

NUJ disabled members council policy statement

Declaration of Intent

We recognise that, in spite of legislation, discrimination continues to exist for many individuals and groups in our union. Our members have experienced such discrimination through being disabled and sometimes because they are also part of another group that experiences discrimination. We are committed to enabling and encouraging all individuals to take a full part in our union and will do our utmost to remove any barriers that may hinder opportunities. We challenge discriminatory practice wherever it exists in our union, our profession and our daily lives as journalists.

Objectives

1. That all sections of the union operate within the 'Social Model'¹ understanding of disability, and that guidance on disability and disability related matters should be taken from the Disabled Members Council. The union will promote disability equality in all aspects of its work and will use its influence to promote civil and human rights for disabled people.
2. The union will promote the principle of self-determination for disabled people.
3. The DMC will engage with all disabled NUJ members, to encourage their participation in all union activities without hindrance or discrimination.
4. The union will ensure that the DMC is kept fully informed of matters relating to disabled members and disability issues and is given the opportunity of involvement.
5. To ensure that disabled members have, through reasonable adjustment (as required in the Disability Discrimination Act) full physical access to union premises and union events.

¹ The social model suggests that it is not the disabled person who is the problem, rather the barriers that they encounter. A benefit of interpreting disability in this way is that disabled and non-disabled people can work together to identify and dismantle the barriers, and that way many more people benefit. It takes the emphasis or "blame away" from the individual disabled person and fosters a spirit of co-operation.

6. To establish appropriate links and outreach opportunities with disabled people, groups and organisations.
7. To promote awareness in the NUJ and its NEC and industrial councils of the specific needs of disabled members in order to provide more relevant opportunities and services.
8. To follow the aims of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and any additional legislation relating to disability equality, and to increase the ability of NUJ disabled members to challenge discrimination which may affect their working lives.
9. To work with the NEC, Equality Council and Black Members Council and other union groups or staff in projects that will improve the rights of disabled and other disadvantaged groups.
10. All union staff will be provided with disability equality training, including specific training on their legal obligations to both colleagues and members under the Disability Discrimination Act and the union's own disability policies. Staff will also be provided with additional training as relevant to their particular roles.
11. The union's head office and regional offices will be audited by appropriately qualified access auditors and any remedial work necessary will be given priority when deciding future expenditure.
12. All information provided to members and staff will be available in accessible formats and websites will be designed to be accessible to disabled people.
13. Training will be provided for branch and chapel representatives on disabled member's employment rights.
14. Complaints about disability discrimination made by staff or members will be dealt with quickly and openly, with the aim of resolving complaints effectively.
15. All policy will be amended as necessary to comply with current and future disability discrimination legislation.
16. All members and staff will be provided with copies of the union's disability policies.