

The background features a white page with a diagonal line from the top-left to the bottom-right. Three large, overlapping blue circles are positioned on the right side, each with a darker blue center and a lighter blue outer ring. In the center, there is a circular emblem with a light blue background and a white border. Inside the emblem is a stylized illustration of a palm tree and Arabic calligraphy. The text 'EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY' is written in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font across the middle of the page, partially overlapping the central emblem.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
POLICY**



THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to:

- a. All staff employed by Al-Hasaniya irrespective of funding agent.
- b. All aspects of service provision, promotional, educational, and campaigning functions of Al-Hasaniya.
- c. Members and affiliate organisations. Al-Hasaniya would expect its membership to concur with and actively promote these objectives.

DECLARATION OF INTENT

Al-Hasaniya is committed to taking positive action to fight unlawful discrimination in every respect of its work.

The policy applies specifically to discrimination and equality of opportunity in respect of 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex – we only employ women and this exemption is sanctioned by law
- Religion or cultural beliefs
- Gender reassignment
- Marital status and civil partnership
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity

The policy applies across the range of employment policies and practice, including those relating to Discipline, Grievance, Harassment and Complaints.

Responsibilities

Al Hasaniya values its staff, contractors, workers, Trustees and customers, and expects them to be treated in a respectful manner. Accordingly, all have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The Coordinator is responsible for providing advice and guidance on equality and diversity issues, and to ensure the Policy document is kept up to date.

General purpose

Al Hasaniya's practices will ensure that staff, workers, Trustees, and customers will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, race, sex, religion or cultural beliefs, gender reassignment, marital status and civil partnership, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity.

Al-Hasaniya's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice relates to all kinds of discrimination, as set out below:



- Direct discrimination - where someone is treated less favourably than another because they have a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination – when a requirement or a condition is applied which has a detrimental effect on a particular group or individual. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.
- Associative discrimination – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- Perceptive discrimination - direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic even if they do not possess that characteristic.
- Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This applies even if the conduct is not directed at the individual or if they do not have the protected characteristic.
- Third party harassment – potential liability for the harassment of staff by others such as clients or customers.
- Victimisation – when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equalities Act or it is thought that they have done so.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Al-Hasaniya is an equal opportunities employer. The aim of its equal opportunities policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, HIV antibody status, AIDS or disability, nor should they be disadvantaged by requirement. Al-Hasaniya will strive to redress any imbalance that may become evident.

Al-Hasaniya will endeavour to establish a broad base for consultation to identify priorities and needs as reflected by the BME population at large, and in all campaign work will maintain the objectives stated above.

The management committee shall review the content and effectiveness of the policy whenever a new staff appointment is to be made, and at other times as may be necessary. The Director is responsible for the policy's day-to-day implementation.

Al-Hasaniya will monitor and review the composition of its executive committee with the aim of promoting a broad-based representation.

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

A written job description and person specification shall be prepared in respect of every vacancy that arises and every new post that is created. It shall be checked and agreed by the staff and management committee for direct and indirect discrimination, including culture-bound assumptions and ageism before the



recruitment procedures commence. Applicants should be made aware that general life experience and voluntary as well as paid work are valued.

All jobs must be advertised externally and as widely as possible. In addition to whatever channels the organisation may choose to utilise, the vacant post must also be advertised in minority press. Adverts should clearly state the minimum requirements for the post.

At both the short-listing and the appointment stage, brief notes shall be made on each application indicating clearly why the applicant has or has not been short-listed or appointed. A form will be drafted for this purpose.

No interview, for any post should be conducted by a panel of fewer than three representatives or more than five members of the management committee. All interview panels must include women and shall be suitably representative of the various ethnic groups within the membership of the organisation. Members of staff will be involved at all stages of the selection process in an advisory role. Whenever possible, an external assessor shall be invited to join the panel in a non-voting capacity.

An open invitation will be given to short-listed applicants with a disability to discuss their specific needs and requirements. Al-Hasaniya will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the specific needs of disabled employees are met.

During each interview, notes should be taken and at the end of the interview a form should be completed for each candidate, assessing their response to the topics and themes raised. These should be reviewed at the end of the interview process by the panel to see that each candidate has been treated fairly.

Questions on the following topics are forbidden in an interview. Any candidate who is asked these questions has the right to refuse to answer. It is the responsibility of the Chair, or any other member of the panel to stop such questions being asked:

- Marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Occupation of partner
- Number of children/domestic arrangements (it should be made clear that the organisation aims to be flexible to individual requirements)

An equal opportunity section should be included on the application form. The equal opportunities policy, and the purpose of monitoring should be clearly explained.

TRAINING

New staff should be inducted into the Staff Development and Training Policy and made aware of training opportunities available to them, and be positively encouraged to take them up. All reasonable facilities will be offered to staff to take study leave.



SUPPORT

All workers should have access to support. If a worker feels isolated, provision should be made for support from other parts of Al-Hasaniya or outside the organisation. If groups of women, BME workers, or gay workers, for example want to set up a support group, this should be encouraged.

In order to implement this equal opportunities policy; Al-Hasaniya accepts that it needs to ensure that all members and staff involved in selection and recruitment within the organisation are given adequate and appropriate training in:

- i. Interview techniques
- ii. Codes of practice
- iii. Disciplinary and grievance procedures as contained in the Al-Hasaniya staff manual.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Al-Hasaniya's commitment

Al-Hasaniya is committed to ensuring equality of access to all its services. The management committee will take action to provide genuine equality of opportunity to counter past discrimination and to monitor the outcome. The management committee will aim to ensure that no sector of the community shall be denied access or receive a poor service on the grounds of age, race, gender, disability, being a lesbian or gay man, marital status, ethnicity or religious belief. Al-Hasaniya serves the Arabic speaking population in line with its constitution and articles of association.

The management committee will aim to ensure that all its services will be provided in line with this anti discrimination policy. In order to promote equality of access the management will aim to ensure the following:

- i. That services are based on consultation with those who receive the services and positive steps are taken to include excluded groups in decision-making.
- ii. That all services are flexible and responsive to the changing needs in the community.
- iii. That information on services is widely available and where necessary targeted to ensure maximum awareness of provisions.
- iv. That systems are developed to audit and monitor service delivery and consumer satisfaction.
- v. That an accessible complaints procedure will be developed to ensure against discrimination in service allocation and delivery.



- vi. That positive action programmes will be developed to target the needs usually excluded groups.
- vii. That in advertising and publicity Al-Hasaniya will be presented as an organisation committed to promoting equality of access to employment and services.

Data Collection

Al Hasaniya complies with the requirement of the Data Protection Act. Any data, either qualitative and or quantitative, required in order to monitor the requirements or the impact of the Equalities Act 2010, will be collected where it is reasonable, proportionate and practical to do so. Any such requirements will be notified to Al Hasaniya's customers and will follow a common data format.

Complaints and Sanctions

Al Hasaniya will treat seriously any complaints of unlawful discrimination on any of the stated grounds made by employees, volunteers, Management Committee members, clients or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

All complaints made by external parties will be investigated in accordance with Al Hasaniya's Complaints Procedure and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

In the event of an investigation concerning a complaint against an employee, Al Hasaniya's Grievance Policy and Procedures will be followed and any action necessary dealt with under Al Hasaniya's Disciplinary Procedure.

Complaints will be monitored annually and any outcomes/action recorded.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Training

Al Hasaniya will ensure that all new employees, volunteers, and Management Committee members will receive induction on the policy. Al Hasaniya will provide ongoing Equalities training for all staff, volunteers and Management Committee members on an annual basis and this shall be documented in the individual Training Plans/Records.

Review

The Management Committee shall regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in achieving the stated aims. This process shall be undertaken at least annually, shall include the review of each component of the policy, and shall aim to seek the views of organisations representing the interests of those groups referred to in this policy. The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on service users, staff and volunteers. The information collected for



monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.

INFORMATION

This document shall be circulated to all employees and job applicants.

Date of Management Committee Meeting when policy was reviewed:

Name of Management Committee Member:

Signature:

Signed date:

Glossary

Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010 are sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity.

Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The person does not have to be under medical supervision.

Race

Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. A racial group can be made up of two or more different racial groups (eg Black Britons).

Religion or belief

Under the Equality Act 2010, religion includes any religion. It also includes lack of religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion



at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.

Sexual orientation

Includes bisexual, gay, heterosexual, and lesbian people.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perceptive discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see associative discrimination below).

Associative discrimination

This is direct discrimination against someone because they are linked or associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified in relation to the job.

Harassment

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Third party harassment

Harassment of employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of your company, such as clients. XXX has a duty to prevent harassment and may be liable if aware that harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions and does not take reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment, or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

Positive action

Some people with protected characteristics are disadvantaged or under-represented in some areas of life, or have particular needs linked to their characteristic. They may need extra help or encouragement if they are to have the same chances as everyone else. The new positive action provisions held within the Equalities Act 2010 enable service providers to take proportionate steps to help people overcome their disadvantages or to meet their needs.