

Trade Union Charter for Disability Equality

Click on the asterisks* to read the accompanying briefing material on each clause

By signing up to this charter, _____ makes a commitment that:

1) The union will promote disability equality in all aspects of its work, and will use its political influence to promote civil rights for disabled people. The union will also use its best endeavours as a purchaser of services to use suppliers who do not discriminate against disabled people.*

2) The union will promote the principle of self-determination for disabled people. Advisory committees or forums of disabled members will guide the union's work on disability equality, and when working with other organisations on disability issues, the union will seek to ensure that disabled people exercise an appropriate degree of control.*

3) Disabled trade union members will be enabled to participate in an equal way in all union meetings, events and structures, and to benefit equally from all union services. This will include provision to allow 'job-sharing' of union positions. The remaining points of the Charter set out the other steps which will enable unions to achieve this goal.*

4) All union staff will be provided with 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 disability equality training as relevant to their particular roles, such training being best provided by appropriately qualified disabled consultants or organisations run by disabled people.*

5) A proactive strategy will be adopted to book accessible venues for all union events. Venues appropriate on some occasions, for instance for one-day meetings for a small number of people, will not be used inappropriately, e.g. for a residential conference for a larger number of people.*

6) Information about the accessibility of a venue will be included in the basic information about that venue. In addition, disabled union members attending events will be invited to indicate any specific needs which they may have in order to participate fully in the event.*

7) The union's own accommodation will be professionally audited by appropriately qualified access auditors to ensure equal access for those attending union events and/or working in them, with preference given to qualified disabled auditors. Any remedial work necessary in order to meet responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act will be included when deciding future financial expenditure.*

8) All information provided to union staff and members will be made available in accessible formats as required (e.g. large print, on disk, in Braille, on tape), and websites will be designed to be accessible to disabled people.*

9) Specific support will be provided to disabled staff and members as required to enable their full participation in union activities e.g. the provision of a support worker, reader or Sign Language Interpreter.*

10) When determining access needs, these will be defined by the disabled person themselves, with appropriate support provided by the union as necessary. Any requirement to disclose medical information will be kept to a minimum, and this information will be kept confidential.*

11) Funding of accessibility features will be a priority expenditure for all parts of the union. A central budget will meet the costs of adjustments for disabled members in circumstances where it would be too expensive for these to be funded by individual committees or branches.*

12) Training and other resources will be provided for branch and workplace representatives on disabled people's employment rights, so that they are able to support union members who encounter disability discrimination at work. This training must extend to include the union's responsibility to enable disabled members' participation in trade union activities.*

13) Training and other resources will be provided to members representing the trade union movement on Employment Tribunals, so that they have a full understanding of disability discrimination and the Disability Discrimination Act.*

14) The union will not enter into collective agreements containing terms that discriminate against disabled people. The union will strive to enter into collective agreements at national and local level in respect of anti-discriminatory policies and practices, and will monitor the effectiveness of any such agreements.*

15) Complaints about disability discrimination made by staff or members will be dealt with quickly and openly, with the aim of resolving complaints effectively. All necessary steps will be taken to ensure that disabled people making complaints are not disadvantaged by the process, and are not victimised as a result of their actions.*

16) Discriminatory conduct by union staff or members will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with under the union's disciplinary procedures.*

17) The union's staff and membership will be monitored on a regular basis, and action will be taken to identify and remove barriers facing disabled people.*

18) The effectiveness of all disability policies will be reviewed regularly, and the findings will be acted on as necessary.*

19) All union policies will be amended as necessary to comply with current and future disability discrimination legislation.*

20) All staff and members will be provided with copies of the union's disability policies.*

Further copies of the Charter and the accompanying [briefing document](#) are available in standard print and other formats from Trade Union Disability Alliance (TUDA), BM TUDA, London WC1N 3XX. info@tuda-online.org A poster version of the Charter is also available for signatories to display.