

BELFAST MUSIC SOCIETY

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. The Belfast Music Society's objects are to promote, by charitable means only, the knowledge and appreciation of chamber music through the organisation and presentation of recitals and any other appropriate musical events that the Board of Management may determine.
2. The Belfast Music Society's promotions include, but are not limited to, the International Festival of Chamber Music, masterclasses, workshops, and individual recitals.
3. The Belfast Music Society is a voluntary organisation with no paid employees. It engages the services of a part-time Concerts Manager and individual professional artists, and offers opportunities for participation to young musicians. Within this context the Belfast Music Society is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. We are committed to:
 - preventing any form of direct or indirect discrimination or victimisation
 - promoting equal opportunities for women and men
 - securing fair participation for Catholics and Protestants
 - promoting equal opportunities for people with disabilities
 - promoting a good and harmonious working environment where all men and women are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment will be tolerated
 - fulfilling all legal obligations under the relevant legislation and associated Codes of Practice
 - taking any necessary positive/affirmative action, including setting goals and imetables
4. Selection of professional artists and participants for Belfast Music Society events will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. It is our policy to provide equality to all, irrespective of:
 - gender
 - marital or family status
 - religious belief or political opinion
 - disability
 - race or ethnic origin
 - nationality
 - sexual orientation
 - age

5. This policy is fully supported by the Board of Management. All present and future members of the Board will be provided with a copy of the policy.
6. Artists or participants who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through agreed procedures. A copy of these procedures will be available from the Chair of the Board of Management. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.
7. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another on the grounds of their sex, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, race, nationality or ethnic/national origin.
Indirect discrimination can occur when a requirement or condition which cannot be justified on grounds other than sex, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, race, nationality or ethnic/national origin, is applied equally but has the effect in practice of disadvantaging a considerably higher proportion of persons in one or other of the above groups.
In order to establish a complaint of indirect discrimination, an applicant must show the following:
 - that a requirement or condition has been applied
 - that the said requirement or condition adversely impacts against the person because of his/her religious belief, political opinion, sex, marital status, race nationality or ethnic/national origin
 - that he/she has suffered detriment by reason being unable to comply with the condition or requirement
8. Disability discrimination occurs when, for a reason related to his/her disability, a disabled person is treated less favourably than other people, and this treatment cannot be justified.
9. Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because that person has, for example, asserted rights under any of the discrimination laws or has helped another person to assert such rights or given information to the relevant statutory body, or because it is suspected that the person might do any of these things.
10. Complaints of sex/marital status, race/nationality/ethnic/national origin, and disability discrimination should be lodged with the Chair of the Board of Management within three months from date of the alleged act of discrimination.
11. This policy will be reviewed and updated if necessary in accordance with relevant legislation every five years.