



Equal Opportunities and Diversity

Approved on behalf of the Young People's Support Foundation Management Committee			
Date of Approval:	May 2009	Date of next Review:	April 2011

Introduction

YPSF recognises within this policy its responsibilities under: the **Sex Discrimination Act** (1975), the **Race Relations Act** (1976), the **Disability Discrimination Act** (1995), the **Equal Pay Act 1970** (amended by **Equal Pay Regulations 1983**), **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act** (1974), **Protection from Harassment Act** (1997) and other relevant codes of practice and Law.

1. Statement of Intent

The Young People's Support Foundation works with young people aged 16-25 who are primarily disadvantaged by homelessness. We recognise that oppression and discrimination exist in our society and affect people in many ways. YPSF also recognises that some disadvantaged groups of young people are more vulnerable than others to homelessness. YPSF also recognises that disabilities and disadvantages may not be visible, and this should not prevent YPSF supporting these people.

Young People's Support Foundation will actively work towards equal treatment in service provision, committee representation, and employment of staff and recruitment of volunteers within the Foundation. Individuals should be provided with equal access to services and employment at every level, irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, age, class or any other factor.

YPSF is opposed to discrimination of any kind, and will work with all young people to challenge prejudice and encourage respect and value for diversity.

2. The Scope of this Policy

This policy covers all aspects of YPSF's work, including:

- Service provision and development
- Responsibilities of employees and employer
- Work practice with young people
- Grievance/discipline
- Leave
- Recruitment and selection
- Employment terms and conditions of service
- Promotion, training and career development
- The use of contractors and sub-contractors
- Committee members, members and volunteers

In implementing this policy, YPSF recognises different needs and values diversity. We have highlighted the equality issues, as they are relevant to YPSF for the following groups of people:

3.1 Ethnic minorities

Young people from ethnic minorities are overrepresented in homelessness but underrepresented in the statistics, and experience barriers in accessing services. YPSF will develop strategies to ensure young people from ethnic minorities have equal access to services, and encourage people of all ethnic origins to apply for job vacancies, training and volunteering, management committee membership and contracts to provide services.

3.2. Gender

YPSF is opposed to gender discrimination and recognises in particular the impact of sexism, sexual harassment and sexual violence on women. YPSF will work to ensure that young women are able to access services without barrier, and work with young people to counter gender stereotyping and sexism.

3.3. Disabled People

YPSF recognises that disabled young people are often invisible in homelessness statistics, and that particular barriers face them when accessing services. The Foundation will provide and adapt facilities, premises and equipment where possible and ensure that young disabled people feel welcome and able to access services.

3.4. Sexuality

Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals are particularly drawn to Manchester because of the gay village. YPSF recognises the difficulties each group will face, different to one another, and will work to ensure young people feel welcome and able to access services. YPSF respects an individual's right to be open about their sexuality or keep it confidential as desired.

3.5. Class and Poverty

Young people growing up in poverty will be disproportionately affected by homelessness. The children of poor families are more likely to have poor health, to be poorly educated or trained and to end up unemployed and homeless. We will work with these young people to address these inequalities and work in a manner that does not stigmatise or disadvantage individuals, groups or communities.

3.6. Age

YPSF is committed to providing services to young people between the ages 16-25 at City Centre Project, and between 14 and 25 at Signpost. YPSF will not discriminate on the grounds of age in the recruitment of employees, members, volunteers and management committee members. YPSF will operate a normal retirement policy of 65 years for men and women with an option to retire at 60. In the recruitment of committee members YPSF welcomes applications from people who have retired and/or are over the age of 65 years.

3.7. Religion

YPSF will provide space and time for religious needs when required. The Foundation will promote positive images of people from all religions. Flexibility will be available regarding public and religious holidays, and the standard working week. Staff should discuss religious needs with their line manager or the Resources Manager.

3.8. Family and dependents

YPSF will not discriminate against people who have responsibilities for dependents, i.e. children, elderly and disabled. We provide flexible working arrangements where possible, as well as adequate leave, maternity leave and child care leave for natural, adopted or sick dependents.

4. Recruitment and Selection

YPSF will take positive steps to encourage disabled people to apply for employment with us, be involved with the Management Committee and use our services. We will do this by:

1. Advertising in relevant places/publications
2. Making use of alternative forms of publicity
3. Making every effort to improve access to our premises.

Job criteria and selection practices will be reviewed to ensure they don't discriminate against anyone. The recruitment and selection policy will identify good practice, and all those involved in recruitment will be adequately trained to ensure equal opportunities practices are adhered to.

See also 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy'.

5. Training and Career Development

YPSF will provide resources for the provision of training and development opportunities and will ensure that training is provided on an equitable basis to all employees, members and volunteers. Equal Opportunities Training will be provided to all employees, volunteers and members as required. This policy will be provided to all members of staff, volunteers, trainees and Committee members at induction.

6. Responsibility for Implementation

All employees of YPSF are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy. Ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Management Committee. All employees and committee members have a responsibility not to discriminate and to ensure the positive implementation of this policy at all times.

The Foundation's Management Team have a particular responsibility to ensure that the requirements of the policy are planned, delivered, monitored and evaluated.

7. Monitoring

The effectiveness of this policy can only be measured by collecting information about how it is operating. Each team of the Foundation will be responsible for collecting relevant data and assessing the progress of developing equal opportunity practices. The Foundation's Management Team will review this information in order to plan future services. The Staffing Sub Committee will be responsible for monitoring of equal opportunities in relation to employment practices.

8. Complaints and Harassment

YPSF will take seriously and deal effectively with all complaints of discrimination as highlighted in this policy. Anyone who makes a complaint will not be victimised, treated less favourably than other employees, volunteers or service users or otherwise treated as if they are over sensitive about discrimination. Please see YPSF Complaints Policy for further details.

The Foundation will maintain Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures to deal effectively with complaints of harassment by members of staff. In other instances of alleged harassment of staff, Committee members or service users, appropriate action will be taken to investigate and prevent further harassment under YPSF's Complaints Policy