

BATTLE SCARS CIO EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Policy information	
Organisation	Battle Scars
Scope of policy	Applies to all service users, volunteers, members, trustees, staff, services, activities, training and general running of the organisation.
Policy operational date (original)	06/02/18
Policy prepared by	Jenny Groves – CEO Debbie Riley – trustee
Date approved by Board	31/01/20
Reviewed	02/01/20
Amended	Yes
Policy review date	31/01/22 Every 2 years or sooner if required.
Distributing	This policy will be available on the Battle Scars website and staff shared drive. It will be a requirement for all trustees and staff to read the policy after appointment or after its review. A summary of all relevant policies will be included in the volunteer handbook with clear signposting to the full text. Volunteers will be kept up to date with any changes that might affect their role.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle Scars strives for high standards both as a provider of services and as an employer. In so doing, we recognise the need for encouraging diversity and wholeheartedly support a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of our work and responsibilities. • This policy provides guidance to enable all who work with or for Battle Scars to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. The policy will also address anti-discrimination issues involving areas that currently fall outside any legislation. • Failure to follow the procedures in the policy may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action. • Battle Scars aims and objectives will be achieved through action planning, effective monitoring and a willingness to tackle problems where they arise. Through our training, interaction with service users and members and other activities, Battle Scars will ensure those we work with know our statements of policy. • Battle Scars will regularly review the implementation of its Equality and Diversity Policy and strategy. Where evidence is found of ineffectiveness, immediate remedial action will be taken to ensure implementation.
Definitions	

Equal opportunities	Equal opportunities ensures that policies, procedures and practice within Battle Scars do not discriminate against the people within it or who access services. It is about treating people fairly and equally regardless of who they are, their background or their lifestyle.
Diversity	Diversity ensures that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximize their potential and contribution to Battle Scars and to the community. It recognizes that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach, which can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.
Direct discrimination	Direct discrimination occurs when an individual is dealt with less favourably on the grounds of race colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin or gender. Also because of, for example, marital status or caring responsibility, sexual orientation, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities.
Indirect discrimination	Indirect discrimination occurs when a requirement or condition, which although it applies equally to persons of all groups, is such that only a considerably smaller proportion of a particular group can comply with it. Examples: (a) a rule about clothing that disproportionately disadvantages a racial group cannot be justified; (b) requiring applicants to have a British qualification. Battle Scars is a survivor led organisation. Trustees are required to have some direct or indirect life experience of self-harm. Self-harm is extremely wide spread so we do not consider this indirect discrimination.
Victimisation	Victimisation occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because that person has asserted rights under the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Act or the Disability Act or acted as a whistle-blower on such activity. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals.
Harassment	Harassment means repeated, unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact which is found objectionable and offensive and which might threaten a service user, volunteer, member, trustee or employee or create an intimidating or uncomfortable environment. Harassment can be sexual, racial, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any characteristic exhibited by the individual.
Positive action	Positive action refers to measures taken to assist volunteers or employees who have been under-represented in specific areas to reach a level of workplace knowledge and competencies that is comparable with 'representative' employees. These measures would normally take the form of additional training. 'Positive discrimination' at the point of selection for work is not permissible. Tasks will be allocated to volunteers based on their skills, interests and developmental needs. Such decisions will be made based on their role descriptions. Battle Scars is a survivor-led organisation and will provide as many opportunities as possible to those affected by self-harm.

	Although many volunteers may have the ability to do such tasks we will allocate tasks to volunteers according to who would benefit most.
Less obvious discrimination	Battle Scars urges staff, trustees and volunteers to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals.
Policy Statements	
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle Scars will actively encourage diversity to maximize achievement, creativity and good practice to bring benefit to individuals and communities. • Battle Scars encourages all people it works with and for to contribute to an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued. • The way we work, train and learn within Battle Scars reflects both the Mission and Objectives of the organization and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity. • Battle Scars will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises and offer, where appropriate, additional support to trustees, volunteers and staff to ensure they are able to take a full and active part in the Battle Scars work. • Battle Scars will endeavour to deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access, not barriers to individuals.
Equal opportunities	Battle Scars is an equal opportunities employer and provider of services. No job applicant, employee, volunteer, trustee or member should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status or caring responsibility, sexual orientation, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities. Nor will such person be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. This principle applies to recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, benefits, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions of employment.
Policy	
Aims	<p>The aims and objectives of the Equality and diversity policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to create a safe and welcoming atmosphere for everyone; • to challenge all forms of oppression including those based on race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status or caring responsibility, sexual orientation, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all our activities and services; • to ensure equal access to volunteer and job opportunities; • to provide services designed to meet local community needs; • to ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality (disabled Persons Employment Acts of 1944 and 1958, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995); • to create environments free from harassment and discrimination; • to maximize the use of resources in the best interests of staff, volunteers and members; • to confront and challenge discrimination wherever and whenever it arises whether it be between colleagues or in any other area relation to Battle Scars work; • to create a willingness to accept and implement this policy as a necessary qualification for any position in Battle Scars; • to ensure, through positive action and so far as practicable, that all Battle Scars premises and services are accessible to all people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We strive to hold all group meetings in venues that are accessible to wheelchair users. ○ We take our service users' physical and mental abilities and disabilities into account when planning any social events including outings and day trips. Carers and support workers are invited to such events. ○ We hold groups on different days of the week as well as on different times of the day to allow those with family or work commitments to attend. ○ We use BSL interpreters when working with deaf people. ○ We aim to make publications available in other formats upon request (currently only available on coloured paper or with large fonts). • to ensure that employment and advancement within the organization is determined by objective criteria and personal merit; • to ensure we receive direction from our service users by obtaining their views and opinions regarding the running of the organization, activity and discussion subjects at support groups, publicity and events.
Policy implementation	
Expectations	<p>Battle Scars recognises that passive policies do not provide equality and Battle Scars will seek to promote equality and diversity within the following framework of responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for implementing and developing the policy rests with the trustees. The overall coordinating responsibility for equal opportunities and management of diversity is delegated to the CEO. However, Battle Scars believes that all who work with or for the organisation have an individual responsibility to accept the policy and ensure a

	<p>personal involvement in its application and to cooperate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle Scars expects individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to cooperate with measures introduced by Battle Scars to ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and non-discrimination; ○ not to harass, abuse or intimidate any other service user, volunteer, member, trustee or employee on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status or caring responsibility, sexual orientation, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities; ○ to feel sufficiently confident to inform management if they suspect discrimination is taking place. • The person with responsibility for Equality and Diversity will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy and associated documents are reviewed every 2 years; ○ review and approve policies, procedures and practices that impact on equal opportunities and diversity practice; • Battle Scars expects service users to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ understand that Battle Scars groups are meant to be a safe space for everyone; ○ treat everything said within the group as confidential. Sharing learning is acceptable, identifying people is not. (If a group member makes a disclosure of serious danger to their health, the Battle Scars facilitators will break confidentiality and act); ○ accept that everyone in the group has the right to be listened to, and their views, thoughts and opinions accepted; ○ be non-judgmental; ○ not compare self-harm methods or injuries; ○ not treat Battle Scars as a crisis service; ○ follow the Self-harm and Health & Safety policies. <p>Sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise offensive and judgmental remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment, and have no place in the organisation.</p>
Enforcement	<p>Battle Scars recognises the need for a continuing commitment to genuine equal opportunities and diversity within the organisation. The effectiveness of the policy's aims and objectives can only be judged by how the policy operates in practice.</p>
Dealing with discrimination and harassment	<p>If any service user, volunteer, member, trustee or employee feels they have been discriminated against by Battle Scars or harassed while accessing a service or attending a social or work event they should raise this with a trustee (via a group facilitator, volunteer or employee or by emailing or ringing Battle Scars).</p>

	<p>Such an allegation will be investigated and acted upon according to the Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure.</p> <p>Battle Scars will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against and will not victimise or treat them less well because they have raised this.</p>
<p>Disciplinary procedure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any service user found to be in breach of this policy will, where appropriate, be counselled on their actions. Repeat or severe discriminatory or harassing behaviour by service users will result in exclusion from all Battle Scars services. • Any volunteer found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled on their actions and may, where necessary, be removed from the Battle Scars' volunteer register. • Any trustee found to be in breach of this policy will, where appropriate, be counselled on their actions and may, where necessary, be asked to resign the Battle Scars board of trustees. • Any member of staff found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
<p>Statement</p>	
<p>Display</p>	<p>The following statement will be displayed in all Battle Scars premises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle Scars expects individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to cooperate with measures introduced by Battle Scars to ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and non-discrimination; ○ not to harass, abuse or intimidate any other service user, volunteer, member, trustee or employee on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status or caring responsibility, sexual orientation, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities; ○ to feel sufficiently confident to inform management if they suspect discrimination is taking place. • Battle Scars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ will not tolerate acts that breach the Battle Scars Equality & Diversity policy and all such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and may be subject to disciplinary action where appropriate; ○ fully recognises its legal obligations under all relevant legislation and codes of practice; ○ will allow staff and volunteers to pursue any matter through the internal procedures which they believe has exposed them to inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy; ○ will ensure that all managers, volunteer leaders and group lead facilitators understand and maintain their responsibilities and those of their team under this policy;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ will provide all employees and volunteers with the training and development that they need to carry out their job effectively; ○ will provide all reasonable assistance to employees and volunteers who are or who become disabled, or who experience mental health difficulties, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to provide continued employment and volunteering. We will ensure an appropriate risk assessment is carried out and that appropriate specialist advice is obtained when necessary; ○ Will distribute and publicise this policy statement throughout the Charity. <p>Battle Scars believes that all who work with or for the organisation have an individual responsibility to accept the policy and ensure a personal involvement in its application and to cooperate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality.</p>
Monitoring	
Policy Impact	<p>In order to determine the impact of this policy it is important that a monitoring system be developed which will measure commitment, progress and effectiveness. The Equality and Diversity policy will be monitored and reviewed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trustees will review the equality of opportunity to Battle Scars services on an ongoing basis. • The CEO will undertake a policy review every two years. All relevant parties will be encouraged to submit comments for consideration. • The review recommendations will be presented to the next trustee meeting for their comments and ratification.
Policy breach	Where it appears that there may have been or there is a breach of the policy, the CEO or the chair of the board will investigate the circumstances and action will be taken to counter any proven breach of policy.
Other findings	If it is found that the policy is excluding or discouraging the development of trustees, staff or volunteers or restricting other people, the CEO or the chair of the Board should take positive action to re-adjust the policy.
Policy review	
Responsibility	It is the responsibility of the CEO to review this policy unless the task has been delegated to an appropriate volunteer or employee before the policy review date.
Procedure	All volunteers and employees can have input in this policy's review via their supervision.
Timing	The review must be completed within a month of the review date.