

Equal opportunities policy – Haslemere Musical Society (HMS)

Aims

Haslemere Musical Society is a music group open to all. We aim to treat our members, volunteers, Paid Professionals and supporters equally regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, class and socio-economic background.

- The Chair of the HMS committee is responsible for providing advice and guidance on equality and diversity issues, and to ensure the Equality and Diversity Policy is kept up to date.

Equality of opportunity – Haslemere Musical Society aims to:

- promote equality for its members and potential members in access to membership and musical activities and opportunities within the membership criteria.
- ensure no member or potential member will receive less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by the criteria and characteristics set out in the introduction within the membership criteria.
- ensure no individual wishing to volunteer or work for (including on a freelance basis) Haslemere Musical Society will receive less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by the criteria and characteristics set out in the aims.

Inclusion and respect;

- Haslemere Musical Society values its members, Paid Professionals, volunteers and supporters and will do all it can to:
 - treat them in a respectful manner and ensure they are made to feel equally welcome and included in all activities.
 - provide an environment in which the contribution and needs of everyone are fully valued and recognised.
- Accordingly, all members, staff volunteers, supporters and those representing Haslemere Musical Society are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity and ensure activities are welcoming and inclusive for all.
- Inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment and have no place in Haslemere Musical Society.

- Haslemere Musical Society will support our members, volunteers, Paid Professionals and supporters in not tolerating any inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour from other group members, volunteers, colleagues, other organisations or customers.

Accessibility: Haslemere Musical Society aims to use venues that are accessible to all for rehearsals, concerts and any other activities or events it undertakes.

Dealing with Complaints

- If any member, volunteer, staff or supporter feels they have been discriminated against or harassed they should raise it with the committee.
- The committee will take complaints of discrimination and harassment seriously.
- The committee will investigate the complaint, listening to all parties involved:
 - If the complaint is against a committee member, that member will not be part of conducting the investigation.
 - If the complaint is against an individual, that individual will have the opportunity to express their point of view in a safe environment and accompanied by a friend.
 - The person making the complaint will have the same opportunity.
- If a complaint is found against Haslemere Musical Society, the committee must work to ensure that such discrimination is not repeated in the future, and must inform the members of how they propose to do this.

Employment practices – general

- HMS does not act as an employer for anyone associated with the activities of the Society. HMS has four 'Paid Professionals' who are remunerated for their services based on their contracts of engagement and at a rate reviewed and agreed annually by the Committee. These are the Music Director, the Orchestra Leader, the Chorus Master/Mistress, and the Chorus Rehearsal Pianist/Assistant Chorus Master. HMS takes no responsibility for the payment of National Insurance or tax incurred by the Paid Professionals.
- Haslemere Musical Society aims to promote equality and inclusivity as a contractor of Paid Professionals and shall ensure that no volunteer, Paid Professional, person engaged to provide a service (e.g. freelance) or job/volunteer applicant receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by the characteristics set out in the aims of this policy.
- Haslemere Musical Society selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- Selection and appointment practices will be subject to regular review to ensure that they comply with the Equality and Diversity Policy.

- Haslemere Musical Society regards discrimination, abuse, harassment, victimisation or bullying of staff or volunteers in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct.

Requirement for DBS checks for current and potential members, staff and volunteers – with reference to ex-offenders

General:

- HMS does not meet the requirements that enable DBS checks to be undertaken for any of its Paid Professionals, staff and volunteers based on the criteria for hours of work undertaken with HMS on a monthly basis. This has been confirmed by Making Music (June 2018).
- Haslemere Musical Society actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.

Responsibilities

Haslemere Musical Society ensures that all those who are involved in the recruitment process are:

- aware of the Haslemere Musical Society equality and diversity policy.
- have read any other guidance deemed appropriate by the Haslemere Musical Society committee.

Policy review

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the Committee. Members of Haslemere Musical Society will be informed of any changes to the policy and be invited to comment.

Policy adopted on 9th January 2018