

## 1. Purpose

1.1. This policy sets out Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy's commitment for inclusive and supportive learning and working environments for all students and staff where all individuals have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

## 2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to all students and staff. Visitors and contractors are also expected to abide by this policy.

## Definitions 3.

3.1. A set of definitions used in this policy is set out in Appendix 1.

## 4. Legislative context

4.1. This policy is set within the following legislation:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Protection from Harassment Act (1997)
- Data Protection Act (2018)

4.2. More information on the Equality Act (2010) is set out in Appendix 2.

4.3. This policy will be reviewed in the light of any new legislation.

## 5. Policy statement

5.1. Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy is committed to supporting and promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices; and in so doing ensuring an inclusive culture.

5.2. Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy will, in carrying out all of its activities, have due regard to:

- The promotion of equality of opportunity;
- The promotion of good relations between different groups;
- The elimination of all indirect and direct discrimination.

5.3. Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy will not tolerate discrimination (including indirect discrimination), harassment (including sexual harassment), and victimisation of any kind, especially where this is based on protected characteristics. We are determined to build an inclusive culture.

5.4. In publishing this policy statement Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy is committing to the following principles:

- To use equality information to inform and evaluate the Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy's plans;
- To deliver and monitor the equality, diversity and inclusivity policy using evidence based data;
- To support staff to meet their equality, diversity and inclusivity responsibilities through training;
- To support students to meet their equality, diversity and inclusivity responsibilities through their programmes of study and wider student experience opportunities;

- To ensure that equalities information is accessible, current and shared openly whilst observing data protection;
- To monitor all stages of the employment process, with a view to taking action where appropriate;
- To monitor all stages of the student journey with a view to taking action where appropriate;

5.5. As a broad principle, Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy aspires to meet and go beyond our legal compliance requirements in its support of diverse students and staff, in line with its values.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

It is incumbent on all members of the Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy community to behave with dignity, courtesy and respect and to at all times act in a manner that does not discriminate, harass or victimise.

6.1 The Centre Director is responsible for ensuring Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy's compliance with equality and diversity legislation.

The Centre Director will ensure there are arrangements in place to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic;
- foster good relations between people who share and those who do not share a protected characteristic.

The Centre Director is responsible for the approval and oversight of the implementation of equality, diversity and inclusivity policies and strategies.

### **6.2 Members of staff**

Members of staff are responsible for:

- Supporting, implementing and abiding by the aims and contents of this policy statement;
- Using their role to promote equality of opportunity for students and staff;
- Contributing to an inclusive culture which celebrates diversity, and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Reporting any witnessed or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisation immediately to Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy

### **6.3 Students**

All students are responsible for:

- Abiding by the aims and contents of this policy statement;
- Complying with the standards of the Code of Conduct Policy;
- Contributing to an inclusive culture which celebrates diversity, and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect;
- Reporting any witnessed or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisation to Heartwood Counselling and Psychotherapy.

## Appendix 1:

### Definitions

**Direct discrimination:** Actions where people are treated less favourably than others on grounds related to their identity as one of the above protected groups.

**Diversity:** Recognising, valuing and taking account of individuals' different backgrounds, knowledge, skills and experiences to create a more productive and effective educational community.

**Equal opportunity:** This is the right of individuals and protected groups to equality of access and outcome in employment and service delivery.

**Equality:** A situation where all are able to participate and where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

**Harassment:** There are three types of harassment which are unlawful under the Equality Act:

- Harassment related to a relevant protected characteristic
- Sexual harassment;
- Less favourable treatment of a person because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex.

Pregnancy and maternity is not protected directly under harassment provisions, however, unwanted sexual behaviour will amount to harassment related to sex.

**Indirect discrimination:** This occurs where a condition or requirement has been put in place which applies to all, but, in practice, has a detrimental effect upon a group of individuals that cannot be fully justified.

**Positive action:** This is action taken by an organisation to provide development opportunities for 'Protected groups' who are demonstrably and statistically under-represented within the Centre.

**Protected groups:** Equality legislation currently provides protection against unlawful discrimination in employment and service delivery for these protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Being Neurodiverse will often amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010, even if the person does not consider themselves to be disabled.
- Gender reassignment Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

**Victimisation:** This is the treatment of someone less favourably because they have made or might make a complaint about discrimination under one of the above protected group categories.

## Appendix 2 : Equality Act 2010

Under Equality legislation it is unlawful to:

- discriminate directly against anyone and treat them less favourably than others on the grounds of the protected characteristics of: age (unless this can be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim), disability (including discrimination arising from a disability and failure to make reasonable adjustments), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This also includes discrimination based on perception of the person.
- discriminate against someone for reasons relating to their association with a person on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation e.g. discriminating against an employee or student because they have a disabled dependant.
- discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people with a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation) unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- subject someone to harassment for reasons relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This includes behaviour that an individual finds offensive on these grounds even if the behaviour is not directed at the individual.
- treat a person less favourably because they either submit to, or reject, sexual harassment or harassment related to their sex.
- victimise someone because they have made, or intend to make, a complaint or allegation, or have given or intend to give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination in line with the Equality Act.