

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Introduction

Terapia is committed to equality both as a service provider and an employer. Terapia addresses the need and right of everyone, clients and employees, to be treated with respect and dignity, in an environment in which a diversity of backgrounds and experiences are valued.

Terapia intends to resist any form of discrimination and is wholly opposed to discriminatory attitudes and their manifestations.

By implementing this commitment Terapia aims to ensure that no client, student or employee receives less favourable treatment, on the ground of race, gender, age, disability, physical appearance, sex orientation, political or religious belief, marital status or trade union activity.

2. Our aims

The commitment to equal opportunities is consistent with the broader aims of Terapia, in making a vital contribution to its core activities. Terapia expects both volunteers and paid staff to share that responsibility. An equal opportunities policy should go beyond the avoidance of unfair discrimination, to the encouragement, whenever practicable, of training activities which reflect a diversity of cultural experience.

3. Students' admissions.

- 3.1 Terapia welcomes everybody from all social and ethnic backgrounds.
- 3.2 Terapia believes that clients, volunteers and employees with disabilities should have access to the full range of training activities. Terapia will make reasonable adjustments to meet both the general need for access and the specific needs of individuals.
- 3.3 Terapia will ensure that all clients are adequately and appropriately consulted about their needs, and their views are taken into account.

4. Discrimination and Harassment

Introduction

Terapia aims to create a supportive and stimulating environment for clients and members of staff, paid or volunteers. It accepts that such an environment cannot be created or sustained if clients or employees are individually or collectively subjected to harassment, intimidation, aggression or unfair or unlawful discrimination.

4.1 Discrimination

Discrimination is the wilful or conscious decision to exercise a personal prejudice against another person or persons.

Discrimination can occur in three forms:

Direct Discrimination – when an individual is deliberately and knowingly treated less favourably than another

Indirect Discrimination – when a condition is applied with which certain individuals of a particular group cannot comply and this cannot be shown to be justifiable

Victimisation – when an individual is singled out for unfair treatment by other person or persons as a result of claiming direct or indirect discrimination.

4.2 Harassment

Harassment may take the form of action, behaviour, comment or physical contact, which is considered objectionable or offensive to the recipient even if the offence is not intended. The essential aspect of harassment is that it is unwanted and causes offence and/or embarrassment to the recipient.

Personal harassment will be regarded as a serious matter, which could result in disciplinary action taken against the harasser.

4.3 Racial Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Racial harassment is directed against easily identified and targeted groups. Racism involves implication (direct or indirect) of inferiority on ground of race, colour, religion ethnic origin and nationality.

Actions considered to be unacceptable include:

- a. Verbal racist comments or innuendo including comments made in the course of lectures, tutorials and meetings
- b. Derogatory name-calling, insults and racist jokes
- c. Bringing racist materials such as leaflets to the organisation
- d. Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges

5. Implementation

Terapia will respond to any form of discrimination or harassment through the following steps:

1. Setting up an immediate support system to the sufferer
2. Taking action against any individual, client or a member of staff found to be contravening the policy, and pursuing discriminatory or harassment practice
3. Following appropriate grievance or disciplinary procedures

4. Recording the reported incidents, how, where and why they occurred and what action had been taken
5. Reviewing good practice procedures and identifying any problem areas to ensure that similar incidents do not re-occur
6. Providing additional training on Equal Opportunities to members of staff if appropriate

6. Adherence to policy

It is the responsibility of all Terapia's members, employees, paid or unpaid to ensure that the standards established within this policy are followed and to review the effectiveness of the policy.

7. Grievance procedures

Any client or employee who alleges that he/she has been the subject of discrimination or harassment by Terapia staff or any other member may invoke Terapia's established Complaints Policy procedures.

8. Review

8.1 Regular reviews:

Terapia recognises the importance of the Equal Opportunities Policy and undertakes to conduct annual reviews to ensure the policy and its implementation is appropriate and effective. The policy is subject to change in the light of:

1. General agreement being reached by the core staff
2. Clarifications or information that may have been overlooked
3. Any other event that casts doubt on the policy.

8.2 Special Review:

Any member of staff or client may raise an equal opportunity issue. In this event the Course Director and another member of core staff will meet to discuss this and to propose a resolution. If the outcome of monitoring results in changes to the policy, all students and members of staff will be informed and given the opportunity to comment prior to the changes being put into effect.

9. The legal framework

Terapia as an employing organisation has a responsibility to comply with the provisions of the Sex Discrimination Act (1976) as amended, the Race Relations Act (1976) and the Equal Pay Act (1970). As an Organisational Member of BACP Terapia Training in Integrative Child Psychotherapy and

Counselling also abides by the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy (2001).