

SP33 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY (EDI)

Policy Number	SP33
Policy Name	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (EDI)
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Reviewing Body	Executive Team

Version	Amendments	Date	Initials	Publish on Website?
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1.1	1 year review	August 2024	ED/ET	Yes

We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to following practices which are fair and non-discriminatory. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

The terms equality, inclusion, diversity, and equality are pivotal to this policy.

'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination.

'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution.

'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce.

'Equity' means recognising barriers and that some groups are more advantaged than others, and putting measures in place to eliminate these barriers, ensuring equal opportunities for all.

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. We will actively support diversity, equity and inclusion and ensure that our workforce is valued and treated with dignity and respect. We are committed to encouraging everyone in our business to reach their potential.

This policy covers all employees, trustees, governors, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers and applies to entire employment lifecycle including recruitment, training and promotion. All areas of the employment cycle are monitored and policies

and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities.

Managers are provided with EDI awareness training.

The HR Director has responsibility for implementing and monitoring the EDI policy and, as part of this process, all people policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals at Autism Unlimited as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of everyone to this policy and its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality and equity throughout the Charity.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or through our confidential whistleblowing line.

Our commitment

We are committed to:

- Encouraging equality, diversity, inclusion in the workplace.
- Maintaining a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all colleagues are recognised and valued.
- Training managers and colleagues on EDI rights and responsibilities.
- Ensuring all complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by colleagues, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the charity's work activities are taken seriously.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under our grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the

Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Providing opportunities for training, development and progress to all colleagues, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of our charity.
- Reviewing employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitoring the statistics of our workforce regarding age, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion. This will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.
- Ensuring that all colleagues have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, no matter what age, sex, ethnic background, religion or belief.

6.0 Review

Annually