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This information can be made available in different formats, such as large print or translated into another language upon request.

A. Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Lancashire Mind believes that equality, diversity, and inclusion are critical to the organisation’s values: to be Real, Bold, Caring and Open, and to enable us to give impartial, neutral and universal support to all people living and working in Lancashire.
- 1.2. This policy covers how we treat everyone fairly in all aspects of our business: employees, volunteers, people who use our services and other stakeholders, and should be used when all policies are being planned and services are commissioned.
- 1.3. Lancashire Mind has been awarded the LGBT+ Quality Mark by Lancashire LGBT, acknowledging its commitment to being an LGBT+ friendly employer and service provider.
- 1.4. Lancashire Mind is committed to being an anti-racist organisation, and endeavours to be an organisation where people of all ethnicities feel welcomed to work, volunteer or seek help. For more information, please see national Mind’s [REMI Blueprint for change - Becoming a truly anti-racist organisation](#) and refer to the Lancashire Mind [EDI Workplan](#)
- 1.5. The organisation believes that the experiences and perspectives shared through a diverse workforce and volunteer base, and by engaging with diverse communities, further enriches the organisation and can ensure that we are effectively serving the diverse needs of the population of Lancashire.
- 1.6. The organisation is firmly committed to equality and diversity at work and providing equal opportunities in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline, and redundancy and in how we deliver our organisational values.
- 1.7. The organisation recognises and accepts its responsibility to employees, volunteers, people who use our services and other stakeholders, and strives to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

- 1.8. The organisation ensures that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination in accordance with this policy.
- 1.9. Lancashire Mind strives to ensure that this policy is adhered to, but in the event an employee feels that they are being unfairly treated due to a protected characteristic, this policy should be used in conjunction with the Grievance and Whistleblowing policies.
- 1.10. Lancashire Mind strives to ensure that this policy is adhered to but in the event a person who uses our services or other stakeholder feels that they are being unfairly treated due to a protected characteristic, this policy should be used in conjunction with the Complaints policy.

2. Scope

Lancashire Mind promote equality of opportunity for all. It aims to treat people with dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence, in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998. This policy applies to:

2.1. All Lancashire Mind employees, volunteers and people using our services in line with The Equality Act 2010 regardless of:

- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Disability
- Race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

2.1.1. Lancashire Mind recognises all disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Under the act, you are classed as having a disability if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

2.1.1.1 What 'substantial & long-term' mean

- 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- 'long-term' means 12 months or more, e.g a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

There are special rules about [recurring or fluctuating conditions](#), e.g arthritis.

2.1.1.2 Progressive conditions

A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. People with progressive conditions can be classed as disabled.

However, you automatically meet the disability definition under the Equality Act 2010 from the day you're diagnosed with HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

2.1.1.3 What isn't counted as a disability

There's [guidance on conditions that aren't covered by the disability definition](#), eg addiction to non-prescribed drugs or alcohol.

2.2 People with criminal records. Those with an offending background should refer to the Recruitment Ex-Offender's policy for in-depth policy relating to this.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. To build a workforce that represents the diverse population of Lancashire.
- 3.2. To provide a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment for the public, contractors, volunteers, and employees.
- 3.3. To ensure that all employees, people who use our services and other stakeholders are treated fairly, consistently and with dignity.
- 3.4. To ensure that all employees, people who use our services and other stakeholders have equal access to our services where appropriate and all aspects of employment.
- 3.5. To ensure our services are reflective of and accessible to the needs of all people living and working in Lancashire.
- 3.6. To provide managers with a framework and clear guidance on how to manage equality, diversity and inclusion in terms of service delivery and as an employer.
- 3.7. To ensure that all employees are aware of their contractual obligations to adhere to the organisations Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy, and to ensure that all staff are aware of the reporting requirements under the policy.
- 3.8. To eliminate discrimination of employees, people who use our services and other stakeholders.

4. Principles

- 4.1. Lancashire Mind will always strive to improve in our equality, diversity & inclusion practices, ensuring there is consistent engagement with employees, volunteers, people using our services and the general population of Lancashire.
- 4.2. Managers and the workforce are expected to be mindful of discrimination which can happen directly or indirectly, and present as exclusion, bullying, harassment, victimisation, or failure to make reasonable adjustments (by an employer).
- 4.3. The organisation will provide training in equal opportunities to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or any decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.
- 4.4. The organisation will provide training to all existing and new employees to help them understand their responsibilities and rights and what they can do to help create a welcoming and inclusive working environment, free of bullying and harassment.
- 4.5. The organisation prioritises monitoring and evaluation of its employees, volunteers, people using services and our projects to ensure we are accessible, inclusive and always striving to improve.
- 4.6. The organisation will ensure that recruitment is fair and transparent and based solely on the person's ability to meet the person specification for the post. Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Lancashire Mind commit to actively identify and reduce barriers to ensure paid and voluntary roles are accessible to all.
- 4.7. Confidentiality of matters informed to the organisation in relation to disability, gender assignment, religion etc. will always be respected. *For more guidance on how your data is handled, please refer to the Information Governance and Confidentiality policies
- 4.8. The organisation will train, develop and promote based on merit and ability alone, and these opportunities will be available to all employees. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability or caring responsibilities. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

- 4.9. The organisation will provide services to anyone who meets the criteria of our services without bias or discrimination and will actively work to identify and reduce barriers to ensure our services are accessible to all.
- 4.10. The organisation recognises that unlawful discrimination can take many forms and will take every step to prevent it:
 - 4.10.1 Direct discrimination – consciously treating a person less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.
 - 4.10.2 Indirect discrimination – a rule, policy or way of doing things that applies in the same way for everybody but disadvantages a group of people who share a protected characteristic.
 - 4.10.3 Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual.
 - 4.10.4 Victimisation – treating someone unfavourably because they have taken (or might be taking) action under the Equality Act or supporting somebody who is.
 - 4.10.5 Failure to make reasonable adjustments – where an organisation unreasonably does not change the way things are done, the physical features of a space or provide aids so that an individual is no longer at a disadvantage by the conditions.
- 4.11. The organisation provides official guidance to those undergoing gender reassignment; who are pregnant; taking maternity or paternity leave or fostering/adoption leave during their employment; and those who observe practices and holidays in relation to their religion/beliefs, which can be found in the Guide to Working with Lancashire Mind.
- 4.12. Employees must notify the organisation if they feel they are not being treated equally by colleagues, people who use our services or other stakeholders using the grievance policy.
- 4.13. Lancashire mind will take any grievance seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. Employees will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if the grievance is not upheld, unless it is made in bad faith or for a malicious or inappropriate reason.
- 4.14. Anyone within the organisation found not to be adhering to the Equality and Diversity policy may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure as appropriate.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. It is the responsibility of:

5.1.1. Lancashire Mind

- a) To ensure the policy and procedures are readily available to all staff
- b) To provide support and guidance to managers on applying the policy
- c) To monitor and review the implementation and effectiveness of the policy
- d) To assess the impact of any change to this policy and their effect on all organisational policies
- e) To ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is managed appropriately
- f) To provide training opportunities on applying the policy
- g) To ensure reasonable adjustments are made to improve access to employment, volunteering and service provision

5.1.2. Managers

- a) To implement the policy
- b) To support staff to understand and correctly follow the policy

c) To manage staff in appropriate and fair manner and to support staff if they feel they are not being treated equally by colleagues, people who use our services or other stakeholders.

5.1.3. Staff & Volunteers

- a) To understand the Equality and Diversity policy and follow procedural guidelines
- b) To correctly notify the organisation if they feel they are not being treated equally by colleagues, people who use our services or other stakeholders.
- c) To fully cooperate in the process of investigating any equality and diversity related concerns.
- d) Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, Lancashire Mind for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

For related policies, procedures and guidance, including the Recruitment; Recruitment of Ex-Offenders; and Continuing Professional Development Policies and Guide to Working with Lancashire Mind guidance, look in the Policies folder on Lancashire Mind's SharePoint site in Office 365.