SECTION 9: GPTI EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & DIVERSITY POLICY

1   **General Statement of Intent – throughout 'we' refers to GPTI**

1.1   We acknowledge that we operate within an increasingly complex social environment and value diversity and difference. We also recognise the existence of oppression and discrimination, direct and indirect, inherent at every level within our society, which will inevitably be reflected in GPTI itself. This policy aims to widen access both to and within GPTI and to ensure that all individuals who have links with the Institute are treated with dignity and respect and to make our services as relevant and approachable as possible for everyone.

1.2   We recognise that we work in a richly diverse community and understand the importance of achieving a diverse membership which reflects our society. We undertake to recruit, train and support members by valuing the varied skills and experiences that they bring. We aim to do this by investing in their training and development, by treating staff and volunteers fairly and equitably, by combating harassment and discrimination within the Institute, and by encouraging an honest and open culture which values the differences between us.

1.3   We believe in equality of opportunity, and value all individuals regardless of any collective identity. However, we recognise that individual and institutional discriminatory practice in society (and therefore also within GPTI) has meant that some groups have not had equal access to services and fair employment practices, nor to opportunities in training. We believe that all people have a right to employment, training and to services which are free from direct and indirect discrimination.

1.4   We are committed to providing an environment free of stereotyped and oppressive beliefs, attitudes and practices. We seek to promote diversity and to respond to the needs of all individuals in a fair and equitable manner. We work to reduce unfair discrimination in society and seek to eliminate such practices within the organisation.

1.5   GPTI's Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy is designed to support the Institute's general objectives and comprises distinct elements covering the role of the Institute:

      1.5.1   as a regulator of standards of psychotherapeutic practice, training, supervision and accreditation

      1.5.2   as an employer of paid and voluntary staff

      1.5.3   as a developer of the practice of Gestalt psychotherapy in the United Kingdom

2.0   **Policy Statement**

2.1   Within current Equal Opportunities/Diversity legislation and codes of practice (see appendix 2), we operate an anti-oppressive and diversity policy and are committed to working towards implementing this policy in all its roles. We are committed to conducting an Impact Assessment of the policy to ensure that its aspirations are being realised in practice.

2.2   No person will be discriminated against or denied access to services or positions within the

Institute on the basis of his/her disability, HIV/AIDS status, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender (including gender identity), sexual orientation, marital status, social class, age (subject to a minimum age requirement set by UKCP.), political affiliation or non-relevant criminal conviction.

A notable exception to this will apply to the formation of sections (see section 7) that may choose to restrict their membership accordingly.

Wherever practicable, reasonable adjustments will be made to enable anyone with a disability to have access to services or positions; however, there may be times when the physical adjustments needed to make services accessible to those with a physical disability are not feasible (see 5.6).

3.   Scope of the policy

3.1   This policy covers the following areas:

3.1.1   The production and dissemination of information relating to the Institute (including its training centres)

3.1.2   Access to the Institutes services (including physical access to buildings and also access to information and opportunities)

3.1.3   Employment opportunities both paid and voluntary within the Institute (including its training centres)

3.1.4   Internal communication systems throughout the Institute covering employees, all members and clients, trainers, pre-trainees, trainees, supervisors and supervisees.

3.1.5   The regulatory systems and practices of the Institute

3.1.6   Individual members practising as psychotherapists, trainee psychotherapists, supervisors and/or trainers

3.1.7   Standards for accreditation and reaccreditation

3.2   As part As part of its quality control system we will ensure that policy processes and procedures are made transparent. As such a copy of the policy will be included on the Institute's web site, in its handbook and on notice boards at each of our training centres.

4.   GPTI as a Regulator of Standards

4.1   Accreditation at any level within the Institute will be based solely on the applicant's ability to meet the published criteria.

4.2   The Executive and Training Standards Committee will take responsibility for reviewing whether any processes and criteria may disadvantage people from certain groups unnecessarily and we will work to address this imbalance.

4.3   The outcome of applications for accreditation will be regularly monitored by the Training Standards Committee and reported to the Executive Council to ensure equity and fairness.

4.4   All those involved in the accreditation process will receive training in assessment procedures for both written and oral examinations to ensure that accreditation criteria are directly related to the skills necessary for a psychotherapist, supervisor or trainer as appropriate, and that these procedures are as accessible as is possible to a diverse community of members. All those involved in such processes will ensure that candidates have an understanding of the issues faced by clients belonging to minority groups.

4.5   The GPTI Executive and its subcommittees will take responsibility for monitoring and supporting the training needs of those involved in the accreditation process and in the investigation and management of the regulatory practices of the Institute particularly in relation to equal opportunities and diversity issues.

5.   GPTI as an Employer (of both paid and voluntary staff) and as a provider of training.

5.1   Recruitment of staff will be made from as wide a field as practicably possible and will be made on merit alone. All new posts, either paid or voluntary within the Institute will be filled through open recruitment and selection process.

5.2   All appointments will be made on merit. Everyone selected for interview will be asked to demonstrate how they would implement the GPTI equal opportunities and diversity policy in relation to the post for which they are applying.

5.3   We will not insist on higher education or professional qualifications other than those which are strictly necessary to do the job. In choosing someone for a job the ability to provide the service needed is viewed by the Institute as of primary importance.

5.4   In assessing qualifications, the Institute does not assume that overseas diplomas and degrees are inferior to UK qualifications. Wherever appropriate a candidate's experience will be taken into consideration and rated for equivalency in relation to professional-experience requirements.

5.5   As the need arises, for example through growth, vacancies and restructuring, the requirements of individual jobs, both paid and unpaid will be reviewed and redesigned as necessary. Where appropriate new work patterns and flexible working arrangements will be considered and introduced to widen opportunities.

5.6   The Executive Council will consider physical adjustments and flexibility in working practices to support candidates with disabilities to take up positions within the organization (in line with the Disability Discrimination Act).

5.7   The Chair of the Executive Council must approve advertisements, both internal and external after discussion with the relevant committee chair(s).

5.8   Paid vacancies will be advertised internally and externally according to the Institute's procedures. The Executive Council will consider targeting adverts to reach particular communities to actively encourage diversity within its staff and volunteers.

5.9   The above points will apply to the recruitment and selection of trainers and assistants by our training centres

6.   **Responsibilities**

6.1   All members are required to adhere to this policy in their work as psychotherapists, trainee psychotherapists, trainers and supervisors. All staff, both paid and unpaid, are also required to adhere to this policy, which is incorporated into all contracts of employment.

6.2   The Chairs of the Executive Council and all committees are responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied within their operational areas. The relevant committees will discuss queries on the application or interpretation of the policy prior to any action being taken.

6.3   It is the responsibility of trainers and supervisors to ensure that the minimum standards established within the policy are adhered to within their area of responsibility. This includes the selection of trainees and awareness and implementation of equal opportunities and diversity within the subjects taught.

6.4   All members must:

    6.4.1   co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity, diversity and anti-oppressive practice;

    6.4.2   address any discriminatory acts or practice in breach of the scope of this policy and report to either the Chair of the Executive or the Chair of the Ethics Committee any matter not resolved in this way;

    6.4.3   not induce or attempt to induce others to practice discrimination in breach of the scope of this policy;

    6.4.4   not victimise any person who has reported or provided evidence of such discrimination;

    6.4.5   not harass, abuse or intimidate others on the grounds contained in the scope of the policy;

    6.4.6   not canvass job applicants in an attempt to discourage them from applying or taking up a post

    6.4.7   take responsibility for reflecting on their practice (as pre-trainees, trainees, trainers, supervisees, supervisors, and accredited psychotherapists) in relation to equal opportunities and diversity issues seeking additional training or support as necessary. Formal reflection will be required as part of the 5-yearly reaccreditation process.

7.   Support / Communities of Interest

7.1   All members should have access to support. If, for example, a group of members sharing a collective identity wish to set up a support group then this should be encouraged (for example a Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual or a Race Section).

7.2   If a member feels isolated within GPTI on the basis of their identity as a member of a marginalized group, they are encouraged to contact the Executive Council who will endeavor to help provide the needed support.

8.   Training and development

8.1   The Institute's training strategy seeks to ensure that anti-oppressive practice is integrated into and across the curriculum of GPTI. GPTI members will ensure that these requirements are met when designing and delivering any training.

8.2   We are committed to all training events being held in premises that are accessible to all members (in line with the Disability Discrimination Act).

9.   Communication

9.1   We are committed to broadening the ways in which we communicate both internally and externally**,** for example, by providing copies of newsletters or policies in accessible formats as required and by reviewing our website.

9.2   The details of this policy will be communicated to all current and future members and employees. All job applicants will receive a copy of the policy.

10.   Complaints

10.1   Any breach of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy will be dealt with through the complaints or grievance procedures. Serious offences such as harassment and victimisation will be defined as serious (gross) misconduct and dealt with via the appropriate regulatory procedure.

10.2   Anyone who has a concern regarding the application of this policy can make use of the Institute's Regulatory Procedures and Practices.

10.3   If you would like to speak to someone because you feel that you are or have experienced discrimination or harassment within GPTI, please contact a member of the Executive or one of its sub committees or sections.

11.   Monitoring/Impact Assessment

11.1   The responsibility for monitoring this policy rests with the Executive Council. A comprehensive review of this policy will be conducted at intervals of three years.

Appendix 2 – Legislation Drawn on:

1976 Race Relations Act & **Race Relations (Amendment)**	http://www.cre.gov.uk/
1970 Equal Pay Act & **Equal Pay (Amendment) Act 1984**	http://www.eoc.org.uk/
1975 Sex Discrimination Act & 1988	http://www.eoc.org.uk/
1995 The Disability Discrimination Act **(Amendment) Regulations 2003**	http://www.drc-gb.org/
1998 Human Rights Act	http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hract/
The Employment Equality (Sexual **Orientation) Regulations 2003** and **The** **Employment Equality (Religion or Belief)** **Regulations 2003**	http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/discrimination/emp-equality-regs-2003/amendments-civil-partnership/index.html Key Questions answered http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/equality/eeregs_a.htm#b1

Useful Links:

AGE CONCERN	**Age**	http://www.ace.org.uk/
AGE INFO	**Age**	http://www.cpa.org.uk/ageinfo/ageinfo.html
BLACK & ASIAN MENTORING PROGRAMME	**Race**	http://www.diversitymentoringuk.com/
COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY	**Race**	http://www.cre.gov.uk/
DFEE	**General**	http://www.dfee.gov.uk/
CHOICES AND RIGHTS – DISABILITY COALITION	**Disability**	http://www.choicesandrights.org.uk/index.html
DISABILITY	**Disability**	http://www.disability.gov.uk
DISABILITY NET	**Disability**	http://www.youreable.com/
DISABILITY RIGHTS COMMISSION	**Disability**	http://www.drc-gb.org
DISAIBILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT	**Disability**	http://freespace.virgin.net/steven.jacklin/ddacont.html
EMPLOYMENT & DISABILITY	**Disability**	http://www.opportunities.org.uk/
RNID	**Disability**	http://www.ucl.ac.uk/UCL-Info/Divisions/Library/RNID/
ENGENDER	**Gender**	http://www.engender.org.uk/
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION	**Gender**	http://www.eoc.org.uk
HMSO	**General**	http://www.hmso.gov.uk/
HUMAN RIGHTS UNIT	**General**	http://www.drc-gb.org/drc/

THE FAWCETT SOCIETY	Gender	http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/
WOMEN' & EQUALITY UNIT	Gender	http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/
HUMAN RIGHTS ACT & SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Sexuality	http://www.hrea.org/learn/guides/lgbt.html
LESBIAN & GAY EQUALITY: STONEWALL	Sexuality	http://www.stonewall.org.uk/