

Equal Opportunities Policy

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1. Statement of intent

1. ADCA is fully committed to treating its employees, volunteers and members equally.
2. ADCA will offer opportunities for employment by, volunteering for, or being a member of ADCA fairly and irrespective of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, ethnic or national origin, and nationality), religion or belief, or sexual orientation (“the protected characteristics”).
3. We aim to create a service environment that is free from discrimination and harassment in any form and in which all staff, volunteers, members and their families are treated with dignity and respect.
4. ADCA will not unlawfully discriminate in arrangements we make for the recruitment and selection of staff or volunteers, decisions about attendance at our services, or training provision. All such decisions will be made fairly and objectively.
5. We aim, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure that all our practices are applied fairly and consistently. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to avoid or overcome any particular disadvantage these may cause and to promote equality.

2. Responsibility

1. ADCA is committed to the effective operation of this policy and to ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated legislation and to observing relevant Codes of Practice.
2. All staff, volunteers and Trustees have a responsibility not to discriminate against or harass other staff, volunteers or members and to report any such behaviour of which they become aware to the Development Coordinator, or to the Chairman.
3. All staff, volunteers and Trustees are responsible for implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy and must apply the policy as part of their day-to-day involvement with ADCA.

3. Forms of discrimination

Direct discrimination

1. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic that they either have or are thought to have. Direct discrimination can also occur by way of association, which is when a person is treated less favourably because, for example, their spouse or partner or other relative has a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

2. Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but has a disproportionately adverse effect on people who share a particular protected characteristic. A person with the protected characteristic who is disadvantaged in that way has the right to complain.
3. To be justified, the provision, criterion, or practice must be necessary for legitimate operational reasons in circumstances where less discriminatory alternatives are not reasonably available.

Victimisation

4. Victimisation occurs where a person is treated unfavourably because they have raised a complaint under this policy, or taken legal action (in relation to an alleged act of unlawful discrimination) against ADCA, or because they have supported someone else in doing this.

Harassment

5. Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates an individual’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment can take many different forms and may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments, emails or physical contact that cause offence or are objectionable.

6. Harassment may involve a single incident or persistent behaviour that extends over a period of time and can occur even if someone did not mean to cause offence. This also means that a person can be subjected to harassment by behaviour that is not aimed at them directly but which they nonetheless find unpleasant.
7. Harassment is always unacceptable and where it relates to a protected characteristic it will amount to an unlawful act of discrimination.

4. Disability

1. It is unlawful to treat a person unfavourably because of something that is the result, effect or outcome of their disability, unless that treatment is necessary and can be objectively justified.
2. Furthermore, as an employer, ADCA has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled applicants, employees or other workers are not substantially disadvantaged.

5. Policy implementation

Recruitment and selection

1. ADCA's recruitment and selection procedures will be free from bias or discrimination. Recruitment procedures will be conducted objectively and will be based upon specific and reasonable job-related criteria. Decisions regarding an individual's suitability for a particular role will be based on aptitude and ability.
2. All staff will be given an appropriate induction to enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of their role.
3. All staff will be encouraged to develop their full potential and we will not unreasonably deny an employee access to training or other career development opportunities.

Terms and conditions

4. ADCA's terms and conditions of service will be applied fairly and benefits and facilities will be made available to all staff that should have access to them, as appropriate.

Employment policies and practices

5. ADCA aims to ensure that its employment policies and practices, including any rules or requirements, do not directly or indirectly discriminate and are applied in a non-discriminatory manner. In particular we will ensure that all disciplinary decisions are fair and consistent and that selection for redundancy is based on objective criteria.
6. ADCA will ensure that any staff member who raises a complaint through the grievance procedure and anyone who supports them or gives evidence on their behalf will not suffer any harassment or unfair treatment as a result.
7. ADCA will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the working environment or any work arrangements that would alleviate any substantial disadvantage these may cause to staff.