

HACKNEY QUEST

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy (Updated March 2025)

Introduction

Equality, diversity, and inclusion have been central to the mission of Hackney Quest since it was established in **1988** and remain key to the design and ethos of all our programmes. Hackney Quest aims to reflect, celebrate, and support the hugely diverse community we serve. We recognise the need to reflect on and implement strategies to ensure that our programmes, recruitment processes, and communications remain representative and inclusive.

Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion at Hackney Quest

Diversity, equality, and inclusion mean:

- Creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and fulfil their potential.
 - Recognising and valuing individuals' differences and placing positive value on their diversity.
 - Providing equal access to opportunities and resources, without discrimination or intolerance, regardless of:
 - Race, ethnicity, nationality, or colour
 - Gender or gender identity
 - Sexual orientation
 - Disability, including mental health
 - Age
 - Religion or belief
 - Marital or parental status
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Commitment to Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

Hackney Quest is committed to:

- Helping people to recognise their own biases and supporting them to challenge these attitudes.
 - Creating an environment where all staff, volunteers, and young people feel safe, supported, and valued.
 - Ensuring that our premises and activities are accessible to all individuals and addressing any structural barriers with dignity and sensitivity.
 - Encouraging our staff, volunteers, and young people to promote diversity and inclusion within Hackney Quest and the wider community.
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Legal Framework

This policy reflects the requirements of:

- **Equality Act 2010** – Ensures protection against discrimination based on nine protected characteristics.

- **Human Rights Act 1998** – Establishes the rights and freedoms of individuals.
 - **Public Sector Equality Duty** – Requires public bodies to actively consider how they can eliminate discrimination and promote equality.
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Types of Discrimination

Direct Discrimination

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic. For example, refusing to interview a job applicant based on their race or gender identity.

Indirect Discrimination

This occurs when a condition or requirement applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular group more than others without a valid justification. For example, holding a social event at a venue that excludes people with certain dietary needs or accessibility requirements.

Harassment

Unwanted behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment.

Victimisation

When a person is treated unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

Commitment to Fair and Equal Treatment

Hackney Quest is opposed to discrimination of any kind, including:

- **Race and ethnicity** – We value the diverse cultural backgrounds of our staff, volunteers, and young people.
 - **Gender and gender identity** – We promote gender equality and respect gender identities.
 - **Sexual orientation** – We provide a welcoming environment for LGBTQ+ staff, volunteers, and young people.
 - **Disability** – We strive to make our facilities, programmes, and communications accessible to all.
 - **Mental health** – We are committed to supporting individuals with mental health challenges and ensuring equal access to opportunities.
 - **Religion or belief** – We respect all religious beliefs and practices and provide accommodations where possible.
 - **Age** – We provide equal opportunities regardless of age.
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Recruitment and Selection

Hackney Quest is committed to inclusive recruitment by:

- Using clear and inclusive language in job descriptions and advertisements.
 - Encouraging applications from underrepresented groups.
 - Ensuring recruitment panels reflect the diversity of the community.
 - Providing reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities.
 - Avoiding unconscious bias through training and structured interview processes.
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Implementation

- The **CEO** is responsible for the implementation of this policy.
 - **Janita Halsey (Youth Manager)** is the **Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI) Representative**.
 - All trustees, staff, and volunteers are responsible for upholding and promoting the policy.
 - Third-party recruitment agencies must comply with this policy.
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Reporting and Handling Incidents

- All incidents of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation must be reported immediately.
 - Concerns should be raised with the **CEO**.
 - If the concern involves the CEO, it should be reported to the **Chair of Trustees**.
 - All reports will be treated confidentially and investigated promptly and fairly.
 - Appropriate action will be taken against anyone found to have violated this policy.
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Monitoring and Review

- The Board of Trustees will review the policy every **three years**.
 - Implementation will be monitored and reviewed annually during the CEO's appraisal.
 - Feedback from staff, volunteers, and young people will be incorporated into future updates.
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Reviewed: March 2025

Next Review: March 2026

Approved by: Colette Allen (CEO and Safeguarding Lead)

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