
ACAT Equality and Diversity Policy

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Introduction

CAT promotes an active engagement with difference. It therefore seeks to provide a framework for the profession of psychological therapy that allows competing and diverse ideas and perspectives on what it means to be human to be considered, respected and valued.

ACAT is committed to the achievement of equality of opportunity as an employer and in its dealings with members. It is also committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in professional training and to users of psychotherapy services. The Association aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee of the Association, member or user of psychotherapy services receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of, for example, gender, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, disability, sexual preference or age, or is disadvantaged by terms or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified.

In psychotherapy Equal Opportunity applies:

(i) To an individual's access to the provision of psychotherapy services

Psychotherapists should be committed to working towards an understanding of the meaning of cultural diversity and they should strive to acknowledge the impact of different cultural experiences on themselves, their clients and their work.

A crucial element of difference is the extent to which it adversely affects access to services and life chances. Many minority groups experience prejudice and discrimination on the basis of their religion, ethnic origin, disability etc.

Explicit discrimination is now unlawful but more subtle forms of prejudice continue to affect many groups and overt hostility is often experienced by minorities.

Psychotherapists must aim to acknowledge, in their practice, the reality of difference and of discrimination and prejudice in society as a whole and within the profession.

(ii) To an individual's access to courses of training

- a) Equality of opportunity in professional training with attention to issues of diversity.
- b) 'All trainings conduct themselves with an awareness of the importance of the respect for difference in society whether this is in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, ethnic or cultural differences. This is not simply because it is a moral requirement to address the complex issues of equal opportunities but also in order that a lively and open atmosphere can be promoted within ACAT'. *From ACAT Training Handbook p.6.*
- c) Non-exploitative and anti-discriminatory practice: 'Trainers/supervisors are expected to treat trainees/supervisees with integrity, impartiality and respect. They must recognise, and work in ways that respect the values and dignity of supervisees and their clients with due regard to issues such as status, race, gender, age, beliefs, sexual orientation and disability.'

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- The trainer/supervisor has a responsibility to be aware of her own issues of prejudice and stereotyping and particularly to consider ways in which these may be affecting the training/supervisory relationship. The trainer/supervisor has a responsibility to make such issues explicit where appropriate.
- The trainer/supervisor needs to be alert to any prejudices and assumptions that supervisees reveal in their work and to raise awareness of these so that the needs of clients may be met with sensitive recognition and appreciation of difference.
- The supervisor must not exploit her supervisee sexually, financially or emotionally in any way.

From ACAT Code of Ethics and Practice for Training and Supervision.

(iii) To an individual's access to employment and to positions of responsibility within ACAT.

CAT strives to be an equal opportunity organisation in every way we can. We do not discriminate on grounds of:

- Race
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Age
- Social class

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