

## Equality & Diversity Policy

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## 1. Purpose

Shaw Trust recognises that our employees, the organisations we work with in partnerships and the clients we support come from diverse backgrounds and all have different aspirations, needs and experience life in different ways. We actively seek to support staff and clients with this by ensuring Equality & Diversity (E&D) is at the heart of what we do and at the heart of our service delivery and employment of staff.

Shaw Trust's vision and mission are about a society that is fair and inclusive and provides opportunities for everyone in it. This policy will actively support the achievement of this vision and mission.

Shaw Trust recognises that people face discrimination or prejudice as a result of their identity, which is made up by a range of aspects. Under the Equality Act 2010 there are nine protected characteristics, these are discussed at the end of this policy in depth. However diversity is defined by more characteristics than these and include:

- Religious beliefs
- Social status in society
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Gender and Gender Identity
- Age
- Race/Ethnicity
- Trade Union activity
- Marital status
- Employment status
- Political beliefs
- Caring responsibilities

By being a responsible employer and service provider we will actively work to break down stereotypes that exist around all the forenamed identities and thus help create a more inclusive society.

We will research and develop our understanding of the communities we operate in to ensure our services actively target all different groups within them and ensure our workforce is reflective of these communities to help this process.

Shaw Trust is committed to a equal and diverse society that provides opportunities for all and sees these freedoms as the key to successful development of sustainable communities and wider society. Everything we do will be underpinned by the contribution it will make towards E&D policy.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, including volunteers, interns, agency staff and temporary staff. Clients and visitors to Shaw Trust are covered by this policy as well as sub-contractors, partners and suppliers.

It should also be noted that the groups discussed in this policy are not an exhaustive list and this policy is not confined to them.

## 3. Policy Statements

Shaw Trust will ensure all policies, procedures and guidance produced by the organisation for its staff, clients, partner organisations, sub-contractors and suppliers will not only abide by current UK legislation but will set an example of best practice to other organisations.

## 4. Definitions

Diversity in this case refers to the quality of human relations, i.e. the way in which we all interact with each other and doing so in such a way that is respectful and encourages a culture in which people can be themselves and are empowered to achieve their full potential.

Inclusion refers to the continuous effort to maintain this diversity and ensures this does not become an ideological point of being, but is actively put into practice.

## 5. Legislation

The policy is underpinned by the principles set out in the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- European Convention on Human Rights
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004

The policy should be read in conjunction with

- Dignity at Work policy
- Code of Conduct
- Life Work Policy

### Supporting Information

The above will be further supported by the Equality & Human Rights Commission Codes of Practice on Employment and Goods & Service Delivery and advice on this subject around Good Practice by other specialist organisations as well such as United Kingdom Council for Access & Equality.

## **6. Roles & Responsibilities**

### **6.1 Shaw Trust as a Service Provider**

Shaw Trust recognises that its operations impact on people's lives and their communities. Shaw Trust will ensure that the services it delivers will be relevant to local needs and local people and ensure that these services are accessible and appropriate for all sections of those communities. These services will not only be accessible in terms of their design, but also our marketing will be in accessible formats for the communities that they are intended for.

Shaw Trust cannot deliver this high level of service provision in isolation and will work with partner organisations who specialise in working with certain groups of people to help ensure that all groups get the best and most appropriate services.

Through consultation we will ensure that local people can input into our service delivery design and implementation to make services as relevant and supportive as possible.

### **6.2 Shaw Trust as an Employer**

Right from the start, through our recruitment process Shaw Trust will ensure that the principles of E&D are embedded in people's employment.

Shaw Trust will make sure that all staff we recruit will be trained in E&D and are aware of how to apply these skills in the recruitment process. Shaw Trust takes positive action where and when appropriate to encourage applications from different parts of the community. For example disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria will be guaranteed an interview under our commitment to the Two Ticks symbol.

Our recruitment process will be fair and transparent and we monitor applications and recruitment on diversity to make sure that these measures are working. Copies of this policy and Code of Conduct will be made available to prospective applicants and recruitment forms will be available in different formats, e.g. Braille when necessary.

Job Descriptions will be written in such a way that when looking at specific qualifications or experience these will be essential to the job. We will also look and monitor where and how we advertise our vacancies and ensure that they reach all parts of the communities we operate in and allow everyone to apply for them. The needs of different groups will be taken into account when deciding on timings, venues etc of the interview. For example we will try and make sure venues used for interview are accessible by public transport or timings fit around caring responsibilities wherever possible. Other possible adjustments could be the use community venues for interviews and ensuring interview timings do not conflict with religious observations and needs. Where recruitment agencies are used these will be required to adhere to these standards as well.

All staff will receive our Code of Conduct and Equality and Diversity Policy and as part

of their induction will be required to undertake E&D training. This will raise awareness of E&D and sets out behaviours expected as soon as employment commences, these can also be used in a wider societal context. E & D forms part of the competency framework ensuring the topic is regularly discussed. Staff development and career progression will be based on merit and will be offered to all staff regardless of background or personal circumstance.

Internal Impact Assessments will measure how policies, procedures and other organisational initiatives impact on people ensuring all staff needs are taken into account. For example Terms & Conditions of employment and staff benefits will be available to all staff.

Through monitoring of employee data, from recruitment through to employment and people leaving we will measure our workforce statistics, finding potential under-representation and addressing any concerns these statistics may raise. They will be shared with management to ensure appropriate steps can be taken.

We will take a zero tolerance approach to discrimination and by taking all of the above steps take pride in ensuring a working environment where people can be themselves and develop themselves and work towards their aspirations and goals and those of the organisation.

**Under this policy the Executive Management Team commits to:**

- Proactively encourage dialogue on E & D throughout all parts of the organisation.
- Challenge and promote E & D wherever possible.

**In order to achieve this our Senior Leadership Team and Managers will:**

- Set clear examples of behaviours expected from all in the organisation, including staff, volunteers and sub-contractors and monitor and deal with any breaches of this policy.
- Proactively challenge any form of discrimination and, where necessary, handle such cases sensitively and appropriately with support from HR.
- Make available staff time to attend and undertake E & D training
- Discuss E & D whenever appropriate, for example during team meetings, one-to-ones and appraisals.
- Ensure staff are aware of this policy and associated policies.

**Under this policy our Staff & Volunteers are expected to:**

- Follow examples set by management in terms of appropriate behaviours
- Treat people with dignity and respect and refrain from discriminating, harassing and bullying others.
- Actively challenge any discriminatory behaviours shown by their peers.
- Raise any concerns they have with regards to E&D with their line manager or HR team.
- Undertake training on E&D topics provided by the organisation.
- Familiarise themselves with this policy and related policies.

## **Clients**

Although not the main audience for this policy, we expect clients to show basic E&D behaviours, such as not discriminating and not bullying. Different forms of training will be made available to Shaw Trust staff so they can work with clients to increase their understanding of E&D.

## **7. Audit & Review**

A review of this policy will take place annually by the HR Department, unless other legal, contractual, specific business requirements, operational changes or events necessitate an earlier review.

The effectiveness of this policy, including staff understanding of it, will be measured by the Equality & Diversity Impact Assessments, by accessing information on grievances raised under the policy and complaints received under the policy. We can also look at uptake of E&D training, both E-learning and face to face and look at statistical information around client and staff data.

## **8. Disciplinary & Grievance**

Failure to comply with this policy needs to be addressed in the first instance on a local level between parties involved and by relevant line managers, where needed appropriate support from the HR department can be sought. In more serious cases however, especially those pertaining to discrimination, HR Department should be informed immediately.

Where internal grievances are raised or disciplinary actions taken the HR department should be involved.

Where appropriate mediation should be offered and should be seen as a first step in the process of settling any complaint, dispute or other incidence.

## **9. References and Further Information**

For further information on Equality & Diversity please see the following websites:

Commission for Equality & Human Rights: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

Government Equalities Office: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/government-equalities-office>

ACAS: [www.acas.co.uk](http://www.acas.co.uk)

## **Diversity Strands & Identity**

As discussed at the beginning of this policy, the Equality Act 2010, though recognising that people's identities are made up of a whole range of factors, characteristics and experiences, recognises 9 specific protected characteristics. These are discussed below and should be taken particular note of when since these are protected by law and are also discussed most frequently within the E & D field.

### **1. Gender**

We want both men and women to be fully represented within the organisation and will challenge gender stereotyping and encourage people to achieve life-work balance by ensuring, for example, that those with caring responsibilities will be enabled to do so without this limiting their opportunities in work around training, personal development and promotion.

### **2. Gender identity / Transsexual/Transgender**

Any employee that has undergone, is in the process of undergoing or is thinking about undergoing gender re-assignment will be fully supported in this and not treated differently as a result. They do not have to be under medical supervision in order to prove this.

### **3. Race**

We will aim for our ethnic make up to mirror those of the communities we operate in and celebrate this diversity and create understanding amongst all staff about these differences and ensure that these are respected and valued and ensure no one will be discriminated on the basis of their race or racial stereotypes.

### **4. Disability**

We use the social model of disability and will ensure that we focus on what people can do rather than what they can not and ensure that adjustments are made to enable disabled people the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers

### **5. Age**

We understand the need of a diverse working age workforce and will proactively challenge age discrimination and ensure that everyone, regardless of age, can actively contribute to the organisations aims.

### **6. Religion or Belief**

We will treat all employees fairly, no matter what their religious beliefs, faith or lack of and expect the same from all our employees and expect them to be understanding of these different beliefs and accommodating towards them, as long as



this does not contradict our values. Shaw Trust encourages people of all (non)religions and faiths to work with and for us and through training and other means actively encourages greater understanding amongst people of different faiths and religions. Where possible and practicable we will also make adjustments so that both employees and clients can fulfil requirements of their religion. It should however be noted that Shaw Trust is non-sectarian in religion. This means that although we encourage respect between different religions it does not accept people 'spreading the word' about their religion at work nor does it accept people actively trying to persuade people of different or non religions to join theirs

## **7. Sexual Orientation**

Lesbian, Gay and Bi-Sexual people can be open about their sexuality without fear of being singled out or treated differently as a result, whether they are open about their sexuality or not. We expect everyone to treat people of different sexual orientation and lifestyle the same.

## **8. Marriage & Civil Partnership**

Though this protected characteristic has got less protection under law than many of the others above, it is still now considered as a protected characteristic. People both in marriage and civil partnership, under this characteristic, will be treated the same by Shaw Trust and their needs met, for example in our HR policies and Flexible benefits system.

## **9. Pregnancy & Maternity**

Although this protected characteristic has more limited protection than some of the others we still expect people falling into this category to be treated fairly by all and in this case also, any reasonable adjustments made.

People can expect to be treated fairly by Shaw Trust no matter what their identity. We also expect all our staff to commit to this and ensure that they treat everyone fairly and do not discriminate in anyway whether on the basis of the groups listed above or anything else. By raising awareness of our diverse backgrounds, thoughts, convictions and beliefs and creating a culture of mutual understanding we will enable everyone to be open about who they are and make sure that other people understand what this means and treat people fairly as a result.