



Equal opportunities, or equality of opportunity, may be defined as ensuring that everyone is entitled to freedom from discrimination. There are two main types of equality encompassed in equal opportunities:

- Equality of treatment is concerned with treating everyone the same. Thus, in an organisational context it recognises that institutional discrimination may exist in the form of unfair procedures and practices that favour those with some personal attributes, over others without them. The task of equal opportunities is therefore concerned with the elimination of these barriers.
- Equality of outcome focuses on policies that either have an equal impact on different groups or intend the same outcomes for different groups.

Diversity describes the range of visible and non-visible differences that exist between people. Managing diversity harnesses these differences to create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met. (Kandola and Fullerton 1998).

Westward Pathfinder is intent on advancing equality and diversity as key features within all its activities, as it believes this to be ethically right and socially responsible.

The Equality and Diversity Policy is supported by additional policies including Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults, Disability, Confidentiality, Professional Code of Conduct, etc. All Policies are available to view in every centre and on the website www.pathfinder.org.uk/policies.

Equality and Diversity Policy 2012

Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Westward Pathfinder believes that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. Our aim is to create an environment that respects the diversity of staff and clients and enables them to achieve their full potential, to contribute fully, and to derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement with the organisation.

To this end, Westward Pathfinder acknowledges the following basic rights for all:

- To receive a professional and appropriate service
- to be treated with respect and dignity
- to be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices
- to receive encouragement to reach their full potential

These rights carry with them responsibilities and Westward Pathfinder requires all staff and clients to recognise these rights and to act in accordance with them in all dealings with others. In addition, Westward Pathfinder will comply with all relevant legislation* and good practice.

No individual will be unjustifiably discriminated against. This includes, but not exclusively, discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. We will engage with people to ensure the service is relevant and meets their needs. We will empower people to recognise and counter discrimination, and be supported in doing so.

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

Responsibility

Westward Pathfinder's Board of Trustees, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, has overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation operates within a framework of equality of opportunity.

The Projects Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Safeguarding Officer will co-ordinate related activities, facilitate developments and communicate responsibilities to all staff and clients.

Westward Pathfinder recognises that all of its staff and clients have a duty to support and uphold the principles contained in its Equality and Diversity Policy and supporting policies.

Implementation

We will ensure:

- an active commitment to equality and diversity within the organisation.
- services offered are consistent with, and promote, equality and diversity.
- training at all levels of the organisation, including those at senior management level.
- organisation of, and contribution to, specific events, campaigns, and projects aimed at promoting equality of opportunity, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Communication

Copies of this Policy will be displayed in all centres, be included in all client induction sessions, as well as being on the website www.pathfinder.org.uk/policies. In the case of recruitment of new employees equality and diversity will be embedded throughout the process. Equality and diversity is also a set agenda item on monthly staff meetings.

Complaints

Any complaint will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner, in accordance with Westward Pathfinder's Grievance Procedure. The procedure can be obtained from the website.

*

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 2000
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Part-time working regulations 2000
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Equality Act 2010

Reviewed 04/01/2012