AGCAS Equal Opportunities Policy

Aims

- AGCAS wishes to state its positive commitment to Equal Opportunities and seeks to implement inclusive policies across all its operations. The association abides by current legislation and regulation on Equal Opportunities.

Definitions

- **Direct discrimination** is here defined as the treatment of a person or group in a less favourable manner than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances.

- **Indirect discrimination** is here defined as the setting of a requirement, condition or practice which, whether intentionally or not, adversely impacts on a considerably larger proportion of people of one sex, age group, colour, ethnic or national origin, or with a particular martial status, sexual orientation, family responsibility, physical and sensory disability, political or religious beliefs and activities, than another, and this cannot be reasonably justified on grounds other than their belonging to that particular group.

Scope of the policy

- AGCAS commitment to Equal Opportunities and inclusivity applies to the following areas.
  - Employment
  - The recruitment of Trustees and volunteers
  - The provision of services by the organisation and its staff, volunteers and trustees, whether this be to the general public, staff, students and graduates of higher education or AGCAS staff, volunteers and trustees
  - Relationships with suppliers

Principles – statement on Equality of Opportunity

- AGCAS affirms its commitment to the equal treatment of all people regardless of their sex, age, ethnic or national origin, colour, marital status, sexual orientation, family responsibility, physical or sensory disability, political or religious beliefs and
activities. It is firmly opposed to any form of discrimination based on these human attributes and values.

• AGCAS will therefore, as an employer operates an equal opportunities policy in recruitment, selection and promotion of staff at all levels. Selection criteria and procedures will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that individuals are recruited and selected on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities by ways that can be shown to be not directly or indirectly discriminatory as defined in the Sex and race Discrimination Acts. Within the resources available, all employees will be afforded the opportunity to undertake training appropriate to their present posts and future aspirations.

• AGCAS will, as a recruiter of trustees and volunteers, offer equal opportunities in the recruitment and selection of trustees and volunteers. Selection criteria and procedures will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that volunteers are recruited on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

• AGCAS, as a provider of products and services will ensure that all eligible groups or individuals are offered equal opportunities in the provision of these products and services, and will pursue positive policies to ensure maximum open access.

• AGCAS will take appropriate legal or disciplinary action to protect staff and volunteers while at work, from any discriminatory behaviour, verbal or physical, by any individual or groups from within or outside the organisation.

• Allegations of discriminatory behaviour by any staff member, volunteer or trustee will be dealt with under the Dignity at Work procedures.

Responsibility and Implementation

The Board of Directors and Trustees are responsible for ensuring that AGCAS meets its legal obligations under current Equal Opportunities Legislation and Regulations.

In implementing its Equal Opportunities policy AGCAS will have regard to:
- An individual's capacity to undertake and benefit from AGCAS activity
- Legal requirements such as those for health & safety
- Any limitations or improvements in the association's facilities, so far as these are not reasonably capable of remedy within the resources available to AGCAS

Monitoring and Evaluation

Equal Opportunities monitoring information may be requested as part of the recruitment of staff, trustees and volunteers. This information will only be evaluated to ensure that AGCAS policy on Equal Opportunities is being implemented successfully and will not be used in the taking of recruitment decisions.
AGCAS may collect Equal Opportunities monitoring information on its service users. This information will only be used for monitoring and evaluation purposes and to ensure that AGCAS policy on Equal Opportunities allows and encourages inclusion and open access in its provision of services and products.

Any Equal Opportunities monitoring and evaluation information collected or requested by AGCAS will be dealt with in accordance with the AGCAS Policy on Information Security (under development).