

Equal Opportunities & Diversity Management Policy

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1** York Mind is committed to promoting equality and diversity within a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can enhance the way we work. York Mind aims to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected and built upon, with ability to recruit and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the communities it serves.
- 1.2** York Mind is also committed to compliance with relevant equality legislation, the Equality Act 2010, Codes of Practice and relevant best practice guidance.
- 1.3** York Mind aims to pro-actively tackle discrimination or disadvantage and aims to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to employment or accessing its services.
- 1.4** However, York Mind is also mindful of the provision in discrimination law for the rare circumstances when an organisation may need to justify discrimination rather than have a disproportionate effect. This could be, for instance, where there is a conflict with other legislation that York Mind has to comply with or between service needs. In such circumstances York Mind is committed to following the required proper assessment and objective justification of any decision in order to demonstrate that the provision, criterion or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- 1.5** Issues regarding harassment and bullying are covered in the Harassment Policy. For issues regarding recruitment refer also to the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

2 Definitions

- 2.1** Equality can be described as breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups both in employment, and to goods and services; the basis of which is supported and protected by legislation.
- 2.2** Diversity can be described as celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for York Mind.
- 2.3** Equality and Diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed and taken account of.

3. Policy Statement

York Mind is committed to ensuring that:

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3.1 Existing members of staff, volunteers and clients are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination with regard to nine of the protected characteristics as outlined by the Equality Act 2010 which are:

age;
disability;
gender reassignment;
marriage and civil partnership;
pregnancy and maternity;
race (includes colour, nationality and ethnic origins);
religion and or belief;
sex;
sexual orientation;

3.2 Existing members of staff, job applicants, or workers are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination with regard to: caring responsibilities, part-time employment, membership or non-membership of a trade union or spent convictions.

3.3 All employment-related policies, practices and procedures are applied impartially and objectively

3.4 Equality of opportunity to all and to provide staff with the opportunity to develop and realise their full potential;

3.5 We work towards achieving a diverse workforce at all levels

3.6 Employees, volunteer and clients of York Mind can work together in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

4.0 Promoting Equality and Diversity in Practice

4.1 York Mind will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amounts to direct discrimination, associative discrimination, discrimination by perception indirect discrimination including harassment (harassment by a third party), victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping. See Appendix I below for further explanation of these concepts. York Mind will not tolerate any behaviour from staff which breaches our equality and diversity policy. Any such breaches will be regarded as misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal from employment without notice.

4.2 York Mind will distribute and publicise this policy statement throughout the organisation and elsewhere as appropriate. We will also take care that our publicity material presents appropriate and positive messages about equality and

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diversity.

4.3 Organisational Policies: All York Mind policies for example, the Recruitment and Selection Policy, the Flexible Working and TOIL Policy, Attendance Management Policy, the Capability Policy and the Performance Appraisal Policy are designed to promote equal opportunity and protection against discrimination for all employees. These policies are reviewed regularly.

4.4 Work / Life Balance: York Mind are committed to helping its employees fulfil their potential at work whilst finding the right work/life balance. Requests for flexible working will be processed in line with our Flexible Working and TOIL Policy.

4.5 Monitoring: York Mind recognises the importance of monitoring, reviewing and reporting on its equality and diversity policy and practice and to measure progress in meeting our policy statement. We do this through a variety of measures such as our Staff Survey, review of equality monitoring data for recruitment, and our services' project reporting data which includes statistical analysis of our client's demographics. The latter is published in our Annual Report.

4.6 Training: York Mind is committed to ensuring its staff and managers are trained in equality and diversity and aims to ensure that adequate training is provided so that managers are able to operate this policy. Examples include specific training on race, gender, gender identity, disability, sexuality, age and religion or belief, in accordance with the requirements of the law and good practice. Diversity and equality forms an integral part of York Mind's induction package.

4.7 Complaints: York Mind takes all claims of discrimination, bullying and harassment, and victimisation very seriously and will take appropriate action against those concerned. We recognise that discrimination covers all behaviour including remarks and insinuation, both verbal and non-verbal, which cause offence. York Mind will deal with any complaints in relation to discrimination in line with relevant organisational policies and procedures.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 The Board of Trustees is responsible for the content of this policy and will review it every three years or when changes are made to relevant legislation.

5.2 The CEO has overall responsibility for ensuring the culture and systems of the organisation facilitate implementation of the policy.

5.3 Managers are responsible for implementing this policy as part of their day-to-day work, including

- Applying employment policies and Practices in a fair and equitable way
- Ensuring equality and diversity issues are addressed in performance.

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- Ensuring all staff act in accordance with the equality and diversity policy providing necessary support and direction;
- Effectively manage and deal promptly when investigating issues relating to potential discrimination
- Ensure that sub-contractors are aware of this policy and agree to adhere to it.

5.4 Employees and volunteers are responsible for implementing this policy as part of their day-to-day work, including

- Implementing the policy in their day-to-day work and their dealings with colleagues, volunteers and clients;
- Ensuring their behaviour is appropriate to the policy and that they treat people with respect and dignity;
- Not discriminating against other employees or service users
- Notifying their line manager of any concerns with regard to the conduct of other employees, service users or third parties.

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