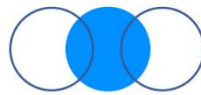




Code	ED.001
Title	Equality and Diversity Policy
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Approved by	Andrew Buckingham
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Distribution Status	Controlled



EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Direct Mediation Services is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee/volunteer feels respected and able to give of their best.

To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all employees/volunteers, contractors, workers and applicants, whether full-time or part-time, and not to discriminate on grounds of gender (including sex, marriage, gender re-assignment), race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. Direct Mediation Services opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

1. Responsibility

The overall responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of Direct Mediation Services' Equal opportunities policy is assigned to the CEO, Stuart Hanson. This responsibility includes ensuring that all employees/volunteers, contractors and workers are notified of the details of this policy and are aware of its implications through the provision of appropriate training.

All line managers have responsibility for promoting equality of opportunity, and should ensure that their own procedures and practices comply with the provisions of Direct Mediation Services' Equal opportunities policy. The performance and example of managers is crucial to improving opportunities for all.

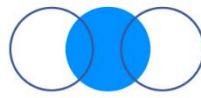
Individual employees, volunteers, contractors and workers at all levels have responsibility for ensuring that equality of opportunity is consistently provided in all of Direct Mediation Services' employment practices and activities.

2. Recruitment and selection

Direct Mediation Services will strive to:

- Ensure that all employees are recruited on the basis of ability and other objective relevant criteria.
- Work towards ensuring that through recruitment, its workforce better represents all sections of society.
- Ensure that it communicates job opportunities to all sections of the community, ensuring that it does not discriminate against, or discourage applications from any section of the community.
- Ensure that all involved in the recruitment selection are trained on equalities issues.
- Use appropriate legislation as a framework for action to support the recruitment process in a positive way.
- Offer fair terms and conditions of employment to employees.

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3. Training and organisational development

Direct Mediation Services will:

- Seek to ensure that all employees are developed by the provision of appropriate and accessible learning opportunities in line with organisational and individual needs.
- Ensure that vacancies are open to existing staff.
- Ensure that equalities training is provided as part of its overall training and organisational development programme.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring will be carried out to measure the effectiveness of Direct Mediation Services' Equal opportunities policy and to check that the policy is working and to act as a basis for future plans. This will be done by:

- Monitoring recruitment and selection procedures to ensure discrimination is not occurring.
- Checking the representation of applicants.
- Checking the representation of Direct Mediation Services' workforce.

5. Disciplinary

All employees/volunteers/contractors should be aware that whilst an employer can be held liable in law for acts of discrimination committed by employees/volunteers, employees/volunteers/contractors too can be held personally liable in law for acts of discrimination which they commit, authorise, contribute to, or condone in relation to other employees/volunteers, contractors, workers, service users and members of the public.

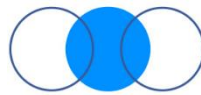
Employees/volunteers therefore should be aware that breaches of Direct Mediation Services' Equal opportunities policy and will be dealt with through Direct Mediation Services' Grievance and Disciplinary policy.

6. Grievances

Should an employee/volunteer have an issue or concern in relation to Direct Mediation Services' Equal Opportunities Policy, then they should follow Direct Mediation Services' Grievance and Disciplinary policy.

Should an employee/volunteer believe they are being, or have been, discriminated against or harassed in any way, then they should follow Direct Mediation Services' Bullying and Harassment policy.

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Further information

ACAS

Tel: 08457 474747

Website: www.acas.org.uk

The Commission for Racial Equality

Tel 020 7939 0000

Website: www.cre.gov.uk

The Disability Rights Commission

Tel: 08457 622 633

Website: www.drc.org.uk

The Equal Opportunities Commission

Tel: 0845 601 5901

Website: www.eoc.org.uk

Acas Equality Direct Helpline

Tel: 08456 00 34 44

Website: www.acas.org.uk



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