

## Equality Policy

### Statement of Policy

We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a long-standing feature of our employment practices and procedure, we have made the decision to adopt a formal equal opportunities policy. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and possible disciplinary action.

The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy and maternity and part-time or fixed term status.

We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.

The policy will be communicated to all private contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity.

The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.

Definitions "Discrimination" means less favourable and detrimental treatment on grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy and maternity and part-time or fixed term status.

The law recognises a number of forms of discrimination:

**Direct discrimination:** this occurs when an individual is treated less favourably than another in relation to employment on grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy and maternity.

**Discrimination by association:** This occurs against someone because they associate with another person who possesses one of the following protected characteristics: - age, disability, race, religion or belief.

**Discrimination by perception:** This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic. This applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief.

**Indirect discrimination:** indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

For example:

When a job requirement is applied equally to all, but it has a disproportionate and detrimental effect on one section of the workforce, because fewer of that group can comply with it, and the requirement cannot be justified in relation to the job. This applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex.

**Failure to make adjustments:** In a case of disability if the company's premises or equipment, materials or working arrangements put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage, then it is unlawful discrimination not to make any reasonable adjustment which remove or minimise that effect.

**Harassment:** is a form of direct discrimination. It can be defined as unwanted and unwelcome behaviour which causes discomfort or upset to an individual, violating their dignity and which has an adverse effect on working relationships. It creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive work environment for the individual. This applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex. Please refer to the company's separate policy on harassment.

**Third Party Harassment:** This can occur against employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of our company, such as customers or clients. This applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex. Please refer to the company's separate policy on harassment.

**Victimisation:** Is where a person is treated less favourably than another when they have made allegations, brought proceedings, given evidence or complained about the behaviour of someone who has been harassing or discriminating against them or others, or have been suspected in doing so.

## Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equal opportunities policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

We will not continue our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only. Or mainly. Applicants of a particular group.

All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job. All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible.

Interview questions will be competency based and related to the requirements of the job and not discriminatory in nature.

We will not disqualify and applicant because he or she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

### **Terms and Conditions of Employment**

We will ensure that terms and conditions of employment are free from all forms of direct and indirect discrimination and apply equally regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy, and maternity and part-time or fixed term status. No requirements or conditions will be imposed, directly or indirectly, which will or might place any group of employees at an unfair or unlawful disadvantage.

We recognise that flexibility with regard to working patterns will assist the broadest range of people to work for the company. We will not reject any request for non-standard working patterns unless there is objective justification after careful consideration.

Grievance and disciplinary procedures will be operated without discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy, and maternity and part-time or fixed term status.

## Training, Career Development and Promotion

Senior staff will be provided with the appropriate training (according to business need) to enable them to improve their performance and to achieve the performance standards and targets set for them by the company, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy and maternity, part time or fixed term status.

We will also ensure that opportunities for training, career development are made equally available to all employees.

Promotion within the company is based on personal merit and the reasonable requirements of the job regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy and maternity and part time or fixed term status.

Mark Grantham  
Managing Director  
10<sup>th</sup> May 2013