

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

The Company aims to be an equal opportunities employer and seeks to ensure that all existing and potential employees are given equal opportunities in employment. No applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, physical characteristics, nor be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which can not be shown to be justifiable. All employees will be given equal opportunity and, where appropriate, special training to progress within the company. We will not discriminate against any employee on the grounds of his or her personal views or activities except where these adversely affect or are likely to affect, the job or obligations of the company.

2. Definitions

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others in similar circumstances. Indirect discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is imposed which adversely affects a particular group considerably more than another and cannot be strictly justified in terms of requirements for performing the job. Harassment is defined as unwanted, not reciprocated and/or uninvited comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is found objectionable and offensive and that might threaten an employee's job security, or create an intimidating working environment.

3. General principles

This policy applies to all employees of the company and to those who apply to the company for a job.

You have a duty to co-operate with the company in putting this policy into practice. This includes making sure that you do not act in a discriminatory way, or influence colleagues to harass, abuse, intimidate or threaten other employees or students.

All managers are responsible for adopting working practices and procedures which are free from discrimination and for ensuring that all employees properly observe and comply with this policy. Any active discrimination (including harassment) or breach of this policy by any employee will be treated as a disciplinary matter. Where the breach is wilful and to the detriment of an individual or the company, this may result in dismissal.

4. Measures to promote equal opportunities

We undertake to do the following:

4.1.1 Review our recruitment policy and procedures regularly to ensure individuals are selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. We will endeavour to ensure that job vacancies are widely advertised and publicised so that the widest range of candidates can apply.

4.1.2 Ensure that no employee receives less favourable terms and conditions of employment, including pay and benefits.

4.1.3 Ensure that no part-time employee is treated less favourably than any comparable full-time employee with respect to their contractual terms and conditions including their hourly rate of pay, access to contractual benefits and training, pro rata entitlements to leave and sick pay.

4.1.4 Monitor promotion decisions to ensure that procedures are fairly and consistently applied.

4.1.5 Encourage all employees to develop their skills and abilities in line with the needs of the company.

4.1.6 Consider training or development based on an individual's capabilities, performance and potential and not restrict opportunities in any way which might be discriminatory or be on the basis of criteria which cannot be justified by job requirement.

4.1.7 Establish non-discriminatory criteria for selecting employees for redeployment or redundancy should the situation arise.

4.1.8 Treat seriously and take prompt action on any employee grievance concerning discrimination.

4.1.9 Ensure that all employees are treated consistently under the disciplinary procedure and are not discriminated against on any grounds.

4.1.10 Ensure that all employees who are absent from work are treated consistently under the relevant policies and are not discriminated against on any grounds.

4.1.11 Ensure that employees are aware of the needs of any disabled applicants or employees.

4.1.12 Make every effort to accommodate the needs of any employee who becomes disabled or whose disability increases during their employment and will consider any reasonable adjustments necessary or opportunities for retraining and redeployment, as appropriate.

If you believe that you have received treatment that is contrary to this policy or feel that you have been subjected to harassment or victimisation, either directly or indirectly, you should first raise the matter with your manager and, if felt necessary, pursue it through the company's grievance procedure, as appropriate.