

BATTLE SCARS CIO EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

| Policy information | |
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| 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 |
| Date approved by Board | 15/01/24 |
| Reviewed on Reviewed by | 06/01/24 Jenny Groves - CEO |
| Amended | Yes |
| Policy review date | By 31/01/25 Every year or sooner if required. |
| Distributing | This policy will be available on the Battle Scars website. 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 of ineffectiveness is found, 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 |

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| | 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 recognises 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, gender reassignment, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities. |
| Indirect discrimination | Definition of indirect discrimination: a provision, criteria or practice is applied which is discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic. 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 widespread so we do not consider this indirect discrimination. |
| Victimisation | Victimisation: protection from bringing proceedings under, giving evidence in proceedings under, doing any other thing in relation to or making an allegation that another person has contravened the Equality Act 2010. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals. |
| Harassment | Harassment: unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the other person. |
| 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 are likely to 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 |

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| | 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 maximise 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 organisation 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 | <p>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, gender reassignment, 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.</p> |
| 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, gender reassignment, 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 encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all our activities and services; • to ensure equal access to volunteer and job opportunities; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to provide services designed to meet local community needs; • to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010; • to create environments free from harassment and discrimination; • to maximise 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 use 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 when capacity allows to make them accessible to those with family or work commitments. ○ 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 organisation 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 organisation, 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 personal involvement in its application and to cooperate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality. • Battle Scars expects individuals: |

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| | <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 year; ○ 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 services/spaces are meant to be a safe space for everyone; ○ treat everything said within a group as confidential. Sharing learning is acceptable, identifying people is not. (If a service user makes a disclosure of serious danger to their health, the Battle Scars volunteers and/or staff will break confidentiality and act); ○ accept that everyone in a 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). 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> |

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| Disciplinary procedure | <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 to help them understand why their behaviour is not acceptable. 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. |
| Statement | |
| Display | <p>The following statement will be displayed in all Battle Scars premises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Battle Scars expects everyone to cooperate with rules and principles introduced by Battle Scars to ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and non-discrimination. • Expectations include 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. • We want everyone to feel confident enough to inform management if they suspect discrimination is taking place. • We won't tolerate any actions violating our Equality & Diversity policy and will investigate and take disciplinary action when needed. • We make sure staff and volunteers can raise concerns internally about unfair treatment. • Managers and leaders will understand and uphold responsibilities under this policy. • Training will be provided for employees and volunteers to perform their roles effectively. • Support, including reasonable adjustments, will be offered to those with disabilities or mental health challenges. • We acknowledge our legal obligations under relevant laws and codes of practice. • Everyone associated with Battle Scars must personally embrace and actively support the organisation's policy.” <p>The policy statement will be widely distributed and publicised within the organisation.</p> |
| Monitoring | |
| Equality & Diversity trustee lead | Tristan Batten (vice-chair) |

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| 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. |