



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

Savera UK is committed to providing equality of opportunity, outcomes and experiences and to fostering good relations for our diverse community. We want to maintain an inclusive culture to ensure that all of our staff, as well as those that seek to apply to work with us, are treated fairly and do not experience unlawful discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristic(s).

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which we treat service users, suppliers, partners, stakeholders and former colleagues.

Our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion builds on the Equality Act 2010, which provides a legal framework to protect people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation in the workplace and wider society on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (includes race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief including philosophical belief and a lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition to being unjust, Savera UK believes discrimination on the grounds of these characteristics represents a lost opportunity to draw on rich and diverse perspectives and experiences, and potentially denies individuals the opportunity to reach their full potential. We believe that discrimination and disadvantage can take different forms and are not always overt or intended; nevertheless, the impact can be profound.

In recognising that everyone is different, we value the unique contribution that each individual's experience, knowledge and skills can bring.

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all Savera UK employees, as well as volunteers and casual and agency workers (referred to collectively as "staff" or "employees" for the purposes of this policy, where relevant) and Trustees. All staff are required and act in accordance with this policy,



failure to do so may result in the disciplinary procedure being instigated, which could result in dismissal.

This policy supports how SaverA UK will not only fulfil its legal duties, but also promote a culture where the diversity of our employees and community is positively valued.

Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded through SaverA UK's policies and practices to ensure that employees are treated with respect and dignity.

All our staff are required to undertake equality, diversity and inclusion training and appropriate additional development will be provided for all employees involved in recruitment and selection.

The roles and responsibilities for SaverA UK and its employees will be positively incorporated into equality, diversity and inclusion training at all levels from induction courses to mandatory training and workshops. This will ensure that employees understand how equality, diversity and inclusion is a key business imperative and not a 'tick box' exercise.

SaverA UK will adopt appropriate strategies and initiatives to support and embed equality, diversity and inclusion within the organisation.

Definitions

Under the Equality Act, 'discrimination' is defined as treating one person less favourably than another. It may be 'direct' or 'indirect' and can be by 'association' or 'perception':

- *Direct discrimination* occurs when two individuals are treated differently where the reason for the difference in treatment is a protected characteristic.
- *Indirect discrimination* occurs when a practice or policy or action which may at first appear neutral in its effects, but at closer examination disproportionately and adversely affects a person's protected characteristic.
- *Discrimination by association* occurs where a person does not have a protected characteristic themselves but is treated less favourably because of their relationship with someone who does e.g. the parent of a disabled child.
- *Discrimination by perception* occurs when someone acts or behaves in a discriminatory way towards a person due to the belief that they have a protected characteristic, whether or not they have such a characteristic.
- *Harassment*: unwanted conduct linked to a protected characteristic which violates an individual's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them
- *Victimisation*: treating a person less favourably because they have committed a "protected act". "Protected acts" include making or supporting an allegation of discrimination, or giving evidence relating to an allegation of discrimination, or raising a grievance about equality or discrimination.

In addition, under the Equality Act, discrimination also occurs when treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something arising from their impairment and failing to make a reasonable adjustment.

Duties



In applying this policy, SaverA UK will have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity, and to provide for good relations between people of diverse groups, in particular on the grounds of the following characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010; age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, offending background, trade union membership, or any other personal characteristic.

The working environment

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our working environment does not prevent people from taking up positions for which they are suitably qualified. This may include physical adaptations or more flexible ways of working (where appropriate and practical).

Terms and conditions of employment

Our employment policies and procedures will be reviewed regularly to improve, amend or adapt current practices to promote equality of opportunity within SaverA UK, and to remove barriers experienced by members of disadvantaged social groups in seeking employment with us and working with us.

We will ensure that all of our employment policies including compensation, benefits and any other relevant issues associated with terms and conditions of employment, are formulated and applied without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

These will be reviewed regularly to ensure there is no discrimination. Length of service as a qualifying criterion for benefits will not exceed five years unless clearly justifiable.

Employees will not be subjected to any detriment if they wish to join our pension scheme, nor will they be offered any inducement not to do so.

Recruitment and selection

We aim, through appropriate information, training and supervision, to ensure that all employees and Trustees who are responsible for recruitment and selection are familiar with this policy.

We aim to ensure that our recruitment practices are free from unlawful discrimination. Our normal recruitment and selection processes will be adjusted where necessary to ensure applicants with disabilities are not disadvantaged.

Job descriptions and person specifications will be reviewed to ensure that criteria are not applied which are either directly or indirectly discriminatory and that they do not impose any condition or requirement which cannot be justified by the demands of the post. Shortlisting and interviewing will normally be carried out by more than one person, to minimise the risk of conscious or unconscious bias.



Selection will, as far as possible, be conducted on an objective basis and will focus on the applicants' suitability for the job and their ability to fulfil the job requirements. Our interest is in the skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude and the potential of individuals to do the job.

Questions asked of candidates will relate to information that will help assess their ability to do the job. Questions about marriage plans, family intentions, religious or political beliefs optional: (unless a Genuine Occupational Requirement applies to the role), caring responsibilities, intention to join our pension scheme or to opt out, or about any other issues which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination should not be asked.

Selection tests will be specifically related to the job, measuring an individual's actual, or inherent, ability to do or train for the job.

Those successful will complete a mandatory check including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and two references with a latest employer.

Training and development

We recognise that our ability to meet the diverse needs of our service users is improved by having a workforce which has the skills and understanding to achieve our objectives. All workers will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their manager. We are committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, all workers receive the widest possible range of development opportunities for advancement in line with the needs of SaverA UK.

Induction training will include awareness of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and how it applies to individuals.

The provision of training will be reviewed to ensure that provisions are made where necessary to enable part-time workers, or remote workers or those returning to work following a break to benefit from training

Flexibility

We recognise the benefits of helping our workers to balance the responsibilities of their work and private life. We will consider any requests for flexible working in a way which aims to balance the needs of the individual and our organisation.

Disability

We aim to provide a safe working environment for workers with disabilities. We will make reasonable adjustments to the workplace and/or working arrangements for people with disabilities where they cause disadvantage to the person.

If, due to changing circumstances, an employee with disabilities is unable to carry out their existing duties, every effort will be made to find suitable alternative employment within the organisation, and retraining will be provided as necessary.



Where an employee without disabilities becomes disabled during their employment, we will make every effort to facilitate continued employment in their existing job. Where this is not possible, suitable alternative employment will be considered, and we may provide training and support as required.

Whilst we will make every effort to retain employees in these circumstances, we cannot make any guarantees about continued employment.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment, i.e. conduct that violates a person's dignity, or behaviour against an individual that is intimidating, degrading, offensive, humiliating or malicious will not be tolerated. It is normally characterised by more than one incident of unacceptable behaviour, particularly if it recurs once it has been made clear by the individual that they consider it offensive. However, one incident may also constitute harassment if it is sufficiently serious. It includes not only situations occurring whilst at work, but also at any time on our premises, or externally whilst attending social functions or training courses etc in the course of our employment. It also includes emails, phonecalls and texts made outside of work using either our or the worker's own equipment, as well as via social media sites.

Any acts of bullying or harassment committed in the course of employment with SaverA UK will not be tolerated. Any individual who feels that they have been subjected to harassment or bullying should, where they feel able to do so, inform the perpetrator, either verbally or in writing, that the behaviour is unacceptable to them and it must stop. Where this fails, or a serious incident of bullying or harassment occurs, the worker should refer to the Acas Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance (or, if a volunteer or casual or agency worker, discuss their concern with a manager).

Equally, anyone who witnesses incidents of harassment or bullying should report this to their line manager.

Serious examples of bullying and harassment may constitute gross misconduct which could lead to summary dismissal, in accordance with Acas Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance.

Grievances, disputes and disciplinary procedure

Employees who believe they have been discriminated against should bring this to our attention as soon as possible. In the first instance, employees are encouraged to do this informally, but where it has not been possible to resolve this informally, or where the matter is particularly serious, they are advised to refer to the Acas Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance. An employee who brings a genuine complaint of discrimination must not be victimised or less favourably treated as a result. However, allegations made for malicious reasons or in pursuit of a personal grudge will be managed under the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

References

We will not discriminate against individuals who have left SaverA UK by providing references that are not based on factual information.



Retirement

We have no fixed retirement age and employees who wish to work beyond State Pension Age may choose to do so.

Monitoring Arrangements

Savera UK will monitor diversity data for all employees, and for internal and external job applicants. This information helps us to better understand our community so we can support individual and collective needs and develop appropriate policies and diversity action plans. It also helps us to understand the profile of our workforce and how we reflect the communities we serve.

Personal/diversity related information will be handled in strictest confidence and in line with SaverA UK GDPR policy. Where we compile essential data for statistical purposes, the information is completely anonymised to protect staff privacy. This information, and any collected manually for SaverA UK, will be collected and stored in line with SaverA UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 1998.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the CEO:

- i. To champion equality, diversity & inclusion and taking accountability for the implementation of this policy and associated objectives;
- ii. To demonstrate appropriate behaviors and take a lead role in creating and maintaining a culture of inclusion across SaverA UK;
- iii. To ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion training needs are identified and reflected in the Organisational action plan.

Responsibilities of the senior officer:

- i. To manage the review of this policy;
- ii. To monitor the operation and implementation of the policy;
- iii. To ensure SaverA UK complies with the Equality Act 2010 as a minimum;
- iv. To seek support from the shared equality services service and/or legal advisors when required who will provide advice, guidance and support on equality, diversity and inclusion related issues;
- v. To ensure this policy is clearly communicated to employees along with sources of available support.
- vi. To ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken to deal with any breaches of this policy, or to deal with any behaviour which could lead to a breach;
- vii. To ensure that any identified breaches of this policy are dealt with using the appropriate policies and procedures;
- viii. To apply employment practices, policies and procedures fairly and consistently, and to highlight and address any practices which could lead to discrimination.

Responsibilities of Employees/other officers of SaverA UK:

- i. Should ensure that their actions comply with the requirements this equality, diversity and inclusion policy to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different groups.



- ii. Any individual who believes that an act in breach of this policy has taken place should raise the issue as soon as possible with the individual concerned and their line manager or a member of the SaverA UK Board;
- iii. If the complaint is against an individual's line manager then the individual should raise the issue as soon as possible with their line manager's manager or with the SaverA UK Board (refer to the Dignity at Work Policy for further information).

Review

SaverA UK will review compliance with this policy within 12 months of its implementation and 2 yearly thereafter. Where a policy review is necessary due to legislative change, this will happen immediately. Minor changes may be approved by the Chief Executive office.

Policy to be reviewed every two years.

Action	Responsibility	Date	Review date
Policy Adopted	Board of Directors	July 2023	July 2026