



Equality and Diversity Policy



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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the CareTrade's commitment to upholding and valuing the principles of diversity, inclusion, fair treatment and equality of opportunity.

The policy outlines the CareTrade's commitments to the protected characteristics as specified in the Equality Act 2010 as well as the operational steps CareTrade takes to advance and monitor equality within the organisation.

1.2 Background and need

The policy applies to all members of staff and students, visitors, contractors, service providers, and any other persons associated with the functions of CareTrade. Subcontractors are expected to work in accordance with this policy and evidence how they meet any equality objectives as determined by specific funding rules e.g. ESF.

The legislative and regulatory requirements that CareTrade has to comply with in their Equality and Diversity policy are set out in The Equality Act 2010, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the protected characteristics.

1.3 Link to Mission and Beliefs

CareTrade aims to help young people and adults with autism to have choice and opportunities, to live fulfilling and purposeful lives and be as independent as they are able. By implementing this policy and creating an ethos of equality and diversity within the CareTrade environment it will demonstrate to the students how to respect and celebrate each other's difference.

1.4 Outcomes

CareTrade is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce and programme participants. Our aim is that each employee and programme participant feels respected at all times.

To that end the purpose of this policy is to promote equal opportunities for CareTrade staff and programme participants by prohibiting all forms of discrimination, harassment and incitement to discriminate or harass. The aim of this policy is to create an environment whereby programme participants and staff are treated fairly and equally.

No person will be discriminated against on grounds of any of the following:

- a. Age
- b. Colour
- c. Ethnic and/or national origin
- d. Gender
- e. HIV Status
- f. Marital Status
- g. Nationality
- h. Parental status

- i. Physical and/or mental disability
- j. Political opinion
- k. Pregnancy
- l. Religion
- m. Sexual orientation
- n. Socio-economic background
- o. Any other irrelevant distinction

CareTrade provide equality and fairness for all job applicants, those in our employment and those that apply to access services and not to discriminate on grounds.

All employees, whether part-time, full-time, temporary or volunteers will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

It is the responsibility of all programme participants, staff and visitors to CareTrade Offices and Programme sites to adhere to this policy behave in a non-discriminatory manner and to help change practices and procedures that deny or limit equality of opportunity or treatment.

2. Our commitment:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with employee representatives.

3. Implementing the Policy

Karen Edwards CEO and the Board of Trustee are ultimately responsible.

CareTrade's Equality & Diversity Policy is available for distribution during the recruitment process on request. CareTrade reinforces the Policy during staff induction, annual staff training and reviews.

All CareTrade staff are individually responsible for upholding CareTrade's Equality & Diversity Policy.

CareTrade will not tolerate any bullying or harassment or breaches of CareTrade's Equality & Diversity Policy. Evidence of the above may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

4. Monitoring the Policy

CareTrade monitors its Equality & Diversity Policy to ensure its aims are being met. During appraisal, staff are given the opportunity to provide feedback on Equality & Diversity issues. Feedback will be passed on to senior management, with consent, if necessary.

The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

5. Complaints & Concerns

All CareTrade staff are individually responsible for upholding CareTrade's Equality & Diversity Policy. Staff are to report any Equality & Diversity concerns or complaints to their Line Manager in the first instance, or if appropriate, a senior member of staff. Concerns will be treated as confidential in matter, will be taken seriously and will be dealt with accordingly.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this Policy, please contact your Line Manager or a senior member of staff.

6. Definition of Terms

6.1 Discrimination

Discrimination means singling an individual or group out in a favourable or unfavourable way on the basis of irrelevant distinctions such as age, gender etc. Examples of discriminatory behaviour include:

- Derogatory language
- Obstructing or encouraging progress of an individual/group on the grounds of an irrelevant distinction such as age, gender etc.

6.2 Harassment

Harassment refers to any action aimed at individuals or groups deemed to be unwelcome by the recipient(s). This may include:

- Offensive comments or jokes
- Unwanted physical contact
- Physical or verbal abuse
- Bullying

The common characteristic of harassment is that the behaviour is unwanted and unreciprocated. To this end, it is not the intention of the perpetrator, but the impact on the recipient that determines what constitutes harassment.

6.3 Bullying

Although bullying may be non-discriminatory in nature, it is a serious abuse of power involving threatened or actual physical or verbal abuse. Examples include:

- Insensitive and derogatory jokes, statements and pranks
- Offensive comments about appearance
- Unnecessary or unwanted physical contact
- Displays of offensive materials and literature
- Speculation about an individual's private life
- Threatened or actual violence, sexual or otherwise.
- Behaviour that creates an uncomfortable or intimidating atmosphere.
- The undermining of a person's ability to carry out their duties.