EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PRN-58: Equality Impact Assessment Policy and Procedure

Digital Video Call Facilitation Policy

Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd

Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES

Company Registration Number: 15556946

SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled

Email: admin@carehopes.com

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that the organisation systematically considers the potential impact of its decisions, policies, procedures, services, projects, and operational changes on different groups of people.

The organisation is committed to promoting equality, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in all aspects of its work. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) help ensure that decisions are fair, evidence-based, and do not unintentionally disadvantage individuals or groups.

This policy aims to:

Promote equality and inclusion.

Identify and reduce barriers.

Support evidence-based decision-making.

Improve accessibility and participation.

Meet legal and ethical responsibilities.

Reduce the risk of discrimination.

Improve outcomes for service users, employees, volunteers, and stakeholders.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to:

Trustees

Directors

Managers

Employees involved in decision-making

Volunteers involved in service development

Consultants acting on behalf of the organisation

The policy applies to:

New policies

Policy reviews

Service developments

Service changes

Projects

Strategic plans

Organisational restructures

Recruitment and employment practices

Volunteer management arrangements

Community initiatives

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3. Policy Statement

The organisation is committed to ensuring that equality considerations form part of organisational planning and decision-making.

Equality Impact Assessments will be used to:

Identify potential impacts.

Promote good relations.

Advance equality of opportunity.

Reduce barriers to participation.

Inform decision-making.

Improve service delivery.

Equality Impact Assessments are intended to support positive outcomes and continuous improvement.

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4. Principles

The organisation will ensure Equality Impact Assessments are:

Proportionate

The level of assessment should reflect the significance of the proposal.

Evidence-Based

Assessments should use available information and evidence.

Inclusive

Stakeholder views should be considered where appropriate.

Transparent

Decisions and actions should be documented.

Outcome-Focused

Assessments should lead to meaningful action where required.

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5. Objectives

The organisation aims to:

Identify potential adverse impacts.

Improve accessibility and inclusion.

Ensure fair treatment.

Support legal compliance.

Reduce inequality.

Improve organisational decision-making.

Strengthen service quality.

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6. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

Equality Act 2010

Human Rights Act 1998

Care Act 2014

Data Protection Act 2018

UK GDPR

Relevant equality and inclusion guidance

The organisation will seek to ensure compliance with applicable equality legislation.

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7. What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a structured process used to identify whether a proposal could have:

Positive impacts.

Negative impacts.

Unintended consequences.

Opportunities for improvement.

The process helps ensure that equality, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility considerations are incorporated into planning and decision-making.

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8. When an Equality Impact Assessment Should Be Completed

An EIA should be considered when:

Developing a new policy.

Reviewing an existing policy.

Introducing a new service.

Changing service delivery methods.

Making significant operational decisions.

Implementing strategic changes.

Introducing new systems or technologies.

Revising recruitment procedures.

The need for an EIA should be considered at an early stage.

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9. Protected Characteristics

Equality Impact Assessments should consider potential impacts relating to:

Age

Disability

Gender reassignment

Marriage and civil partnership

Pregnancy and maternity

Race

Religion or belief

Sex

Sexual orientation

Additional factors such as caring responsibilities, socio-economic challenges, communication needs, and digital exclusion may also be considered where relevant.

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10. Areas for Consideration

Assessment may examine potential impacts on:

Service Users

Access, participation, outcomes, and experience.

Employees

Recruitment, development, wellbeing, and progression.

Volunteers

Recruitment, engagement, support, and retention.

Trustees

Governance participation and representation.

Community Stakeholders

Access to programmes and involvement opportunities.

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11. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

Responsible for:

Promoting equality and inclusion.

Reviewing significant equality issues.

Providing strategic oversight.

Directors

Responsible for:

Ensuring EIAs are undertaken where required.

Monitoring implementation of actions.

Supporting equality objectives.

Managers

Responsible for:

Completing EIAs.

Consulting stakeholders where appropriate.

Implementing agreed actions.

Employees and Volunteers

Responsible for:

Contributing information where requested.

Supporting implementation of improvements.

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12. Stages of the Equality Impact Assessment Process

The Equality Impact Assessment process consists of:

Stage 1

Identify the proposal.

Stage 2

Gather relevant information.

Stage 3

Assess potential impacts.

Stage 4

Identify mitigating actions.

Stage 5

Record findings.

Stage 6

Approve and implement actions.

Stage 7

Review outcomes.

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13. Stage 1: Identify the Proposal

The assessor should clearly define:

The proposal being assessed.

Objectives.

Intended outcomes.

Groups affected.

The purpose of the proposal should be clearly understood before assessment begins.

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14. Stage 2: Gather Evidence

Evidence may include:

Service user feedback.

Complaints and compliments.

Consultation results.

Equality monitoring data.

Staff and volunteer feedback.

Audit findings.

Research and guidance.

The quality of evidence should be considered.

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15. Stage 3: Assess Potential Impacts

Consider:

Positive Impacts

Will the proposal improve access, participation, inclusion, or outcomes?

Negative Impacts

Could any group be disadvantaged?

Neutral Impacts

Where no significant impact is expected.

Potential impacts should be documented.

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16. Stage 4: Consider Accessibility

The assessment should consider whether the proposal may affect:

Communication accessibility.

Physical accessibility.

Digital accessibility.

Service availability.

Participation opportunities.

Reasonable adjustments should be considered where necessary.

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17. Stage 5: Consider Mitigating Actions

Where risks are identified, actions may include:

Alternative communication methods.

Additional consultation.

Staff training.

Service adjustments.

Accessibility improvements.

Monitoring arrangements.

Actions should be realistic and proportionate.

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18. Stage 6: Decision Making

Following assessment, the organisation may decide to:

Proceed

Where no significant concerns are identified.

Proceed with Adjustments

Where improvements or controls are required.

Delay Implementation

Pending further assessment or consultation.

Review the Proposal

Where significant concerns exist.

The rationale should be recorded.

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19. Stage 7: Monitoring and Review

Following implementation:

Outcomes should be monitored.

Feedback should be reviewed.

Improvement actions should be evaluated.

Further action should be taken where required.

Monitoring helps determine whether anticipated impacts occurred.

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20. Consultation

Consultation may involve:

Service users.

Employees.

Volunteers.

Trustees.

Community partners.

Advocacy organisations.

Consultation should be proportionate to the significance of the proposal.

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21. Involvement of Service Users

Service users should be involved wherever appropriate, particularly where proposals directly affect:

Service delivery.

Accessibility.

Participation opportunities.

Communication methods.

Their lived experience can provide valuable insight.

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22. Recording Equality Impact Assessments

EIAs should be documented and include:

Description of proposal.

Evidence considered.

Potential impacts identified.

Actions required.

Responsible persons.

Review arrangements.

Records should be retained securely.

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23. Equality Impact Assessment Outcomes

Possible outcomes include:

Outcome	Description
No Impact Identified	No significant equality issues identified
Positive Impact	Proposal promotes inclusion or accessibility
Potential Negative Impact	Further action required
Significant Impact	Senior review required

All outcomes should be documented.

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24. Examples Requiring an Equality Impact Assessment

Examples include:

Introducing online-only services.

Changing volunteer recruitment processes.

Revising accessibility arrangements.

Relocating community activities.

Introducing new communication methods.

Developing strategic plans.

Changing eligibility criteria.

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25. Monitoring Equality Outcomes

Equality information may be monitored through:

Participation data.

Complaints.

Feedback.

Accessibility requests.

Equality monitoring reports.

Service outcomes.

Monitoring helps identify emerging issues.

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26. Training and Awareness

Relevant personnel may receive training covering:

Equality legislation.

Inclusive practice.

Equality Impact Assessments.

Accessibility.

Reasonable adjustments.

Training supports effective assessment and decision-making.

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27. Equality Impact Assessment Template

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Title of Proposal

Assessment Date

Assessor

Purpose of Proposal

Evidence Considered

Groups Affected

Positive Impacts Identified

Negative Impacts Identified

Actions Required

Responsible Person

Review Date

Approved By

28. Case Study

Scenario: Introduction of Online Review Meetings

The organisation proposes increasing the use of online review meetings to improve flexibility.

Equality Impact Assessment Findings

Potential benefits:

Improved accessibility for some participants.

Reduced travel barriers.

Greater scheduling flexibility.

Potential risks:

Digital exclusion for some older adults.

Technology access difficulties.

Communication barriers.

Mitigating Actions

Telephone alternatives offered.

Face-to-face reviews remain available.

Additional support provided for technology use.

Outcome

The proposal is implemented with appropriate adjustments to support inclusion.

Learning Point

Equality Impact Assessments help identify both opportunities and risks before changes are introduced.

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29. Responsibilities Summary

Role	Responsibility
Board of Trustees	Strategic oversight of equality impacts
Directors	Ensure EIA completion and review
Managers	Conduct EIAs and implement actions
Employees	Contribute information where required
Volunteers	Support inclusive practices

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30. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The organisation will monitor:

Equality Impact Assessments completed.

Action plans implemented.

Equality-related complaints.

Accessibility improvements.

Service user participation.

Equality monitoring data.

Outcomes of organisational changes.

Monitoring findings will be used to strengthen equality, diversity, inclusion, and service quality.

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31. Review Arrangements

This policy and procedure will be reviewed:

Annually.

Following significant organisational changes.

Following equality-related complaints.

Following legislative changes.

Following equality audits or reviews.

Related Policies

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Policy

Accessibility and Inclusive Communication Policy

Service User Engagement, Participation and Co-production Policy

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Volunteer Management Policy

Data Protection and GDPR Policy

Governance, Board and Trustee Responsibilities Policy