Transitions
Accessing the skills of refugee professionals

Last reviewed December 2015 SH

Equality & Diversity **Statement of policy**

Introduction

Transitions is committed to addressing and challenging discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst both the wider labour market, our stakeholder network and our workforce, including volunteers. Our aim is to work towards promoting equality and diversity in London's workforce and in London's labour market mechanisms. We have particular interest in supporting the equalities related interests of refugee professionals.Transitions has a corporate Objective to collaboratively lobby to challenge and address issues of inequality, with particular reference to refugee professionals.

Transitions will ensure active compliance with all relevant legislation**: Equality Act 2010**

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/

We aim to promote Equality and Diversity over and above our legal requirements and to champion the case for positive action and policy changes to better address the multiple disadvantages experienced by refugee professionals in the London labour market.

To that end, the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all Transitions stakeholders. Each employee, volunteer and stakeholder should feel respected and able to give of their best. In our careers guidance and employment support operations and regarding employment and volunteering within Transitions and relating to our conduct towards all stakeholders, we aim not to discriminate against any persons because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

This policy covers all aspects of Transitions' activities, including advertising & publicity, selection, setting up and monitoring volunteering, recruitment services for employers & refugee candidates, recruitment to Transitions and training, the Transitions stakeholders' advisory network and any other activities.

Definition of Transitions' stakeholders: Transitions' stakeholders are individuals or organisations who are served or supported by Transitions, or who advise, assist or feedback to Transitions,

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within its objectives. This includes: refugee professionals, refugee advisers, refugee community organisations and agencies, careers practitioners and agencies, employers, placement providers, professional bodies, statutory bodies such as DWP, JCP, UKBA and BIS, and other relevant individuals and organisations.

Breaches of Transitions' equality and diversity policy by our staff and volunteers will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Equalities & Diversity Monitoring: To ensure that this policy is operating effectively (and for no other purpose) Transitions maintains records of refugee candidates' and employees' and applicants' racial origins, gender, age, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Positive Action: Timetabled targets will be set for groups in the community that are identified as being underrepresented in the Transitions workforce, in particular, refugee professionals. Where necessary, special steps, as permitted by the relevant Acts of Parliament, will be taken to help disadvantaged and/or underrepresented groups to compete for roles on a genuine basis of equality.

Overall Responsibility: The Quality Standards and Evaluations director of Transitions is responsible for the effective operation of the company's EDP.

A copy of this policy is available from the Quality Standards and Evaluations director. Justin.brett@transitions-london.co.uk.

Transitions services to refugees

Transitions candidates, referral advisers and all stakeholders are entitled to see and give feedback on the Transitions equal opportunities based **selection criteria** for advice and placement and recruitment services**.** Feedback and complaints will be responded to in writing by the director within 5 working days when possible.

Our services should be accessible to all, including those candidates with disabilities. This includes, for example large print documents on request and an accessible website.

Transitions refugee candidates on work placement are entitled to:

Receive an induction at their placement provider / employer which covers equality and diversity which is then supported by on-going updates and reviews during their placement

Expect that the placement provider provides suitable access for disabled people

Comment and feedback on the extent to which Transitions programmes promote and maintain equality and diversity

Have their knowledge, understanding and experience of equality and diversity issues enhanced and reviewed on a regular basis i.e. through meetings with Transitions and placement

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provider supervisers.

Transitions services to employers/placement providers

This policy is embedded in all the services provided to employers/placement providers. Transitions requires all employers/placement providers to also have an Equal Opportunities Policy and to work within it to support good practice with Transitions and its service users.

Transitions services and collaboration with other Transitions stakeholders

This policy is embedded in all the services and collaboration with all Transitions stakeholders to support good practice. Feedback and complaints will be responded to in writing by the director within 5 working days where possible.

Transitions internal jobs/volunteering Vacancy advertising

Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit within Transitions will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees and volunteers will be encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Wherever possible, all vacancies will be advertised simultaneously internally and externally. Sometimes, in the interests of Transitions employees' professional development, vacancies may be advertised internally only.

Steps will be taken to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches underrepresented groups internally and externally. We aim to attract refugee professionals to be part of the Transitions' team, including management, staff & volunteers.

Wherever possible, vacancies will be notified to job centres, RCO's, and a range of agencies with significant minority group rolls, as well as to minority press/media.
All vacancy advertisements will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunity.

Selection and recruitment

- Selection criteria (job description and employee specification) will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.
- More than one person, at the discretion of the Quality Standards and Evaluations Director, should be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process, and all should have received training in equal opportunities.
- Wherever possible, refugee professionals will be involved in the shortlisting and interviewing processes.
- Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies must be recorded. Positive action - training, promotion and conditions of service
- Underrepresented groups will be encouraged to apply for training and employment opportunities with the company/etc. Wherever possible, special training will be provided

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for such groups to prepare them to compete on genuinely equal terms for jobs and promotion. However, actual recruitment to all jobs will be strictly on merit.

- Wherever necessary, use will be made of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups.
- Wherever possible, efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary/unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged and/or underrepresented groups.

Personnel records

- Where necessary, employees will be able to check/correct their own record of these details. Otherwise, access to this information will be strictly restricted.
- Such records will be analysed regularly, and appropriate follow-up action taken.
- Staff members will all receive training in equal opportunities & diversity principles & practice.

Sources of advice and information for this Policy:

http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/8/i/Acas_Delivering_equality_and_diversity_booklet_(MARCH_2011).pdf

A4E Equality and Diversity policy, available online.

KEY DATES

ACTIVITY	DATEs	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Annual Policy review due :	December 2016	Justin Brett, **Quality Standards and Evaluations Director** advised by Sheila Heard, Managing director

Key contact

Justin Brett, Quality Standards and Evaluations Director Justin.brett@transitions-london.co.uk

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