



The
British
Psychological
Society

Our plan for equality and diversity

April 2008

We consulted the Plain English Campaign when we prepared this document.

This document is available in large print and other formats (such as in Braille and on audio tape).

Please ring us on 0116 2529587

Foreword

We have developed this plan to make sure that we are fair in everything we do. This plan provides a framework of what we will do to help both our members and our staff to place equality at the heart of their work.

This plan has been a shared effort, with discussions and consultations across our society. Promoting equality and diversity is about encouraging everyone to reach their full potential and to overcome barriers (such as prejudice and discrimination), leading to better and more fulfilling lives.

While equality is something we must all try to achieve, without leadership and commitment this plan will not work. Our Board of Trustees and our Senior Management Team will make sure that we review our progress and make sure that the plan is actually carried out.

We would like to thank everybody who helped with the consultation process. We would especially like to thank the Standing Committee for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities (SCPEO) for pushing forward the development of the plan and for advising the Board of Trustees.



Pam Maras
President



Tim Cornford
Chief Executive

April 2008

Introduction

This plan replaces our 1994 equal opportunities statement and policy. The consultation we have carried out for this plan reflects the importance of understanding how equality and diversity affect how psychology is practised.

This new plan responds to many changes since 1994, including changes in laws about equality, changes in the population, and a changing political landscape in the UK, introducing greater devolution. We have also tried to take into account developments in equality and diversity legislation and practice. This plan contains an ‘action plan’, which we will update every year. The action plan outlines what we will do and when we will put our aims into practice.

You can get a copy of our action plan by visiting www.bps.org.uk/scpeo or by e-mailing scpeo@bps.org.uk.

About us

We were founded in 1901 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965.

Our mission is to be the voice of UK psychology. We want to promote psychology to help reach all parts of the community.

We support research, education and professional training and encourage high standards of effective and fair practice for our members.

We are forward-thinking and socially responsible. We make sure that the people making decisions that affect the public understand the psychological aspects of important issues. We employ excellent staff and develop their skills.

Our equality and diversity plan has to take into account the fact that we are an organisation with members as well as employees.

Our plan sets out our aims.

These are to:

- be an authoritative voice for the discipline of psychology;
- promote people's understanding and wellbeing;
- make sure research is carried out effectively;
- be forward-thinking and socially responsible;
- tell decision-makers about the psychological aspects of important issues.

We must be positive about equality and diversity if we want to meet our aims.

We will do this by:

- promoting effective and fair practice to our members;
- creating a guide to help our members follow fair working practices;
- encouraging professionals to develop psychology as a scientific discipline and as a profession;
- raising standards in psychology training and practice;
- supporting the people making our decisions and encouraging them to be socially responsible and to gather all the facts before making decisions; and
- employing staff across the UK.

Our equality and diversity policy

Our first priority is to make sure we meet legal requirements to treat every job applicant, employee, or service user fairly. We believe that we will have much more to offer if we take an active approach to promoting equality and diversity.

Evidence from our research and work shows that to work well we have to understand equality and diversity. As a professional organisation, society and employer, we will work actively to promote equality for everybody. We will use our knowledge and experience when we put together our policies and we will increase our understanding of the communities and people we serve.

We are trying to meet targets under current laws focusing on equality, but we are already planning for future changes. For example, changes such as setting up the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the outcome of the Discrimination Law Review.

By committing ourselves to achieving equality in all that we do, we can keep up with changes in the law and focus on what we can encourage and promote.

Our priorities

We will put our aims into practice by:

- making sure that we have good information and reporting systems to tell us about different groups of people (for example, understanding how many male and female employees we have so we can assess whether we are treating the sexes fairly);
- tackling any issues that we identify in monitoring activities (for example, encouraging people from under-represented communities to apply for our jobs, or encouraging them to join our committees);
- making sure that our members and our staff are aware of how equality and diversity relates to their interests (for example, making sure all our Trustees and managers receive equality and diversity training and telling our members about developments in equality and diversity);
- working with others to include awareness of equality and diversity opportunities in the work they do;
- promoting our contribution to equality and diversity (for example, through our annual award for promoting equality of opportunity);
- making sure our information leaflets are available to everyone; and
- making sure everybody can access our information leaflets (including people who are blind or have sight problems).

Who is responsible for the equality and diversity plan and action plan?

Our Board of Trustees (who receive advice from the Standing Committee for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities (SCPEO)) are responsible for the plan. Our Senior Management Team is responsible for managing the action plan on a daily basis.

Our joint negotiating team is responsible for making sure that we act fairly as an employer and that we agree changes with the union.

How do you measure your success and review the plan?

Our action plan outlines our priorities, how we will carry them out and sets out our aims. You can get a copy of the action plan from our website by visiting www.bps.org.uk/scpeo or by e-mailing scpeo@bps.org.uk.

Our Trustees review our action plan every year. They will also review the overall plan every three years.

We believe that people's differences matter. Our experience as psychologists who teach, research or practise shows that we must take account of factors such as people's ethnicity, gender and age. This plan is aimed at helping us move forward in our different roles.

About the Society

The British Psychological Society was founded in 1901 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Our principle object is to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge.

The Society has more than 46,000 members and:

- has offices in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales;
- accredits undergraduate programmes at 117 university departments;
- accredits 143 postgraduate programmes at 84 university departments;
- confers Fellowships for distinguished achievements;
- confers Chartered Status on professionally qualified psychologists;
- awards grants to support research and scholarship;
- publishes 11 scientific journals, and also jointly publishes *Evidence Based Mental Health* with the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Psychiatrists;
- publishes books in partnership with Blackwells;
- publishes *The Psychologist* each month;
- supports the recruitment of psychologists through the Psychologist Appointments section of *The Psychologist*, and www.psychapp.co.uk;
- provides a free 'Research Digest' by e-mail and at www.bps-research-digest.blogspot.com, primarily aimed at school and university students;
- publishes newsletters for its constituent groups;

- maintains a website (www.bps.org.uk);
- has international links with psychological societies and associations throughout the world;
- provides a service for the news media and the public;
- has an Ethics Committee and provides service to the Professional Conduct Board;
- maintains a Register of nearly 15,000 Chartered Psychologists;
- prepares policy statements and responses to government consultations;
- holds conferences, workshops, continuing professional development and training events;
- recognises distinguished contributions to psychological science and practice through individual awards and honours.

The Society continues to work to enhance:

- recruitment – the target is 50,000 members;
- services to members – by responding to needs;
- public understanding of psychology – addressed by regular media activity and outreach events;
- influence on public policy – through the work of its Policy Support Unit, Boards and Parliamentary Officer;
- membership activities – to fully utilise the strengths and diversity of the Society membership;
- operates a Psychological Testing Centre which sets, promotes and maintains standards in testing.

The British Psychological Society

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