

**Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga CIC
Equality and Diversity Policy
Version 2**

Date: July 2025

Review: Annually

Next review date: July 2026

AIMS

- To promote equality of access, opportunity, outcome and experience for people using our services.
- To promote inclusion and to reduce inequality and stigma for those who fall within one of the nine Protected Characteristics, and to consider other characteristics.
- To ensure fair and equal access to our services
- To prevent and eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment; and to promote valuing diversity and equality of opportunity
- To celebrate our diverse community, and promote and foster positive relationships between every person that is in contact with the organisation

OUR COMMITMENT

Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga's teachers and students are required by law not to discriminate against others involved with Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga whether volunteers, employees or students.

Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga (WIY) recognises its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality-related legislation that may be relevant. Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga aims to ensure that all teachers and students can expect fair and accessible classes, workshops and events. We aim to do this by removing unfair conscious and unconscious bias as far as possible and improving equitable measures. Equality is about treating members of our community fairly and impartially without bias and to create conditions that foster fairness, encourage kindness, value diversity and promote dignity and inclusion.

Language should contain no bias in content towards any student or teacher sharing a particular characteristic, other than those that specifically apply to the purpose of the classes. In all instances where restrictions apply the reason will be clearly explained. For example, women only classes or age specific.

Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga is committed to:

- Complying with all the relevant UK legislation and regulatory requirements in force prior to or at the time this document was created.
- Upholding the core values of Iyengar yoga with regards to unity and regarding all people as equals, to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect.
- Ensuring any complaints raised are acted upon in a fair and timely manner

We aim to make our workforce truly representative of all sections of society and to ensure that our clients and employees feel respected and are able to give their best.

This policy applies to all employees, workers, directors, contractors and volunteers. Everyone involved in WIY plays a part in making sure all aspects of our work are inclusive and welcoming of everyone.

The implementation of this policy and completion of the action areas will be the responsibility of the Directors. It is also the responsibility of everyone involved in WIY to ensure that the principles of the Equality and Diversity Policy are understood and implemented

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics:
3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - delivery of services
 - access to services
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal
 - redundancy
 - leave for parents
 - requests for flexible working
 - selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

THE EQUALITY ACT

The Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/101/contents/enacted> applies to everyone who accesses, buys, or uses our facilities or services. All service providers and those providing goods and facilities in the United Kingdom are covered by the Act.

The Act protects anyone who accesses our services from discrimination on the basis of a 'protected characteristic'. The Act also protects members of our yoga community from being discriminated against or harassed because of a protected characteristic they do not personally have (that is held by a member of their family, partner or associate.)

The nine protected characteristics are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership

5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality.
 - Race
 - Colour
 - Ethnicity - includes aspects of both race and culture; as well as other characteristics such as traditions, language, religion, spirituality, upbringing, nationality and ancestral place of origin. It is also a personal expression of identity influenced by life experience and place of habitation; it is dynamic and changes over time.
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

Other Characteristics: Although not legally protected, those characteristics that are unprotected should be treated equitably. Some examples of unprotected characteristics that could lead to unfair discrimination are:

- Accent
- Body expression and modification (tattoos, piercings, hairstyles, etc.)
- Culture
- Having a criminal record
- Political beliefs
- Socioeconomic status
- Subcultural identity
- Weight/body size/shape discrimination

TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE EQUALITIES ACT (2010):

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person in the same circumstances because of a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by association

Discrimination by association occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they are linked, or associated, with a person who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by perception

Discrimination by perception happens when someone is discriminated against because they are thought to have a particular protected characteristic or are treated as if they do. Teachers and students are protected from this sort of discrimination even if someone who discriminates knows that the other person does not have the particular protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

The Act makes indirect discrimination by businesses unlawful. This will take place when a business applies a policy, criterion or practice in the same way to all individuals, but that policy, criterion or practice is discriminatory in its effect on, for example, one particular sex or racial or social group.

Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying

Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga encourages all students and teachers to contribute to the building of a positive environment where all are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. All teachers and students of WIY have a responsibility to ensure that their behaviour towards each other reflects the principles of treating others with dignity and respect.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation are never acceptable and are not tolerated by Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga. Complaints about bullying and harassment will be treated in good faith and investigated fairly and appropriately.

Breaches of this policy regarding any form of unlawful discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying will be investigated.

Our commitments

Warwickshire Iyengar Yoga commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, clients, suppliers and the public

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, clients, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

8. Promote Sports Equality:
“Sports equality is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure that it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society.”

Agreement to follow this policy

This equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the board of directors.

Code of Conduct

- People will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability and/or age.
- At all times people's feelings will be valued and respected.
- Language or humour that people find offensive will not be used, e.g. sexist or racist jokes or terminology which is derogatory to someone with a disability.
- No one will be harassed, abused or intimidated on the ground of his or her race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or age.
- Incidents of harassment will be taken seriously.

Dealing with Complaints

- We will take complaints of discrimination and harassment very seriously, investigate them thoroughly, and provide opportunities for the person making the complaint to speak in a safe environment about their experience.
- If the complaint is against a particular individual, the committee will hear their point of view.

- The Committee will decide the action to take based on the principle of ensuring the continued inclusion and safety of any member who has experienced discrimination or harassment.

COMPLAINTS procedure

If you have experienced discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying, please see our Complaints Procedure.