



# Equality and Diversity

## Level 2

# About the Level 2 Award/Certificate in Equality and Diversity

We live in an increasingly diverse society, and everyone, in their daily life and at work, will meet people from a range of different backgrounds with a variety of values and beliefs. Therefore, it is important that we are able to understand and accept people's differences, otherwise we will find it very difficult to live and work with the people around us.

In workplaces, educational institutions and other organisations it is expected that everyone will behave respectfully towards others regardless of their values, beliefs and background. Prejudice and discriminatory behaviour should not be tolerated, and this is backed up by legislation that makes it illegal to discriminate on a wide range of characteristics that make people different.

In this course you will explore how issues related to equality and diversity affect us, our workplaces and our local communities. You will also examine the importance of taking individual responsibility and action to help and support others and to challenge discrimination and prejudice.

## Aims

On completion of this course you should:

- Understand the concepts of equality and diversity in a variety of environments including society, the community and the workplace.
- Appreciate how stereotyping and labelling can affect individuals.
- Be able to outline the effects of prejudice and discrimination.
- Understand people's rights and responsibilities in terms of equality, inclusion and discrimination.
- Be able to explain the importance of taking individual responsibility and action to help and support others.

## Course content

If you are completing this course to achieve a qualification there are two qualifications available:

- Level 2 Award in Equality and Diversity
- Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity

For the Award you will complete one unit (Module A):

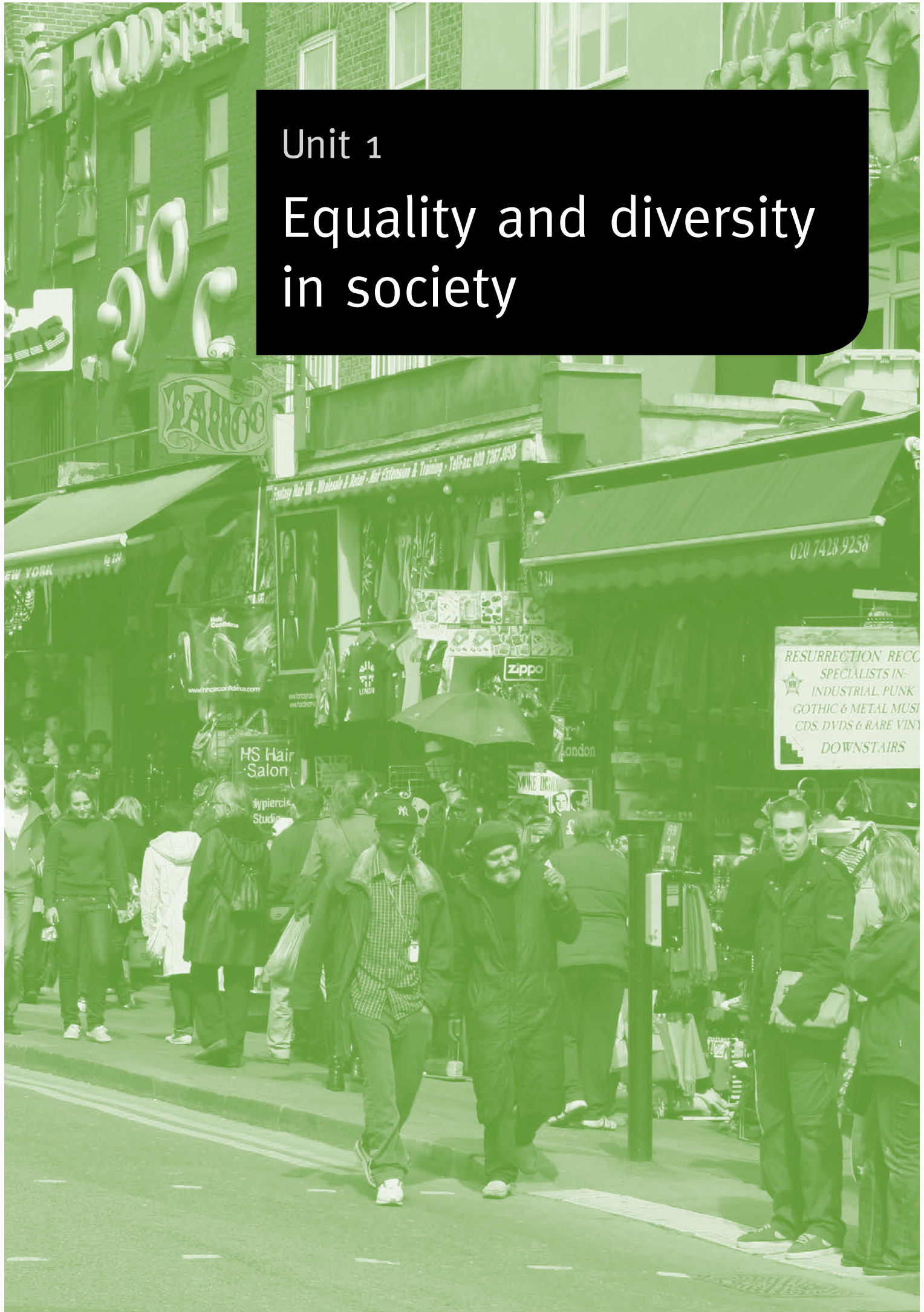
- Unit 1: Equality and diversity in society

For the Certificate you will complete the above, plus two further units (Module B):

- Unit 2: Equality and diversity in the community
- Unit 3: Equality and diversity in the workplace



# Equality and diversity in society



# Section 1

## Equality

**In this section you will learn about:**

- What do we mean by equality?
- The terms used to discuss equality

### What do we mean by equality?

The word 'equality' is used frequently in daily life. Governments, organisations and individuals all regularly talk about equality. But have you ever stopped and thought about what it actually means?

Equality for individuals means that **individuals are valued equally**. It does not mean that everyone is treated exactly the same. Equality is about creating a society that is fair, where everyone has the same access to the economic, social, cultural and political aspects of society. This means everyone should have **equal access** to important services such as health care and education. Everyone should have an **equal say** in how our country is governed. And everyone should have the right to **equal protection** under the law.





- Providing a special **health programme** to meet the needs of a particular ethnic group, for example screening people in high-risk groups for sickle cell anaemia, which is a genetic blood disorder. In the UK this high-risk group includes people of African Caribbean origin.

### Key point

Positive action means treating one group more favourably than another. Although this sounds like it goes against the principles of equality, the Equality Act 2010 recognises that some groups may need particular help and encouragement to access services and opportunities. In these instances action can be taken to help them overcome their disadvantages.

## Discrimination

Discrimination is the **unfair or unequal treatment of individuals or groups**, which is usually based on prejudice against those individuals or groups. Discrimination occurs when an individual or group is treated differently than others would be in that situation, because of who they are. For example, if you went into a shop and were refused service simply because you were a woman, that would be discrimination.



EVERYONE IS ENTITLED, IN LAW, TO EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES.

## *Protected characteristics*

The **Equality Act 2010**, which replaced most other equality legislation in the United Kingdom, lists a number of personal characteristics. These are known as protected characteristics, and the Act made it illegal to discriminate against anyone because of them. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment (becoming or being a transsexual)
- Marriage and civil partnership (there is no protection for single people)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief (or lack of religion/belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation





# Section 2

## Diversity

**In this section you will learn about:**

- What do we mean by diversity?
- Valuing diversity
- Respecting difference

### What do we mean by diversity?

Diversity means **different and varied**. UK society is diverse – people are different in their:

- **Interests** – The things that they are interested in and choose to do.
- **Beliefs** – Their religion and values.
- **Age** – Whether they are a baby, a child, a teenager or an adult.
- **Lifestyle** – How they live their lives, their work patterns, their economic resources and family life, for example.
- **Personal characteristics** – For example, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities.
- **Cultural identities** – Their ethnicity and race.





## Valuing diversity

### Activity A5

Choose three people that you like. These can be people you know personally – your friends – or people you see in the media, eg celebrities.

1. Write down one way in which they are different from you and say why you like it.
2. Write down one way in which they are similar to you and say why you like it.

	Person A	Person B	Person C
1. Difference			
Why I like it			
2. Similarity			
Why I like it			

If everyone were exactly the same, the world would be a very uninteresting place. You can see from the exercise above that we value difference as much as similarity. **Difference adds to our life experience.** It helps us to step outside our own world and experience something new. In many instances, variation and diversity enriches society and enhances the lives of its citizens. It allows for and promotes a **greater range of skills, talents, strengths and knowledge** within society.

The UK population is made up of people from a range of ethnic cultures, with different beliefs, interests and lifestyles. Our diverse society is not new. People have been arriving in the United Kingdom and contributing to the culture here for over 2000 years. Because our society – in modern times – is generally **tolerant and liberal**, people have been able to live their lives as they choose, practise their own religions and choose their lifestyle.

## Unit 2

# Equality and diversity in the community





In this unit you will learn about the level of diversity that exists within a community and the value of diversity within that community. You will also look at the inequalities that can occur in communities and the support services that can help to maintain equality and diversity. You will be asked to choose a community and carry out some research on it, and to base your assessment answers on this work.

## Aims

When you have worked through this unit you should know:

- The level of diversity that can exist within a community.
- The value to communities of creating and maintaining a diverse environment.
- The potential inequalities that can occur within a community.
- The support services that exist within a community to ensure that equality and diversity are maintained.

## Content

This unit contains three sections:

**Section 1: Diversity within the community**

**Section 2: The value of diversity in the community**

**Section 3: Maintaining equality and diversity in the community**

# Section 1

## Diversity within the community

**In this section you will learn about:**

- What is a community?
- The extent of diversity
- Physical diversity

### What is a community?

We talk about communities all the time but do we ever really stop to think about what they are? Traditionally, most people think of a community as the **people within a geographical area** such as a town or village, but the word community can also be used to describe **any group of people that share something in common.**

Some examples of communities are:

- A church community
- A school community
- A work community
- A military base
- A gay community
- A geographical area, such as a town, a village or a smaller area such as a housing estate or a block of apartments.

In this unit we will generally be talking about communities as a geographical area. In relation to your community, this will be the town, village or area of a city that you live in. However, much of the information here applies to all of the different sorts of communities we describe. **All communities have some diversity within them.**



# Section 1

## Workplace equality and diversity

**In this section you will learn about:**

- What do equality and diversity mean to organisations?
- The benefits of a diverse workforce
- Promoting and maintaining equality and diversity in the workforce
- Difficulties in establishing and maintaining a diverse workplace
- The promotion of equality and diversity by employees

### What do equality and diversity mean to organisations?

Organisations need to think about equality and diversity in everything they do, from **recruiting staff**, through **managing**, **promotion** to **when staff leave** the company for whatever reason. They should make sure that the workforce is diverse and that individuals within the workforce are treated equally.

#### *Workforce diversity*

Workforce diversity means that **the workforce reflects the sort of diversity that exists in the population** in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, disabilities etc. This diversity should be reflected **at every level** of the organisation. Organisations should have **flexible working conditions** and **policies** in place to take account of the needs of this diverse workforce. For example, if the working day ends at 5pm meetings should not be scheduled after this time, which would disadvantage employees with childcare arrangements.



An organisation's workforce should reflect the diversity of the population in its local community.

## Equality issues

When an organisation has a diverse workforce, it is particularly important to ensure that individuals are treated equally. This is especially true in relation to **recruitment, pay, conditions and promotion opportunities**.

- **Recruitment** – When recruiting, organisations need to ensure that they **avoid any discriminatory language or practices** in advertisements or job descriptions and person specifications. It is good practice for job advertisements to state that they **welcome applicants from all sections of the community**. They should avoid terms such as ‘mature person’ or ‘young graduate’ as these may be discriminatory on age grounds. For jobs where employees need to be able to talk to customers on the telephone, job descriptions should not refer to needing a ‘good level of spoken English’ but use alternative phrasing such as ‘needs to be able to speak clearly to customers’. When interviewing candidates for a job, it is **unlawful to ask any questions related to health**, except to make sure that candidates can carry out any essential parts of the job. Interview questions should also not be of a personal nature.

### Activity B13

Choose a job advertisement from a work organisation and show how it meets equality and diversity requirements.