

April 2013

Equality and Diversity Policy

This document is relevant to:	
Central Support Services	✓
Education	✓
Residential and Community Services	✓
Community Mission	✓

Introduction

1. This document sets out Livability's policy for the promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity in our provision and delivery of services and in our employment practices. One of Livability's core values is that we believe in the equality and unique value of every individual and creating opportunity for people to fulfil their potential and live life to the full. We aim through this policy, our corporate strategy, business plans and other relevant policies to integrate this value into our services and employment practice and to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and related codes of practice.

Specifically we will seek to understand and consider the effect of our policies and services on different people with the following characteristics:

- Disability
 - Race
 - Age
 - Religion or belief – including no belief
 - Gender
 - Gender reorientation
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Sexual orientation
2. Livability recognises there are other forms of discrimination not specifically mentioned in this policy, and commits itself to applying general principles of fairness, justice and equality for all. In particular, Livability recognises that many employees are also carers for family members and seeks to support them through flexible working policies and procedures. In our Community Mission work with churches, we will also seek to promote social inclusion for people affected by poverty, homelessness, unemployment, family breakdown and disability.

3. Livability operates within a Christian ethos. Students and service users of all faiths and none will be supported to meet their spiritual needs in ways appropriate to them. We do not seek to impose our beliefs on others but respect the unique worth of all individuals to make choices. Similarly we welcome people to work with us regardless of their faith basis providing they support our values. A few posts, by the nature of the role or to uphold the ethos, may have an occupational requirement for a practicing Christian, which we will keep under review in line with the law.
4. This policy sets out our overarching corporate approach. Specific services will develop their own equality objectives within this overall framework.

Policy

5. Livability aims to create and sustain an inclusive environment that provides equality of opportunity for everyone and reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. Livability has a rich and vibrant heritage of creating choices for disabled and disadvantaged people, and believes that everyone should have the freedom to live their life and the chance to use their abilities. We are committed to the following:
 - **The elimination of unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment and any other conduct prohibited by law.** We aim to treat all clients, users of our services, students, employees, volunteers, job applicants, suppliers and other stakeholders, fairly and equally, paying due regard to any barriers they may face. We will ensure that our policies and procedures, and the terms and conditions associated with them, do not unfairly or unjustifiably limit access to services, learning, jobs, or volunteering opportunities. We will challenge 'institutional prejudices' where we find historic evidence of unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness or stereotyping in our policies, procedures or practices. Breaches of this and other policies will be subject to disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal.
 - **Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.** We will seek to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics and other groups we seek to serve, to encourage their involvement and participation in our services and in the wider community.
 - **Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.** We will challenge prejudice and stereotyping through our behaviour, practice and learning to promote understanding and appreciation.

Key Actions

6. **Effective monitoring.** We will ensure that this policy is implemented effectively by collecting and publishing data and information relevant to equality and diversity for people accessing and using our services, employees and volunteers. This will help us to understand more about the people using and working in our services. Each service may have differences in the range of data relevant to the nature of the service but wherever possible we will aim to capture data only once and in the same format. Such records will be kept in line with the Data Protection Act. The type of data and the data itself will be reviewed at least once per year by the relevant operational management teams and equality and diversity steering group.

For service users and students

- Applications and success/failure admission rates
- Service user/student profiles and retention rates
- Student destination and achievement rates

For employees, volunteers and applicants, (where applicable)

- Job application rates and participation in “Positive About Disabled People Two Ticks” scheme
 - Workforce profile
 - Pay levels
 - Disciplinary, grievance and capability hearings
7. **Analysis** We will consider and review our strategy, objectives, operational plans, policies and procedures in the light of the data and the impact on groups with protected characteristics as part of a quality cycle. We will identify under-represented groups within the users of our services, workforce and volunteers, and take practical steps to achieve necessary change. We are particularly keen to promote the employment of disabled people within our workforce as an under represented group and an illustration of our values in action.
8. **Involvement and consultation** we aim to involve our service users and students at the heart of everything we do to support them to increase the opportunities for choice in the way they live their lives. We consult with student and service user representative bodies and have established a Partnership Board about our work. Our staff are highly committed to Livability’s vision, mission and values. We involve and consult with staff through our normal line manager channels and through the Livability Employee Forum, which reviews and provides feedback on our work and other matters that affect them. We aim for an inclusive approach and

discuss equality issues with the relevant forums to achieve this and monitor our progress.

9. **Training** We will provide appropriate training on equality and diversity issues to all our workforce, through formal training and/or induction as appropriate. We will ensure that no individuals or groups are refused or overlooked for necessary and appropriate training that is afforded to others. We will provide appropriate development for service users to enable them to participate fully in recruitment development and partnership forums.
10. **Objectives** In the light of our review of our strategy, policies and plans, feedback from user and employee groups and interpretation of data we will set and publish equality objectives to continue to improve our services and employment practices to promote inclusion and choice.

Related policies and procedures

11. This policy has no dedicated procedure attached to it due to the number of areas on which it impacts and it is therefore integrated with all key policies and procedures affecting service users, students, applicants, volunteers and employees which are available via Livability's intranet. Key policies and procedures include:

- Code of Conduct
- Admissions Policy and Procedure
- Care Practice Policy and Procedure
- User Involvement Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy for service users
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Family Friendly Policy and Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection Policy & Procedure
- Family Friendly Policy and Procedure
- Volunteers Policy and Procedure
- Performance management Policy
- Learning and Development Policy

Please note this list is not exhaustive

Responsibilities

12. Key responsibilities are set out below and on the attached organisational framework

- **The Board of Trustees of Livability and Local Governing Boards** of education units are responsible for ensuring governance of Livability's equality and diversity policy and objectives and ensuring that the impact on equality and diversity is considered in strategy development and review.
- **The Chief Executive and Directors** are responsible for the effective promotion and implementation of this policy and any other policies and procedures associated with it, and specifically for ensuring that the impact on groups with protected characteristics is actively considered when developing and reviewing organisational strategy and business plans.
- **The Director of Human Resources** is responsible for chairing the Equality & Diversity Steering group, ensuring regular reporting to Directors Management team, Trustee groups and Workforce involvement team. The Equality & Diversity Steering group is responsible for reviewing practice and making recommendations for continuous improvement.
- **All Managers** are responsible for implementing the Equality & Diversity policy, providing and analysing data for action plans, considering the impact of policy, practice and plans on groups with protected characteristics and ensuring staff are trained and confident about equality & diversity as it relates to their practice and work environment.
- **All employees and/or volunteers** are required to comply with this policy and, in line with the values of the organisation, to act to remove any barriers to equality of opportunity and help create a positive working environment that is open, diverse, friendly and welcoming. Any act of discrimination, harassment or victimisation by employees and/or volunteers or any failure to comply with the terms of the policy will result in disciplinary action and may result in termination of employment.

Complaints

13. Service Users, employees or volunteers who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination are entitled to raise the matter through the Complaints policy and procedure or Grievance policy and procedure respectively. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to take complaints of discrimination to an employment tribunal.

Policy Ownership

Policy Name	Version number	Associated Process
Equal Opportunities & Diversity	5.3	Manage people

Policy Owner	Doc ref
Director of HR	QMS/Pol/EqualOps

Approval and review status:

Date adopted by Trustees	10 Mar 2011	Date published	April 2011
Review carried out on	March 2013	Date of next review	March 2016

Change History:

Issue	Date	Author	Reason
0.1	Aug 2008	Pat Kirby	1 st draft
0.2	Oct 2008	Pat Kirby	Final draft
1.0	Jan 2009	Anne Strach	Final version
1.1	May 2010	Anne Strach	Reviewed – no changes
1.4	Oct 2010	Anne Strach	Reviewed – Equality Act 2010
1.5	February 2011	Anne Strach	Reviewed – Audited and approved by DMT
2.0	Apr 2011	Anne Strach	Revision
3.0	April 2012	Anne Strach	Revision
4.0	April 2012	Anne Strach	Review by E&D Steering Group
4.5	May 2012	Anne Strach	Reviewed
5.2	Sep 2012	Anne Kippax	Final Amendments – approved by DMT & Board
5.3	March 2013	Anne Kippax	Review and minor amendments

LIVABILITY EQUALITY & DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

