



## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

At The Awareness Centre (TAC) we are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, within our counselling services provided to our clients, and in the way we educate and train our counselling students – with the intention of eliminating unlawful discrimination.

We acknowledge we have a duty, both moral and legal, to ensure that we do not discriminate unfairly in our employment, recruitment and management practices, and in the work and services we provide. TAC adopts a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination. We aspire to continue to have a diverse workforce because diversity enables better business outcomes. We also believe that a more inclusive workplace – where people of different backgrounds work together – ensures better outcomes for all who work with us.

As a counselling service and training provider we work to follow the standards of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, and to observe the principles set out in the *BACP's Good Practice in Action 063: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Within the Counselling Professions*.

Our aim is for all our workforce to be truly representative of our clients and all sections of society, and for each person to feel respected and able to give their best.

### **How we work**

At TAC we are proactive in ensuring that we continually reflect on and monitor our progress towards achieving our objectives. Through reflection we work towards:

- Promoting diversity and removing unfair treatment and discrimination through our policies and procedures, regardless of the role held within TAC.
- Ensuring our workplace is a safe, supportive and harassment-free environment.
- Supporting individual and collective responsibility to respect each other's contributions to the running of the organisation.
- Ensuring we have a working environment where all have equal, dignified and ease of access to goods, services and facilities. Where this may not be possible, we will provide well-considered, fit-for-purpose alternatives.

### **Commitment**

We are committed to providing equal opportunities to all current and prospective employees regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to join TAC.

We also promote our counselling services to individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and offer NHS counselling to individuals over 18 who are registered within a GP surgery in Lambeth, Sutton or Wandsworth. We offer a low-cost counselling service to individuals and couples who are registered disabled, receiving a state pension, a student (not a student practitioner), receiving working tax credit or on low income. We also offer a private therapy service to individuals and couples, which they fund personally or through their private healthcare.

To help us achieve our goal of a diverse and inclusive workplace we commit to the following:

- Taking seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow stakeholders – who include employees, contractors, therapists, students, clients and any others – in the course of the organisation’s work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under our grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.
- Creating and offering opportunities for training, development and progress to all employees, contractors and students, assisting and encouraging them to reach their full potential so talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Reviewing and updating our practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness – and to ensure our policies take into account changes in the law.
- Working with partners who share our values on equal opportunities and diversity.
- Making decisions concerning staff or students on merit (apart from any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010).
- Monitoring the make-up of the workforce – regarding information relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation – in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is fully supported and endorsed by TAC’s Managing Director and Senior Management.