

## **Policy: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

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### **1. Introduction**

We are committed to building an organisational culture of respect and equality for all, where everyone can thrive, and where people from diverse backgrounds are truly welcome and feel like they belong. Our aim is to create an environment where all individuals can progress, achieve their career aspirations and are rewarded based on merit and capability alone.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to everyone who receives a service from us, forms part of our governance, is employed by us or volunteers for us (Employees, Relief workers, Students, Volunteers, Clients, Trustees), and all those who work with Julian House including Partner Agencies. We will also seek to ensure that anyone who works on our behalf (e.g. contractors) demonstrates commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

### **3. Purpose**

This policy sets out our commitment to supporting and promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This commitment is endorsed by our Board, and informs all our activities and their impact on our clients, employees, volunteers and other stakeholders.

For the purpose of this policy, the term discrimination is taken to refer to the unjust and prejudicial treatment of a person or group of people, based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or other identity characteristics.

Microaggression is a form of discrimination and a term used for an everyday comment, interaction, gesture or behaviour, that may be considered trivial, but can be hurtful or offensive to the targeted person or group.

### **4. Policy Statement**

#### **4.1 Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:**

- Treat all people (clients, employees, volunteers and other stakeholders), regardless of their background, with fairness, dignity and respect.

- Provide services, employment and a working environment, which does not discriminate against anyone because of:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Being married or in a civil partnership
  - Being pregnant or on maternity leave
  - Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
  
- Create a harmonious work environment that is free from harassment, bullying and victimisation, and an environment in which everybody feels safe. A zero-tolerance approach will be taken to all forms of offensive behaviour arising from discriminatory action in which the dignity of others is adversely affected, including microaggression.
- Comply with UK equalities legislation and our other external obligations including equality standards set by contracts, regulatory requirements, accreditations and good practice schemes.
- Make our people aware of their responsibilities and know how and where to seek support to actively uphold and champion equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Ensure that we attract and retain people from a range of diverse backgrounds and experiences to and at all levels of the organisation.
- Actively promote our services and opportunities to a wide range of diverse communities from all backgrounds to ensure we are able to reach as many people as we reasonably can who need our support.
- Ensure robust diversity-related data collection to better understand our people and communities.
- Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded in everything we do.

## 5. Standards

- 5.1 No unlawful discrimination shall occur in the support and management of our people and delivery of our services, and all decisions shall be objective and fair with individual circumstances taken into account.
  
- 5.2 Our services will take a person-centred approach, which means that all clients' individual needs will be incorporated into processes and delivery to ensure that all our services are inclusive and accessible.

- 5.3 We expect all our people to use appropriately inclusive language and behave in a way that will uphold the dignity of colleagues, clients, and stakeholders.
- 5.4 We commit to providing and supporting ways for our people to have their voices heard by working with them (our people, or clients). This includes opportunities to network with one another, and feedback to organisational proposals. For example, the staff and client survey and the diversity champions group.
- 5.5 At all levels of the organisation we will ensure that recruitment and selection, and promotion is transparent merit-based and fair. We commit to providing recruitment and selection training, including training on equal opportunities and unconscious bias, to support these objectives.
- 5.6 Where reasonable we will make tailored adjustments to accommodate the needs of our people, including those seeking to join Julian House as staff or volunteers.
- 5.7 We will create a working environment that values difference and is free from discrimination, victimisation, microaggressions, bullying or harassment. Any individual who experiences or witnesses discrimination or harassment is encouraged to report it. We recognise that reporting any of these can cause trauma for an individual and we will therefore provide appropriate support where required.
- 5.8 All of our written and digital communications will follow accessibility guidelines and standards and be available in alternative formats on request. The portrayal of under-represented groups within our publications should be balanced, and not reinforce stereotypes.
- 5.9 We will maintain clear policies to ensure that fundraising practices do not put pressure on or take advantage of people in vulnerable circumstances.
- 5.10 Any new and reviewed policies, programmes, decisions that will affect our people will undergo an Equality Impact Assessment. This is to ensure that any negative impact on those with protected characteristics is mitigated wherever possible at all levels of the organisations and in all of our activities.

## 6. Responsibilities

6.1 The Board of Trustees are responsible for:

- Owning and monitoring the implementation of this policy.

6.2 The CEO is responsible for

- Delivery of this policy.
- Providing strong leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Driving delivery of the Equality Action Plan.
- Working closely with the diversity champion network to monitor progress.

6.3 The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Championing equality, diversity and inclusion through an inclusive leadership style.
- Approving the Julian House Equality Action Plan and overseeing its implementation.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers are fully aware of their responsibilities under this policy.
- Responding to allegations of discrimination and harassment fairly, quickly and effectively.

6.4 The HR team is responsible for:

- Providing induction, training and other development opportunities to build capability in equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Investigating and dealing promptly with any incidents or behaviours that contravene this policy.
- Producing timely, accurate and appropriate equality management information to inform decision-making.
- Creating and delivering initiatives that will translate this policy into positive action.
- Setting up effective systems to ensure that positive action on equality is continuously evaluated and improved.

6.4 Line managers are responsible for:

- Building specific actions into their team and individual's goals that contribute to the delivery of this policy as part of the organisational, individual and project planning processes.

- Supporting staff to prioritise delivery of the equality action plan.
- Checking that staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and understand their rights and responsibilities contained within it.
- Role modelling behaviour that supports this policy and challenging those they manage to do the same.
- Allocating their time and support and any training or development opportunities objectively, fairly and without discrimination.
- Communicating regularly with their teams about equality issues in a way that keeps this policy and its action plan live and central to our mission. Through monitoring, ensure that individual and team practice is inclusive and understands and responds to the diverse needs of clients.

#### 6.5 All staff are responsible for:

- Treating others with dignity and respect.
- Reporting discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment that they experience or witness.
- Helping identify discriminatory practices or procedures and bringing these to the attention of their line managers or HR.
- Contributing to creating an inclusive environment that values difference.
- Adopting a person-centred approach when dealing with clients, as well as identifying and responding to the diverse needs of our clients (including support plans which reflect the clients individual requirements).
- Attending mandatory staff training, including training which will provide tools to deal with clients who may hold discriminatory views or opinions.
- Expressing opinions constructively with sensitivity and respect.
- Supporting the work of the Diversity Champions Group when required.
- Playing an active part in delivering the Equality Action Plan.

## 7. Monitoring

In order to ensure the effective operation of this policy, a record will be kept of all our client and peoples' age, gender identity, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation and disability. This information will be used solely for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and will be anonymised when used. All such data will be used and held in line with our Data Protection Policy.

Diversity-related actions and targets within the business plan will be monitored and reported on. We will commit to ensure there is representation from diverse backgrounds at all levels of organisation. Feedback and consultations will take place regularly using existing methods such as the staff and client surveys and the diversity champions networks.

Any breach of this policy will be promptly investigated; breaches by staff will be a matter for disciplinary action.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed on 2/05/2024 and showed no negative equalities impact.