

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

1. Objective

The aim of this policy is to outline the commitment of the organisation to the promotion of equality of opportunity in the ways that it provides services for service users, and in the working arrangements for its staff.

The Manager will have specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy.

All staff engaged to work at the organisation will be expected to abide by the policy and help to create the equality environment which is its objective. In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to all staff, e.g. at induction
- Ensure adequate training programmes are in place to ensure the organisation does not consciously or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of staff
- Incorporate appropriate duties in to relevant job descriptions in respect of implementing this policy
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices in general communications, e.g with service users and the general public

2. Principles

The organisation is committed to :

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all staff, service users and users
- Promoting a good and harmonious learning environment in which all staff and service users are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment is tolerated.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated code of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to termination of employment

3. Policy

It is our policy to provide equality to all service users, staff and other users irrespective of:

- gender, including gender reassignment
- marital or civil partnership status
- having or not having dependents
- religious belief or political opinion

- race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish traveller)
- disability
- sexual orientation
- age.

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All members of the organisation and service users will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions will be made objectively, without unlawful discrimination, and based on aptitude and ability.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in all our activities will benefit the organisation. For example, our equal opportunities approach will help staff to develop their full potential and talents so that resources will be utilised fully to maximise the effectiveness of the organisation.

We recognise that there is a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to implement an equal opportunities policy. This policy applies to applicants for employment, volunteers and members of the public alike.

The organisation is committed to the principles and practice of equality. We want our services, facilities and resources to be accessible and useful to all users regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin, religious belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect a person's opportunities in life. The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed regularly and action taken as necessary.

4. Raising Concerns

Members of staff or service users who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the Grievance procedure. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Every effort will be made to ensure that members who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Complaints from members of the public will be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure.

5. Advertising

The organisation will not discriminate directly or indirectly when advertising new posts and reorganising existing posts by including any requirements or criteria which are unnecessary to the post. Care will be taken to avoid indirect discrimination in recruitment through the recommendations of existing employees, i.e. "word of mouth recruitment".

All posts will be advertised in such areas and publications as to ensure that they do not exclude or disproportionately reduce the number of applicants from a particular group. Job advertisements will not include requirements such as length of residence in the UK or experience in the UK that cannot be justified on work-related grounds.

6. Recruitment

All applicants will be given equal consideration for appointments and shortlisting will be on the basis of the criteria listed in the person specification.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements and circumstances of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

Selections decisions will be made only on the basis of the requirements of the job as set out in the job description and person specification.

All staff responsible for recruitment and selection decisions will be given appropriate training on the principles of good Equal Opportunities practice.

Decisions relating to recruitment will be recorded to enable monitoring of the selection process, including reasons why a candidate was not selected.

7. Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation in Employment

The organisation acknowledges that bullying, harassment and victimisation in the workplace is wholly unacceptable in any form and, as such, a separate procedure is in place to deal with incidents of this nature. For more information, please refer to the Bullying and Harassment policy.

8. Disability in Employment

The organisation recognizes that, as an employer, it has mandatory obligations to ensure that people with disabilities are afforded equal opportunities to enter and maintain employment.