

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Definition

Being committed to equality of opportunity and valuing the diversity of the community we serve forms a key part of Sue Lambert Trust's (SLT's) ethos. This Policy sets out how SLT will respond to issues around equality and diversity as follows:

- How SLT will protect clients and employees from harassment and discrimination in particular when on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age
- How SLT will promote services to all sections of the community and promote the diversity of its workforce and volunteers
- How it will monitor changing demographics and changing requirements and take actions to adapt its services and operations accordingly

2. Key aims

In implementing this Policy SLT is keen to ensure that:

- No client or employee feels that they are being discriminated against – that everyone feels able to report any issues that arise and confident that matters will be dealt with promptly and appropriately
- All sections of the community can access its services – it will take account of issues such as religion, race and nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation,
- SLT will have a diverse workforce and volunteers, recruited openly and fairly on the basis of skills, experience and knowledge
- It is aware of the needs of all sections of the community and responding positively to any requirements to change the way in which services are delivered

3. Key principles

SLT is committed to the following key principles:

- That it will promote this policy to all clients, staff and volunteers
- That it will be proactive and appropriate when responding to issues of discrimination and harassment. That it will take actions to prevent the occurrence of harassment and discrimination where possible
- That it will take reasonable actions to promote its services to all – taking into account available resources and the positive outcomes which can be achieved
- That it will monitor and review its performance against this policy
- That it will monitor and be aware of changing demographics

4. Who this policy affects

This policy affects staff, volunteers, trustees and clients.

5. Policy Statement

The promotion of diversity and equality of opportunity for all are central to ensuring high quality services and fair employment practice. To achieve this SLT is committed to:

- Ensuring no person or group of people will suffer detrimentally in recruitment, promotion and dismissal;
- That there is fair and open access to training services
- That no employee or volunteer suffers discriminatory or harassing behaviour when carrying out their work
- That no client suffers discriminatory or harassing behaviour when accessing or using services

SLT will not tolerate harassment of any staff, volunteers, trustees or clients on the basis of gender issues, race, religion, sexual orientation, age or disability, and will respond promptly and appropriately taking full account of the wishes and needs of the person affected. A separate Harassment Policy sets out how these matters will be investigated and resolved. A person found guilty of harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, or in the case of a client may have services withdrawn.

SLT will create an environment where discriminatory behaviour is routinely challenged. Such challenge will be done in a constructive and polite manner, giving the responsible person the opportunity to rectify the situation. Anyone who continues to behave in a discriminatory way despite being challenged will be subject to disciplinary action or having services withdrawn.

6. Operations

6.1 Recruitment

SLT will operate an open and transparent recruitment process. See Recruitment Policy for further information.

6.2 Services

SLT will complete annual reviews of its service delivery to assess any issues restricting access to its services that can reasonably be resolved. These Service Reviews will include:

- Review of the way in which services are delivered – to include location, times, promotion and publicity, assessment and review procedures
- Feedback and complaints received
- Assessment of any emerging needs and impact on the Access Fund

The Service Reviews will identify reasonable actions that can be taken to ensure that there is equality of opportunity and that all sections of the community can benefit from the services that SLT offer.

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 SLT will review the way in which its services are delivered to ensure that this policy is being applied.

7.2 SLT will monitor its client profile and assess whether certain groups are underrepresented. SLT will then consider what reasonable actions may be taken to promote access to all sections of the community as outlined above

7.3 SLT will report the following quarterly to the Board:

- Number of harassment cases being investigated (if applicable)
- Outcome of harassment investigations
- Number of complaints of discriminatory practice being investigated (if applicable)
- Outcomes of discriminatory practice investigations

8. Related guidance, policy and procedures:

- a. Harassment Policy**
- b. Recruitment Policy**
- c. Disciplinary and Grievance Policies**
- d. Feedback and Complaints Policy**