

# Equality Rep Case Study

Linda Ford, Prospect



Linda has been an Equality Rep for Prospect since 2012 and is based in Dundee.

I feel we need Equality Reps because there is still way too much discrimination. If there was no discrimination and no issues around inequality then we wouldn't need Equality Reps; but there is, and we do.

I became an Equality Rep because it seemed like the perfect fit for me. I am female, I identify as disabled and am LGBTQ+. The fact discrimination routinely occurs in workplaces is the main reason I became an Equality Rep. Even if you feel your workplace is doing well on equalities, discrimination still exists. This is what I want to fight against.

Being an Equality Rep has given me confidence. You get the opportunity to attend conferences, speak at events, and gain recognition for working around equalities. I feel strongly that our young reps need support more than anything. My younger self would have walked away and not bothered, so it's very encouraging to hear and speak with young reps.

Most of the issues I deal with are around sickness absence and management policies.

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Mental Health is a topic I am increasingly dealing with, but it is a difficult topic to deal with. On average, a case could last 9-10 months – although many are considerably shorter. My role has helped make colleagues aware of their rights, and has prevented people from being discriminated against.

Overall, I feel my work as an Equality Rep has had a positive impact, especially around raising awareness of discrimination in the workplace. There have been a number of changes made within my workplace that have happened as a result of Equality Reps.

For example, policies around wellbeing and menopause are going to be established and my employer now undertakes an Equality Impact Assessment on every policy. They have become a disability confident employer with a disability action plan, and have set up an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group. Policies and awareness around disabilities and reasonable adjustments have been enhanced and on the whole, people have a greater knowledge of their workplace rights. Overall, my employer has become better as a result of us Equality Reps. We need people in workplaces to argue the point for equality.