

# Philosophy, Core Values and Aims

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**Deafblind  
Studies**



DEAFBLIND  
·UK·



sense  
for deafblind people



DEAFBLIND  
·SCOTLAND·

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# Philosophy

We believe that all people who are deafblind have the right to be supported by people who have the knowledge and skill to provide a high quality service. We also believe that workers in the field should have access to training and professional development that will allow them to deliver such a service and that will benefit the field in general.

## Core Values

The Board of Partners:

- Expects that the course will provide learning opportunities that encourage transition into innovative and skilled service delivery and lead towards a dynamic supportive workforce for deafblind people.
- Believes in, and supports, full access to teaching and learning on the course, particularly for deafblind and sensory impaired individuals.
- Believes in, and supports, the collective development in knowledge and skills of deafblind people, participants and the 'field' to enable all to take responsibility for improving services.
- Expects that any inequality or discrimination, in all its forms, will be confronted.
- Believes and expects that the Board, trainers and participants will respect each other's contribution and learning time and be supportive and constructive in the manner in which they engage in the course.
- Believes in, and supports, all to keep any promises made, laugh lots and celebrate frustrations and achievements.

## Aims of the course

- To provide learning opportunities which encourage transition into innovative and skilled service delivery.
- To enable full access to teaching and learning.
- To provide the knowledge and skills to enable participants to appropriately challenge and question current practice and take responsibility for improving services.

- To share knowledge and skill in this specialised area of work to support the general development of the deafblind field.

## **Appendices**

Note: The following policies are extracted from the organisational policies of the partner organisations. The full version of each organisation's equal opportunities policy is available on written request to the course coordinator.

Any changes that occur to partner organisation's policies during the life of this document will not be reflected in this version

# Deafblind UK Equal Opportunities

## Equal Opportunities Statement

Deafblind UK is committed to providing equal access to life's opportunities for all those it comes into contact with. In particular, it fights to reduce the extreme disadvantage thrust upon deafblind people, even within the disability world. It recognises that the people it works with - deafblind people, their carers, staff, colleagues in other organisations and the public - include men and women, young and old, those from a range of ethnic/racial backgrounds, those with invisible disabilities, and those whose circumstances and preferences may fall outside conventional expectations. Deafblind UK will not judge or distinguish on any of these grounds.

## Equal Opportunities Policy

Deafblind UK's aim is to ensure that all of its employees, deafblind people and carers, job applicants, colleagues in other organisations and the public are treated equally irrespective of disability, race, colour, religion, age, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender or marital status. This policy sets out instructions that all employees are required to follow in order to ensure that this is achieved. Our policy and procedures are based on this code of practice relating to the following Acts of Parliament:

Race Relations Act 1976

Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Employment Relations Act 1999

Policy 1.	There shall be no discrimination on account of disability, race, colour, religion, age, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender or marital status.
Policy 2.	Deafblind UK shall appoint, train, develop and promote on the basis of merit and ability.
Policy 3.	Deafblind UK will make all reasonable provision to ensure that staff can preserve cultural traditions. Every effort will also be made to accommodate special equipment, access

	and procedures which people with disabilities may need to enable them to make fullest use of Deafblind UK training and facilities.
Policy 4.	Employees have personal responsibility for the practical application of the company's Equal Opportunities Policy, which extends to the treatment of deafblind people, their carers, employees, colleagues in other organisations and the public.
Policy 5.	Senior Managers and Supervisors who are involved in the recruitment, selection, promotion and training of employees have special responsibility for the practical application of the Company's Equal Opportunity Policy.
Policy 6.	The Grievance Procedure is available to any employee who believes that he or she may have been unfairly discriminated against (see staff manual).
Policy 7.	Disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure shall be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination including any form of harassment and bullying. Discriminatory conduct and sexual harassment shall be regarded as gross misconduct (see staff manual for full list).
Policy 8.	If there is any doubt about inappropriate treatment under the Deafblind UK's Equal Opportunities Policy, employees should consult the Finance and Administration Manager.

## **CACDP's Equal Opportunities Policy**

The CACDP Constitution says that:

“CACDP will at all times encourage and promote policies and practices which ensure equality of opportunity for its staff, its members and the consumers of its services irrespective of nationality, ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability.”

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for making sure that this policy is carried out. Those responsible for different parts of the policy are listed after each section.

## **Declaration of Intent**

(Our commitment to equal opportunities)

CACDP is committed to having an Equal Opportunities Policy which encourages, supports, and values the wide variety of different kinds of people in society.

We recognise that discrimination exists. People might experience discrimination<sup>1</sup> because of issues such as their gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, disability, age, marital status, class, caring responsibilities, sexuality or HIV status. CACDP is opposed to both direct<sup>2</sup> and indirect discrimination<sup>3</sup>. We will make every effort to be an organisation which encourages debate and dialogue, with working practices that challenge discrimination.

We are committed to providing educational and employment opportunities for candidates and staff, including those from groups that are currently under-represented. We will ensure that unnecessary obstacles are not put in the way of access to these opportunities.

We expect staff, candidates, and others in contact with CACDP to behave in a non-discriminatory manner, and to support any changes we need to make to our practices if they are found to be discriminatory.

## **RNIB Equal Opportunities**

RNIB is committed to being an equal opportunities organisation. This Policy applies to RNIB's governance, service delivery, employment and volunteering practices. Contractors, and organisations that we work in partnership with, are also expected to abide by this policy. This policy covers RNIB's operations throughout all of the United Kingdom.

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<sup>1</sup> Discrimination means treating people unfairly because we think they are different.

<sup>2</sup> Direct Discrimination: This is where an employee or prospective employee is less favourably treated because of their disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

<sup>3</sup> Indirect Discrimination: This occurs where an employer puts in place requirements, conditions or practices that affect all staff, but as a result one employee or group of employees is affected disproportionately to other groups.

Equality is one of RNIB's core values. As such, it forms part of the framework within which other policies, procedures and practices within RNIB, are to be developed and implemented.

### **We define equal opportunities as:**

- The removal of direct discrimination - ensuring that people are not treated less favourably on the grounds of their disability, ethnicity, national origin, colour and race, sex, gender reassignment, marital status, religious belief and political opinion, sexual orientation, age\* or trade union membership/non-membership. \* RNIB will not discriminate against job applicants and employees, between 16 and 65, (the latter is RNIB's contractual retirement age). Also, there are some posts where insurance cover requires post-holders to be a certain age for cover to be valid, for example, driving posts.
- The removal of indirect discrimination - ensuring requirements or conditions do not unfairly or unjustifiably limit access to services, jobs, or volunteering opportunities.
- Equal rights - the achievement and respect of equal civil rights for all.
- Equal access - increasing access to services, volunteering or job opportunities by having policies and practices which take account of diverse needs.
- Positive action - action which targets groups which are under-represented, within our customers, workforce or volunteers. The aim is to increase under-represented groups' access to RNIB. For example, if Asian people were under-represented as customers, we might choose to publicise our services in Asian newspapers.

### **Disability Equality**

This policy contains a section on disability equality because RNIB is a disability organisation.

RNIB recognises the exclusion and disadvantages that disabled people experience as a result of social, economic, and material barriers, created by the world in which they live. RNIB also recognises that disabled people may be enabled by learning additional skills.

RNIB is working to ensure that disabled people receive the maximum possible benefit that can accrue to them through the Disability

Discrimination Act (DDA). RNIB will, at the very least, takes steps to ensure that it meets its obligations under the DDA and, where possible, exceeds it. This includes making reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled trustees, committee members, job applicants, employees, customers and volunteers.

RNIB is further committed to positive action, in terms of our employment of visually impaired people. We will also use positive discrimination - where two candidates equally meet selection criteria at interview, where one of the candidates is visually impaired, then she or he should be offered the post. The DDA allows charities which promote the interests of a particular group of disabled people, to treat people from that group more favourably than others where this is connected with their charitable purposes.

## **Sense Policy: Equal Opportunities**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Sense welcomes the fact that Britain is a multi-racial multi-cultural society and is committed to celebrating the diverse contribution that all individuals and their communities can bring to the aims of the organisation and to the services that we provide to our users. Given the specific nature of our work we emphasise the positive contributions that are made by people with sensory impairments and other disabilities within the context of a “disabling society”.
- 1.2 The definition of “community” is used throughout this document to refer to groups of individuals who can be classed together as a result of their gender, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnic and cultural background and age. Some of the categories used will be defined by the most recent census. Individuals will then determine themselves which categories apply to them.
- 1.3 We recognise that prejudice, both conscious and unconscious discrimination, and adverse stereotypes may make it more difficult for some individuals to fully realise the richness of their personal experience within the workplace.

### **2. Policy Statement**

- 2.1 We are committed to working to minimise the incidence of prejudice and discrimination within the workplace, through the application of

our values to the recruitment and training of staff, through use of both informal and disciplinary procedures, and through the development of practical actions to support and encourage the contribution of staff from all communities.

- 2.2 We make a commitment throughout the organisation to:
- i) Provide different routes into our services, including employment and promotion, which are suited to the needs of different communities, and to review on a regular basis the effectiveness of these initiatives.
  - ii) Ensure that an individual's experience as a member of a specific community is used by the organisation and their colleagues to enhance the contribution that they can make within work, and is not the cause of any adverse action against them.
- 2.3 This commitment can only be made a reality through conscious action at an individual and collective level by all of Sense's Trustees, Staff and Volunteers. Action in breach of the policy is a serious disciplinary offence and may be considered gross misconduct.
- 2.4 We will regularly assess our performance in this area and report on progress to all stakeholders.

## **Deafblind Scotland - Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Deafblind Scotland is committed to the development of a positive policy to promote equal opportunity and combat discrimination, direct or indirect, in its committee structure, employment practices and provision of service.
- 1.2 Deafblind Scotland will seek to develop an effective positive programme of action to ensure that all members of staff (full or part-time or temporary) and all applicants for employment are given equal opportunity in all aspects of employment and training irrespective of sex, marital status, age, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability or health problems,(providing such disability or health problem does not

impede their capacity to do the job) eg conditions, pay, hours of work, holiday entitlement, overtime, workload, sick pay, pensions, training, promotion, redundancy.

- 1.3 Deafblind Scotland will ensure that in its service provision it will not discriminate against any groups or individuals on any of the above grounds.
- 1.4 Deafblind Scotland will seek to ensure representation in its membership and committee structure of currently under-represented groups.
- 1.5 There will be no discrimination against part-time workers. Conditions of service will apply equally on a pro-rata basis.
- 1.6 Staff employed by Deafblind Scotland will be made aware of the provisions of this policy.
- 1.6.1 Deafblind Scotland will consider where appropriate the implementation of positive action programmes if there is evidence that members of particular racial groups, women or registered disabled people are under represented.

Examples include:

- the physical adaptation or initial design of workplaces to suit the needs of employees with restricted mobility;
  - recruitment or training for school leavers;
  - internal training programmes designed to aid career development.
- 1.7 Deafblind Scotland will undertake to monitor and review all aspects of its equal opportunities policy and, where necessary, amend it to ensure its effective implementation.

## **2. Definitions**

- 2.1 In this policy, “discrimination” means where a person is treated less favourable on grounds of sex or marital status (as defined in the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975), age, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability or health problem including HIV infection or AIDS, (provided such disability or health problem does not impede their ability to do the job).
- 2.2 In this policy, “indirect discrimination” means the imposition of a requirement, condition or preference which is applied or would be applied equally to persons not of the same sex, marital status, age,

ethnic origin, nationality, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability or health problems (provided such disability or health problem does not impede their ability to do the job), but

- a) which is such that the proportion of persons of the same sex, marital status, etc... who can comply with the requirement / condition is considerably smaller than the proportion of persons of that group cannot.
- b) which cannot be shown to be necessary irrespective of the sex, marital status, etc...of the person to whom the requirement / condition is applied.
- c) which is to the detriment of the individual concerned because they cannot comply with it (e.g. having to be of a certain height).

# **Sense Scotland**

## **Policy Statement: Equality and diversity in employment**

We are committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. Our aim is that the workforce will be truly representative of all communities and that each employee feels respected, valued and able to give of their best. We will ensure equality and fairness for all in employment and will not discriminate on grounds of gender (including gender reassignment), age, marital status, disability, cultural or racial grounds (race, colour, nationality – including citizenship - ethnic or national origin), sexual orientation, religious belief, responsibility for dependants or employment status.

We disapprove of all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All employees, whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated equally.

### **Sense Scotland will:**

- Create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- Work to ensure that every employee has a working environment that promotes dignity and respect and will not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying or harassment.
- Make training, development and progression opportunities available to all staff.
- Employ people on the basis of their abilities and qualifications, and will ensure that training and promotion opportunities are open to all.
- Make all staff aware of our equal opportunities policy and of our shared responsibility as employers and employees in implementing this policy.
- Ensure that practices, procedures and the production of information do not lead to unintended discrimination.
- Promote an inclusive culture, good practice in working, training and assessment and good management practice.

- Continually assess and review our policies in order to examine how they affect all under-represented groups and identify whether our policies help achieve equality and diversity of opportunity.

## **Policy Statement: Learning and Development**

We are fully committed to developing a national training strategy and career pathway for all staff. An experienced, qualified and confident workforce who as reflective practitioners are skilled, knowledgeable and effective within their roles are essential for providing quality services. All staff should expect to consider, plan, develop and track their career through a process of training, learning and personal development.

### **Sense Scotland will:**

- Ensure that all staff have access to learning and development opportunities.
- Provide training which will allow all staff to develop their skills and knowledge in their area of work.
- Provide each new staff member with a professional development portfolio which will be a personal resource to track career development and provide evidence of learning and experience.
- Plan training and integrate this into other local service and departmental functions.
- Plan training and recognise that training activities are supported through each level of the organisation.
- Integrate development support within the regional management, practice support, administration and human resource functions.
- Endeavour to provide a variety of development opportunities such as secondments, work with international colleagues and conference participation.
- Encourage research, secondments, work with international colleagues and conference participation.
- Align training with National and European initiatives for workforce development.

## **Policy Statement: Promoting Disability Equality**

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people, so that they have full opportunities and choices to improve the quality of their lives and will be respected and included as equal members of society. We will adopt a proactive approach, mainstreaming disability equality into all decisions and activities to improve our effectiveness and efficiency by ensuring that the resources invested in services benefit all those they are aimed at, or who need them.

### **Sense Scotland will:**

- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their impairments.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encourage participation by disabled people.
- Take steps to take account of disabled people's impairments, even where that involves treating them more favourably than others.

## **Policy Statement: Values and working principles**

We are committed to working to our core values and working principles. Derived from families, these enshrine the organisation's ethos and guide the actions of all staff.

### **Sense Scotland will:**

- Be **open** and **honest**: we will be truthful and won't mean to mislead you.
- Recognise **individual worth**: you are important and what you say is worth listening to.
- Build **relationships** through **trust**: we will work to gain your trust by listening to what you say, by being truthful and by doing what we said we'd do when we said we'd do it.

- Act on the basis of **individual aspirations and needs**: we will respond to you as an individual and will not assume we know and understand about your wishes and needs before we learn about them.
- Be **accountable**: each of us is responsible for our actions and they will not work against what we agreed and will not work to your disadvantage.

## **Working Principles**

Working principles support our values in service provision where we will:

- Respect and protect dignity.
- Work in a way that provides as much privacy as possible.
- Safeguard rights, safety and welfare.
- Encourage as much choice as possible.
- Enhance independence by supporting people to do as many things for themselves as possible.
- Help people to realise personal fulfilment and make the most of opportunity.
- Provide opportunities for learning and having fun.
- Acknowledge the value of risk taking by assessing risk in such a way that it does not stop people trying new things.

Sense Scotland will keep its values and working principles under review in conjunction with families, people who use its services, and other interested parties.

## Revisions and Corrections

The following allows you to make feedback to the course coordinator about issues/revisions/corrections etc.

The page is designed to be removed and returned by post or fax.

It will be helpful if you include your name on the feedback in case more information is needed.

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