PARTNERSHIP WORKING AGREEMENT and TRADE UNION RECOGNITION POLICY

Effective date: July 2010
Review Date: July 2013
**Policy Title:** Partnership Working Agreement and Trade Union Recognition Policy

**Executive Summary:**
East Cheshire Trust believes that a positive and inclusive approach to employment relations is conducive to the achievement of service and business objectives. The Trust and Staff Side organisations have a common objective of ensuring the efficient operation and success of the Trust for the benefit of all and agree to work in partnership to secure the aims and objectives of the Trust.

**Supersedes:** Negotiation, Consultation and Trade Union Recognition 1997

**Description of Amendment(s):** Updated in relation to changes in HR forums.

**This policy will impact on:**
Staff side representatives, all employees, management

**Financial Implications:**
Direct cost savings when litigation avoided. Indirect cost savings through improved employee relations and productivity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>Document Reference:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Version Number</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Effective Date: July 2010</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Issued By</th>
<th>Director of HR &amp; Workforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>July 2013</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Assistant HR Business Partner</th>
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<td>Impact Assessment Date</td>
<td>March 2008</td>
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**APPROVAL RECORD**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Committees / Group</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation:</td>
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<td>Management</td>
<td>31st March 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>JCNC</td>
<td>31st March 2010</td>
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<td>Specialist Advice (if required)</td>
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<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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<td>Approved by:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director of HR and Workforce</td>
<td>July 2010</td>
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<td>Received for information:</td>
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PARTNERSHIP WORKING AGREEMENT AND TRADE UNION RECOGNITION POLICY

1.0 Policy Statement

East Cheshire Trust believes that a positive and inclusive approach to employment relations is conducive to the achievement of service and business objectives. The Trust and Staff Side organisations have a common objective of ensuring the efficient operation and success of the Trust for the benefit of all and agree to work in partnership to secure the aims and objectives of the Trust. Partnership, as defined within the Trust, has the following key elements:

- A commitment to working together at all levels in the organisation to deliver the service.
- An understanding of the relationship between employment security and employee flexibility.
- Building relationships within the organisation that maximise employee involvement through reliable, robust and timely communication.

2.0 Aims

2.1 The aims of this agreement are:

- To facilitate the development of a harmonious working relationship between the Trust and Staff Side organisations.
- To create an environment which promotes communication and avoids conflict.
- To reach a speedy resolution of conflicts of interest.
- To ensure the efficient operation and development of the Trust in the best interests of patients, employees and the local NHS economy.

2.2 The pursuit of these aims under this agreement will be through:

- Communication – keeping each side fully informed of all relevant matters at the earliest opportunity
- Consultation – a meaningful and open exchange of views which provides a genuine opportunity and sufficient time to influence decisions
- Negotiation – a genuine opportunity to shape and reach decisions jointly

3.0 Principles

- It is for the management of the Trust to plan, organise and manage the activities of the Trust.
- It is for the staff side representatives to work together with management in the interests of their members employed by the Trust to develop and enhance the workforce.
- In addition to normal activities of local representatives, the Trust will work in partnership with the Full Time Officers of the Unions to represent their members and to be included in relevant sub groups/working parties.
- Membership of a Trade Union is encouraged by the Trust.
- In support of Trade Union membership, staff side representatives will attend all induction programmes.
- The Trust acknowledges and commits to cover backfill arrangements for staff side to have cover for duties by agreement, reviewed every 12 months.
- There is a shared commitment to the success of the Trust in the delivery of effective patient care.
- Management and staff representatives work together with mutual trust, openness and cooperation.
- There is recognition of the value of early staff involvement in all initiatives and problems at all levels.
- Work within open, honest and transparent systems of communication and collaborative decision making, accept mutual responsibility for identifying and resolving difficulties.
- Share information and insight from different perspectives.
- Respect confidentiality where either party considers this to be essential.
- Treat each other with respect and courtesy, recognise roles/views on both sides.
- Ensure effective channels of communication to enable matters of mutual concern to be discussed, resolved and implemented.
- Ensure a focus on the improvement of working lives.

3.1 Benefits of partnership working are many but the key benefits are:
- Improvements in service delivery and patient care.
- Ability to achieve change in the workplace more effectively.
- Faster and more effective decision making.
- Flexibility in the utilisation of human, physical and capital resources.
- Greater levels of employee satisfaction and commitment, establishing the Trust as a model employer.
- A willingness to be involved and innovative.
- An increase in value added activity and productivity.
- Improved morale with staff feeling more valued and satisfied with their role.

4.0 Scope

The principles within this agreement will apply to all members of staff who are members of a staff side organisation recognised in Section 6.

Individuals who are not currently members of a recognised Trade Union or staff side association will nevertheless be subject to all agreements made within the agreed bargaining machinery.

The forum for medical staff consultation and negotiation will be the Local Negotiating Committee.

5.0 Organisational Responsibilities:

5.1 Chief Executive
- Chair the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee on an annual rotation.
5.2 Staff Side Chair
   ● Chair the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee on an annual rotation.

5.3 Staff Representatives
   ● Ensure effective communication between trade union members and the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee.
   ● Actively take part in the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee.
   ● Follow the principles set out in section 3.0.

5.4 Management Representatives
   ● Ensure effective communication of outcomes of consultations and negotiations to all affected staff.
   ● Actively take part in the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee.

5.5 Staff
   ● Read this agreement/policy.
   ● Contribute in consultations with staff representatives as relevant/appropriate.

6.0 Recognition

6.1 The Trust recognises all those Trade Unions and staff associations, with which it currently has a formal relationship and which have members employed directly by the Trust. The Trust recognises the following organisations as “Trade Unions” under the scope of this agreement, which may be subject to amendment from time to time.
   ● Association of Clinical Biochemistry (ACB)
   ● British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT)
   ● British Dental Association (BDA)
   ● British Medical Association (BMA)
   ● British and Irish Orthoptic Society (BIOS)
   ● Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)
   ● GMB – Britain’s General Union
   ● Hospital Consultants & Specialist Association (HCSA)
   ● Managers in Partnership (MIP)
   ● Society of Radiographers
   ● Royal College of Midwives (RCM)
   ● Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
   ● Union of Construction, Allied Trade and Technicians (UCATT)
   ● Unison
   ● Unite the Union

6.2 Recognition is subject to the following conditions:
   ● Each partner will keep the other informed of the names of its representatives
• Local representatives are employees elected in accordance with the rules of the recognised Trade Union.
• The number of local representatives will be for agreement between the Trade Unions and the Trust and may be varied from time to time by mutual agreement in order to take account of the number of people employed.
• Each Trade Union will have the right to represent its members in all matters for which recognition has been given.
• The Trust will provide time off and other facilities for staff side representatives for the purpose of representing members employed by the Trust.

6.3 Honorary trade union representatives: In the spirit of partnership working, individuals whose work base is at East Cheshire NHS Trust but who are employed by another Trust may hold an honorary trade union representative status. This should be at the agreement of the Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee. This individual may include attendance at the formal Trust JCNC as an honorary member in an advisory capacity only. This would not however be recognised on the Committee and therefore would not have the usual collective bargaining rights and may not act as Staff Side chair.

7.0 Disclosure of Information

This section is based on the ACAS Code Disclosure of Information to Trade Unions for Collective Bargaining Purposes.

• The Trust recognises that the absence of relevant information will impede constructive discussion, consultation and negotiation, and therefore agrees to meet Trade Union requests for information wherever possible in advance of key meetings.
• Trade Unions should make their request for information in writing as soon as possible to the Associate Director of Human Resources and Workforce. Any request should identify the purpose for which the information is required.
• Requests will only be considered from recognised representatives and full time officials of the Unions concerned.
• Upon receipt of a request the Associate Director of HR and Workforce will acknowledge receipt of the request and indicate the timescale within which the full response can be made.
• Requests to disclose information must take account of the subject matter being discussed and the level at which the negotiation is taking place.
• Where information cannot be disclosed, the reason will be given. This may be, for example, to protect the confidentiality and privacy of employees or patients, or where information is deemed to be sensitive.

8.0 Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee (JCNC)

The Trust will co-ordinate with representatives of management and recognised staff side organisations. Formal consultation and negotiations between management and staff side relating to non-medical staff will take place through the JCNC. Individuals who are not currently members of a recognised Trade Union or staff side association will be subject to all agreements made within the agreed bargaining machinery.

The Terms of Reference for the group can be found in the Appendix.
9.0 Time Off and Facilities

9.1 Paid time off for staff side representatives:
- Conducting official elections/ballots in respect of local joint consultation and negotiation arrangements.
- Attending meetings of the JCNC, including pre-meeting.
- Attending staff side meetings.
- Attending other meetings as agreed with the Trust.
- Taking part in Job Matching, Analysis, Evaluation or Consistency Panels.
- Representing members in meetings with management concerning the application of discipline, grievance and other policies where members of staff have the right to be represented.
- Attending information meetings where members of staff and management have agreed staff side may be present and where there is no formal right of representation.
- Representing individuals or groups of staff at Appeal Hearings.
- Communicating with members concerning employment relations matters.
- Representing individuals or groups (as authorised by the Trade Union concerned) at meetings of external bodies, i.e. Employment Tribunals.
- Attendance at a National Conference of the Trade Union concerned.
- Attending relevant training approved by the Trade Union concerned. An application for leave must be made available to the manager on request.

9.2 Paid time off for members:
- To take part in official elections/ballots in the workplace as part of an on-going joint consultation and negotiation.
- To take part in official elections/ballots to elect local representatives.

9.3 Paid time of, general detail:
- Paid time off will be at the normal rate of pay the employee would have earned if he or she had worked as normal during the time off.
- Where time is incurred in joint consultation, negotiation or in representing individuals or groups outside normal working time, payment will be made at the appropriate rate, or time off in lieu granted (whichever is mutually acceptable) with agreement of the manager.

9.4 Arrangements for Time Off:
- Time off must be agreed in advance with the manager concerned.
- Time off will not be unreasonably refused.
- Where time off is refused, management will provide good reasons balancing the spirit of this agreement with service priorities.

9.5 Facilities:
- The Trust recognises that it may be necessary to hold Trade Union meetings during working hours and on Trust premises.
• Permission to hold such meetings should be requested in advance, in writing, to the relevant manager. Permission will not be unreasonably refused, but should be arranged with minimum disruption to service.

• The Trust will provide the following facilities to staff side representatives
  o The Trust will make every effort to provide office accommodation for the shared use of all staff representatives
  o Accommodation for meetings, which should be booked through the usual arrangements
  o Telephone/fax/e-mail facilities
  o The use of official Notice Boards
  o The use of the Trust mail system

10.0 Roles and Responsibilities in Partnership Working

10.1 Managers' Responsibilities:
• To be aware of the importance of good communication and consultation practice
• To understand their roles and responsibilities as communicators
• To support those who are less outspoken and improve their ability to communicate
• To ensure that they update their own skills, experience and knowledge in order to be fully effective and supportive

10.2 Staff Side Representatives' Responsibilities
• To be aware of the importance of good communication and consultation practice
• To ensure that they communicate effectively with their members
• To ensure that they update their own skills, experience and knowledge in order to be fully effective and supportive to their members
• To encourage members and foster the idea of employee involvement which is an underlying principle of communication and consultation

11.0 Planning and Implementing

This policy will be approved by the JCNC. All staff side representatives will be sent a copy of this policy. It is the joint responsibility of staff side representatives and the Human Resources Department to inform all staff whom this policy applies to of the new policy. There are no formal training requirements relating to the implementation of this policy.

12.0 Measuring Performance

Performance measurements:
• JCNC membership and quorum.

13.0 Audit

There will be an annual audit lead by HR of the performance measurements.

14.0 Review

This Agreement will be reviewed every three years by management and staff side representatives, in the light of experience and changes in legislation.
Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee (JCNC) Terms of Reference

1.0  Purpose of the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee (JCNC)

The JCNC promotes good employee relations, and maintains a constructive relationship between the Trust and Staff Side. The JCNC will provide a forum for information sharing, discussion of Trust matters, consultation and negotiation (collective bargaining). Each agenda item will be clearly labelled to enable an appropriate discussion/outcome.

1.1  Information and Discussion

The JCNC enables the Trust to inform and discuss with staff representatives:
- The Trust's economic situation
- General matters affecting the Trust
- Collaborative working on matters of common interest such as: Improving Working Lives; training and development of managers, staff and staff side representatives; HR Performance and Management Framework

1.2  Consultation

The JCNC enables the Trust to inform and consult staff representatives on:
- Employment prospects
- Decisions likely to lead to substantial changes in work organisation or contractual relations
- Health and Safety at work
- Redundancies (where it is proposed to dismiss 20 or more employees over a period of 90 days or less)
- Business Transfers

Topics for Consultation include:
Policies and procedures, working conditions, new ways of working, output and quality, training, health and safety, new equipment, staffing levels, welfare, Trust strategy, Trust prospects, annual report, job stability, equal opportunities.

1.3  Negotiation (Collective Bargaining)

The JCNC enables the Trust to negotiate with staff representatives on the topics of pay, hours and holidays that are not negotiated nationally.

2.0  Meeting Arrangements:

- The quorum should not be less than three members from Management side and three members from staff side (mixed union representation) at any one meeting. The Chair has discretion to rule whether the meeting is quorate or not.
- The staff side membership will be of mixed union representation and not exceed 20. In meetings for negotiation, the staff side membership will be agreed prior to the meeting.
- Members should attend a minimum of 50% of the meetings.
- The Chair of the meetings will rotate annually between the Chief Executive or their nominated deputy representing management and the Staff Side Chair or their nominated deputy representing staff side.
• Meetings will take place bi-monthly. Extraordinary ad-hoc meetings may be requested by the Chair of either side.
• The JCNC may be supported by sub-groups set up on an ‘ad hoc’ basis for work on a particular issue.
• The JCNC may invite persons to attend for the purposes of making particular contributions or giving specialist advice with prior agreement.
• Full Time Officers of the recognised staff organisations can only attend the JCNC following agreement among the Staff Side. Any such attendance will be notified to the Management Side.
• The management side of the JCNC will be responsible for organising meetings, preparation of agendas and papers and minutes to be agreed in conjunction with the Staff-side Chair prior to distribution.
• Agenda items will be identified as - for information, discussion or for consultation. Separate meeting arrangements will be put in place for negotiation items.
• All notices and papers for meetings will be distributed two weeks before the date of the meeting by the PA to the Associate Director of HR and Workforce. The minutes will be circulated to all members.
• The Trust will provide accommodation for the meeting.

3.0 Reporting Arrangements:

• The JCNC is not a sub-group of the Trust Board, however will report to the Board in certain circumstances.
• For policy approval, the JCNC agrees policies and the appropriate Director approves them.

4.0 The JCNC will not consider matters too narrow in scope that they are better dealt with more immediately by direct liaison with line management.

5.0 The JCNC will ensure implementation of partnership working Trust wide and will monitor implementation of policies, procedures, processes and change programmes affecting Trust employees.

5.0 Members of the JCNC are responsible for ensuring wider staff involvement in relation to its agenda and for the cascading and dissemination of any outcomes and decisions made to all staff groups.
# Equality and Human Rights Policy Screening Tool

## APPENDIX 2

### Policy Title: Partnership working and Trade Union Policy

| Directorate: HR |

### Name of person/s auditing / authoring policy: Assistant HR Manager

### Policy Content:
- For each of the following check whether the policy under consideration is sensitive to people of a different age, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion or belief, and sexual orientation?
- The checklist below will help you to identify any strengths and weaknesses of the policy and to check whether it is compliant with equality legislation.

### 1. Check for DIRECT discrimination against any minority group of PATIENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Does the policy contain any statements which may disadvantage people from the following groups?</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Action required</th>
<th>Resource implication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.0 Age?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1 Gender (Male, Female and Transsexual)?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2 Learning Difficulties / Disability or Cognitive Impairment?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3 Mental Health Need?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 Sensory Impairment?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.5 Physical Disability?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.6 Race or Ethnicity?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.7 Religious Belief?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.8 Sexual Orientation?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS ANSWERED ‘YES’ INDICATING DIRECT DISCRIMINATION =**

### 2. Check for DIRECT discrimination against any minority group relating to EMPLOYEES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Does the policy contain any statements which may disadvantage employees or potential employees from any of the following groups?</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Action required</th>
<th>Resource implication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Yes No</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.1 Gender (Male, Female and Transsexual)?</strong></td>
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<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2 Learning Difficulties / Disability or Cognitive Impairment?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.3 Mental Health Need?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.4 Sensory Impairment?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.5 Physical Disability?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.6 Race or Ethnicity?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.7 Religious Belief?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.8 Sexual Orientation?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS ANSWERED ‘YES’ INDICATING DIRECT DISCRIMINATION =**

### 3. Check for INDIRECT discrimination against any minority group of PATIENTS:
### Question: Does the policy contain any conditions or requirements which are applied equally to everyone, but disadvantage particular people because they cannot comply due to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Action required</th>
<th>Resource implication</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 Age?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1 Gender (Male, Female and Transsexual)?</td>
<td>√</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Learning Difficulties / Disability or Cognitive Impairment?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Mental Health Need?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Sensory Impairment?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Physical Disability?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Race or Ethnicity?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Religious, Spiritual belief (including other belief)?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8 Sexual Orientation?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Check for INDIRECT discrimination against any minority group relating to EMPLOYEES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Action required</th>
<th>Resource implication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 Age?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Gender (Male, Female and Transsexual)?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Learning Difficulties / Disability or Cognitive Impairment?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Mental Health Need?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Sensory Impairment?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Physical Disability?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Race or Ethnicity?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Religious, Spiritual belief (including other belief)?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Sexual Orientation?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS ANSWERED ‘YES’ INDICATING INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION = 0

---

**Signatures of authors / auditors:** Emma Newton  
**Date:** March 2010

**Equality and Human Rights Compliance / Percentage Calculation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of ‘Yes’ answers for DIRECT discrimination.</th>
<th>(A) 0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of ‘Yes’ for INDIRECT discrimination.</td>
<td>(B) 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total answers for POLICY CONTENTS discrimination.</td>
<td>(A+B) 0 + 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage content non compliant**

\[ \text{Percentage content non compliant} = \left( \frac{\text{Divide } a+b \text{ by } 36 \times 100} \right) 0 \]