

# **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.**

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## Policy scope.

The Company is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in employment. As part of our zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in any form, you and any job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics). We are also committed to providing equitable treatment to all those we deal with as an organisation, including customers and suppliers.

The terms equality, inclusion and diversity are central to this policy. 'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution. 'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce. We will actively support diversity and inclusion and ensure that all our employees are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

We value our people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All job applicants, employees and workers (including agency workers) are covered by this policy, and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

## Discrimination.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful

(a) Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views.

(b) Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

(c) Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.

(d) Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment. This includes where someone mistakenly believes that the person victimised has done so.

(e) Disability discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Company as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, all individuals have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Company.

## Responsibilities.

The leadership team will ensure that recruitment, selection, training, development and promotion procedures result in no job applicant, employee, or worker receiving less favourable treatment because of a Protected Characteristic within the Equality Act 2010. In accordance with our overarching equal treatment ethos, and our Disability Confident – Committed accreditation, we will also ensure that no-one is treated less favourably on account of their trade union membership or non-membership, or on the basis of being a part-time worker or fixed term employee. The Company's objective is to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted, and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities.

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.

The management team has the primary responsibility for successfully meeting these objectives by:

- not discriminating in the course of engagement against employees, workers or job applicants;
- not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination;
- bringing to the attention of our workforce that they may be subject to action under the disciplinary procedure, or other appropriate action, for unlawful discrimination of any kind.

You can contribute by:

- not discriminating against fellow employees, workers, clients, suppliers or members of the public with whom you come into contact during the course of your duties;
- not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination;
- reporting any discriminatory action to your line manager.

The successful achievement of these objectives necessitates a contribution from everyone, and you have an obligation to report any act of discrimination known to you.

## Breach of policy.

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination and victimisation may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you have suffered harassment, bullying or discrimination, or witnessed it happening to someone else in the workplace, you can raise the issue through the grievance procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

We encourage the reporting of all types of potential discrimination, as this assists us in ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion principles are adhered to in the workplace. However, making a false allegation in bad faith, or that you know to be untrue, will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

## Document Revisions.

Policy Version	Last reviewed date/by:		Next review date:
01	March 2025	Abi Wall - CPO	March 2027