

## **Confidentiality Policy**

Al-Mizan Charitable Trust is committed to providing a confidential service to all members of the public. Any personal information which is disclosed to the Trust as part of its application process cannot be divulged to any third party outside of the organisation.

As a general principle, confidentiality rests with the organisation as a whole and not with any individual member of staff or volunteer who acts on behalf of the Trust. However, it is routine practice within the organisation that personal information is shared only on a need to know basis and where there is no practical requirement for another member of staff to be aware of the personal circumstances concerning an applicant, such information is not disclosed.

The Trust is an independent charity, and we do not work in conjunction with the police or any judicial authority, unless we are legally obliged to do so.

### **Exceptions**

We may breach confidentiality in circumstances where we become aware of significant risk or harm either directly to the applicant or to any third party. This includes cases of sexual abuse, domestic violence and/or rape. We will only breach confidentiality if we believe that there is a significant risk of harm to either the applicant or others in the future, rather than because of any offence committed in the recent or distant past.

If a member of staff is concerned about the security of an applicant, or indeed others, you are advised to speak to your line manager immediately. If the Trust decides to breach confidentiality, we will keep the applicant informed, if appropriate, of any action we are likely to take.

### **Personal Data**

The nature of the Trust's charitable activities requires us to collect a range of personal information including demographic details for the purpose of collating statistical data, contact details, copies of photo-ID and proof of address, personal circumstances and financial information.

### **Security**

All personal data is saved on our in-house database which is only accessible to members of staff, and which is password-protected. Hard copies of signed applications and photocopies of identity documents are stored in a secure and locked filing system at the official address of the Trust, and are never removed from the premises.

### **Record-Keeping**

The Trust is required to maintain a database of all beneficiaries for a period of at least 7 years. The personal information which we keep relates directly to the application submitted to the Trust. As soon as a particular case has been closed, and all monitoring data has been collected, copies of any ID retained by the Trust are destroyed using a paper-shredding machine.

## **Marketing**

For the purpose of promoting our work, and to assist in our fundraising campaigns, we profile a small number of case-studies who have received financial support from the Trust. All information which could personally identify the beneficiary is removed, and demographic or circumstantial details such as the location, ethnicity, age or gender of the beneficiary or minor details of the particular case-study may be changed to further protect the identity of the individual.

## **Personnel**

All members of staff including all volunteers who have access to personal information concerning beneficiaries of the Trust are required to sign a Confidentiality Statement. All personnel are legally bound by this Confidentiality Policy even after they cease to work for the Trust.

Assessment of all grants is undertaken by the Grants Review Panel, all of whom remain anonymous to ensure that there is no bias or external pressure in relation to a particular application. Grants Officers, with the exception of the Senior Grants Officer, are not permitted to disclose the nature of their work at the Trust to any third party, except to any direct family with whom they share permanent residence. Grants Officer are reminded to be discreet when speaking to wider networks of family and friends, and in particular, when using social networking sites.

Al-Mizan Charitable Trust will take any measure necessary, including legal action, to stop a member of staff from breaching the confidentiality of an applicant to the Trust.

## **Complaints**

If you are not entirely satisfied with the level of service you have received by the Trust or are concerned about any issue relating to confidentiality, you may address your complaint directly to the Independent Complaints Adjudicator, as outlined in our Complaints Procedure.

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