

Culture and Safeguarding Statement

HRCS' mission is focussed on human rights realisation for those people whose rights are most at risk. We have an equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and policy and we are also committed to being actively anti-racist in all we do. We have a diverse Board and team who come from a range of backgrounds and experiences and reflect this in our work. We prioritise intersectionality throughout all of our work and our recently published Manifesto sets out our commitment to tackling prejudice and discrimination in all its forms and our commitment to DEI.

Anti Racism

To be anti-racist, organisations must first understand racism. Racism is insidious, pernicious and profoundly harmful to individuals and communities. It's based on bigotry and hatred and diminishes people to stereotypes fed by hate and misinformation. Racism can also be subtle and unconscious – operating through prejudice and preference that is not easy to identify or address. Racism is centuries-old and has been significantly amplified during different periods of history including slavery/colonialism and during those periods where populism, nationalism and fascism have been in the ascendancy.

Racism is based on power imbalances between racial groups and aims to limit the life opportunities of those who do not hold power. Being subjected to racism is deeply dehumanising and traumatising at an individual and generational level. It is essential that people understand

the historical, multi-dimensional destructiveness of racism if they are to successfully promote anti-racism.

HRCS is in the early stages of its development and is committed to being anti-racist in all that it does. We understand that we need to ensure that our operational activities, policies and procedures are inclusive and accessible to people from racially minoritised groups. For example, ensuring that our events are accessible by considering issues such as translation, culturally sensitive and appropriate language and representation and diversity of speakers. Internally we must ensure that our processes and procedures such as recruitment and selection, annual leave, pensions, support and supervision and line management embed the principles of anti-racism, recognise historic power imbalances, support people appropriately to their culture, experience and background and directly challenge racism wherever or whenever it might occur.

Representation matters and we are proud of our organisational diversity – both our Board and team are diverse, and we seek to celebrate this and maintain through our recruitment processes. We work hard to promote intersectional understanding across cultures and experiences, and mirror our anti-racist and diverse approach to our own organisational culture in everything we do.

Safeguarding

Supporting the safety and security of our membership is a priority, it is also the responsibility of all of our members and we all must act with this in mind.

1. Unless otherwise agreed in writing in advance, HRCS will act as the safeguarding lead organisation for our events in line with our Safeguarding policy.
2. For general membership meetings and events, attendee contact details will not be shared with other attendees. Unless express permission is given by a member (for example, if 2 attendees want to have a follow up conversation and ask to be put in touch with each other). Practically, this means things like ensuring we BCC all emails to attendees and select 'hide attendee list' in our outlook calendars.
3. We encourage but do not mandate people to turn their cameras on and share their real names during online meetings. However, we recognise the need to balance this with people's rights, and the technological barriers this can create, so this is not mandatory.
4. We will ask all attendees at membership meetings to share their name and (if applicable) organisation in the chat to ensure effective minuting of meetings.
5. We will continue to ensure that member contact details are stored securely, and in keeping with UK data protection laws.
6. We will not share details of our members (including names of organisations) without specific permission.

7. Unless expressly permitted to do so, members should not share data they attain from the Network – such as the personal details of members, notes of meetings etc.

Access and Inclusion

1. The provision of an accessible and inclusive organisation, which enables free, full and informed participation for all is the responsibility of all members.
2. HRCS recognises accessibility as a relational, systemic, and intersectional issue, applying to everyone who faces structural or attitudinal barriers to full and equal participation.
3. HRCS prioritises the building of policies, spaces, and practices that are responsive to the full diversity of lived experience, considerate of the barriers our members and their communities might face.
4. HRCS commits to embedding access and inclusion into core operational costs, and on request will offer reasonable adjustments to services, events, and spaces. This includes the provision of accessible and alternative formats.
5. HRCS is keen to learn from members and other organisations how accessibility and inclusion can continue to improve over time. Feedback is welcome and can be submitted using all of our communications channels. Members can also use the email members@hrcscotland.org.
6. HRCS has developed a rights-based framework for decision making around access and inclusion, which will be used when planning

events, allocating budget, designing services, and reforming internal systems.

7. HRCS respects and affirms all gender identities, including people from gender minorities and trans communities. Members are encouraged to share and use correct pronouns, and to cultivate a culture of respect and affirmation in all interactions, communications, and documentation.
8. HRCS recognises that language accessibility is fundamental to inclusion. We will strive to make information and participation accessible in multiple languages, and to provide interpretation, translation, and plain language materials wherever possible
9. HRCS acknowledges that access is also shaped by financial and geographic barriers. We will take steps to support equitable participation by offering hybrid and low-cost options for events and workshops, and by considering travel costs in our planning.

HRCS

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