

Age UK Kensington and Chelsea

Title	Equalities Policy	
Policy author and owner	Board	
Date created	23rd November 2021	
Date approved	14th December 2021	
Amended and updated	Summary of change	Date
Amended and updated on		
Amended and updated on		
Amended and updated on		
Amended and updated on		
Planned review date	December 2024	

Age UK Kensington and Chelsea Policy - Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

Age UK Kensington and Chelsea (AUKC) is committed to all aspects of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion and the promotion of equal opportunities in its service provision, volunteer activity and employment and managerial practices.

Most importantly, we will strive to ensure that no one connected to AUKC receives less favourable treatment than others on the grounds of ethnic background, culture, age, belief, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, class, health, marriage, or civil partnership or by any condition or requirement which cannot be shown as justifiable.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our organisation as we seek to develop the skills and abilities of all our people.

We are an equal opportunities employer. Our aim is to celebrate differences and provide services to which all clients are entitled, ensuring that services are delivered equally and meet their diverse needs and without discrimination. We recognise that treating people unequally can result in loss of dignity, respect, self-esteem and self-worth and ability to make choices.

Equal opportunity is also about good employment practices and efficient use of our most valued asset - our employees. We will do all we can to promote good practice to eliminate discrimination as far as is reasonably possible. We recognise that discrimination takes different forms including direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment. The personal commitment of every employee and volunteer to this policy and its principles is essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the organisation - both in terms of service delivery - and employment. For example, we will continue to work toward our goal of encouraging and promoting diversity within the workforce and will monitor the composition of our workforce to ensure that this policy is effective.

Through promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all that AUKC does, we will ensure that all its people - clients, employees and volunteers - feel they are treated fairly and their service provision of contribution to the organisation's business objectives is valued and recognised.

All complaints from whatever source, will be taken seriously and where appropriate, dealt with through relevant AUKC procedures.

Principles

Our policy is based upon the following principles:

1. No person applying for a service or for employment will be refused on discriminatory grounds because of ethnicity or race, gender, disability, age, pregnancy or maternity, religious or spiritual belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or marriage or civil partnership - when they meet all other criteria; and
2. Language or behaviour inconsistent with this policy will be viewed as unacceptable and not be tolerated; and
3. We do not assume that Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion principles and policy applies only to AUKC staff and volunteers. Clients must also respect the characteristics listed in (1) above and not discriminate against them on any grounds when expressing their views and preferences; and
4. AUKC has zero tolerance to all breaches of our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy; and
5. We are committed to promoting positive attitudes and implementing strategies that promote positive attitudes towards individuals and groups facing discrimination; and
6. We acknowledge the need to be aware of discriminatory attitudes and behaviour within our daily practice and working structures and recognise the need to explore ways of challenging and dealing with this; and
7. Willingness to make reasonable adjustments in all that we do.

Application

This policy applies to all aspects of service delivery - including the process of referral and assessment of clients - and to policies and processes in all aspect of employment including recruitment and selection, promotion and conditions of work - as well as general treatment at work and recruitment.

The policy applies to all clients, job applicants, employees and volunteers as well as trustees.

Standards

We will maintain the following standards:

1. All staff and volunteers at all levels of the organisation should be aware of and identify with our aims and we will introduce measures to address and combat all direct and indirect discrimination; and
2. This includes promoting and encouraging awareness through training, supervision, and support within the organisation; and

3. We expect all staff to work to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion principles and policies and always behave in non-discriminatory ways; and
4. We will carry out regular assessments of the impact of our approach to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion on policies, clients, and service provision generally; and
5. We will ensure that clients and staff are continually aware of the procedures for dealing with complaints and allegations of discriminatory or oppressive language or behaviour; and
6. There will be no victimisation of any persons lodging a complaint on the grounds of discriminatory behaviour.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees and Chief Executive have overall responsibility for this policy within AUKC. The Chief Executive is responsible for overseeing it.

Each Service Manager:

1. Has responsibility for promoting Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion with their work streams; and
2. Is responsible for providing advice and guidance to employees on the application of this policy and procedure; and
3. Is responsible for making reasonable adjustments to support staff and volunteers with disabilities and other needs that are covered under the Equality Act 2010; and
4. Should ensure that the Accessible Information Standard is always adhered to, to ensure that people with a disability or sensory loss are given information in a way that they can understand; and
5. Should bring any mutually beneficial improvements to this policy to the attention of the Executive team; and
6. Should make all staff aware of the Employee Assistance Programme offer by AUKC.

Employees and volunteers at all levels:

1. Are personally responsible for the practical application of this policy and must support the organisation creating and maintaining an environment that promotes Equality of Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion in practice; and
2. It is therefore the duty of all staff to cooperate with the measures introduced by AUKC to ensure equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

Legislation

This policy is based on UK legislation as follows:

1. The Equality Act 2010; and
2. Data Protection Act 2018.

Definition

Discrimination can take many forms:

Direct Discrimination - treating a person less favourable on the grounds of racial group, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, pregnancy, marital status, age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation (actual or perceived), religion or belief than you would treat others in the same or similar circumstances.

Indirect Discrimination - where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice puts one group of people at a substantial disadvantage to another on the grounds set out above, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

Victimisation - where an individual is treated less favourably than others because they have acted against AUKC under the Equality Act.

Harassment - when unwanted conduct related to any of the grounds referred to above takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment may involve physical acts or verbal and non-verbal communication and gestures.

Responsibility and review of this policy

Responsibility for this policy rests with the Chief Executive (AUKC) and appointed Executive Lead. The policy was approved in December 2021. It is due for review in December 2024 or sooner if circumstances demand otherwise.