



SAFER RECRUITMENT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, DIVERSITY & DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Date of Adoption: October 2018 – Board Meeting 4 Signed Lynda Clarke (EDAS Chair)

Date of next review: Board Meeting 4 - 2021 By Whom: EDAS Board of Trustees

To be read in conjunction with:

1.1F Managing Diversity in Recruitment & Induction Policy

2.4 Workforce Development Policy

1.2J Harassment & Bullying Policy

1.2E Whistleblowing Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

EDAS is an equal opportunity employer and is fully committed to a policy of treating all of its personnel, job applicants, service users and learners equally. EDAS will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment and selection, promotion, transfer, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, other terms of employment, discipline, and selection for redundancy and dismissal.

EDAS will take all reasonable steps to employ, train and promote employees on the basis of their experience, abilities and qualifications without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. In this policy, these are known as the “protected characteristics”.

EDAS will also take all reasonable steps to provide a work environment in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity and that is free from harassment and bullying based upon age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. In this policy, these are known as the “anti-harassment protected characteristics”. All employees are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with this policy. EDAS will not condone or tolerate any form of harassment, whether engaged in by employees or by outside third parties who do business with EDAS, such as service users, contractors and suppliers.

Personnel have a duty to co-operate with EDAS to make sure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination, harassment or bullying. Action will be taken under EDAS’ disciplinary procedure against any person who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation. Serious breaches of this equal opportunities and dignity at work statement will be treated as potential gross misconduct and could render the person liable to summary dismissal. Personnel should

also bear in mind that they can be held personally liable for any act of unlawful discrimination or harassment. Personnel who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence.

You should draw the attention of your line manager to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or suspected cases of harassment or bullying. You must not victimise or retaliate against a person who has made allegations or complaints of discrimination or harassment or who has provided information about such discrimination or harassment. Such behaviour will be treated as potential gross misconduct in accordance with EDAS' disciplinary procedure. You should support colleagues who suffer such treatment and are making a complaint.

There are seven forms of discrimination under UK legislation (Equality Act 2010):

1) 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 perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

2) Discrimination by association

Applies to race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

3) Perception discrimination

Applies to age, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment and sex. 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.

4) Indirect discrimination

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, disability and gender reassignment. Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice within EDAS that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if it can be shown that EDAS acted reasonably in managing our business, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

5) 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". Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. EDAS

personnel will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Personnel are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

6) Third party harassment

Applies to sex, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The Equality Act makes EDAS potentially liable for harassment of any personnel by people (third parties) who are not employees of EDAS, such as customers or clients. EDAS will only be liable when harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions, you are aware that it has taken place, and have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

7) Victimisation

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

EDAS will not compare treatment of a complainant with that of a person who has not made or supported a complaint.

SAFER RECRUITMENT, ADVERTISING AND SELECTION

This policy applies to all adults who have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults through their work whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. It applies to permanent, temporary and agency staff and to those recruited from overseas. It also applies to staff who do not have direct responsibility for children, but who will have contact with children within the organisation and will be seen as safe and trustworthy and/or have access to confidential and sensitive information e.g. administrative staff, receptionists, caretakers, maintenance workers.

EDAS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, which it is expected ALL staff and volunteers will share.

The recruitment process within EDAS will be conducted in such a way as to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in terms of relevant experience, abilities and qualifications. EDAS is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy statement at all stages of recruitment and selection.

Advertisements will aim to positively encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people. The advertisement will include a statement about EDAS's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake a standard or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check where appropriate. When advertising job vacancies, in order to attract applications from all sections of the community, EDAS will, as far as reasonably practicable:

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1. Ensure advertisements are not confined to those areas or publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants with a particular protected characteristic.
2. Avoid setting any unnecessary provisions or criteria which would exclude a higher proportion of applicants with a particular protected characteristic.

Where vacancies may be filled by promotion or transfer, they will be published to all eligible employees in such a way that they do not restrict applications from personnel with a particular protected characteristic.

However, where, having regard to the nature and context of the work, having a particular protected characteristic is an occupational requirement and that occupational requirement is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, EDAS will apply that requirement to the job role and this may therefore be specified in the advertisement.

The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. All applications will be processed in the same way. The personnel responsible for short-listing, interviewing and selecting candidates will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and of the need for their consistent application. Person specifications and job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Wherever possible, all applicants will be interviewed by at least two interviewers and all questions asked of the applicants will relate to the requirements of the job. The selection of new personnel will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do, or to train for, the job in question.

With disabled job applicants, EDAS will have regard to its duty to make reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria and practices or to physical features of work premises or to provide auxiliary aids or services in order to ensure that the disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

If it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect the performance of the job (for example, if the job involves unsociable hours or extensive travel), this will be discussed objectively, without detailed questions based on assumptions about any of the protected characteristics.

Job Description

Once a post becomes vacant or a new post is created the job description and person specification will be reviewed/agreed to ensure compliance with safe recruitment guidance.

It will clearly state:

- The main duties of the post;
- The extent of contact/responsibility for children and young people;

- The individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the children/ young people/ vulnerable adults s/he is responsible for, or comes into contact with.*

*This includes where the post holder will work mainly or exclusively with adults. Some of these adults will be parents, grandparents or carers and will have contact with children and young people.

Person Specification

This will include:

- The essential and desirable qualifications and experience;
- Other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people;
- The competencies and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate.

Information Pack to Candidates

All information given to interested applicants will highlight the importance of the rigorous selection processes and the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. It will be clear that proof of identity will be required, as well as a Disclosure and Barring Service check where appropriate.

The pack will include a copy of:

- An explanation of the application process;
- The job description and person specification;
- Relevant information about the organisation and the recruitment process;
- The EDAS Child Protection & Adult Safeguarding Policy Statement

Application Form

EDAS will use an application form to obtain a common set of core data. It will not accept a curriculum vitae in place of an application form. The applicant form/information pack will refer to the organisation's commitment to safeguarding children. It should obtain:

- Identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, current address and National Insurance Number;

NB: To comply with the Equality Act 2010, EDAS will not ask for the applicant's date of birth on the main application form, but this is added to a diversity monitoring form, which is retained by HR/Personnel and will not be made available to those involved in the short-listing process;

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- A statement of any academic and/ or vocational qualifications with details of awarding body and date of award;
- A full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start dates, explanations for periods not in employment or education/training and reasons for leaving employment;
- Details of referees. One referee should be the applicant's current or most recent employer/line manager, not a colleague. Normally two referees should be sufficient;
- Where an applicant is not currently working with children, but has done so in the past, it is important that a reference is also obtained from the employer by whom the person was most recently employed in work with children in addition to the current or most recent employer;
- References will not be accepted from relatives or friends.
- A statement of the skills and abilities, and competencies/experience that the applicant believes are relevant to his/her suitability for the post and how s/he meets the person specification;
- An explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- Information will also be requested about any previous - including spent - convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings or bind-overs.

Scrutinising and Short Listing

The same selection panel will both short list and interview the candidate. At least one member of the panel will have undertaken safe recruitment and selection training.

- All application forms will be scrutinised to ensure:
- They are fully and properly completed;
- The information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies;
- Gaps in employment/training or a history of repeated changes of employment are identified;
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted;
- Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons will be noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, as well as a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent to temporary post;

- All candidates will be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification.

References

- The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions;
- One reference will be from the current or most recent employer/line manager or HR (not from a colleague within EDAS);
- They will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee;
- A copy of the job description and person specification will be included with all requests;
- References or testimonials provided by the candidate, or open references, i.e. To Whom It May Concern will not be accepted.
- References will be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones. If possible, these should be obtained prior to interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. (This may be particularly helpful for posts where a safeguarding interview is planned). Note that the Equality Act 2010 places strict limitations on the making of enquiries about a person's health before an offer of employment is made. For further information see 'The Equality Act 2010: What do I need to know? A Quick Start Guide to the Ban on Questions about Health and Disability during Recruitment';
- Where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before the interview, once received it will be scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the person's appointment is confirmed;
- References should seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion. The use of EDAS reference proforma can help achieve this.
- If an applicant is not currently employed in working with children, but has previously done so, then it is advisable to check with the last relevant employer to confirm details of their employment and reason(s) for leaving.

Requests for references should ask:

- The referee's relationship with the candidate, e.g. did they have a working relationship and how long has the referee known the candidate;
- How s/he has demonstrated that s/he meets the person specification;
- Whether the referee is satisfied that the person has the ability and is suitable to undertake the job;

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- Whether the applicant has been the subject of any disciplinary sanctions and whether the application has had any allegations made against him/her or concerns raised, which relate either to the safety and welfare of, or the applicants behaviour towards, children and young people. Details about the outcome of any such concern should be sought;
- Whether the referee is satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children/young people/ vulnerable adults. If not, for details of the referee's concerns and the reason why the person might be unsuitable.

Requests will remind the referee that they have a responsibility to ensure that the reference is accurate and that relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant.

- Requests addressed to a candidate's current employer or a previous employer will also seek:
- Confirmation of details of the applicant's current post, salary and sickness record;
- Specific verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct;
- Details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to which relate to the safety and welfare of children or to the applicant's behaviour towards children, young people or vulnerable adults and the outcome;
- Details of any allegations or concerns about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children, young people or vulnerable adults and the outcome of these concerns.

On receipt of references:

- They will be checked to ensure all questions have been answered satisfactorily;
- Prior to the confirmation of an appointment, referees will be telephoned to confirm their views on the candidate and to ensure information provided by the candidate is accurate;
- Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago or an allegation determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised, are less likely to cause concern than more serious or recent concerns, or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time should give cause for concern.

Interviews

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job description and person specification, and explore their suitability to work with children/young people/vulnerable adults;

The interview will stress that the identity of the successful candidate will be checked thoroughly and, that where a Disclosure and Barring Service check is appropriate, prior to appointment there will be a requirement to complete an application for a Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure;

All candidates must bring with them documentary evidence of their right to work in the UK and their identity. Evidence must be as prescribed by UK Visas and Immigration and the Disclosure and Barring Service, and can include a current driving licence or passport including a photograph, or a full birth certificate, and a document such as a utility bill or financial statement that shows the candidate's current name and address (please note that these latter two are time-limited and must be no more than 3 months old), and where appropriate change of name documentation. Some form of photographic ID must be seen;

Candidates must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualification(s). If this is not possible, written confirmation must be obtained from the awarding body. Also documentation of registration with appropriate professional body;

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file.

Interview Panel

A panel of at least two people is recommended, allowing one member to observe and assess the candidate and make notes, while the candidate is talking to the other. One member of the panel must be trained in safe recruitment practice.

The members of the panel will:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about the appointment;
- Meet before the interview to agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification and to prepare a list of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post;
- Identify any issues they wish to explore with each candidate based on the information provided in their application form and in the references;
- Notes of the applicant's interview answers will be collated by chair of the panel and stored (on HR online).

Scope of the Interview

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the post, the panel will explore:

- The candidate's attitude towards children/young people/vulnerable adults;
- His/her ability to support EDAS's agenda for safeguarding and promoting welfare;
- Any gaps in the candidate's employment history;

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- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or referee;
- Whether the candidate wishes to declare anything relating to the requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

The interview will also explore issues relating to safeguarding, including:

- Motivation to work with children/ young people/vulnerable adults;
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries;
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours;
- Attitudes to use of authority.

Participation of Children and Young People

EDAS recognise that children and young people can make a valuable contribution to the recruitment process and their participation will be considered for key strategic and managerial posts as well as posts where staff will have a high level of responsibility for children's day to day care.

The following considerations should be taken into account in planning children's involvement:

- Clarification of the role children will take in the process, how their views will be taken into account in selection and what weighting these will be given;
- Preparation and/or training;
- Process for debriefing/feedback.

Safeguarding (Warner) Interviews

For posts requiring the post holder to work with highly vulnerable children, e.g. Looked After children, children with disabilities, or posts where staff will have sole care of responsibility for a child/group of children, e.g. staff taking children on residential trips, consideration should be given to the need for an additional safeguarding (Warner) interview. Such interviews were a recommendation of The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Selection, Development and Management of Staff in Children's Homes (Warner, 1992). The aim is to address areas that are more difficult to assess in the formal interview setting.

As set out in regulations 33-33 of Chapter 4 of the Children's homes regulations and Quality Standards, the registered person must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risk to them. The Bichard Report recommended the assessment of personal qualities during the selection process.

Areas of assessment include:

- Motivation;

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- Integrity and values;
- Authority;
- Accountability;
- Ethical standards;
- Emotional resilience;
- Team work.

Elements include:

- Identification of support for candidate if necessary;
- Careful recording to evidence findings;
- Feedback to candidate.

Training is essential for staff prior to undertaking these interviews.

Conditional Offer of Appointment

Pre-Appointment Checks and References

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, where possible confirmed by telephone;
- Verification of the candidate's identity;
- A satisfactory or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure, which includes a check of the Barred Lists, including an overseas 'Certificate of Good Conduct' or equivalent (unless the Disclosure and Barring Service Update Service applies);
- Evidence of permission to work for those who are not nationals of a European Economic Area country;
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness;
- Verification of qualifications;
- Verification of professional status/registration where required, i.e. Health and Care Professions Council for social workers, National College for Teaching and Leadership for teachers. Nursing and Midwifery Council;
- Verification of successful completion of statutory induction / probationary period where appropriate.

All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing;
- Documented and retained on the HR online file (subject to restrictions on the retention of information imposed by Disclosure and Barring Service regulations);

- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or where there are discrepancies in the information provided.

In circumstances where:

- The candidate is found to be on the Barred Lists, or the Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court;
- The applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application;
- There are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

These facts will be reported to the police and/or Disclosure and Barring Service (if they are not already aware). Anyone who is barred from work with children is committing an offence if they apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work which constitutes Regulated Activity. It is also an offence for an employer knowingly to offer work in a regulated position, or to procure work in a regulated position for an individual who is disqualified from working with children, or fail to remove such an individual from such work.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

The level of disclosure requested, i.e. Standard or Enhanced, should reflect the nature of the duties of the post and degree of contact with children or young people or with sensitive, confidential information. As a partner agency of Dorset LSCB and Bournemouth & Poole LSCB Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks will be undertaken on staff and volunteers, unless there are specific reasons that this is not necessary for the specific post. A record will be kept of the date when the disclosure was obtained, by whom, level of disclosure and unique reference number. Disclosure and Barring Service checks will be:

- Treated as confidential;
- Kept secure;
- Destroyed as soon as no longer required (not normally longer than 6 months after decision to appoint; however, note that it may be necessary to retain them for longer for inspection regimes). A record of the date that the check has been made will be maintained.

CRIMINAL RECORD

EDAS will make a judgement about suitability, taking into account only those offences which may be relevant to the post in question. In deciding the relevance, the following should be considered:

- The nature of the appointment;
- The nature of the offence;
- The age at which the offence took place;
- The frequency of the offence.

Anyone who is barred from work with children is committing an offence if they apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work constituting Regulated Activity. It is also an offence for EDAS to knowingly offer work in a regulated position, or to procure work in a regulated position for an individual who is disqualified from working with children or fail to remove such an individual from such work.

Disclosure and Barring Service Update Service

Since the 17 June 2013, an optional online Update Service is operated by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), designed to reduce the number of DBS checks requested. EDAS will ask employees to register with the DBS subscription service and give the reference code to EDAS.

Checks on Overseas Staff

The same checks will be made on overseas staff as for all other staff, (although it is not possible to conduct overseas Disclosure and Barring Service checks). A 'Certificate of Good Conduct' or equivalent will be obtained.

Where an applicant has worked or been resident overseas in the previous 5 years, EDAS will obtain a check of the applicant's criminal record from the relevant authority in that country and seek additional information about an applicant's conduct. Not all countries provide this service and advice can be sought from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Applicants from non-EEA countries must have a Sponsorship Licence under the UK Visas and Immigration points-based system, and EDAS must be registered UK Visas and Immigration to be able to issue such a Licence. For further information, see the UK Visas and Immigration website.

Staff Records

In relation to each member of staff appointed a record will be kept to show:

- Written references obtained and confirmed by telephone;
- Gaps in employment history checked;
- A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service /Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate obtained, with unique reference number and date;
- Reasons/decision to appoint despite criminal convictions (i.e. a Risk Assessment);
- Evidence of proof of identity (this will have been provided for the Disclosure and Barring Service check);
- Evidence of qualifications;
- Details of registration with appropriate professional body;
- Confirmation of right to work in UK;
- Record of interview questions and answers.

Records should be signed and dated by appointing manager/chair of the interview panel.

Post Appointment Induction

There will be an induction programme for all staff and volunteers. The purpose of the induction is to:

- Provide training and information about EDAS's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. This training will be at a level appropriate to the member of staff role and responsibilities with regard to children;
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for their role;
- Confirm the conduct expected of staff;
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities;
- Enable the line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately;
- Ensure that the person receives written statements of:
 - o Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding;
 - o The identity and responsibilities of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities;
 - o Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected;
 - o Other relevant personnel procedures e.g. whistleblowing, disciplinary procedures.

Maintaining a Safer Culture

Maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people/vulnerable adults will be achieved by:

- A clear written statement of the standards of behaviour and the boundaries of appropriate behaviour expected of staff and volunteers;
- Appropriate induction and safeguarding training;
- Regular briefing and discussion of relevant issues;
- Effective supervision and staff appraisal processes;
- Clear reporting system if a user, member of staff or other person has concerns about the safety of children.

Monitoring

Monitoring of both the recruitment process and induction arrangements will allow for future recruitment practices to be better informed. It will cover:

- Staff turnover and reasons for leaving;
- Exit interviews;
- Attendance of new personnel at safeguarding training.

Supervision and Staff Review and Development

EDAS consider annual staff reviews as important elements in ensuring safe practice. They should:

- Ensure staff are up to date with current safe practices;
- Identify areas for development;
- Openly address any concerns about behaviour and attitudes;
- Put in place action plan and arrangements for review.

Disclosure and Barring Service Re-checking

Further Disclosure and Barring Service checks on staff must always be considered when:

- There has been a break from employment of 3 months or more;
- There are grounds for concern about the person's suitability to work with children (note that the employee can decline).

And in addition when:

- An existing staff member, who has not previously had a Disclosure and Barring Service check, applies for and is successful in obtaining a post which requires a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- A member of staff transfers to a multi-agency team, e.g. Youth Offending Service (YOS), e.g. secondments of employees from different employers such as Police, Probation or Health. If the seconded employee is undertaking Regulated Activity under the Vetting and Barring Scheme or is in an exempt post and is not a direct employee of YOS, then a Disclosure and Barring Service check should be undertaken before the person commences work.

Whistleblowing/ Allegations

A mechanism is established for confidential reporting or whistleblowing of any behaviour towards children or young people or vulnerable adults which is abusive, inappropriate or unprofessional (see EDAS Whistleblowing Policy). This includes:

- Conduct which is a breach of the law;
- Conduct which compromises health and safety;
- Conduct which falls below established standards of practice with children and young people.

This mechanism:

- Discourages anonymous reporting;
- Provides for the reporter identity to be revealed only with consent;
- Provides support for the reporter, e.g. in giving evidence.

All allegations of abuse of children or vulnerable adults by those who work with children or vulnerable adults are to be taken seriously. Allegations against any person who works with children or vulnerable adults, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances.

This procedure will be applied when there is such an allegation or concern that a person who works with children or vulnerable adults, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or vulnerable adult;
- Behaved towards a child or children or vulnerable adult/s in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults.

Training

- All those involved in recruitment and selection of staff, including key managers and HR professionals, will have regular comprehensive safe recruitment and selection training, and appropriate updates, e.g. National College of School Leadership;
- Each interview panel should include a person suitably trained;

TRAINING AND PROMOTION

EDAS will train all line managers in EDAS policy on equal opportunities and in helping them identify and deal effectively with discriminatory acts or practices or acts of harassment or bullying. Line managers will be responsible for ensuring they actively promote equal opportunity within the departments for which they are responsible.

EDAS will also provide training to all employees to help them understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to equal opportunities and dignity at work and what they can do to create a work environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Where a promotional system is in operation, it will not be discriminatory, and it will be checked from time to time to assess how it is working in practice. When a group of workers who predominantly have a particular protected characteristic appear to be excluded from access to promotion, transfer and training and to other benefits, the promotional system will be reviewed to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT, BENEFITS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

All terms of employment, benefits, facilities and service will be reviewed from time to time, in order to ensure that there is no unlawful direct or indirect discrimination because of one or more of the protected characteristics. Evidence of this can be found within Information, Policy & Procedures sub group meeting minutes

EQUAL PAY

EDAS is committed to equal pay in employment. It believes its male and female employees should receive equal pay for like work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value. In order to achieve this, EDAS will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria.

REPORTING COMPLAINTS

All allegations of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with seriously, confidentially and speedily. EDAS will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints of discrimination or harassment from employees.

If you wish to make a complaint of discrimination, you should use EDAS' grievance procedure.

With cases of harassment, while EDAS encourages personnel who believe they are being harassed or bullied to notify the offender (by words or by conduct) that his or her behaviour is unwelcome, EDAS also recognises that actual or perceived power and status disparities may make such confrontation impractical. In the event that such informal direct communication is either ineffective or impractical, or the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you should follow the procedure set out in the EDAS Harassment and Bullying Policy.

Any personnel who are found to have discriminated against or harassed another person in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action under EDAS' disciplinary procedure. Such behaviour may be treated as gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal. In addition, line managers who had knowledge that such discrimination or harassment had occurred in their departments but who had taken no action to eliminate it will also be subject to disciplinary action under EDAS' disciplinary procedure.

MONITORING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIGNITY AT WORK

All action taken under EDAS procedures relating to our Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy will be monitored and procedures and policies reviewed as necessary. We will monitor and review our managing diversity in recruitment policy, employment and training procedures together with conditions of service and service delivery, to ensure they conform to equal opportunities and diversity practices.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, DIVERSITY & DIGNITY AT WORK STATEMENT FOR LEARNERS

EDAS is committed to provide equal opportunities for learners and to recruit students on the basis of their ability and the requirements of their course, irrespective of their ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, disability, political beliefs, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

Teaching approaches and teaching materials will reflect EDAS' commitment to ensuring that all students are treated in a manner which supports the aims of the Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

Our Specific Objectives are to:

Recruit students for courses based on objective criteria related to the course requirements. Ensure that those responsible for selection guard against assumptions based on an individual's ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, disability, political beliefs, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

Ensure that opportunities for learning and for personal development are made available to students in accordance with criteria which do not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, disability, political beliefs, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

EDAS core values are:

Providing all learners with the highest quality learning experience.
Recognising that enjoyable learning is the most effective learning.
Embracing diversity as a cornerstone of our learning community.
Accepting accountability and responsibility for our actions.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, DIVERSITY & DIGNITY AT WORK STATEMENT FOR SERVICE USERS

EDAS is committed to providing a quality service free of charge for adults & young people who require assistance in dealing with personal, family, social, health or legal problems involving the misuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances.

EDAS will provide intensive support to alcohol or drug misusers regardless of their ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, disability, political beliefs, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

EDAS shall offer service users the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, with support and stimulation to enable service users to maximise their potential physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs.

EDAS strives to provide easy and swift access to services which will be based in the local community. Our services are designed so that service users, carers and their family members, are provided within a safe environment conducive to change.

EDAS core values are:

Providing all Service users with the highest quality service.
Embracing diversity as a cornerstone of our community.
Accepting accountability and responsibility for our actions.

We will make a significant, recognised and valued contribution to service users.