



Equality Policy

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Equality Policy

Beat recognises that in order to achieve our charitable purpose of delivering information, services, support and guidance to all people affected by eating disorders, we must celebrate diversity and ensure equality of opportunity.

We are committed to ensuring that all our staff, volunteers and users of our services are treated fairly and equitably regardless of their:

- Sex
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity status
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Religion and belief
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We will ensure that no-one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which can be shown to be unjustified. We will ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Scope

This Equality policy applies to all those who work for (or apply to work for) the charity including volunteers, as well as the trustees.

Beat also recognises that discrimination and harassment has a wider application than the workers of the Charity. Service users, contractors and suppliers are

expected to conform to the standards set by Beat. Beat will require organisations with which it has service contracts to have operational policies in place that do not conflict with the principles or procedures in this policy. Where these standards are not met, Beat will investigate and take appropriate action.

Equality Commitments

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equality policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate

Definition of Discrimination

It is unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, disability, religion, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy or maternity, and sexual orientation (unless there is a specific lawful exemption). Acts of discrimination can occur in the following ways:

- **Direct Discrimination** –when one (or more) person(s) is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances because of the characteristic described above.
- **Indirect Discrimination** – when a requirement or condition is applied equally, but has an adverse impact on an individual or group by placing them at a disadvantage, and the reasons for this cannot be objectively justified. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.
- **Associative Discrimination** – when someone is directly discriminated against because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.

- **Perceptive Discrimination** – when someone is directly discriminated against because others think they have a protected characteristic, even if they do not have that characteristic.
- **Harassment** – unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic which violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This applies even if the conduct is not directed at the individual or if they do not have the protected characteristic.
- **Third party harassment** – potential liability for the harassment of employees by others such as clients or customers.
- **Victimisation** – when a person receives less favourable treatment because they have made a complaint, or it is suspected that they have made a complaint, under the Equalities Act or if they or are going to provide evidence about an act of discrimination.

Equality Procedures

The information below highlights those areas directly related to Equality within Beat:

Recruitment, Selection and Promotion of Workers

We will ensure that our recruitment, selection and promotion practices are free from unlawful forms of discrimination. We recognise that the purpose of recruitment and selection is to ensure that the best person for the post is appointed and we consider the Equality Policy crucial in achieving this.

- All vacancies will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunities and only refer to relevant job requirements.
- Promotion or secondment opportunities will be considered and where appropriate advertised internally within Beat and be subject to the charity’s recruitment and selection procedures to ensure fairness and consistency.
- Selection criteria (job descriptions and person specifications) will be kept under regular review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job role.

- More than one person will be involved in any selection interview and recruitment process, and will be competent in equal opportunities issues.
- Recruitment to all jobs will be strictly on merit. Valid reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies will be recorded.
- Wherever necessary, use will be made of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups.
- Wherever possible, efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged groups.
- All workers with recruitment responsibilities must familiarise themselves with Beat's recruitment procedures which include specific guidance on equality and diversity issues.

Training, Education and Development

To achieve the highest quality of services possible and to maintain the quality of our employment practices, we will do all that we can to develop a committed and highly motivated workforce.

Through the performance review process all employees have their development needs assessed. Training and other learning opportunities will be available to all staff based on an assessment of its value in relation to role. All employees will be encouraged to access the training, education and development facilities available to enable them to progress within the charity on grounds of merit. Beat will ensure that all employees are treated equitably in all areas of employment including career development, pay, training and promotion.

Equality and diversity training will be included as part of the induction process. All training, coaching, and facilitation will take into account the needs of its participants. Beat will ensure that any learning needs, access requirements, communication issues any other necessary support can be available.

Quality of Working Life

Beat recognises the need for workers to balance their work and home commitments, and encourages more flexible patterns of work to attract and retain

employees by helping them to achieve a balanced and high quality of working life. For further and more detailed guidance please refer to Work Life Balance policy.

Service Provision

Beat is fully committed to ensuring that our work is informed by the need to address issues of diversity and equality of opportunity.

We provide services of information, support and guidance to people affected by eating disorders, their carers and the professionals who work with them. We need to be confident that these services are relevant to and accessible by all those who have need of them. Beat strives to continually improve awareness and understanding of the needs of different groups who may use our services.

An Equality Impact Assessment, backed by operational procedures and guidelines, ensures that services are planned; developed; delivered and evaluated in ways that are sensitive and responsive to issues of diversity.

Implementation

All employees have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and anyone who feels the policy has been breached in spirit or substance is positively encouraged to raise this as a cause for concern with their line manager, as part of Beat's Risk Management Strategy.

The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this policy. However, ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy's objectives lies with Beat's Board of Trustees and Executive Team.

Monitoring and review

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Board of Trustees for the operation and implementation of this policy. Line Managers have responsibility for ensuring that all aspects of their service delivery and employment practice comply with this policy. They will do this by actively promoting equality and challenging discrimination; and ensuring that employees and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities. *

In order to ensure the effective operation of the Equality Policy (and for no other purpose) the Job Application Equal Opportunities Form attached to the application form seeks information from job applicants in regards to ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and disability. These forms will be detached from the

application form, will not be seen by the recruiting manager and will be stored in an anonymised form for survey purposes only to monitor equality issues.

Individuals commencing employment with Beat are requested to state their ethnic origin, date of birth, disability status and gender, which enables us to monitor these factors in relation to promotion, training and workforce profiling.

Details of any complaints made on the grounds of discrimination will be kept by the Finance and Administration Department and presented to the Board of Trustees on an annual basis.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually.

Complaints

Beat will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment and will investigate all discrimination complaints, whether the accused is an employee, volunteer, service user or contractor.

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, personal harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through Beat's grievance procedures. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly, sensitively and confidentially.

Employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly, sensitively and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Equality Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment involves assessing the likely or actual effects of policies or services on individuals or groups in respect of protected characteristics. It will help to make sure the needs of individuals are taken into account when Beat develops and implements a new policy or service, or when a change is introduced to a current policy or service.

A member of the Senior Management Team will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on all relevant new policies or service development proposals. The assessment will be approved and published, and will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

Legislation and Codes of Practice

Equalities Act 2010

Codes of practice and advice on best practice issued by:

- The Commission for Equality and Human Rights
- The Government Equalities Office
- Campaign for Racial Equality

Compliance with this policy is a requirement of your contract of employment with Beat.