

What can unacceptable behaviour look like?

This document is intended to help clarify and show what unacceptable behaviour might look like in a volunteering context.

You can use this document as a reference if you are trying to identify

particular characteristic or have personal experience which relates to the nature of the unacceptable behaviour. If you are ever in doubt and want to

volunteer coordinator or supervisor. In our **Reporting a concern document**, you can find details of how to make contact.

The Equality Act 2010 - Protected characteristics

There are nine characteristics which are legally protected:

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| 1. Disability | 4. Gender reassignment | 7. Sex |
| 2. Marriage or civil partnership | 5. Pregnancy and maternity | 8. Race |
| 3. Religion or belief | 6. Sexual orientation | 9. Age |

Protected characteristics mean that it is against the law in England, Wales and Scotland to discriminate or treat people less favourably because of their characteristics. Northern Ireland has its own legislation on discrimination, including the Race Relations Order 1997.

On the **Citizens Advice website**, you can find a more detailed description of what being treated differently based on protected characteristics could look like.

Bullying

Refusing to let a volunteer use certain equipment because they are pregnant. Even if this is done out of good intentions with concern for the

Refusing to let a volunteer use certain equipment because they are gay. Even if they are heterosexual, this is direct discrimination by perception.

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted behaviour which has the purpose or effect of intimidating, humiliating and/or offensive environment for you or others.

Harassment could be offensive or negative comments related to personal

Inappropriate or unwanted physical contact

Deliberate intimidation, using different means to frighten someone