

Migrant English Support Hub (MESH)
EQUALITY POLICY

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1) Introduction

MESH has a duty to ensure equality in all aspects of its work – in the way the organisation is run, and in the way we deliver our services.

MESH will take every opportunity to promote anti-discriminatory practice, equality of opportunity and will take positive steps to ensure no group receives a lesser quality service, or achieves less favourable outcomes because of their difference.

2) Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

MESH is committed to

- developing and delivering services to help all migrants living in the Yorkshire and the Humber region to learn English;
- promoting a working culture which embraces and celebrates fairness and difference in everything we do
- recruiting, training and supporting staff and Trustees in ways that ensure the involvement and inclusion of a wide range of people, and reflect the diversity of the communities and groups we serve.
- working in collaboration with clients, volunteers, and partner organisations to provide accurate, accessible information on MESH services, and how to access them
- supporting staff, volunteers and clients to provide positive and constructive challenge to inequality, wherever they find it.

By providing clear information, we will ensure the management and development of MESH and its services is as transparent as possible.

We will actively challenge instances of discrimination against and/or involving our staff or Trustees, including those involving organisations external to MESH.

3) How we will promote this to staff and our partners

- All staff and trustees will be inducted and trained in using this policy at the start of their time at MESH
- We will place this policy on our website
- A copy of this policy will be included in all job advertisements and application packs

4) The steps we will take to make sure all aspects of what we do are fair and equal

a) As a service provider

- Our services are relevant to the needs and aspirations of migrants living in Yorkshire and the Humber
- No prospective or actual client, staff member or volunteer will be discriminated against on the basis of their immigration status, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion, or is disadvantaged by any condition or requirement which is not demonstrably justifiable.
- we will provide and/or make use of appropriate interpreting and translation facilities in the course of delivering and/or explaining our services;
- we are responsive to the cultural needs and requirements of clients – e.g. by responding positively to requests for services to be delivered by someone of a particular gender;

- the information we produce about MESH will be simple and accessible.
- we provide translated information about what we do (as reasonably permitted by funding constraints).
- we aim to hold organisational events in fully accessible venues;
- we work with partner organisations to ensure information about MESH and how to access our services is available to anyone who wants it;
- we will provide clear, regular opportunities for people with experience of using our services to comment on their relevance, usefulness and quality;
- we will use this feedback to develop and review our services, as well as our policies and procedures.

b) As an employer

- Our staff members are aware of and managed in accordance with MESH's Equal Opportunities Policy statement and this policy.
- our staff member recruitment and selection procedures enable us to recruit from a wide a range of backgrounds and our terms and conditions of employment, employment facilities and ways of working do not discriminate against any staff member on the grounds of ethnicity, race, age, gender, gender reassignment, disability, marital/civil partner status, sexual orientation, religion, belief or political opinion.
- we welcome staff member requests for flexible working;
- we will strive to retain staff members whose circumstances change;
- we provide clear opportunities for staff to be involved in the planning and development of MESH, and to develop their roles;
- we regularly inform all staff about the financial position of MESH.
- staff are supported to recognise and challenge discrimination in all its forms, and to address any issues of discrimination in the workplace, using MESH's policies and procedures (i.e. by using the Grievance Procedure.)

c) As a Trustee-managed organisation

- We ensure MESH Trustees are aware of and act in accordance with MESH's Equal Opportunities Policy statement and this policy;
- We ensure our programme of Trustee recruitment encourages and enables the participation of individuals from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible;
- We regularly audit the skills and knowledge of our Trustees to help us identify gaps, and to help direct our recruitment of new trustees
- We provide Trustees with support and training to ensure they are able to manage and guide the development of MESH in an efficient, effective and sensitive manner

5) The ways we will check we are doing what we say, and how we know we are being effective

a) Annual equality audits

We will complete an annual equality audit of their services, to ensure equality of access for clients, to identify under-represented groups, and identify actions to achieve greater equality

b) A Trustee Equality Champion

MESH will nominate a single Trustee to lead on the annual review and continual development of MESH's Equal Opportunities statement and policy, and to act on behalf of all the Trustee

Board on issues relating to Equal Opportunities and the conduct of individual staff, volunteers, Trustees, and MESH as an organisation.

c) Publishing the feedback we receive on our equality record

We will publish the findings of our discussions with clients, volunteers, partners and staff, and make it clear how we have learned from this, and any changes we have made as a consequence.

Date approved: June 2019

Next review date: Due for review in 2021