



Equality & Diversity Policy

Last Reviewed: Jo lake, September 2018

Next review due: September 2020

1. Overview

Application of this policy will be on the basis of equal opportunities regardless of race, colour, nationality, or ethnic origins, age, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or other personal circumstances or disadvantages.

This policy provides guidance to enable all who work with or for the Oasis Project to comply with anti-discrimination legislation.

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2. Legislative Framework

Acts of Parliament

The Equality Act 2010: This Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations.

Other Relevant OASIS PROJECT Policies/ Procedures/ Guidelines:

Recruitment policy for employees
Code of Conduct
Staff Welfare Policy
Disciplinary Policy
Bullying and Harassment Policy

Scope of Policy

- This policy applies to all OASIS PROJECT management, employees, volunteers, service users, and visitors.
- This policy is applicable on and off OASIS PROJECT premises during work-related activities.

3. Policy Statement

Oasis Project is an equal opportunity employer.

The organisation is committed to being a successful, caring and welcoming place for all employees. We want to create a supportive and inclusive environment where our employees can reach their full potential, without prejudice and discrimination. We are committed to a culture where respect and understanding is fostered and the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances will be positively valued.

The policy aims to achieve equality by removing any potential discrimination in the way that our employees are treated by fellow employees or the organisation, including:

- people with disabilities
- people of different sexual orientations
- transgendered and transsexual people
- people of different races
- people on the grounds of their sex
- those of faith and of no faith
- in relation to their age
- in relation to their social class or medical condition
- people who work part-time
- those who are married or in a civil partnership
- women who are pregnant, have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

Discrimination can be either direct or indirect discrimination. Some of the above are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and discrimination is prohibited, unless there is a legal exception under the Equality Act.

Direct Discrimination. This is where someone is treated less favourably due to one (or more) protected characteristics. It can be intentional or unintentional discrimination. Occasionally the discrimination may occur due to a protected characteristic of another person, so the discrimination may be because of association. An example is an advert for a job that requires 'men only' or 'under 30s only'.

Indirect Discrimination. This is where someone is disadvantaged by an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice (PCP) that is applied 'across the board' or 'equally across a particular group'. The PCP may have the consequence (usually unintended) of causing a disadvantage, which then actually affects somebody. For example, a PCP relating to clothing or headwear could be applied 'equally', but may cause someone with a protected characteristic to be disadvantaged. The PCP could be justified if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Victimisation. This is not the same as the common meaning of victimisation, but is specifically regarding treating someone less favourably because they have complained about or given information about discrimination or harassment, either regarding themselves or someone else.

Harassment. This is part of the Equality Act but is covered in more detail in the Bullying and Harassment policy.

The Equality Act 2010 applies to how employees treat fellow employees, visitors, suppliers and former employees. The Act also applies to customers/clients.

The organisation is committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff 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 personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the organisation.

Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.

The CEO has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the equality and diversity policies and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

There will be monitoring and reviews of the effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy, including a review of job applicants and the benefits/career progression of existing employees. Comments and suggestions on the policy can be directed to HR.

As an organisation we recognise that drug and alcohol misuse affects diverse individuals and families and that all people misusing substances may require specific support and services. Part of our services are specifically aimed at women only. This is to consciously address women's lack of access and representation within the drug treatment system. This approach is entirely in keeping with the Gender Equality Duty (2007). Our services for children and young people are non gender specific and will be monitored to ensure equality of provision.

4. Relevant Procedures & Implementation Guidelines

A. Training & Dissemination of Information

All employees, as a part of induction training, will be made aware of this policy and the importance of equal opportunities and diversity will be explained.

Modifications and updates to equal opportunities and diversity policies and procedures will be brought to the attention of all staff.

Contractors, visitors, volunteers & peer mentors at OASIS PROJECT will also be made aware of our equal opportunities and diversity policy and values wherever reasonably practical.

Service users are informed as part of their induction onto a day programme that discrimination of any form is unacceptable and inappropriate conduct which will be challenged.

B. Advice & Consultancy

Where reasonably practical all relevant staff will be consulted on modifications and updates to procedures and policies relating to equal opportunities and diversity.

C. Discrimination Law and Definition of Terms

The Equality Duty replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender and covers the following protected characteristics; sex*, including pregnancy and maternity

- marital status, including civil partnership status
- gender reassignment
- a person's disability
- race
- age
- sexual orientation
- religion/belief
- trade union membership or non-membership
- status as a fixed-term or part-time worker

* The Oasis Project provides gender-specific adult services and therefore positively discriminates between the sexes. This is in accordance with gender discrimination law which recognises the need for gender-specific services and gender-sensitive employees. There are certain roles and positions within Oasis Project to which

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exemption does not apply including infrastructure and governance functions and the
recruitment of these posts is open to all regardless of gender

There are several types of legally defined discrimination:

- direct discrimination - treating somebody less favourably on the grounds of their religion, race, etc
- indirect discrimination - applying an apparently general rule which in practice disadvantages one religion, race, etc
- harassment - behaviours which are found to be threatening or disturbing (see Staff Welfare Policy for further details on this)
- victimisation - treating someone unfairly because, for example, they plan to raise a discrimination-related grievance
- not making reasonable adjustments - failure to make adjustments to working practices and environments where necessary and reasonably possible so that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged
- instructions and pressure to discriminate - tell people to discriminate or put pressure on them to do so
- segregation - physically separating someone from others because of their race, age, sexual orientation, etc

D. Equality, Diversity and Employment

The Oasis Project ensures that all employees are recruited, trained and promoted on the basis of ability to do the job, the demands of the job and the need to maintain efficient, effective and appropriate services. There should be no discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, religious beliefs, ethnic or national origins, nationality, disabilities, age, sexual orientation, caring or marital status in any matter relating to employment.

All gender-specific services are governed by the need for gender-sensitive employees and volunteers and are covered by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and are further supported by the Gender Equality Duty 2007.

Employees will be recruited on merit and ability only. To ensure that only relevant qualifications and experience are considered when recruitment takes place, each post will carry details of the job and the skills and experience requirements against which candidates will be assessed equally and fairly. Selection criteria and procedures will ensure that individuals are selected, transferred or promoted on the basis of their relevant skills, merit and abilities.

Advertisements in printed media shall adhere to clear print guidelines. And all recruitment advertisements will draw attention to Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, The recruitment process will be reviewed regularly and actions will be devised to address any imbalances shown in the monitoring and review processes.

Employee appraisal and supervision processes will ensure that an evaluation on equality performance is considered, and that individual career development plans are established and monitored for all staff, regardless of their origins and status. Career

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development and training will be reviewed to ensure that all employees are given equal access to opportunities to progress within the organisation.

Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of race, marital status, disability, age, part-time or fixed term contract status, sexual orientation or religion.

E. What does Equality of Opportunity mean to the Organisation?

- Fairness and equality
- Common procedures across OASIS PROJECT
- Actions taken which can be measured and justified and are recorded
- Recruiting the best personnel for the job
- Better retention of staff and volunteers
- A stronger chance of competing for staff and volunteers
- A reputation as a good employer
- Breaking down barriers and working practices
- Flexibility in employment e.g. job-share arrangements
- Good management practice
- Training programmes and opportunities
- Motivating staff and volunteers
- Team building
- Establishing support systems
- Improved career development
- Looking at potential within and outside the organisation

OASIS PROJECT also urges staff and volunteers to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals.

5. Equality, Diversity and Service Provision

OASIS PROJECT recognises that structural and individual discrimination can be subtle and therefore aims to monitor, identify, and review the potential needs of all current or prospective service users and their services.

Treating everyone in the same manner, irrespective of differing needs, often results in inequality. Treatment needs to be equal by ensuring that it reflects and responds to the different racial, cultural, disability, age, caring responsibility, and sexual orientation needs of the service users.

Diversity is a broader concept that builds upon the progress made through equal opportunities. Everyone is different and diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing the differences we each bring to work.

Equal opportunities and diversity work together by addressing the inequalities and barriers faced by people in under-represented groups and by valuing, learning and benefiting from the diverse cultures in society and our staff.

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OASIS PROJECT aims to ensure that all services are equally accessible to the diverse range of women, children and young people in our community. This involves reviewing and managing the following:

- Physical needs – ensuring that premises/facilities are easily accessible and that adaptations are made, wherever reasonably practical, to ensure access for people with disabilities.
- Information needs – ensuring that all potential users have access to appropriate and plain English information about the services we offer.
- Communication/language needs – ensuring that interpreters or translation services are arranged for non English-speaking clients.
- Staff Practice – ensuring that staff and volunteers work in a non-discriminatory way, so that current and potential service users feel at ease and have the confidence to utilise the service. All staff should receive training in equal opportunities and diversity.
- ☒ Content – any services and interventions based on Eurocentric or heterocentric models may also need to be adapted to integrate and reflect the diversity of cultural and societal norms of the individuals accessing those services. OASIS PROJECT is committed to reviewing and challenging the content and methods of interventions wherever this becomes apparent.

5.1 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

As part of our commitment to good practice and compliance with The Equality Act 2010 OASIS PROJECT aims to carry out an EIA on all new services, policies and strategies. This will encourage good decision making in the development and delivery of services. It will enable OASIS PROJECT to understand how different groups will be affected by our activities and to identify and address inequalities in service delivery and design.

Our EIAs recognise the three aims contained in The Equality Act 2010 giving ‘due regard’ to all those with protected characteristics under The Act. This means that consideration of equality issues within our EIA will in so far as is possible;

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimization and any other conduct prohibited by The Act,

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t,

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t.

EIA reports will be presented to the Board of Trustees and where necessary an action plan developed which will be monitored via the subgroup at least quarterly.

5. Monitoring

OASIS PROJECT is committed to monitoring, to the best of our ability, how we uphold equal opportunities and value diversity both as an employer and as a service provider.

It will therefore monitor all current and future staff by race, age, sexual orientation, caring and disability status. This is to identify if we are under- represented by certain groups in specific posts, grades, occupations and departments.

Effective monitoring has to include:

- Monitoring applicants
- Monitoring successful candidate
- Monitoring progress of staff

OASIS PROJECT will also monitor, to the best of its ability, the status/origins of all those who join any of the structured day programmes or access any other the other services we provide.

The results of our equal opportunities monitoring will be collated and reported to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis via the monitoring sub group. The CEO and Board of Trustees will seek to identify gaps in service provision, take action to redress any gaps or imbalances, and will develop action plans to fill these gaps.

6. Responsibilities

The Board / Management Committee

- Has overall responsibility for policies and procedures at OASIS PROJECT , so far as is reasonably practical.

The Director

- To oversee the review and renewal of policies and procedures aimed towards the equality of opportunities, outcomes and diversity.
- To ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable this policy and relevant procedures to be implemented.
- To ensure that all relevant equal opportunities statistics are collated, analysed and reported to the board of trustees and that regular reviews are undertaken by

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staff to monitor performance against targets and the effectiveness of procedures.

Line Managers/ Care Co-ordinators

- To ensure staff and volunteers know what equal opportunities and diversity mean.
- To understand and reflect the needs of different members of our community and our different staff.
- To keep up to date with and operate within legislation and policy.
- To measure outcomes of services delivered as well as opportunity to access these.
- To develop and implement equality and diversity initiatives within the organisation.

- To create opportunities for discussion and open communication between staff, volunteers and service users.
- To challenge staff, volunteers and others who discriminate either directly or indirectly.

Staff Members

- To ensure they do not discriminate against any staff member, volunteer, or service user, board member, contractor or other persons involved with the work of the organisation, or collude with discrimination against others.
- To be considerate, caring and thoughtful to everyone and take feelings of different individuals into consideration.
- To foster racial and cultural awareness for themselves, other staff, and service users.
- To operate within current legislation and policy

7. References

Improvement and Development Agency summary of Equal Opportunities Legislation - <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=5145524>

Equality and Human Rights Commission -
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-job/>

Gender Equality Duty – Code of Practice
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/gender_equality_duty_code_of_practice_england_and_wales.pdf

Race Equality Duty – Code of Practice
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/PSD/cop_red_eng_and_wales.doc

Disability Equality Duty - Code of Practice
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/PSD/ded_code_englandwales.doc

ACAS guide to Equality - <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1363>

A Fairer Future: The Equality Bill 2009 -
http://www.equalities.gov.uk/PDF/GEO_A%20Fairer%20Future-%20The%20Equality%20Bill%20and%20other%20action%20to%20make%20equality%20a%20reality.pdf

8. Appendix A – Equality & Diversity Legislation

This page provides a round-up of all the equality and diversity legislation that public bodies must be aware of, plus external links to the full legal texts.

Equality Act 2010

The Act brings together and strengthens earlier legislation. The Act provides a modern, single legal framework with clear, streamlined law to more effectively tackle disadvantage and discrimination. It requires public bodies to ensure that the needs of all individuals are considered when new services or changes are planned or carried out.

Earlier legislation includes:

Civil Partnerships Act 2004:

Provides legal recognition and parity of treatment for same-sex couples and married couples, including employment benefits and pension rights.

[Access the Civil Partnerships Act 2004](#) at the website of the Office of Public Sector Information

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Outlaws the discrimination of disabled people in employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services or the administration or management of premises.

[Access the Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#) at the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) website

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005

Introduces a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality for disabled people.

[Access the Disability Discrimination Act 2005](#) at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006

Protects against discrimination on grounds of age in employment and vocational training. Prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment and instructions to discriminate.

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[Access the Employment \(Age\) Regulation 2006](#) at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Acas website](#) and the [Local Government Employers website](#)

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003

The directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief

in employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions. [Access the Employment Equality \(Religion or Belief\) Regulation 2003](#) at the OPSI website
Further information at the [Acas website](#)

The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005

Introduces new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, explicitly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave, sets out the extent to which it is discriminatory to pay a woman less than she would otherwise have been paid due to pregnancy or maternity issues.

[Access the Employment Equality \(Sex Discrimination\) Regulations 2005](#) at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003

The directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment, vocational training, promotion, and working conditions.

[Access the Employment Equality \(sexual orientations\) Regulation 2003](#) at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Acas website](#)

Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended)

This gives an individual a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, where the man and the woman are doing: like work; work rated as equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study; or work that is proved to be of equal value.

[Access the Equal Pay Act \(Amendment\) 1970](#) at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Equality Act 2006

Establishes a single Commission for Equality and Human Rights by 2007 that replaces the three existing commissions. Introduces a positive duty on public sector bodies to promote equality of opportunity between women and men and eliminate sex discrimination. Protects access discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in terms of access to good facilities and services.

Access the Equality Act 2010 at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Women and Equality Unit website](#)

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Gender Recognition Act 2004

The purpose of the Act is to provide transsexual people with legal recognition in their acquired gender. Legal recognition follows from the issue of a full gender recognition certificate by a gender recognition panel.

[Access the Gender Recognition Act 2004](#) at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Race Relations Act 1976

The Act prohibits discrimination on racial grounds in the areas of employment, education, and the provision of goods, facilities, services and premises. Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

Places a statutory duty on all public bodies to promote equal opportunity, eliminate racial discrimination and promote good relations between different racial groups.

[Access the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000](#) at the OPSI website Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulation 2003

Introduced new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, new burden of proof requirements, continuing protection after employment ceases, new exemption for a determinate job requirement and the removal of certain other exemptions.

[Access the Race Relations Act 1976 \(Amendment\) 2003](#) at the OPSI website Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

The Act seeks to stop people from intentionally using threatening words or behaviour to stir up hatred against somebody because of what they believe.

[Access the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006](#) at the OPSI website Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex. Sex discrimination is unlawful in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services or facilities. It is unlawful to discriminate because someone is married, in employment or advertisements for jobs. [Access the Sex Discrimination Act 1975](#) at the Press for Change website Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

The Act seeks to prevent sex discrimination relating to gender reassignment. It clarified the law for transsexual people in relation to equal pay and treatment in employment and training.

[Access the Sex Discrimination \(Gender Reassignment\) Regulations 1999](#) at the

Press for Change website

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).