

# THE ASSOCIATION OF CHARITY INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS (ACIE)

## Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

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### Introduction

ACIE recognises that no-one should be discriminated against in the employment relationship or in the way goods and services are provided. We are committed to promoting a just society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice and although aware of our legal obligations, we want to develop a culture of celebrating diversity regardless of legislation and valuing both the differences and similarities we all share.

This overarching comprehensive equality policy is designed to cover all aspects of equal opportunities and diversity with specific reference to the Equality Act 2010.

### Our Commitment:

- To value and celebrate diversity
- To develop an inclusive organisational culture which reflects the local community
- To take action on any form of discrimination
- To monitor employment and service provision and audit our progress by self-assessment, scrutiny and audit mechanisms, using performance indicators
- To systematic representative consultation
- To fair recruitment, employment and equal pay
- To monitor progress and revise targets set to develop equalities into all areas of our service.

### Equality and Diversity a Definition

#### Equality

Equality of Opportunity can be defined as the provision of choice and fairness to every person; being treated with respect and recognising that as individuals, we are different and have different needs. We should have equal opportunities to enable choice and pursuance of our own lifestyles and goals without prejudice.

In order to avoid discrimination, practices or actions must be applied in such a way that they treat all people equitably and fairly and in line with legislative guidelines.

## **Diversity**

Diversity can be defined as the various differences we all have as individuals, and the contribution we make within society. Differences can range from age to religion to geographical location and the list is never exhaustive. However we should celebrate these differences and learn from each other, harnessing the talents and qualities of everyone, both within the workplace and the community. Open mindedness is required and we should never presume we know what other people's needs are.

Diversity covers every difference that we can have and therefore is not always bound by legislation, however morally it is a positive way of respecting ones differences and promoting professional organisational values to everyone.

## **Principles of Equity**

The principles of equity require the making of an adjustment or provision to give any individual from an underrepresented group, the opportunity to function on equal terms. Equity is not treating everyone the same, but ensuring that appropriate adjustments are made to give all individuals equal choice and fairness thus preventing discrimination.

## **Legislation**

We recognise our legal obligations and know that if any legal requirements are contravened, both the employer and the individual employee concerned will be liable to legal proceedings. We are committed to taking all of the necessary steps to prevent acts of discrimination. We also wish to promote anti-discriminatory practice in all areas of diversity and not only because there is legislation to protect certain minority groups.

## **Discrimination**

We are committed to ensuring that there is no discrimination against parts of the community either in access to employment, employment practices or service delivery.

Discrimination covers direct and indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination takes place where one person is treated less favourable than others in the same circumstances. Indirect discrimination means applying a condition or requirement of employment which adversely affects, or favours, one particular group over another and which cannot be justified in terms of the requirements of the job.

Discrimination can take many forms including bullying and harassment, segregation, victimisation and stereotyping.

## **Equal opportunities in Employment**

### **Concerns**

Anyone who feels that they have been discriminated against or witnessed discrimination can and should discuss it informally with the Chair of the Board of Trustees or another member of the Board. By raising any issue, you will be in a position to positively identify a way forward which is suitable for yourself either informally or formally.

## **Equal Pay**

We are committed to Equal Pay and comparative consideration of jobs will ensure we achieve equal pay for men and women doing work of equal value in different jobs.

### **Formal procedures**

We will take prompt action to investigate any employee grievance concerning discrimination, victimisation or harassment. Any employee who brings such a grievance will retain the right to bring a case concerning discrimination or victimisation to an employment tribunal. An employee who has, in good faith, complained via this procedure will not receive less favourable treatment than any other employee.

### **Recruitment, Promotion and Training**

Any applicant or employee will be treated equitably in all aspects of the employment and training relationship. Recruitment and promotion will be determined on the basis of individual merit. Training and equality of access to training will be provided to enable employees to perform their jobs effectively and to pursue career development opportunities in line with organisational objectives.

All members will be treated fairly and without bias. To eliminate any individual or minority group from being discriminated against in the way services are planned, organised and delivered, we will ensure that all services are widely available and supplied on the basis of eligibility.

### **Equal Opportunity Monitoring**

Everyone has responsibility for the successful implementation of Equality of Opportunity. The main responsibility for achieving and providing equality of opportunity rests with employers, however, employees at every level have a responsibility to own and promote this policy.

It is the responsibility of every employee to provide professional, fair treatment and respect to both colleagues and service user's individual rights.

### **All Employees**

It is your responsibility:

- To treat all colleagues and service users with equal respect and fairness, taking care not to offend, embarrass or discriminate for any reason
- To co-operate with and give support to measures introduced to ensure equal opportunities and non-discrimination
- Not to discriminate for any reason or attempt to induce other employees for whatever reason
- To oppose any form of harassment or discrimination, which you may suffer or observe around you
- To report any instance to the Chair of Board of Trustee or another member of Board

### **Managers/Supervisors**

In addition to accepting the above responsibilities and ensuring that your staff do too, you must also:

- Develop knowledge, demonstrating competency in promoting equality issues, by review and establishing equality within services

- Ensure that all employees are aware of their responsibilities, the law and policies on equality issues
- Ensure grievances are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner
- Ensure that proper records of employment decisions are maintained and that regular reviews are carried out regarding employment practices
- Guard against possible prejudice or preconceptions.

### **Equal Opportunities in Membership**

#### **Concerns**

Anyone who feels they have been discriminated against or witnessed discrimination can and should discuss it informally with a trustee. By raising an issue, you will be in a position to positively identify a way forward which is suitable for yourself either informally or formally.

#### **Formal Procedures**

We will take prompt action to investigate any members grievance concerning discrimination, victimization or harassment.