

Equality & Diversity Policy

Statement of intent

We are committed to eliminating discrimination.

Our objective is to create a working environment in which there is no unlawful discrimination and all decisions are based on merit.

Policy Objective

Discrimination is unlawful when it takes place on one of the following grounds (the 'protected characteristics'): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

We aim to avoid discrimination in all aspects of employment and recruitment. Our approach to different aspects of employment and recruitment is set out below.

Recruitment and selection

We aim to ensure that job requirements and job selection criteria are clear and based only on what is required to get the job done effectively. We will avoid making stereotypical assumptions based on protected characteristics about who is able to do a particular job.

We aim to ensure that no job applicant is placed at a disadvantage by practices or requirements which disproportionately disadvantage protected groups and which are not justified by the demands of the job. Where appropriate we will draw up a clear and accurate job description and person specification to ensure that we remain focussed on what the job involves and the skills, experiences and qualifications which are relevant and necessary to do the job. If a job can be done flexibly, we aim to say so in the recruitment process/job description.

Where appropriate, shortlisting for interview will be done by two managers using a preagreed marking system that is applied fairly and consistently to all applicants. If we hold interviews, we will try to ensure that more than one person conducts them to ensure that we avoid unintentional bias. We will not ask for personal or irrelevant information on application forms or in interviews. We will focus instead on whether someone has relevant skills, qualities and experience to do the job.

Promotion, training and appraisals

Promotion and training decisions will be made on the basis of merit. We will not unlawfully discriminate against an employee in making promotion or training decisions. We believe all employees should have an equal opportunity to progress and develop.

Working conditions and terms of employment

We will try to accommodate cultural or religious practices such as prayer requirements where we reasonably can. If you wish to discuss any individual requirements then you should refer the matter to your line manager and/or HR Department.

We will ensure that decisions made under our disciplinary, grievance, and attendance management policies are carried out fairly and without discrimination.

We aim to ensure that our pay systems are fair and free from discrimination.

Disabled Employees

We will make adjustments to accommodate disabled employees where possible and reasonable. For example, we can provide extra equipment or support, we can re-arrange duties and we can make changes to our premises in appropriate cases. If you think you may have a disability, you are encouraged to tell the business about this so that we can explore what adjustments might be appropriate.

Training on equalities

We will train our managers and those responsible for recruitment on understanding and avoiding discrimination.

Monitoring

We may ask job applicants and employees for information about some of their protected characteristics. We do this to help us to establish whether our Equality & Diversity Policy is effective in practice and to take action where we think it is needed to address problems or reduce disparities.

We collect this information anonymously and we will use it only for monitoring purposes and not for any other purpose. We will protect the confidentiality of the information given to us.



Your rights and responsibilities

You have the right not to experience unlawful discrimination in our workplace. You also have a responsibility to understand this policy and help us to implement it.

All employees have a duty not to discriminate against each other and not to help anyone else do so.

You must not discriminate against any of our visitors/ customers/suppliers. Equally, we expect our visitors/ customers/suppliers not to discriminate against you and we will take appropriate action against any visitor/customer/supplier found to have done so.

If, after investigation, we decide that you have acted in breach of this policy you may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. This applies to the most senior levels of management as well as to all other employees.

What to do if you have been discriminated against

If you believe you may have been discriminated against, please tell us. You can speak informally with your manager or anyone in HR. If you want to make a more formal complaint, you are encouraged to raise the matter through our standard Grievance Procedure.

Allegations of potential breaches of this policy will be treated seriously. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

Policy review and promotion

We will promote and publicise our Equality & Diversity Policy as widely as possible when recruiting and using our induction packs, notice boards and handbooks.

We will review our Equality & Diversity Policy on a regular basis.

Mark White
General Manager