

Equality and Diversity Policy

This document sets out Hamilton Grace Apartments policy on equality and diversity for its staff and those who use our services. It defines why equality and diversity are important, what the basic principles we will follow are and how we intend to achieve this.

Hamilton Grace recognises the positive benefits of the implementation of an Equality and Diversity Policy. The aim of the policy is to ensure that:

all employees, potential employees, and visitors are treated in a fair and equitable manner regardless of their colour, race, ethnic or national origin, language, religion or belief, gender or gender reassignment, marital status, sexuality, disability, age, any illness or infection, social background, or organisation role.

We value the differences, needs and contributions a diverse workforce and customer base represents.

Hamilton Grace places an obligation upon all our staff to respect and act in accordance with this policy. We are committed to providing information on equality and diversity for all our staff.

Hamilton Grace extends this positive attitude in respect of equality and diversity to our contractors, service users and the community. We will:

- promote equality and diversity.
- challenge and eradicate discrimination.
- provide responsive and accessible services.

Within the overall framework of its statement of purpose and values, Hamilton Grace is committed to the principle and practice of equal opportunities and celebrates the diversity of people.

Hamilton Grace believes that equalising employment opportunity not only meets legal and social responsibilities, but also promotes organisational effectiveness and improves the quality of working life.

All employees whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

1. Definitions

Equality is creating an even platform to enable everyone to access the same opportunities and is backed by legislation to prevent discrimination based on prejudices against any group.

Diversity is understanding and valuing the differences in people and believing that harnessing these differences will create a productive working environment and an enriching life experience where talents are fully utilised and organisational goals are met.

Valuing diversity means valuing the qualities that different people bring to their jobs, to the resolution of problems and to the development of business opportunities - rather than judging people's ideas by the extent to which they conform to our existing values or personal preference.

Managing diversity means recognising that our staff and those who use our services are from differing social, cultural, ethnic, racial and gender backgrounds and have different religions or beliefs, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identities, ages, physical and mental abilities.

In practice this means that we are committed to:

- giving all staff the chance to achieve their full potential by striving to eliminate unfairness, discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying at work.
- dealing with staff solely on the basis of merit and without prejudice, thus ensuring fair, reasonable and dignified treatment for all in:
 - recruitment
 - appraisals
 - access to training
 - career development
 - job allocation • promotion
 - grievance and disciplinary matters
- providing support and encouragement to all staff to enable them to give of their best, but with special consideration for members of staff with particular needs such as those with additional responsibilities at home or with disabilities.
- treating staff employed by others (including agency staff and outside contractors) in a professional manner and making sure they are not harassed, bullied or discriminated against.

2. The aim of our policy

- To ensure all staff are afforded equality of opportunity. • To ensure all employees have equality of access to promotion and equal pay.
- To attract a diverse workforce and utilise the skills, knowledge and abilities available.
- To create a positive image as an employer and service provider.
- To increase performance and efficiency, and prevent disciplinary and grievance cases.
- To have zero tolerance of breaches of our Equality and Diversity Policy. All instances of alleged misbehaviour will be investigated under our disciplinary procedures (contained within the contract of employment).
- To recognise the diversity of the residents of, and visitors to, Hamilton Grace Apartments and their diverse backgrounds, culture and needs and ensure that services are delivered appropriately to maximise participation by all.
- To endeavour to remove any barriers to access the services we provide.

3. What we will do

Hamilton Grace will uphold equality and diversity:

- in employment, by ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or trainee is unfairly discriminated against on the basis of their colour, race, ethnic or national origin, language, religion or belief, gender or gender reassignment, marital status, sexuality, disability, age, or any illness or infection, social background, or organisation role;

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- in service delivery, by providing appropriate, sensitive and impartial services and being accessible to all;
- by fostering a co-operative working environment which is free from harassment or victimisation and which promotes good relations among staff to create the conditions for the full development of their potential.

4. Specific actions and commitments

Gender

Hamilton Grace will take action to promote gender equality. • We will never use gender as the basis for making staff recruitment decisions. • We will ensure that we do not apply any direct or indirect discrimination to our visitors or staff on the basis of gender and marital/civil partnership status. • We will operate a transparent and non-discriminatory pay system.

Sexual Orientation

Hamilton Grace is committed to creating a safe working environment for all its staff and service users with due regard to their sexual orientation.

We want Hamilton Grace Apartments to be a place where people who are lesbian, gay and bisexual among our staff and visitors feel it is safe and comfortable to be open about their sexual orientation.

Disabled People

Hamilton Grace recognises that people are not necessarily disabled by their impairments, but the way in which they are discriminated against by society (the social model of disability).

Therefore Hamilton Grace will:

- Create a new Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan and deliver against it.
- Increase awareness in the organisation about the needs of staff, users and visitors with disabilities. • Work to ensure our practices do not restrict use of our services or the contribution people with disabilities can make to our work.
- Continue to assess the accessibility of our sites and actively seek opportunities to improve access to our premises' and services for people who have disabilities. • Recognise that disabilities may not always be visible and equally respect the wider needs of this group including individuals with mental health or debilitating conditions such as MS or AIDS.

Race and Ethnicity

Hamilton Grace serves people from a diverse range of racial, national and ethnic groups. Hamilton Grace is committed to promoting a cohesive society and eliminating racial discrimination. Hamilton Grace will encourage good relations between people of different racial, national and ethnic groups and challenge negative views/actions.

Religion and Belief

Hamilton Grace is committed to creating a safe working environment for all its staff and service users with due regard to their religions or beliefs.

We want Hamilton Grace Apartments to be a place where all staff and visitors who adhere to different religions or beliefs feel it is safe and comfortable to be open about their religion or belief. We will challenge negative views and practices.

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Age

Hamilton Grace will continue to employ and serve people of all age groups and will ensure its policies do not adversely affect staff or services users because of their age.

We will ensure that we do not unfairly discriminate in the employment of staff and volunteers or the provision of services on grounds of age, both old and young.

Procurement

Hamilton Grace will strive to ensure that the purchase of goods, services and facilities is undertaken in line with our equality and diversity commitments.

We want to engage with a diverse range of suppliers and ensure that businesses from diverse communities have an equal opportunity of competing for our contracts. We will endeavour wherever practicable to purchase from agencies or companies who share our values on equality of opportunity and diversity.

Training

Hamilton Grace will circulate this policy to all staff and volunteers. Training on the contents of the policy will be given at staff meetings and on a one-to-one basis at annual staff appraisals. All new members of staff will be trained on this policy as part of their induction process.

5. Whose responsibility is it?

The Directors has overall responsibility for equality of opportunity within the organisation.

The Directors are responsible for ensuring the Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented in the organisation; for ensuring staff understand the policy and their roles within it; and for providing reports and monitoring information.

Every member of staff has an individual responsibility to ensure this policy is actively implemented. This should be reflected in the development of individual work programmes which take account of the needs of all potential users of services. It should also be reflected in individuals' performance and conduct.

This policy will be circulated to all Hamilton Grace employees and all candidates applying for positions within Hamilton Grace Group and all contractors. This policy will be made available on our web site.

Hamilton Grace actively encourages individual members of staff who feel that they have in any way suffered from, been disadvantaged by, been discriminated against unlawfully, or has been subjected to harassment to report these incidents to the Directors. In the same way, members of staff who witness an act of discrimination or harassment against a fellow employee and/or visitor should report this to the Directors. Staff can also raise any concerns they have at staff meetings.

Hamilton Grace recognises that it is important that staff raise any concerns they have about equality and diversity issues – even if they have not yet become actual 'incidents'. In some situations it may be possible to prevent a 'concern' becoming an 'incident' through taking early action.

Any employee found to have acted in a discriminatory way in relation to colleagues or visitors to the museum will be dealt with in accordance with the Hamilton Graces disciplinary procedure.

Approved by the Board 10th January 2018

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