

SWOP

EQUALITY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This organisation is committed to advancing equal opportunities in employment and in the selection of clients and volunteers. This means that all job applicants, employees, clients and volunteers will receive fair (as opposed to equal) treatment (as in order to achieve fairness sometimes unequal treatment is necessary), regardless of race, colour, sex, gender reassignment, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital/partnership or family status, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, trade union membership or any other relevant factors.

We welcome our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation to advance equality of opportunity as a service provider and employer.

2. EMPLOYMENT

As an employer, SWOP will treat all employees, job applicants and customers in a fair and equitable manner and not unlawfully discriminate against them. These principles apply equally to all aspects of our recruitment and employment practices, including recruitment, selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, promotion and transfer, grievance and disciplinary procedures and selection for redundancy or references and any other employment related activities.

All employees, volunteers and customers have a right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times and not to be subjected to discriminatory behaviour or conduct. Failure to observe this policy may result in services being withdrawn or the person being subjected to the strongest disciplinary sanctions as appropriate to the issue.

We recognise the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will take steps to ensure that:

- We recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates practicable
- Employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit
- Where appropriate, positive action measures are taken to attract applicants from all sections of society and especially from those underrepresented in the workforce. However these measures will always be within legal parameters

- Where appropriate necessary positive discrimination will only occur where it can be justified as an essential 'qualification' or criteria for a particular post

We will encourage and support all employees to achieve their full potential and conduct appraisals of performance on objective factors and measurable criteria.

3. SELECTION OF CLIENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND TRUSTEES

SWOP will ensure that applications are attracted from all sections of society and will ensure that there are equal opportunities in all stages of the selection process. SWOP will ensure that any publicity materials relating to the organisation make reference to this policy.

4. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

Managers are responsible for implementing this equality policy. However the policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trustees, visitors and contractors. All employees, trustees and volunteers will be given a copy of this equality policy as part of their induction.

5. CONDUCT AND GENERAL STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

All volunteers and staff are expected to conduct themselves in a considerate manner. SWOP finds the following behaviours unacceptable:

- Making threats
- Physical violence
- Shouting
- Swearing at others
- Persistent rudeness
- Isolating, ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- Telling offensive jokes or name calling
- Displaying offensive materials such as pornography or sexist/racist cartoons, or the distribution of such material via email/text message or any other format
- Any other forms of harassment or victimisation

This list is not exhaustive and conduct not listed may also be deemed to be inappropriate and may constitute gross misconduct.

Acts of unacceptable behaviours by employees of SWOP are considered to be disciplinary offences and can lead to disciplinary action being taken.

6. COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION

SWOP will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by employees, volunteers or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedure as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

We will monitor and report annually on the number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by staff, volunteers and other third parties.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The trustees will monitor this policy and judge its effectiveness. In particular, Trustees will monitor the age, ethnicity and gender of existing clientele, staff and applicants who work with this organisation. The trustees will review this policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, the trustees will implement them.