

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

New Tribes Mission (NTM-UK) is an evangelical Christian missionary organisation. Its purpose is set out in its purpose statement:

***Motivated by the love of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, New Tribes Mission exists to assist the ministry of the local church through the mobilising, equipping, and coordinating of believers to evangelise the world's least-reached peoples, translate the Scriptures, and see indigenous churches established that glorify God.***

We believe that the Bible teaches that God loves all people equally and desires that all people should come to know Him and enjoy a relationship with Him. It is our purpose to communicate this message to all the world's people groups and provide the opportunity for them to accept or reject God's offer.

It is this love of God for all people that is foundational to our valuing and treatment of others. God shows no partiality towards those He has created and we too must treat others likewise. NTM is therefore committed to the principle of treating all people equally and giving them equal opportunity. This policy brings together both biblical and legal considerations. It is incumbent on all therefore to respect and act in accordance with this policy.

Being a Christian organisation, we will always conduct our affairs based on biblical principles. This policy highlights some particular considerations regarding equality and diversity. As followers of Jesus Christ, we will seek to demonstrate and emulate His love for all and His care and inclusivity for all in our Christ-centred community.

### SCOPE

#### *Personnel*

The obligations under this policy cover all personnel, as well as those applying for ministry positions at NTM-UK. This policy cannot be applied directly to volunteers, contractors or third parties (but if any related issues become apparent in relation to such individuals, these will be raised with them where appropriate).

### *Service users*

NTM-UK was set up with the goal of reaching people groups who have no access to the Gospel and serves to support missionaries, their families, students and third parties as they seek to know Christ better and to reach out to the millions of people living with no access to the saving message of the Saviour.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination occurs when someone directly or indirectly treats a person or a group of people less favourably.

It may also be unlawful when it relates to a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics include race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, disability.

Any reference to 'discrimination' in this policy means unlawful discrimination.

Although there may be circumstances justifying different treatment which are not unlawful (for example: to comply with an occupational requirement for a position; or to make an adjustment in order to accommodate a person with a disability), New Tribes Mission UK will not tolerate discrimination.

### **Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs where one individual treats another individual, on grounds of a protected characteristic, less favourably than he treats or would treat other persons.

### **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination occurs when a requirement or condition is applied generally (and not because of a protected characteristic), but which is such that it has a detrimental impact upon a protected group that cannot be objectively justified.

### **Disability Discrimination**

The Equality Act 2010 sets out an additional obligation upon organisations to make "reasonable adjustments" so that a disabled member, or service user, is not substantially disadvantaged. New Tribes Mission UK will accordingly make reasonable adjustments in order to help those with disabilities to have access to the same ministry opportunities and services as others.

## **HARASSMENT**

Harassment is, in general terms, unwanted conduct, which has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for another.

Harassment may be unlawful, particularly where the harassment occurs because of a protected characteristic.

## **CHRISTIAN ETHOS**

NTM-UK's Christian beliefs may mean that personal characteristics will lawfully and properly inform decisions. However, this does not detract from the principle that NTM-UK is an Equal Opportunity organisation.

Ministry applicants will be assessed against the ministry description and any person specification (in accordance with the candidate's merits, qualification, and ability to perform the role and to meet any occupational requirement, the needs of NTM-UK and those it serves).

All service users will need to comply with our behavioural standards. These reflect our beliefs.

For the avoidance of doubt, discrimination on the grounds of religious belief or absence of religious belief will not be tolerated.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

All New Tribes Mission UK's members must:

- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity
- Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices
- Not induce or attempt to induce others to practise discrimination
- Not treat anyone less favourably as a result of them having reported or provided evidence of discrimination ("Victimisation")
- Not subject others to harassment

All service users should conduct themselves in the same way.

Where there are breaches of this policy, NTM-UK will take appropriate action.

For members, this may include taking steps through the disciplinary procedure; serious incidents may be treated as gross misconduct. False allegations of discrimination or harassment that are not made in good faith will also be viewed seriously.

For service users, this may include withdrawing provision of the service.

For example, it will be necessary for a member of NTM-UK to agree with its statement of faith as set out on the website as well as its aims and objectives. However, care will be taken to regularly review the situation and assess (for example prior to advertising any ministry position) whether the nature of the position or its context mean that an occupational requirement is i) necessary; and ii) that it is proportionate to apply the requirement in respect of the position.

We will review the operation of this policy in order to ensure we continue to avoid discrimination.

If any member is concerned about any breaches of this Policy, they should raise their concerns with the Personnel Department. Alternatively, formal complaints can be made under the New Tribes Mission UK Complaints Procedure.

## **DOCTRINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

We accept the whole Bible as the inspired revelation of God to man. Our beliefs deriving from this are reflected in our teaching and practices. Some of these are set out below.

We are aware that others may have different convictions. We welcome the right of all members of our community to freely discuss and debate our beliefs and the issues arising from them but ask that this is done with gentleness and respect.

All NTM-UK members need to share our beliefs.

Non-members do not need to share all of our beliefs in order to use our services, but in their conduct, they should respect them.

### **Compassion**

We live in a broken world where much of what takes place is clearly not as God intends. There will be a time when everything is restored to God's

predetermined plans and purposes. In the meantime, God instructs us to care and show compassion to all and to be especially mindful of the poor, weak, and disenfranchised. Our relationship and treatment of others will always be motivated by Jesus Christ's compassionate concern for all people irrespective of gender, sexuality, race, class or creed.

As a Christian community we will be welcoming to all and affirm those values that engender and ennoble the best in mankind and so confirm each person in being all that they can be by God's enabling. We will refrain from critical and condemnatory attitudes that stifle development and instead seek to nourish a spirit of acceptance, compassion and respect.

### **Sex: Male and Female**

There are two distinct and complementary biological sexes which define an important aspect of Christ's relationship to his church. Biological sex is an essential aspect of personhood. It is neither pliable nor nonbinary.<sup>1</sup>

We acknowledge the reality and struggle of gender dysphoria<sup>2</sup> for some individuals. Although gender is socially shaped to an extent, we do not believe it to be a mere social construct. We believe that an emphasis of chosen-ness over given-ness and changeability over stability can be at odds with the gospel (individualism and self-government).

### **Sexual Expression and Marriage**

Outside any legal definition, we believe marriage according to the Bible to be a lifelong union between one man and one woman for life and to the exclusion of all others.

We believe that the only God-ordained context for sexual expression is between a husband and wife within such marriage.

## **PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

If we taught, advanced or acquiesced to something different from the above doctrinal position, we believe we would not be honouring Christ and we could lead others to stumble.

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<sup>1</sup> We acknowledge the intersex condition, which we consider distinct from gender reassignment.

<sup>2</sup> Recognised by the NHS as when "a person experiences discomfort or distress because there's a mismatch between their biological sex and gender identity." Matthew 19:4-6

**Code for sexual conduct**

Our code for sexual conduct reflects these convictions. For so long as service users/personnel are part of our community, we require celibacy from those who are not within such marriage.

**Accommodation**

Almost all of New Tribes Mission UK's accommodation is in single rooms or apartments. Residential single accommodation is single sex, with the exception of those within such marriage.

We have a limited number of wheelchair accessible rooms. These are available on a first come first served basis for those with reasonable need for such a room.

We are open to discuss arrangements in advance with any potential resident (or their parent/guardian) where there may be particular needs or where such accommodation could present a difficulty. We strongly recommend such conversations are initiated as soon as possible.

**Naming and personal pronouns**

As a basic courtesy New Tribes Mission UK personnel, students and guests will be encouraged to use the name and personal pronoun requested and preferred by any adult individual. (In the case of under-18-year-olds our usage will be guided by the parent or guardian.)

We would not compel anyone to address another using a name or pronoun they feel compromises their conscience/religious beliefs but would expect them to instead limit use of any name or pronoun contrary to the individual's expressed preference and to continue to act with respect and gentleness in all interactions.

**Toilets, Bathrooms and Changing Facilities**

Most toilets and changing rooms at New Tribes Mission UK are designated as either male or female. There are, however, a number of individual cubicles around the site.

Our request and expectation is that when residents do access a gender-specific toilet or changing room, they use the one appropriate for their biological sex.

## **Specific Specialist Requirements**

Many of New Tribes Mission UK's facilities are single room ex-MOD building with limited disability access. However, renovations, adaptations and new buildings have made some of the major meeting rooms and several toilets wheelchair accessible.

As New Tribes Mission UK's resources for the adequate care of those with specific specialist requirements are limited, to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals and third parties the admission of those with such requirements will not exceed our capacity or capability (considering any reasonable adjustments).

Sex to be determined by passport or similar official state identification, subject to any gender recognition certificate.

Those with particular needs should alert us to them early in the application process to ensure we can offer as much assistance as possible, including considering and putting in place any reasonable adjustments.

## **PASTORAL CARE AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

New Tribes Mission UK is part of a global missionary organisation. North Cotes College exists to train and equip students for missionary service. All personnel and students are strongly encouraged to participate in the life of local churches.

New Tribes Mission UK is not a centre for intensive pastoral counselling, although informal pastoral conversations are frequent. Those who need such intensive support are strongly encouraged to seek longer term help in their home settings.

### **Related policies**

NTM-UK Anti-bullying and Harassment policy  
NTM-UK Code of Conduct

Reviewed: August 2025

Next review date: August 2026