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Title: **Equality and Diversity**

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Lead Person for Review: Tony Pearson

ISSUE AUTHORISED BY

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Title: **Chief Executive**

Signature:



Date: November 2010

AMENDMENTS

Date	Text Affected
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November 2010	No changes.
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Previous Amendments

February 2010	No changes.
November 2009	Reviewed as part of the policy review process – insertion of word - sectarianism to page 2.
February 2009	Additional review appendix 1 added – no change to policy.
November 2007	Reviewed as part of the policy review process – policy re-written.
November 2008	Reviewed as part of the policy review process – minor amendments made to pages 1 and 2. Page three re-written.
November 2006	No change.

PLEASE DESTROY SUPERSEDED INFORMATION

All Real Life Options Policies and Procedures are reviewed in line with, and should be applied with consideration to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and It's Your Decision – The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Policy Statement

Real Life Options is committed to equality and diversity and seeks to offer and promote equal opportunities both in its service provision and employment. We believe that a policy of equality and diversity benefits everyone who comes into contact with our organisation whether they are a user of our services, an employee or potential employee, or a commissioning authority.

Real Life Options is committed to the following principles:

- To combat discrimination and eliminate any practices, procedures or behaviour that may treat individuals less favourably - particularly in regard to race and nationality, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion or belief.
- To be an organisation that celebrates and values diversity and embraces the rich contribution made by people from different backgrounds and cultures
- To offer services fairly to individuals, ensuring that our services are accessible to a wide and diverse range of people
- To ensure that **everyone** involved or who comes into contact with Real Life Options or its staff is treated with dignity and respect
- To recruit and retain individuals on the basis of merit and ability removing any barriers which may hinder the access of individuals into employment or in achieving their full potential within RLO
- To recognise and ensure that we meet our obligations under the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Equal Pay Act and all related Codes of Practice

Real Life Options will strive to:

- fully utilise the skills, talents and resources of all our employees
- ensure our policies and working practices support our commitment to equality of opportunity and keep them under regular review so that particular groups or individuals are not disadvantaged by them
- listen to and meet the different and changing needs and expectations of both the people we support and the people who work for us

Policies

We have established a range of policies that support our commitment to equality and diversity which include:

CORP05	-	Fair access, diversity and inclusion
HRM07.1	-	Bullying and Harassment Policy for Staff
Support26	-	Bullying and Harassment Policy for Service Users
HRM07.2	-	Dignity at Work
HRM23	-	Flexible Working Policy
CORP07	-	Racial Equality
CORP09	-	Whistle-Blowing Policy
HRM01	-	Recruiting and appointing staff

Responsibilities

Our Board of Management, directors, managers and all employees have a responsibility to be pro-active in demonstrating their commitment to equality and diversity and to challenge any discrimination or sectarianism, whether or not it was intended.

Directors and Managers are responsible for:

- implementing the policy and all related policies and procedures
- taking appropriate action against anyone who discriminates
- delivering services which meet the needs of a diverse range of individuals
- adhering to our policies and procedures in regards to the recruitment, promotion and management of individuals
- ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated

Every employee has responsibility for:

- making the principles of equality and diversity integral to their work
- adhering to the principles of our Dignity at Work policy, contributing to an environment where individuals can work and live without fear or intimidation
- being pro-active in tackling discrimination

Complaints

Any complaints or concerns relating to discrimination, bullying, harassment, sectarianism or victimisation will be dealt with in a sensitive manner in line with the relevant policy and procedure. This will generally involve them addressing the matter with their line manager or the next manager above. However, where individuals feel unable to discuss such matters with their line managers, they can approach their HR Advisor.

Monitoring

We will monitor our success in achieving the commitments and responsibilities outlined within this policy and highlight any possible inequalities.

This monitoring will be both quantitative and qualitative. We will monitor:

- Numbers of staff from different ethnic groups
- Numbers of disabled staff
- Numbers of male and female staff
- Age range of staff

We will also survey staff on a regular basis to gain their views about equality within the organisation and carry out occasional monitoring of successful and unsuccessful applicants to gain their impressions on their treatment during their recruitment and selection.

We will review our monitoring data internally using internal benchmarking exercises as well as against external data.

Equality Action Plan

In making bold policy statements we are aware of the need for pro-active action to ensure they are put into practice consistently throughout the organisation and that our commitment to equality, diversity, fair access and inclusion is reflected in all that we do.

Our equality targets and objectives are laid out within our Equality Action Plan. These are agreed by our Board of Management and owned by senior managers and are subject to on-going monitoring and annual review.

The Equality Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and shared with staff teams, service users and made available to other relevant stakeholders.



December 2008

Ensuring equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice – our Action Plan and Targets

Our Equality and Diversity Policy states *"Real Life Options is committed to equality and diversity and seeks to achieve equal opportunities both in its service provision and employment. We believe embracing a policy of equality and diversity benefits everyone and anyone who comes into contact with our organisation whether they are a user or potential user of our services, an employee or potential employee, or a commissioning authority."*

Equally our policy document Fair Access, Diversity and fair access, diversity and inclusion for people supported states *"Real Life Options recognises that inequality, unfair treatment and discrimination can and does occur in any part of any society. Real Life Options services should never be considered to be immune from unfair, unequal or discriminatory practices although measures have been put in place to make such occurrences significantly less likely."*

In making bold policy statements we are conscious of the need for pro-active action to ensure they are put into practice consistently throughout the organisation and that our commitment to equality, diversity, fair access and inclusion is reflected in everything that we do.

Our equality targets and objectives are laid out within this document and form our Equality Action Plan. These are agreed by the senior management team and are subject to on-going monitoring and annual review.

Analysis of our monitoring programme will be published and reviewed by our Board of Management and made available to senior operational management in order that appropriate action can be taken and to share good practice. This information will inform the future review of the Action Plan.

We will review this plan annually and share it with staff teams, service users and make it available to other relevant stakeholders. The next review will be carried out in January 2010.

December 2008

REAL LIFE OPTIONS
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2009-10



TARGET 1
To promote a culture where equality and diversity is celebrated

No	Objective	Action	Start	Completed	Responsible
1	Our Equality and Diversity Policy and Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion policy are implemented and effective	<p>Equality and Diversity Policy and equality action plan are reviewed annually and review includes consultation with all stakeholders</p> <p>Assess implementation through monitoring of recruitment and appointment processes</p> <p>Monitor the level of disabled staff, what if any reasonable adjustments have been carried out and their level of satisfaction</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Spring 09</p> <p>Spring 09</p>		<p>DMS/ H of Ops/Acc'ible Information officer</p> <p>MIU</p> <p>HR/MIU</p>
2	Policies and procedures support a culture where discrimination, exclusion, harassment and bullying are not tolerated	<p>Bullying and Harassment policies and procedures are reviewed annually and provide effective guidance to management in responding to allegations</p> <p>Equality and diversity policies are publicised to staff and service users</p> <p>Training is provided to managers in implementation of our organisational policies</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>		<p>DMS</p> <p>HR</p> <p>SMT</p>
3	That those individuals we support are treated with dignity and respect	<p>Service users and other stakeholders are made aware of our equality and diversity policies and Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Policies available in a range of accessible formats.</p> <p>All staff are given appropriate training in regard to organisational values and equality issues</p> <p>Our complaints policy is made available and accessible to service users and other stakeholders</p>	<p>On-going review Spring 09</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>		<p>Div Managers, Accessible Information Officer</p> <p>LDM</p> <p>QM Accessible Information Officer</p>

REAL LIFE OPTIONS
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2009-10



TARGET 2
Governance and Management

No	Objective	Action	Start	Completed	Responsibility
1	Ensure that equality and diversity action plan objectives are embedded in the planning process at all levels of the organisation.	Ensure that our Equality and Diversity Policy and Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion policy are both consistent with and linked to our organisational strategy	On-going		Board of Management/ EMT
2	Managers' behaviours and actions actively promote a culture of equality and diversity and act as a role model for others	Managers receive training in equality and diversity Managers at all levels fairly and consistently implement organisational policies and procedures and actively encourage a positive attitude to all people	On-going On-going		LDM/DMS Line Management
3	Appropriate language is used within all our communications and organisational documentation	All managers and people responsible for the day to day supervision or management of others receive training in equality and diversity Marketing and other organisational communications directed to stakeholders is reviewed to ensure consistency with our Equality and Diversity Policy	On-going		HR Head of Marketing/TL MIU

REAL LIFE OPTIONS
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2009-10



TARGET 3
Recruitment and Employment

No	Objective	Action	Start	Completed	Responsibility
1	To review and maintain a recruitment procedure that removes barriers based upon gender, ethnic origin, sexuality, disability, age	<p>Provide training in fair recruitment for managers and recruiters</p> <p>Monitor successful and unsuccessful applications to ensure our recruitment and selection procedures are fair and equitable</p> <p>Where appropriate develop targets following analysis of data</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>April 09</p>		<p>DMS/ HR Advisors</p> <p>DMS/MIU</p> <p>EMT</p>
2	That our workforce reflects the community in which they work	<p>Monitor workforce in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job/grade - Gender - Ethnicity - Age - Disability <p>Compare this information against available information on the composition of local communities and identify under-represented groups.</p> <p>Monitor Leavers</p> <p>Set targets to address weaknesses or under-represented groups</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>- Annually</p> <p>April 09</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>May 09</p>		<p>MIU</p> <p>MIU / HRA</p> <p>MIU/HRA/EMT</p>
3	All staff have fair and equitable access to training and development in line with regional/functional plans	Regional and functional training records are monitored and the results shared with the SMT	Jan 09		MIU / LDM
	To provide fair and equitable employment where all staff are treated with dignity and respect	<p>Ensure that bullying and harassment, dignity at work policy and codes of practice are reviewed annually</p> <p>Ensure that staff are aware of these policies and action to take where they believe a breach has occurred</p> <p>Monitor complaints</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>		<p>DMS</p> <p>Line Management/DMS/MIU</p>

REAL LIFE OPTIONS
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2009-10



TARGET 4
Fair Access and Inclusion

No	Objective	Action	Start	Completed	Responsibility
1	To engage with service users in order to inform our service delivery and ensure our services are accessible and appropriate to their needs	<p>Carry out annual consultation with service users through use of accessible surveys, service user forums and interactive events</p> <p>We will ensure that we tell our stakeholders about the outcome and what action we are taking to respond to that</p> <p>Peer audits of application and selection process to be undertaken</p>			<p>QI Manager</p> <p>QI Manager</p> <p>QI Manager</p>
2	Policies and procedures are reviewed on an annual basis to improve quality of service delivery	Stakeholders are involved in review of key policies	On-going		Accessible Information Office/Policy Leads
3	Service users are supported to meet their cultural, religious and/or lifestyle needs	<p>Care plans are in place for each person supported to ensure their needs are met</p> <p>Staff are specifically recruited in line with the COQ exemptions or are trained to ensure an understanding of an individual service user's cultural needs</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>		<p>Divisional Managers</p> <p>Divisional Managers/LDM</p>
4	Information about Real Life Options and the services it can provide is made accessible to "hard to reach groups"	<p>Marketing materials are distributed to local groups and representatives – feedback obtained to inform future approaches</p> <p>Information resource and contact database maintained regarding cultural, ethnic and religious organisations maintained in respect of areas where we deliver services</p>	<p>Jan 09</p> <p>Jan 09</p>		<p>Head of Marketing</p> <p>Heads of Ops</p>