Scope

At Genius Within CIC, we recognise that everyone has a contribution to make to society, a right to equal opportunity and we want to take an active role in creating a world where that is possible. We value the effort and the rewards of operating within diversity and aspire to be models of the process we train.

We recognise the impact of culturally bound stereotypes and cognitive bias in preventing inclusion Diversity and Inclusion is a progressing field that does not stand still.  Where once we used to think in terms of a few simple ‘categories’ of people, our current understanding is more intersectional and nuanced. People may experience inclusion and exclusion differently according to multiple, intersecting experiences or identities, in differing contexts.  Our stated outcomes and intentions are in this Policy, and we expect to grow and evolve as we learn from colleagues and external partners.

Genius Within is committed to Social Justice. In the enactment of this policy, we aspire to the following company goals:

* Developing fully inclusive practice with zero discrimination
* Working non-judgementally with all our clients, colleagues, customers, supply chain and partners
* Allyship in race, gender, sexual orientation, pan-disability and age discrimination as we share goals and values, and can amplify the work of others in the progress towards social justice
* Positive action and taking responsibility for promoting inclusion in all areas of our work, not just internally but also with customers, clients, partners and supply chain relationships
* Facilitating an environment where we can have transparent conversations that allow us to put right anything we inadvertently get wrong
* Doing more than we ‘have to’ - instead doing what we believe to be morally and socially just, challenging ourselves to stay focused on inclusion for all, not just our specialism
* Aspiring to role model inclusive behaviours for other companies to learn, in line with our Disability Confident Leader status.
* Positive action and taking responsibility for action against direct discrimination- ensuring no one is treated unfavourably than another due to protected characteristics.
* Positive action and taking responsibility for action against indirect discrimination- we ensure polices or ways of working will not impact on anyone unfavourably.

This policy sets out the principles that should be applied to ensure equal opportunities in the areas of:

* recruitment and selection
* promotion, appraisal, transfer, and training
* terms of employment, benefits, facilities, and services and
* grievance and disciplinary procedures, dismissals, resignations, and redundancies

This policy should be considered alongside other Company policies, such as those dealing with harassment and bullying, family leave (maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental, parental), emergency time off for dependants, copies of which are available on Breathe HR or via HR@geniuswithin.org.

Zero Discrimination

In line with the nine legally protected characteristics, we can confirm that no applicant, employee, Associate, client, or individual will be discriminated against by us on the grounds of:

* Gender/gender re-assignment
* marriage or civil partnership status
* race (including ethnic origin, skin colour, nationality and national origin)
* disability (including neurominorities and health conditions)
* sex and sexual orientation
* pregnancy or maternity status
* religion or belief
* age

For the purposes of this policy ‘discrimination’ includes direct and indirect discrimination and other ‘prohibited conduct’ under the Equality Act 2010. Discrimination may take the form of:

**direct discrimination**—this is treating someone less favourably (or, in the case of pregnancy and maternity, unfavourably) because of a protected characteristic. An example of this would be paying someone less because of their sex or because they belong to a particular racial group. 'Because of' is very wide and will cover behaviour that takes place, for example because of sexual orientation, even if the person is not in fact gay, and even if the perpetrator knows that they are not gay. It also includes less favourable treatment because someone is associated with another person who has a protected characteristic, e.g., because a worker is the primary carer for a disabled child. Such treatment is unlawful unless, in relation to age only, it can be objectively justified, i.e., the employer can show that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim;

**indirect discrimination**—this is treating a group of people in the same way, but in a way that adversely affects those with a protected characteristic. An example of this would be telling all employees that they must work late at night—although applied to everyone, it will adversely affect those employees with childcare responsibilities, and these tend to be women or single parents. Such treatment is unlawful unless it can be objectively justified;

**victimisation**—this is treating someone less favourably because they have alleged discrimination or asserted their right not to be discriminated against because of a protected characteristic. An example of this would be a disabled employee claiming that they had been discriminated against, who is then refused a reference by their manager because of that claim;

**harassment**—this is unwanted conduct, related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone or violating their dignity. Harassment may also be of a sexual nature. It may also occur where someone harasses the victim, the victim either rejects or submits to the harassment and, because of that rejection or submission, that person then treats the victim less favourably.

In addition, we will not tolerate any discrimination on the grounds of having or not having dependents to look after or a political opinion. We aim to fulfill our legal duties and promote equal opportunities, equity and inclusion and eliminate discrimination and harassment through the following:

* Opposing all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination in all our circles of influence
* Aspiring to ensure that all individuals will be treated fairly and with respect.
* Aspiring to ensure that all individuals will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, and the talents and resources of individuals will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Company
* Reminding all individuals within our influence that they have a legal and moral obligation not to discriminate and to report incidents of discrimination against any individual or group of individuals to the Company by contacting their supervisor or a company manager immediately, who will log the event as an Incident in our QMS system.

If we feel that an individual’s voiced opinions, behaviour or communications are in direct opposition to our values and this Policy, we will initially remain curious and investigate with the person. Clean feedback will be provided to separate inference from evidence and the individual will be given the opportunity to explain their standpoint and correct any errors or misunderstandings. However, if deemed necessary, we will intervene when conflicts and misunderstandings upset colleagues, clients and stakeholders so as not to breach our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. This may be considered a disciplinary matter in extreme cases.

Inclusive Practice – Neurominorities

When conducting coaching, training and assessments, our employees and Associates should be aware of disabilities which may affect the learner’s ability to perform. These include Dyslexia, DCD (Dyspraxia), AD(H)D and more.

It may be necessary to provide reading materials in advance and extra time or support; employees and Associates should create materials which:

* use a 12 point, Arial, Tahoma or Calibri (sans serif) font
* are finely spaced out on the page and avoid long paragraphs of text
* use bullet points, mind maps and diagrams where appropriate.
* use **bold**to differentiate headings instead of *italics* or underlining.
* it is recommended to use a background that is slightly off white and use dark text (but not black)

Inclusive Practice – Stereotypes and Assumptions

Employees and Associates should be aware of, seek feedback on and aim to improve the assumptions in their delivery.  For example, avoid using phrases which imply that all Doctors are men, all women are mothers, etc.  We encourage colleagues and facilitators to respectfully challenge assumptions and stereotypes portrayed by participants. Instead, we would seek to create a climate of curiosity about social, cultural, religious and physical differences where prejudice through lack of awareness can be overcome.

Inclusive Practice – Physical Disability

We sometimes use client premises to deliver programmes and we cannot guarantee adequate accessibility for all.  However, it is the Trainer/Coach’s responsibility on any programme to find out if participants have any specific needs in advance. Where there are specific needs, employees and Associates will ensure that participants are, for example, able to access the training space we have acquired for this purpose. We will point out and feedback to venues areas for improving accessibility

Inclusive Practice – responsibilities

As members of the Genius Within community you are expected to commit to the goals and values of social justice and inclusion in this policy. This is an action, not an agreement. Diversity language, best practice, accessibility options are an evolving field and part of our expectation is that you educate yourself and stay up to date. We will provide opportunities for learning and resources, however you must take the time to familiarize yourself with latest insights on allyship in pan-disability, race, gender, sexual orientation, age and more. This might include learning how to use alt-text in PowerPoint slides, checking with participants for any accessibility needs before an event, paying attention to the stereotypes and assumptions in your language or those around you and challenging politely where you have influence. If you are not sure where to find resources or how to access training, please contact HR or your Manager.

Inclusive Practice – Acting to protect from harm.

The Company is aware that from time to time, colleagues and clients may be in situations which they find challenging, and they may report this to us.

Where we might observe a client’s employer behaving improperly according to the Equality Act, for example, active discrimination based on race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or other, this should be reported to the Sales and Client Service Team or your immediate supervisor. Where we witness discrimination against a colleague we are also obliged to support that colleague and report if we feel there is a safeguarding risk. An enquiry can be raised anonymously and confidentially with the SCST or your supervisor if you are not sure. We might observe discriminatory behaviour or comments within training groups or in carrying out the duties of our work, for example in shared locations with partner organization, we expect our colleagues to take this as seriously as if it were in house and to safely and politely challenge or report as appropriate. We are responsible for the welfare of those on our courses and workshops and we must act to defend individuals who are discriminated against by their peers, this might include removing individuals from programmes.

Our Safe Working Practices and Safeguarding Policies clearly state our commitment to supporting and ensuring Vulnerable Adults remain safe.

Inclusive Practice – Social Inclusion

We are committed to promoting social inclusion among neurominorities who are socially excluded from society, or parts of society.  This may include those being detained at Her Majesty’s Prison throughout the UK.

We achieve this by:

* Providing education and information to support and enable neurominorities to maximise educational opportunities
* Raising public and organisational awareness of the issues affecting neurominorities, both generally and in relation to their social exclusion
* Providing workshops, forums, advocacy and general support
* Providing reading materials in a font which is deemed to be complimentary to readers from neurominorities
* Providing all resources online as an alternative to reading and 1-1 discussion
* Offering Action Learning Sets to those adults who have limited access to resources such as those being remanded by HMPS

Equality Commitments

We are committed to:

* Creating a pleasant and harmonious environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our employees and Associates are recognised and valued
* Ensuring that every employee and Associate is entitled to be part of an environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
* Taking action if an employee or Associate is subjected to discrimination from business partners, customer or clients, whilst conducting business on behalf of the Company
* Offering training, development and progression opportunities to all, and that they are offered objectively without unlawful discrimination
* Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
* Complying with our own Equality & Diversity Policy and associated policies
* Executing equity practice where equal treatment is insufficient to attain equal opportunities
* Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
* Regarding all breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings

Review and Update

This Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is being applied throughout the Company.  It will include a review of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights web page (www.equalityhumanrights.com) for any legislations changes that might affect Genius Within.

An action plan will be implemented to manage any issues that are in breach of this Policy.

Revision History

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| **Revision** | **Changes** | **Author** | **Approver** | **Date** |
| 1A  | New document  | Nancy Doyle  | Sandie Scrase  | 01/01/14 |
| 2A  | Updated to include social inclusion  | Nancy Doyle  | Sandie Scrase  | 07/07/14  |
| 3A  | Updated to remove monitoring of clients  | Sandie Scrase  | Nancy Doyle  | 16/12/14  |
| 4A  | Updated to add Safeguarding policy reference  | Cheryl Winter  | Nancy Doyle  | 29/5/15  |
| 5A  | Updated to add review history section. Review notes addresses. Minor spelling and grammar errors corrected  | Sandie Scrase  | Nancy Doyle  | 07/07/16  |
| 6A  | Review of policy  | Dom Nally  | Nancy Doyle  | 08/09/19  |
| 7A  |  Annual review of document  | Nancy Doyle  |   Fiona Barrett  | 2020 11 05  |
| 8A | Edit and addition of direct and indirect discrimination  | Fern Fuller | Fiona Barrett  | 2021 03 03  |
|  9A | Change of Format | P Aparicio | F Barrett | 2022 01 22 |
| 10A | Review and addition of areas where equal opportunities are included and definitions of direct/indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment  | Fiona Barrett | Angelica Simpson | 2023 01 23 |