



bdm

GROUP

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Version Control

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## Issue History

When minor amendments are made to the document, the version number should increase after the point (0.1, 0.2, etc.). When major amendments are made, it should increase before the point (1.0, 2.0, etc.).

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2.0	13/04/2018	Mike Surridge	GDPR amendments	
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3.0	01/09/2022	Wendy Burgess	Inclusion of staff survey Race – to include Nationality Religion – to include lack of belief Recruitment statement	
4.0	02/02/2023	Wendy Burgess	Add Approved By in Issue History Page 5 – addition of ‘gender identity’	Sharon Powell
4.1	04/04/2024	Wendy Burgess	Spelling and grammar amendments	Sharon Powell

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## 1. Introduction

The BDM Group consists of two companies: BDM Voice Ltd., BDM Talk Ltd.

BDM Group is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

BDM Group aims to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected, and built upon, with the ability to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

This policy is designed to ensure that BDM Group complies with its obligations under equality legislation and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly.

Implementation of this policy will provide assurance to stakeholders and clients that the Group Management has considered the importance of equality and diversity in the workplace and has appropriate management processes and monitoring in place to ensure adherence to The Equality Act 2010.

## 2. Aim of the Policy

BDM Group will do all it can to ensure it recruits, trains and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation.

BDM Group recognises and values people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.

BDM Group is unreservedly opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics).

Using fair and objective employment practices, the BDM Group aims to ensure that

- All employees and potential employees are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment
- All employees (volunteers/service users) have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour. Such behaviour may come from other employees or by people (third parties) who are not employees of BDM Group such as customers or clients
- All employees (volunteers/service users) have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination
- All employees (volunteers/service users) have the right to be free from discrimination because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic or because others perceive that they have a particular Protected Characteristic, even if they do not

### 3. Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to:

- Job applicants
- Employees
- Agency temps
- Students on work experience or placements
- Volunteers including trustees
- Service users

The policy applies to all stages of employment including recruitment and selection, promotion and training.

The policy covers the following types of discrimination:

#### Direct discrimination

This is when an employee or applicant is treated less favourably than someone else because of their:

- sex
- marriage or civil partnership
- gender reassignment / gender identity
- pregnancy and maternity leave
- sexual orientation
- disability
- race - this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- age

and that there is no genuine occupation requirement for it.

BDM will not discriminate against an employee because they are on a part time or fixed term contract

#### Indirect discrimination

This is where there is a working condition, practice or rule that disadvantages one group of people more than another.

For example: it is more difficult for people from one group to comply with the requirement. Even if it is done accidentally indirect discrimination is unlawful. Indirect discrimination is only allowed if it is necessary for the way the business works, and there is no other way of achieving it.

#### Discrimination arising from disability

This is where a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability where it cannot be objectively justified. This only applies where the organisation knew or could reasonably be expected to know that the person was disabled.

#### Associative Discrimination

This is where someone is treated worse than someone else because they are associated with someone with a protected characteristic.

### Perceptive Discrimination

This is where someone is treated worse than someone else because there has been an incorrect assumption that they have a protected characteristic. This applies even if the person does not possess the characteristic.

### Third Party Harassment

This is where an employee is harassed by a third party who is not an employee e.g., volunteers or service users. The organisation becomes liable if it has happened on at least two occasions, that it is aware that it took place and has not taken steps to prevent it happening again.

## 4. Policy statement

As an organisation, we value the variety of different views, outlooks, and approaches that a diverse workforce brings. This assists us to provide improved services and increase our understanding of our service users/clients.

We will do all we can to ensure no one will receive less favourable treatment or is to be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions, which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

### Responsibilities

All employees, temporary staff and volunteers of BDM Group have a duty to act within this policy, ensure it is followed and to draw attention to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices.

Responsibility for promoting awareness of this policy and monitoring that it is being followed rests with the Management Team.

### Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy by employees

Breaches of this policy by employees may be dealt with by invoking disciplinary procedures.

### Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy by volunteers (including trustees)

The position of a volunteer may be jeopardised if they do not follow this policy.

Employees, temporary staff and volunteers and trustees are also personally liable under equality legislation for any act of unlawful discrimination.

## 5. Equality and diversity in practice

In carrying out the policy, the organisation will carry out the following actions.

- Particular attention will be placed on the following:
  - Use of selection criteria that does not unlawfully discriminate in recruitment and promotion procedures
  - Requiring entry to employment /volunteering or progression within it to be based on merit
  - Not discriminating in opportunities for recruitment, training, promotion or transfer of employees or volunteers

- Ensuring that every individual is assessed according to his or her personal capability to carry out a given job/role
- Ensure that all employees are given equal treatment with regards to terms and conditions of employment, provided they do the same or broadly similar work, or work of equal value
- Ensure equal opportunities and non-discrimination in the operation of grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Ensure that all relevant requirements of the Equality Act in relation to disability are met and adhered to. This will include making reasonable adjustments to ensure access to employment or volunteering tasks and opportunities
- Ensure that any amendments to any legislation relating to discrimination are met and adhered to

## 6. Implementation of the Policy

All staff and volunteers will be involved in creating an equality environment and one that values diversity.

### Communications

Communication of the policy to job applicants and employees/ volunteers through

- Making available a copy of the policy to prospective applicants
- Ensuring all new starters can discuss the policy with line managers/ colleagues
- Making use of team meetings to discuss the policy and defining areas where practice could be improved
- Providing non- discrimination selection training for managers who are recruiting
- Providing Equality and Diversity training and guidance to staff and volunteers (including trustees)
- Including reference to abiding by the policy in staff terms and conditions/ volunteer agreements
- Incorporating specific responsibilities into job/role descriptions

### Working with Partners

In selecting our partners, we will consider their commitment to Equality and Diversity by:

- Asking to see their policy
- Asking what they do in practice, including (but not limited to) management and monitoring the policy

### Users of our Services

We will make our services accessible by:

- Considering formats for promotional material
- Appropriate use of language/ formats / fonts/ size
- Considering whether information should be available in alternative formats e.g. easy read /other languages
- Considering locations where the organisation's services are promoted /advertised (these could be named)
- Considering accessibility of locations from which the service is provided

- Considering the diverse make up of our staff/ volunteers in relation to our service users
- Considering the impact of proposed new services on the user group

### Managing the Policy

We will ensure that all managers are fully equipped to lead on equality, diversity and inclusion matters by including specific training on how to recognise and address issues of equality, diversity and inclusion as part of the leadership development programme.

### Management skills

We will accentuate the value we place on people-management skills by developing processes to ensure that anyone taking on significant management responsibilities receives appropriate training. This training will enhance awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues and provide staff with the capabilities to address them effectively.

### Recruitment

We will ensure that we are always recruiting, retaining and promoting a diverse mix of colleagues who are representative of the diversity in our local community. This also gives us a great opportunity to have access to a broad range of ideas and allows us to give both our clients and customers the wide mix of knowledge and experience reflective of both theirs and our business.

We endeavour to generate shortlists that properly reflect the diversity of talent available to us and to accelerate the process of making our staff profile more representative of the populations from which people are recruited.

### Monitoring the Policy

This policy will be monitored to judge to what extent it is working and identify areas for improvement.

Monitoring will relate to both employees/ volunteers and to service users. Effective monitoring is an important tool for measuring performance and progress towards equality and diversity goals and in ensuring a truly inclusive working environment. Monitoring is not an end. Data that is collected is analysed and used to inform appropriate action. Monitoring will only generate meaningful and reliable results when employees feel safe and confident in disclosing personal information and when they feel assured that meaningful action will follow.

BDM has taken steps to reassure staff on issues of confidentiality through their communications.

Equality and Diversity is a specific area questioned in our monthly confidential telephone staff surveys and with results reported and reviewed in the monthly management meeting.

## 7. Reporting discrimination / potential discrimination

Employees who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should in the first instance where possible raise the issue with their manager.



Volunteers who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue with their manager.

Service users who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise a complaint with the company through their Account manager or the Managing Director.

Employees/volunteers/service users should also use this approach if they feel that they been the subject of harassment from someone who is not an employee of BDM Group. BDM Group will not tolerate any harassment from third parties towards its employees/ volunteers/service users and will take appropriate action to prevent it happening again.

If an employee, volunteer or service user witnesses' behaviour they find offensive in relation to age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, even if it is not directed at them, they should also use this procedure.

## 8. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Directors to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of the organisation.

The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered.

