



## Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique (STAT)

### Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

#### **1. Policy Statement**

The Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique (STAT) is committed to taking positive action in all aspects of its work to prevent unlawful discrimination. In particular, we shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (which are "protected characteristics" under the Equality Act 2010, "the Act"): all are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity. This Policy aims to remove unfair and discriminatory practices within STAT and the services it provides.

This Policy applies to all aspects of STAT's work, including its relationship with staff, relations between members at all levels and external parties. All members and employees of STAT must adhere to the Policy and promote STAT's aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. The Council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law.

#### **2. What is discrimination?**

Discrimination by or against a member or employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption under the Act. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an application for membership on the grounds of race because the applicant would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination. Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement that employees work full time may put women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would need to be objectively justified.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or

creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings or they have given or intend to give evidence.

### **3. Objectives of this Policy**

- a. To prevent, reduce and stop all forms of unlawful discrimination.
- b. To ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity.
- c. To promote good practice to ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristics as set out in paragraph 1 in every aspect of STAT's functions, including without limitation: -
  - all staff employed by STAT;
  - all students attending STAT-approved schools, but subject to the schools' own duty to prevent unlawful discrimination;
  - all aspects of promotional, educational, and campaigning functions of STAT;
  - all aspects of the work of STAT's Council, Committees and Working Groups; and
  - the practice of the Alexander Technique by all STAT members.
- d. STAT will strive to comply with this Policy and the law at all times; however, it cannot be held responsible for the acts of third persons over whom it has little control.

### **4. STAT Strategy**

- a. STAT will promulgate policy documents and guidelines for its membership; it is a condition of continued membership that all members agree to be bound by and comply with the terms of any such documents.
- b. The Council of STAT will monitor and review its composition with the aim of promoting a broad-based representation of persons in its membership. Without itself discriminating in any way, STAT Council will strive to redress any imbalance that may become evident.
- c. Any alleged breach of this policy by any officer, member or employee of STAT will be put before Council and the alleged offender may be subject to the relevant complaints, disciplinary or grievance procedure. In respect of all employees, breach of this policy is a dismissible offence.

## **5. Disability**

STAT encourages its members and employees to tell STAT about any relevant disability so that STAT can, if possible, offer appropriate support. Contact STAT's General Manager for further details. STAT has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment of a disabled person provided such adjustments are within the financial means of STAT.

## **6. Responsibility for the Implementation of this Policy**

- a. All employees, subcontractors, members and representatives of STAT are required to act in a way that does not subject any other employees, members or clients to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of the protected characteristics described above.
- b. The co-operation of all employees and members is essential for the success of this Policy. Senior employees are expected to follow this Policy and to try to ensure that all employees, subcontractors, members and representatives of STAT do the same. From time to time STAT will consider whether training is needed to assist with this duty.
- c. Employees, subcontractors, members and representatives of STAT may be held independently and individually liable for discriminatory acts by STAT and in some circumstances an Employment Tribunal may order them to pay compensation to the person who has suffered as a result of discriminatory acts. STAT takes responsibility for achieving the objectives of this Policy, and endeavours to ensure compliance with relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice. STAT cannot and does not take responsibility for the discriminatory acts of third parties about which STAT has no knowledge or over which STAT has insufficient authority.

## **7. Breaches of this Policy**

- a. Any member or employee believing that they may have been discriminated against is encouraged to raise the matter through the relevant complaints, disciplinary or grievance procedure contained in STAT's Code of Professional Conduct & Professional Competence and Child or Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy. If any person is uncertain which applies or needs advice on how to proceed they should speak to STAT's General Manager.
- b. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this Policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Members and employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be examined by STAT's

General Manager, PIC coordinator or Council, as appropriate, and dealt with under the relevant complaints, disciplinary or grievance procedure.

- c. Any employee or STAT member who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal from employment and/or expulsion from membership. STAT takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

## **8. The Status of this Policy**

- a. This Policy does not form a part of any employment contract with any employee and its contents are not to be regarded by any person as implied, collateral or express terms to any contract made with STAT.
- b. STAT reserves the right to amend and update this Policy at any time. For further information contact STAT's General Manager.

**This Policy was approved & authorised by STAT Council on 22.6.2011**

STAT deploras racism and all expressions thereof, in any form, contemporary or historical. In particular, STAT wishes to place on record its fundamental disagreement with offensive and discriminatory passages which appear in the first American edition and in other subsequent editions of Man's Supreme Inheritance by F M Alexander (New York: E P Dutton & Co 1918). STAT accepts that such passages and references to "savages" and "primitive peoples", while reflecting views that were commonly held at the time, appear overtly racist and offensive to the modern reader. These views neither expound nor define the body of practice and theory that has come to be known as the Alexander Technique; they play no part in the manner in which the Technique is taught in STAT's schools or in the practice of the Technique by its Teaching Members. The core of F M Alexander's evolutionary theory is "man's transcendence to consciousness" and this continues to be central in the practice of the Technique. Needless to say, as this Policy makes clear, the principles of equality and freedom from discrimination are fundamental to STAT's advancement of the Technique.