

Equal Opportunities Policy

Lindengate is committed to implementing and promoting equal opportunities in its activities, services and practice. It realises that discrimination exists in society (whether protected by law or not), and believes that this prevents potential and ability from being realised.

Lindengate will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of:

- Age
- Colour
- Gender
- Sexual orientation or identity (including gender reassignment)
- Ethnic or national origin
- Trade union activity
- Race
- Disability
- Partnership status or home responsibility
- Pregnancy (including maternity and paternity rights)
- Political or religious belief
- Socio-economic background

As a provider of a service to the community, Lindengate accepts the responsibility to promote equal opportunities and challenge discrimination wherever it occurs. This document sets out the main consequences of this commitment and the action to be taken in order to achieve equal opportunities.

Lindengate recognises that some users of its services may, because of their past or present distress or illness, say or do things which would otherwise be unacceptable and incompatible with our Equal Opportunities Policy. We will do all we can to challenge such behaviour. In cases where intervention is possible a gentle approach will be adopted which aims to alter attitudes and behaviour while maintaining support for the distressed client.

Lindengate realises that a genuine commitment to equal opportunities must operate on all levels:

- we will prevent unfavourable treatment, directly or indirectly, upon individuals from any group facing discrimination in its recruitment and deployment of human resources. Where discrimination does occur, it will be dealt with through the agreed procedures. This will be achieved by following Lindengate's *Equal Opportunities Policy*.
- we will seek to prevent discrimination and ensure equal representation in the services it provides, the structures that it facilitates and the practice through which it carries out its work. This involves the development of greater diversity in the management committee, networks and membership, to ensure a genuinely wide representation.

Responsibility

- The management committee of Lindengate has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers and service users have a duty as part of their involvement with Lindengate to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice. Those responsible for recruiting volunteers to work in our projects are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of Lindengate's *Equal Opportunities Policy* and adhere to it while working as volunteers.
- Lindengate will bring to the attention of all volunteers and service users the existence of this policy, and will provide such training as is necessary to ensure that the policy is effective and that everyone is aware of it.
- If any service user or volunteer feels that they have been, or are being discriminated against, in any way, they are entitled to pursue the matter with the management committee.
- All instances or complaints of discriminatory behaviour will be treated seriously.

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- Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will also be treated as serious.

Disabled Access

- Lindengate will endeavour to ensure, as far as is practicable, that all the premises it uses have disabled access. When considering new premises, every effort will be made to ensure such premises are fully accessible.

Use of Language

- Volunteers and service users should avoid and challenge the use of language which, in any way, belittles anyone
- Where the language used has a personal impact on others, and it has been made clear to the person concerned that their use of such language is unwelcome and/or offensive, disciplinary action may be taken if they persist with it.
- All materials used or developed by Lindengate will be judged in the light of the promotion of equal opportunities, and those considered to be discriminatory will not be used.

Sexual Harassment

No volunteer or service user should be subject to sexual harassment. This is interpreted as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature including:

- verbal sexual abuse
- physical contact
- repeated remarks which an individual finds offensive
- If it has been made clear to the person concerned that their behaviour is unwelcome and they persist with it, then the service user or volunteer who is the recipient of the behaviour will be entitled to make a formal complaint.

Monitoring and Review

The Policy will be constantly reviewed by the management committee to ensure that no Member of the group is put to a disadvantage either, directly or indirectly. This monitoring will apply to the practices of staff and volunteers, the member organisation, the composition of the Committees and the provision of services.

It is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and to ensure the practical application of this Policy.

The Trustees of Lindengate will review this policy every 2 years.

Policy development record

Date	Edition	Notes
3 rd November 2013	Initial release	
4 th December 2015	Review release	Formatting improvements.
14 th August 2017	Updated	Broadens definitions of discrimination
Reviewed 13 th Aug 2019	Approved	No changes needed
1 st August 2020	Approved	No changes needed

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3 rd August 2021	Approved	No changes Needed
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Next Review Date: 1st August 2022

Important Data Protection Information

Lindengate uses this information to review compliance with its policies on equal opportunity in relation to recruitment. We will use this data to inform our statistics on the representation of the categories of individual as shown above. We will treat all personal information in line with current data protection legislation and our data protection policy. For more information on how we use the information you have provided, please see our privacy notice for job applicants available on the job vacancies page on our website.

In order for us to process this information and to comply with data protection legislation, we require your consent. You are not required to give your consent; you acknowledge that any consent given is freely given. Your job application is not dependent on your giving consent to our processing of this data.

Including your signature below will signify your consent to our processing of this information. Once you have given consent, you may withdraw it at any time by contacting our Data Protection Officer.

Signature:

Date: