



## NCS Diversity and Inclusion Policy for Programme

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| Responsible Manager | Inclusion Manager |
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| Distribution list   | Trust and Network |

## Version Control

NCS Trust is committed to the continuous improvement of its service offerings and underpinning policies and procedures. It will review the functionality of this policy and related procedures on an annual basis unless an incident warrants it being reviewed sooner or if there is new legislation or guidance that must be taken into account.

| Version | Date          | Author and job title | Date of approval and by whom            | Next Review due and by whom      | Comments (changes applied)  |
|---------|---------------|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2       | July 2019     | Inclusion Manager    | Director of Programme                   | Inclusion Manager, July 2020     |                             |
| 3       | March 2020    | Inclusion Manager    | Director of Programme                   | Inclusion Manager, July 2020     | Branding updates            |
| 4       | December 2020 | Inclusion Manager    | Head of Programme Design and Curriculum | Inclusion Manager, December 2021 | Minor additions and updates |

## Inclusion during NCS programmes and services

This policy applies to the delivery of all NCS programmes and services delivered by contracted suppliers, partners or directly by NCS Trust and outlines guiding principles to ensure that, as far as is reasonably possible, all young people who want to, can fully participate in all that NCS has to offer.

NCS Trust is committed to ensuring that the NCS programmes and services experienced by young people are inclusive and accessible in both design and delivery.

Note: throughout this document 'delivery partner' refers to any organisation involved in the design or delivery of NCS activities to young people (encompassing Delivery Partner, Managing Partner and Recruitment Partner).

### 1. Eliminating Discrimination

In order to ensure that all young people are provided with a fair and equal opportunity to participate in NCS, steps should be taken to ensure that all young people are part of strong, safe and trusting teams in which all young people are treated as individuals

without judgment being made. All NCS activities should be delivered in a manner which values diversity and promotes inclusion.

More information about practically creating strong, safe and trusting teams is available within the NCS Quality Framework and associated Programme Planning Guidance.

NCS Trust is actively opposed to all forms of bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of the following protected characteristics as prescribed by the [Equality Act 2010](#):

- Disability
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marital or civil partnership status

As independent organisations who are contracted to deliver NCS programmes and services, delivery partners must uphold the [Equality Act 2010](#). Delivery partners are responsible for ensuring all staff (and volunteers) operating on NCS programmes and services can independently understand and enact this legislation.

All delivery partners should take swift and appropriate actions to address any behaviours during NCS programmes and services which constitute bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of the protected characteristics outlined above.

Further guidance is available on anti-bullying within the NCS Trust Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

## **2. Making Reasonable Adjustments**

All delivery partners should take action to remove or reduce any barriers which may put disabled young people at a substantial disadvantage to non-disabled peers whilst

accessing NCS programmes and services. Delivery partners should, as far as is reasonably possible, plan ahead and anticipate adjustments.

NCS Trust supports the social model of disability, which says that disability is created by barriers in society. NCS Trust expects all organisations involved in the delivery of NCS programmes and services to be proactive in seeking opportunities to overcome the physical and attitudinal barriers which create exclusion.

Reasonable adjustments are actions taken to remove or reduce barriers to participation, aiming to eliminate disadvantage and ensure that NCS programmes and services are inclusive of disabled young people.

Reasonable adjustments should consider;

- Programme, provision or practice e.g. programme of planned activities
- Physical features e.g. accommodation
- The support provided e.g. auxiliary aids, support staff

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is outlined with the [Equality Act 2010](#).

All delivery partners are encouraged to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of any young person in relation to a protected characteristic (beyond the current legislative requirement relating to disability). For example, flexing the attendance and/or completion criteria to support the participation of a young person with a caring responsibility.

### **3. Extending access for disabled young people**

NCS residential programmes are designed as a 'rite of passage' experience for 15-17 year olds in England. The age range eligibility is designed to coincide with a key transition to adulthood. NCS Trust recognises that for some young people with Education, Health and Care Plans, additional support is provided for the transition to adulthood whilst a young adult is 18-25 years old. Under these circumstances, disabled young people, meeting this criteria and who were previously unable to access NCS may opt to undertake NCS programmes and services at a later stage, aged 18-24 years.

Age eligibility flexibility should only be used where this is in the best interests of the individual participant.

The Supplier should be confident that the appropriate support is in place and that the barriers which prevented the young person accessing NCS aged 16 or 17 have/can now be removed or reduced.

#### **4. Social Mixing**

NCS is committed to creating a more cohesive society. Meeting and working with new and diverse people- whether with peers in teams, with staff or other adults from different walks of life in the community- is a core component of NCS programmes and services.

##### **i. Diversity of recruitment**

To ensure all participants have the opportunity to mix and build relationships with people from different social backgrounds, delivery partners should ensure that the make-up of the young people accessing NCS programmes and services is representative of the demographic make-up of the Local Authority.

This should consider;

- Gender
- Ethnic origin
- Number of young people with Education, Health and Care Plan
- Number of young people in receipt of Free School Meals
- Number of Looked After young people

In addition, recruitment should evidence active engagement of young people accessing education in specialist or alternative provisions or at risk of exclusion, young people within the youth justice system or at risk of offending, young people with caring responsibilities and/ or other vulnerabilities identified as local priorities.

Recruitment activities should consider how best to engage young people with a shared protected characteristic who are currently underrepresented within the regional participants as part of seasonal planning.

##### **ii. Wave and team level mixing**

Social mixing generates valuable outcomes for young people. These outcomes can be achieved by bringing together young people of a variety of ethnic origins, differing

socio-economic backgrounds and those from a variety of urban and rural settings. Delivery partners should create opportunities for mixing across these groups at wave level e.g. offering co-located phases and involving joint activities.

The allocation of young people to teams should take into consideration opportunities for social mix by bringing together teams with gender diversity and consisting of young people from different schools and abilities. There is flexibility within the NCS Curriculum to ensure that all young people can enjoy and achieve together during NCS.

Social mixing is a core component of a quality programme, however, no young person should ever be denied a place on an NCS programme or service as a result of protected characteristics and social mixing within teams. Where a team lacks diversity in membership, it is the responsibility of the delivery partner to embed alternative opportunities for social mixing within the programme/ service design.

In decision making over the allocation of places, the supplier must apply the following decision-making hierarchy:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
2. Provide places to those service users that have requested them; and
3. Meet NCS Trust's social mix requirements

## **5. Social Action**

NCS is committed to creating a more engaged society. This mission is underpinned by social action; enabling young people to connect with and impact upon their community, developing skills and knowledge which is useful for the future.

Social action is most impactful when it is led, owned and shaped by young people's needs, ideas and decision-making.

During each seasonal delivery period, delivery partners should monitor the beneficiaries of social action projects, being mindful to ensure that the chosen beneficiaries do not over-represent organisations with a shared protected characteristic interest. For example, avoiding all fundraising activities exclusively supporting organisations for one religion exclusively.

## 6. NCS Trust and the Equality Duty

NCS Trust is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a public body, NCS Trust now has additional responsibilities to advance equality by taking an increasingly proactive approach to diversity and inclusion both in the way we think (our decisions) and the way we act (our delivery).

The Equality Duty has 3 aims:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristics and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

NCS Trust cannot delegate the responsibility to deliver this duty, however all private organisations which are contracted to deliver NCS programmes and services should operate in ways to support NCS Trust's compliance with this duty. As a commissioning body, NCS Trust expects all delivery partners to commit to delivering inclusive and accessible programmes/ services and take action to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. Delivery partners are required to demonstrate how they have considered the Equality Duty before and at the time decisions are made in relation to the provision of NCS.

In addition, delivery partners are expected to contribute to activities undertaken by NCS Trust to advance equality of opportunity by sharing good practice, learning and challenges via Network forums e.g. NCS Communities of Practice, to ensure that NCS Trust can continue to take action to identify and remove barriers to NCS programmes and services.