



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 Manchester Deaf Centre is committed to avoiding discrimination and valuing diversity within the team. Our aim is to make our organisation as diverse as possible and to create an environment which is free from all forms of harassment and within which each employees, workers, users and clients feel respected and empowered to contribute fully.

1.2 The Equality and Diversity Policy shall apply to employees, users and clients of the Manchester Deaf Centre.

Where the term “worker” is used in this document, it includes paid and unpaid staff, management committee members, volunteers and any external consultant organisations contracted to work on behalf of the Centre.

1.3 We recognise that diversity in the workplace makes sound business sense and will be reflected in the service we provide to our members.

1.4 This policy aims to ensure equality and fairness for all in our employment policies and practices and to ensure that we do not discriminate on grounds of gender, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age. We oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on these grounds, against any job applicant, employee, worker, user or client.

2. LEGISLATION

2.1 The Manchester Deaf Centre recognises its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

2.2 To this end MDC will:-

- a. Seek to provide all employees with equal opportunities to progress within the organisation
- b. Seek to provide a welcoming atmosphere and environment, in which all workers, users and clients feel comfortable, including through the use of sign language communication
- c. Provide equal access to the use of equipment available within the Centre, for all employees, users and clients
- d. Provide equal access for all employees, users and clients to such environmental aids or equipment that may be available for loan, hire or purchase
- e. Provide equal access for all users to rooms, equipment, and sign language courses on a ‘first come first served’ basis

- f. Take steps to ensure that there is no harassment or victimisation of any individual or group using the Centre.

2.3 Charges for the use of equipment or facilities may be set by the Board of Trustees.

3 EQUALITY: CENTRE USERS

3.1 Users of the Centre will have equality of access to the following special groups:

Church, Sign language Courses, Tinnitus Group, Lip Reading Group, Deaf Blind Group and a wide range of community groups including Senior Citizens Group, Asian Group, Triangle, Deaf Women's Group, Women's Assertiveness Group, Deaf Issues Group, Manchester Disability Forum, Sports and Social Club, Employment Training and Youth Club (Play Scheme).

(Note: Some groups may incur participation charges)

3.2 Crèche facilities for special events will be arranged if required.

4 EQUALITY: EMPLOYMENT

4.1 INCLUSION IN EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

- a) This Diversity Policy will be taken into account in all Manchester Deaf Centre's employment policies and practices, particularly in the interpretation of:
 - Employee Handbook
 - Recruitment & Selection policy
 - Pay and Benefits policy [See Employee Handbook]
 - Sickness/Absence procedures and Pay[See Employee Handbook]
 - Maternity/Paternity/Adoption leave [See Employee Handbook]
 - Bullying & Harassment policy
 - Disciplinary Policy
 - Grievance Policy and Procedure
- b) All policies will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure compliance not only with Equality Law but with best practice and with the changing needs of the organization.

- c) The sections of our employment policies and practices which are especially relevant to this Equality and Diversity Policy are highlighted below.

4.2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF EMPLOYEES

- a) To maintain the quality and diversity of the Manchester Deaf Centre team and to ensure the organization receives a regular injection of fresh thinking, some job vacancies will be advertised externally. The media used for advertising will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be chosen to reach a diverse range of quality applicants. The diversity of applications and the progress of applicants will be continuously monitored through each stage of the recruitment process.
- b) As a general rule, when a role becomes vacant or a new role is created in Manchester Deaf Centre, internal candidates will be encouraged to apply alongside external applicants.
- c) Interviews will be conducted by a minimum of two interviewers. All selection decisions will be made against objective criteria, with a job description and person specification agreed before any opportunity is advertised. Normally candidates will only be appointed after two in-depth interviews. We shall always seek to employ the candidate best suited to the role, based on assessment against the essential and desirable criteria outlined in the job description and person specification and potential for development within the role (taking into account financial considerations of value for money and affordability).
- d) For succession or talent management reasons, Manchester Deaf Centre reserves the right to appoint an internal candidate to a vacant or new position without any internal or external advertising. This could be where Manchester Deaf Centre's business needs make it desirable that a particular person undertakes the role in question. This might be, for example: where staff turnover makes this a sensible decision for continuity purposes or to ensure service delivery is not compromised.

4.3 PERSONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- a) As a small organisation with a 'flat' structure, Manchester Deaf Centre can only offer limited opportunities for internal promotion to its employees. We can, however, offer:
- rewarding jobs;
 - opportunities for broadening experience through development/job extension within individual roles, teams and across the organisation that give individuals a range of transferable skills;
 - opportunities to innovate.

- b) All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be used to provide the best possible service to Manchester Deaf Centre members.
- c) As part of the performance management arrangements, each individual in Manchester Deaf Centre should create for themselves, a personal and career development plan. The plan should include:
- Skills they want to develop – which fit the needs of the business and take into account their long-term career aspirations;
 - Internal opportunities/roles which could become available and would enable them to develop these skills;
 - Timescales to achieve certain objectives/undertake certain roles;
 - Internal or external training (or other development) they would want to undertake with target dates;
 - Expected outcomes within the next 12 months i.e., the success criteria for a particular development activity.
- d) Each individual is responsible for formulating and implementing his/her own personal development plan, and for discussing it with their line manager. Manchester Deaf Centre is committed, as far as is possible, and within the needs of the business, to help individuals fulfill their long-term development plans, and will take their aspirations into account when looking at their individual roles and training.

4.4 PAY AND BENEFITS

- a) Our pay structure reflects the responsibilities involved in the job and the individual's contribution to the organisation. Our benefits policy is to make benefits available to all staff equally, subject to length of service.

5 EQUALITY: PUBLICITY AND SERVICE PROVISION

5.1 All Deaf Centre publicity will reflect equality of opportunity and will be available in local libraries, at the Deaf Centre and, when necessary, in the local 'free' press and other appropriate media and public places throughout the community.

5.2 All publicity material will be available in an appropriate language and media e.g. B.S.L. on video and written English, or any suitable means.

5.3 The Board of Trustees of Manchester Deaf Centre is committed to the provision of appropriate training to ensure effective implementation of its equal opportunity objectives and procedures.

6 MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1 The Board of Trustees of Manchester Deaf Centre are committed to ensuring the implementation of its equal opportunity objectives and procedures. All Board of

6.2 Trustees members, employees, users and clients have a responsibility to adhere to the equal opportunities policy.

6.3 Specific responsibilities to support the management of diversity within the organisation are outlined below:

Development of an action plan for implementation	Richard Jones
Continuous review and updating of employment policies to reflect employment legislation and best practice	Richard Jones
Identification of ongoing learning & development needs regarding diversity matters	Richard Jones
Monitoring & analysis of relevant employment data (e.g. from recruitment & selection)	Richard Jones
Managing major breaches of the policy	As outlined in the Grievance, Harassment & Bullying and Disciplinary policies, as relevant.

7 MEASURES OF SUCCESS

7.1 It is essential to ensure that Manchester Deaf Centre implements its equality and diversity policy and works to continuously improve on this ground. However, in a small organisation such as Manchester Deaf Centre, the creation and monitoring of too many measures can be an excessive burden on the efficiency of the business, and may harm our resource utilisation.

7.2 We will concentrate on monitoring key employment data including recruitment statistics and performance management data as well as using relevant evaluation feedback from our events and other activities. In addition, to ensure the policy is kept alive, we will ensure that diversity is reviewed annually or as often as required.

8 REMEDIES FOR BREACH OF THE POLICY

8.1 While it is always desirable to resolve issues informally and at as early a stage as possible, Manchester Deaf Centre’s grievance, harassment and bullying procedures are available for workers, employees, volunteers, or service users to raise any issues which they feel need to be raised formally.

8.2 Employees’ failure to adhere with the Equality and Diversity policy will be dealt with through Manchester Deaf Centre’s disciplinary procedure.