# Operational Policy: Equal Employment Opportunities (NAG 3)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) has a statutory responsibility under the State Sector Act 1988 and its amendments to meet the needs of staff belonging to groups that are disadvantaged in the workplace, and to be an employer of choice.

BLENNZ recognises and values the diversity of its staff and is committed to providing a work environment where everyone is treated fairly and where equal opportunities are offered to all potential and existing staff on the basis of relevant merit.

BLENNZ will not accept discrimination in any form, whether active or passive.

## Definitions:

Discrimination occurs when someone, or a group of people, is/are treated less favourably than other person or group in the same or similar circumstances, because of a particular characteristic. As specificed in the Human Rights Act, discrimination is unlawful when it occurs in the areas specificed in the Act. These areas are: gender, marital status, religious belief, ethical belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status, sexual orientation and socio-economic background.

## Policy Requirements:

BLENNZ will:

1. have inclusive employment practices

2. not permit either active or passive discrimination of employees

3. recognise employees as individuals with different needs

4. respect and value the potential contribution of each employee

5. make reasonable accommodations to ensure full and equal participation is possible

6. avoid overt bias and overcome unconscious bias in the employment cycle

7. provide support to managers to employees with “diverse-abilities”

8. wherever possible, and in terms of New Zealand employment law, allow flexibility in hours of work to meet the responsibilities such staff members have for the care of children and others for whom they have a responsibility of care.

## Supporting Documentation:

BLENNZ Flexible Work Practices Policy

BLENNZ Workplace Bullying & Harassment Policy

BLENNZ Sexual Harassment Policy

Relevant legislation:

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 23).

2. Human Rights Act 1993.

3. Employment Relations Act 2000.

4. Health & Safety in Employment Act 2015

5. Crown Entities Act 2004

6. Harassment Act 1997

7. Official Information Act 1982

8. Privacy Act 1993.

Online Resources:

1. [Workbridge website](http://www.workbridge.co.nz)

2. [Equal Employment Opportunities Trust website](http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/)

3. [Website link to Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment](http://www.mbie.govt.nz/)

4. [Website link to Government Legislation](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/)

5. [Website link to Unteach Racism NZ](https://www.unteachracism.nz/)

Approved: 

Date: 12 August 2021

Next Review: 2024