

Merit first!



HPAC equality and diversity policy, service users, registrants, members and staff

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Health Practice Associates Council INFORMATION READER BOX

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Document Purpose	Policy
Document Name	Equality and diversity Policy
Author	Health Practice Associates Council Concerns Processing Lead
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Target Audience	HPAC board, HPAC panel, HPAC registrants, Organisations registered with HPAC, service users of HPAC registrants, members of the public
Equality Impact assessment	This document does not unfairly impact any protected characteristics of HPAC stakeholders registrants, complainants or the public
Description	This updated document describes the HPAC's policy surrounding equality and diversity
Cross Reference	N/A - document currently includes both policy and procedure
Superseded Docs (if applicable)	V1.9
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Action Required	N/A
Timing / Deadlines (if applicable)	N/A
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Our diversity and inclusion statement

As a value driven organisation our first commitment is attracting the best people to our organisation. We want to work with and retain the partnership/relationship of the best people regardless of their background. We pride ourselves on the highest ethical values and ensuring that every relationship is bias free is at the heart of our core values.

We are constantly building and developing a work environment where all our staff, registrants, service users and members are treated in a fair and consistent way. To this end we work to the spirit and practice of the [Equality Act 2010](#) by promoting a culture of dignity and respect and actively challenging any form of discrimination should it ever arise. We strive to continually improve our organisation by challenging ourselves to achieve even higher standards by ensuring we do not stay complacent but progressing with an abiding sense of excellence.

Purpose

This policy sets out HPAC's approach to equality and diversity. HPAC is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

HPAC aims to be an inclusive organisation, committed to providing equal opportunities for all our stakeholders be they clinicians applying to the register, current members of the register, registrants facing investigation, and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating discrimination.

Equality and diversity at HPAC

We consider that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups in our organisation and everyone we are opportune to engage with in the discharge of our services. We consider diversity to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting the uniqueness of every individual and valuing everyone's contributions we provide a mutually beneficial system. We acknowledge that equality and diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed.

Scope

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all registrants, members, other service users, staff and executives whether volunteers, pro bono, part time or full time on a substantive or fixed-term.

Everyone has personal responsibility for the application of this policy. As part of our collective duty for the implementation of this policy every registrant, member, other service user, staff and executive are expected to read and familiarise themselves with this policy, ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully complied with

This policy is also of particular relevance to the staff, directors, registrants and members and any such persons concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions which affect others.

Our commitment

Everyone is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. HPAC will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of a protected characteristic (sex; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin); disability; sexual orientation; religion and or belief; and age.

Selection for employment, membership, committee duties, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of experience, aptitude and ability.

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. Anyone who feels and or believes that they may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with another member of the organisation.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated.

HPAC will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with by the executive team and may result in suspension and or dismissal or removal from the registry. A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy is intended for the staff or persons in employment of HPAC (whether temporary, part-time or full-time), panel members, registrants, service users, and we commit to:

- not unlawfully discriminate because of the [Equality Act 2010](#) protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.
- encourage equality and diversity in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
- create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow staff, members, registrants and the public. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct by senior management and any appropriate action will be taken. Should the complaint involve a member of senior management that individual should manage the investigation in to the allegation.

- further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the [Protection from Harassment Act 1997](#) – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the [Equality Act](#)).
- review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- HPAC will ensure the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy.

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