



## Equality And Diversity Policy

Equal opportunities does not mean treating everybody the same; it means recognising people's differences and adapting the way we work in order to ensure everyone is given a fair and equal chance. Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference in its broadest sense. The term diversity in the context of Guernsey Disability Alliance's work means the differences in the attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, ability or disability, skills, knowledge, age and life experiences of each individual. Inclusion is about an individual's experience within the workplace and in wider society and the extent to which a person feels valued and included.

Guernsey Disability Alliance realises that in society, certain groups and individuals face discrimination and aims to embrace diversity, oppose discrimination and promote the possibility of fair and equal chances for all to develop their full potential.

It is the responsibility of all Guernsey Disability Alliance employees, Board members and volunteers to constructively challenge discriminatory behaviour and processes. Breaches of this policy may lead to formal action including disciplinary action.

### 1. Legislative Background

In the UK, the Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. The Bailiwick of Guernsey is not subject to this Law, however in June 2018, the States of Guernsey unanimously agreed that the Committee for Employment and Social Security should develop proposals for new legislation to protect people from discrimination on multiple grounds. While awaiting this legislation, Guernsey Disability Alliance commits to working toward the requirements within the UK Equality Act 2010, ensuring that staff, Board members and volunteers work towards best possible practice in this area.

The UK Equality Act 2010 contains wide positive action provisions which offer special encouragement to those from disproportionately under-represented or otherwise disadvantaged groups. The law protects people from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics which are:

- Age

- Disability (which includes mental health problems)
- Sex (gender)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race (ethnicity)
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Under UK Equality legislation it is unlawful to:

- Discriminate directly against anyone and treat them less favourably than others on the grounds of the protected characteristics.
- Discriminate against someone for reasons relating to their association with a person on the grounds of the protected characteristics.
- Discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people with a protected characteristic unless the person applying the provision can justify it as proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Subject someone to harassment for reasons relating to the protected characteristics. This includes behaviour that an individual finds offensive on these grounds even if the behaviour is not directed at the individual.
- Victimise someone because they have made, intend to make, a complaint or allegation or has given evidence in relation to complaint of discrimination in line with the Equality Act.

Guernsey Disability Alliance is committed to creating an environment in which individual difference and the contributions of all are recognised and valued, which promotes dignity and respect and where no form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. We promote equality and diversity as 'business as usual' in all aspects of our services, to honour our ongoing commitment to reflect the communities we serve and improve access and engagement.

We foster positive action in the following areas:

- Access to services
- Involving people who use our services
- Cultural awareness
- Recruitment of staff and volunteers

- Training and supervision
- Publicity and communication

## **2. Access To Services**

We aim to ensure that all our services are equally accessible by:

- Assessing service environments for disability access and making reasonable adjustments where possible to support clients and staff with disability access needs.
- Being clear what we can/cannot do where there are limited resources.
- Targeting groups and communities that under-represented.

## **3. Involving People Who Use Our Services**

We actively promote the involvement of people who use our services in the work of the organisation by:

- Recognising that member and people who use our services are an expert resource.
- Ensuring consultation about changes to policy and procedure.
- Creating and evolving a variety of means of consultation.
- Actively involving people who use our services in recruitment of all posts in the organisation.
- Taking steps to ensure that the Board of Directors includes people who have experienced disability issues.

We challenge discriminatory practice, abuse, harassment and victimisation. We do this by:

- Ensuring staff, volunteers and people who use our services are made aware of their rights and obligations with regard to equal opportunities.
- Ensuring people are aware of their rights to report allegations of discrimination and address disincentives to reporting.
- Ensuring grievance and disciplinary procedures reflect good practice and equal opportunities.
- Recognising that discriminatory practice can be subtle and unconscious and by promoting an honest working atmosphere where constructive challenge is welcomed.

- Recognising that staff from groups facing discrimination may have particular support needs and responding flexibly to ensure workers are supported to do their work.

We work to actively promote cultural awareness and a respect for diversity by:

- Using translation services where appropriate.
- Building relationships through community events.
- Building links with disadvantaged and minority communities.
- Staff and Board Members attending Equality and Diversity training.

#### **4. Recruitment Of Staff**

Guernsey Disability Alliance recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and Board of Directors and ensures employees are treated fairly by ensuring:

- Job descriptions and person specifications do not have requirements that unnecessarily exclude applicants from meeting the criteria.
- Externally advertised posts are aimed at reaching as wide a section of the population as possible within available resources.
- Employment opportunities are open and accessible to all.
- Selection criteria and processes do not discriminate.
- Recruitment decisions are made in accordance to the criteria set for each post.
- Applicants' special needs are considered.

#### **5. Training And Supervision**

Staff, volunteers and Board members are expected to operate best practice in terms of fairness and diversity and this is done by:

- Ensuring all aspects of this policy are reflected in the induction processes.
- Staff attend mandatory equality and diversity training.
- Operating robust appraisal and supervision procedures.
- Addressing serious concerns through staff management procedures such as supervision, probationary review, appraisals, code of conduct and disciplinary process.

## 6. Publicity And Communication

Guernsey Disability Alliance uses a variety of communication methods to address the needs of many audiences. Positive and inclusive images are promoted both with and outside the organisation in its literature and publicity materials.

- Information may be provided in different languages and accessible formats.
- Equality and diversity is highlighted in our publicity materials.
- An accessibility statement is on the website and is included in significant printed materials.

## 7. Governance

We aim to ensure the Board of Directors has a membership that reflects the wider community by:

- Making resources available to provide adequate training and support for Board members.
- Conducting a periodic audit to identify gaps and ensure a good skill mix.
- Clearly describing the role and responsibilities of Board members and the skills/experience required.

This policy is kept on the organisation's SharePoint site. This policy will be available on request in accessible formats and on the GDA website.

Drafted	Approved by Board	Document Date	Review	Document Author / Reviewer
9/11/19				Kerstin Neason
05/08/2024		July 2026		Janina Almeida