

WORKING TOGETHER



unionstogether is committed to the fullest possible participation of delegates to our training courses. This means that no one should feel put off from participating because of the actions, attitudes or language of other course members. The following guidelines have been drawn up to help course members meet our commitment to full participation in a practical and constructive way. You will see that underlying this guide is a commitment to the principle that everyone has equal rights to benefit from, to contribute to and enjoy the course.

Working Together

A key feature of trade union education is the value it places upon the knowledge, experience and skills that each member brings with them to the course – both in terms of their trade union or political work and their everyday lives. It is important that everyone feels equal and able to make a contribution if they so wish. So:

- Listen to what others have to say, and avoid being dismissive of their contribution.
- Wait until a speaker has finished and do not interrupt their train of thought.
- Aim to have reasoned discussion, not arguments.
- Any criticism should be constructive and help members to develop confidence, skills and knowledge.
- Make your own contribution as clear and concise as possible and do not dominate the discussion.
- Ensure that everyone who wishes to speak is given encouragement and the opportunity to do so.
- It is equally important that participants on the course can speak openly about problems they or their members have experienced in the full knowledge that personal or sensitive information is restricted to the classroom. Confidentiality must be respected.

Language

Language is important and our policy is not to use language which offends or hurts people. This type of language should always be avoided as it causes distress. Often it is a reflection of stereotyped thinking. Do not be surprised if you are challenged if you make broad sweeping generalisations about any group of people, e.g. that women working part-time only go out to work for pin money.

Language which contains discriminatory references and which is abusive or threatening in any way should not be used and nor should jokes or comments which perpetuate discrimination.

Jargon

Jargon is a barrier to good communication. Sometimes, the more we become involved in trade union or Labour Party activities, the more likely we are to use jargon. Take care to explain any jargon or initials you use which others may not be familiar with so that everyone understands what you are talking about.



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Mobile Telephones

If at all possible please switch your mobile phones off during the training sessions. If, for whatever reason, you must have your phone on please have it on silent or vibrate.

Social Media

Please think before you tweet. Respect other course members' privacy - please don't post photos or 'tag' others without checking first.

