

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The aim of an equal opportunities policy is to guide us to:

- resist and remedy explicit or implicit discrimination
- identify what is universal in our world and in ourselves
- enquire without prejudice into what is local and specific
- celebrate the extraordinary diversity of human identity

Statement of Intent

Underpinned by the principles of Respect, Independence and Social Equality, CEDA's mission is to provide opportunities for training and development to young disabled adults and social play to disabled children in the south west of England. CEDA will ensure, through the code of practice detailed below, that none of its activities, services or practice will in any way reflect, endorse or advocate racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist or disablist attitudes or practice. CEDA recognises that access to services is not equal and that discrimination occurs on grounds of race, disability, linguistic and cultural preferences, gender, sexuality, age, class and religious beliefs.

CEDA recognises that disabled people represent a high percentage of the population in the UK and that disability crosses all the boundaries of cultural diversity. Many disabled people face multiple oppression (for example, black disabled people, gay disabled people). People are disabled by society through the built environment and communication systems as well as by discrimination and prejudice. CEDA's Equal Opportunities Policy reflects this understanding.

Code of Practice: Programme

CEDA is committed to:

1. Ensuring all of its activities and services take place in fully accessible environment
2. Creating marketing, publicity, training materials and reports in accessible formats
3. Ensuring that trainers, artists and advisors for CEDA work to equality standards
4. Presenting and supporting work that celebrates the diversity of the disabled community be it cultural, sexual, religious, generational or impairment based
5. Promoting achievements by students that is assessed against standards of creativity, innovation, technique and materials used as well as any requirements from qualifications and awarding bodies

Code of Practice: Employment

Procedures are established to ensure that fair and efficient employment decisions are achieved and that no existing or potential employees receive less favourable treatment due to personal circumstances.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Advertising and Application

1. All vacancies will be advertised publicly, except under specific circumstances
2. Advertisements should: state that CEDA is an equal opportunities employer; state offices are fully accessible; carry the Closing and Interview Dates; explain that information is available in accessible formats
3. Advertisements should take positive action to ensure disabled people or people from other under-represented ethnic backgrounds apply
4. Advertisements should be placed in local and national disability press, as well as arts publications
5. All respondents will be sent an Application Form, Job Description, Person Specification, Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form and relevant information about CEDA
6. Respondents will be given a minimum of 21 days between date of advertisement and Closing Date
7. All posts should be open to job-share or flexible working
8. Application Forms should not ask for information which is personal, such as 'age', 'marital status' or 'no. of children'.
9. All Recruitment material will be made available in accessible formats and candidates asked to state their own access requirements
- 10 Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms will be separated from Application Forms on receipt

Job Description/Person Specification

1. Before advertising any post, a detailed Job Description should be drawn up. Where a Job Description already exists, it should be reviewed to ensure it remains accurate
2. Job Descriptions should specify the purpose, duties, responsibilities and reporting structure of the post
3. Person Specifications will provide objective criteria relating to the attributes, experience and skills required for the post. Together with the Job Description, this paper will provide the criteria and context for shortlisting and interviewing

Shortlisting and Interviewing

1. Selection will be made on the basis of the information contained in the application only, applying the criteria contained in the Person Specification
2. All disabled people who meet the essential criteria of the Person Specification will automatically be interviewed
3. All interviews will be conducted in fully accessible environments and candidates' specific access requirements (eg. BSLI) be met
4. Interview Panels will be briefed in equal opportunities procedures to avoid questions which may imply discriminatory attitudes
5. A list of questions should be agreed by the Panel in advance, relating directly to essential criteria
6. Feedback will be offered to unsuccessful candidates

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

1. Full terms and conditions of employment should be laid out and new staff briefed on these at the point of contract
2. Employment Services (Disability Services Team – DST) should be approached immediately to assist in identifying any specific support requirements for disabled people in post (eg. personal reader, BSLI, electric wheelchair etc)
3. Any required adaptations or employment aids should be acquired as soon as possible

INDUCTION, TRAINING AND APPRAISAL

1. All appointments will be subject to a satisfactorily completed period of probation
2. Induction should provide the new employee with information about the organisation that relates to his or her own post and also about the wider picture ie. the staffing and reporting structure, the legal and financial status, activities and service
3. Induction should include a hand-over period where possible, unless the post is new
4. A Training budget should be made available each year to ensure staff receive appropriate training to perform their jobs effectively
5. Staff should be encouraged to identify and discuss their own training needs
6. Ongoing review meetings should be held, along with an in-depth annual appraisal
7. Appraisals should:
 - take place in undisturbed environments
 - ensure that roles, priorities and targets are clear
 - provide a forum for individual achievements to be recognised and valued
8. Regular staff team meetings should be held to ensure the organisation is bonded by a common set of expectations and values

Code of Practice: Monitoring

1. Equal Opportunities Forms used for Recruitment should be reviewed after interview to assess how effective the process has been at attracting disabled and other applicants
2. Ongoing review of staff profile, conditions of service and specific services should be maintained
3. The Code of Practice should relate to all involved with CEDA's work including Trustees, full, part-time and casual workers, students and volunteers

Code of Practice: Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of all members of the CEDA community to comply with the Equal Opportunities Policy.
2. All members of the CEDA community should treat each other with fairness, dignity and respect.
- 3.

You must not:

- use behaviour which is unwanted, inappropriate, unsolicited, causes distress or is unacceptable to others
- persecute others by intimidation, unfair, sarcastic or malicious behaviour, threaten or undermine the safety of others
- illegally or unfairly discriminate against others
- You should report to your line manager any incident which infringes yours or other people's rights

Code of Practice: Definitions

Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of age, class, colour, disability, marital status, national/ethnic origin, personal circumstances, political belief, race religious belief, sex or sexuality

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is imposed which adversely affects particular groups or individuals more than others and cannot be strictly justified in terms of requirement for performing the task (see Positive Action below)

Affirmative Action – existing anti-discrimination laws permit employers to take positive action to overcome the heritage of past discrimination. They allow for direct encouragement in the recruitment process, particularly if it relates to essential experience eg. in order to be able to perform a certain job effectively, a personal experience and understanding of disability is essential (ie. a disabled person).