



A really useful place for community groups

Prior House, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 0GY

Tel: 01273 606160 | Fax: 01273 673663

email: [info@resourcecentre.org.uk](mailto:info@resourcecentre.org.uk) | [www.resourcecentre.org.uk](http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk)

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# Equalities Policy

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This policy and the way in which it operates will be reviewed every 2 years.

The policy was reviewed in January 2010.

Signature .....

Position .....

Date .....

Brighton and Hove Social Welfare and Educational Trust Ltd  
Limited Company registered in England under number 1730256  
Registered Charity number 287516  
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Resource Centre recognises the existence of discrimination against people because of particular characteristics or beliefs. This policy sets out the steps taken by the Resource Centre to prevent discrimination in the services it provides and in employment.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 The Resource Centre Equalities Policy aims to prevent direct and indirect discrimination.
- 2.2 **Direct Discrimination** is treating a person less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of age, disability, race (including colour, ethnic origin or nationality), gender, responsibility for dependants, sexuality, religion/belief, marital status or HIV/AIDS status.
- 2.3 **Indirect Discrimination** is an unjustifiable requirement or condition which appears to apply equally to everyone but which has a discriminatory effect on people from a particular group.
- 2.4 The policy also covers **harassment**, which is defined as any uninvited, unwelcome or unreciprocated behaviour which is offensive to the person involved and causes that person to feel threatened, humiliated or embarrassed.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1 It is a condition of employment that every member of staff understands, complies with and implements this policy.
- 3.2 All staff are responsible for making every effort to prevent direct and indirect discrimination at the Centre, and for ensuring that the Centre is equally accessible to groups and individuals from all communities.
- 3.3 Staff must not:
- § discriminate against other staff or users of the Centre
  - § encourage others to practice discrimination
  - § harass, abuse or victimise other staff or members of the public.

## 4. Providing an equal service

### 4.1 Respect for diversity

- 4.1.1 The Resource Centre exists to provide a service to community groups. Users are therefore drawn from a wide variety of communities present in Brighton and Hove. Staff will ensure that they treat all users with respect and dignity. Where users have particular needs, we will do everything possible to meet these needs.

### 4.2 Publicity and written materials

- 4.2.1 The Resource Centre's publicity is distributed regularly to community groups in Brighton and Hove. Special mailings are sent to particular areas (for example ethnic minority groups, schools, women's groups.)
- 4.2.2 Our publicity materials are written in plain English and are designed to be easy to read.

### **4.3 Access to services**

- 4.3.1 Our premises are fully accessible to people in wheelchairs with a ramped entrance, wide doorways and passages throughout, and an accessible toilet. The public areas are all on the ground floor and there are no changes of level.
- 4.3.2 We have a portable infra-red hearing system and a portable induction loop for use at meetings or training sessions where people are using hearing aids. The equipment is available for groups to hire or can be set up in the Centre when required.
- 4.3.3 Our publications and publicity materials are available in large print, on disk, on tape, or in Braille, on request. There is a magnifying lens in our information library.
- 4.3.4 Our publications are written in plain English. We will arrange for any publication to be translated into another language if requested by a user group.
- 4.3.5 We are committed to offering services in a manner appropriate to the needs and abilities of each individual user.
- 4.3.5 As a matter of policy, prices are kept as low as possible, in order to make the resources accessible to as many groups as possible.
- 4.3.6 We are committed to making the content of our website as accessible to as many people as possible. We have achieved WAI Level 2 accessibility, a set of guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium. Our website has a summary of our services in the 9 other languages most commonly spoken in the city.

### **4.4 Training**

- 4.4.1 We offer training to members of any community group in the use of equipment in the Centre. This is empowering for people who have been excluded from access to computers and reprographic equipment because of discrimination.
- 4.4.2 We offer a detailed training and support package to groups run by and for disabled people; minority ethnic groups; and groups based in areas of social housing. This includes tailored one-to-one training in the use of equipment at the Centre, together with any additional support needed to enable the group to pursue its aims on an equal basis with other groups.

## **5. Equality in employment**

- 5.1 We intend to ensure equality in employment. No job applicant or member of staff will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, race, (including colour, ethnic origin or nationality), gender, responsibility for dependants, sexuality, religion/belief, marital status or HIV/AIDS status.

### **5.2 Recruitment**

- 5.2.1 Vacancies are advertised through notices and leaflets in centres used by community groups in Brighton and Hove, through mailings to minority ethnic groups, on our website and through advertisements in the local press.
- 5.2.2 Job applicants are given information about the access details of the building, and are offered any assistance necessary in attending an interview, if shortlisted.

## 5.3 Employment

- 5.3.1 All staff at the Resource Centre are paid at an equal hourly rate. Rates of pay and employment benefits available to staff are limited by the level of funding received by the Centre.
- 5.3.2 Staff training is planned and implemented with the aim of achieving equal levels of skill and knowledge among Resource Centre staff.
- 5.3.3 The Centre's sickness policy states that staff will receive their full rate of pay for up to 3 months of sickness in any one tax year. Arrangements for additional paid sick leave, unpaid leave, accumulated annual leave, maternity/paternity leave, dependant care leave and carer's non-standard work patterns are made on a case by case basis, within an overall framework of aiming for equality for all staff while accepting the need to keep the Centre running.

## 6. Harassment

- 6.1 Any member of staff who harasses another member or any user of the Centre will be automatically dismissed, with a right to appeal under the grievance procedure. Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct towards a person based on age, disability, race, gender, sexuality, or religion/belief which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of that person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Harassment includes (but is not limited to)

- abusive language, including sexist, racist, homophobic, or other bigoted jokes
- unwanted physical contact
- displaying sexist, racist, homophobic, or other bigoted material, including graffiti
- requests for sexual favours

## 7. Monitoring

- 7.1 Staff recruitment and selection is monitored by means of a confidential Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. These forms are separated from the application forms as soon as they are received. The monitoring forms are used for statistical analysis only, and form no part of the selection process.
- 7.2 Every 2 years in our User Satisfaction survey, we ask each group in the sample to classify its main activities under headings such as *Provide services to a faith or minority ethnic community* and *Work to improve your local area or neighbourhood*. In addition, each use of the Centre by a community group is recorded, with details of the group and the service used. This information is used to plan services and target publicity.