

Equality And Diversity Policy	
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<p>Summary</p> <p>The Equality and Diversity Policy ensures fair treatment and non-discrimination for all employees, applicants, clients, and business associates, covering aspects like recruitment, pay, training, and workplace conduct. It promotes a respectful, inclusive environment where individual differences are valued, and any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimization is not tolerated. The company commits to equal opportunities across various protected characteristics, such as age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, and more, with policies regularly reviewed and monitored. Managers are responsible for upholding and implementing this policy, and all employees are expected to contribute to a culture of dignity and respect. Any breaches will be addressed through disciplinary procedures, while complaints will be taken seriously and investigated fairly.</p>	
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Approved and Authorised by: Iftikhar Ahmad (Chief Executive Officer) 	Distribution: Master File 1 Site Manuals

Introduction

We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees, apprentices, consultants, officers, contractors, interns, volunteers, job applicants, agency and casual workers are covered by this policy, and it applies to all areas of employment including:

- Recruitment
- Pay and conditions of employment
- Training and continuing professional development
- Promotion
- Appraisals
- Grievances and disciplinary matters
- Ending employment
- Giving references
- How visitors are treated
- How clients and suppliers are treated
- How any other business contacts and associates are treated

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.

The [insert job title] has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and diversity policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination. Should you have any feedback, please contact [insert contact details].

All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, led by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

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, individuals at all levels 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.

This Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

What is equality and what is diversity?

'Equality' requires us, and you, to treat everyone equally and fairly, with equal opportunities and rights.

'Diversity' recognises that this world is full of differences. We should note, value and positively embrace these differences. It is important for differences to be recognised. But it is equally important that, whilst recognising them, each and every person does so positively, with the importance of equality at the forefront of their minds.

Our commitment to equal opportunities

We want everyone associated with our business to have a fair and equal opportunity to achieve their very best in a safe working environment. We want everyone who works for us to understand the importance of this, and to act consistently with it at all times.

We will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in our business, and we will never victimise anyone who makes a legitimate complaint to us about harassment or discrimination, or anyone who supports a colleague in their complaint.

This Policy is underpinned by the following further commitments:

- To create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all and is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment
- To have a workplace capable of allowing everyone to achieve their potential, and where individuals are willing to give their best
- To providing training, development and progression opportunities to all staff
- To creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued
- To understanding equality and inclusion in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- To reviewing all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness and inclusion for all
- To taking steps to ensure equity amongst our workforce such as ensuring that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse range of potential candidates and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our Company, taking positive action to recruit disabled people and ensuring there are no unlawful barriers to accessing our employment opportunities, training, progression opportunities, benefits and facilities
- To regularly monitoring our diversity in our workforce to ensure equal opportunities throughout the company. Where appropriate, measures will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary obstacles and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups
- To make sure that all staff understand their rights and responsibilities under this Policy – if you are not sure what we consider acceptable and unacceptable, you should check with your [line manager]
- To amend this Policy if we think it has become outdated, or circumstances suggest to us that it needs to be updated
- To protect staff, wherever possible, from being victimised or treated less fairly if they make or support a complaint in good faith under this Policy

Our commitment as a service provider

The Company is committed to:

- providing services to which all clients are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- making sure our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients
- taking steps to ensure equity amongst our clients and service users such as removing any unlawful obstacles to accessing our services or facilities. Where appropriate, measures will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups
- fully supporting this policy by senior management and ensuring agreement has been reached with employee representatives, if applicable
- monitoring and reviewing this policy annually
- having clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated

Equal opportunity policy statements

Age

We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that people are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities. If we feel that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will discuss this with you and try to find an alternative solution where possible
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate
- We will keep the physical features of our premises under review to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

Race

We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents and
- actively promote race equality and inclusion in the Company
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other Companies to do the same.

Gender

We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other Companies to do the same and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transgender people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual orientation

We will:

- ensure that we take account of the needs of everyone, including the LGBTQ+ communities
- promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the LGBTQ+ communities
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone and
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other Companies to do the same.

Religion or belief

We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity during pregnancy or maternity leave
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy or maternity and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged during pregnancy or maternity leave and that we take account of the needs of our employees' during pregnancy or maternity leave.

Marriage or civil partnership

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership status
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of their marriage or civil partnership status.

Part time and fixed term work

Part time and fixed term staff should be treated the same as comparable full time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Equal pay

We will ensure that all employees have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

Commitment to equal opportunities in recruitment, training and development

We will conduct recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises, such as redundancy selection, or any other benefit on the basis of merit, using criteria and processes that avoid discrimination. Managers involved with these processes will receive training on equality and diversity.

Training needs will be identified through regular appraisals. We will not be influenced by any protected characteristics that you may have. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and given appropriate access to training to enable you to progress within the Company. The talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Company.

How we monitor whether this policy is working

We may record and analyse information about equal opportunities within the workplace, and when you join us, you give us consent to gather and process this data about you. We use the information to make sure this Policy works properly and to refine it. We may also use the information to review the composition of our workforce and to promote workplace equality. All data will be stored and processed in line with our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.

[HR/Manager] will monitor the outcomes of any complaints raised under this Policy to note any patterns of behaviour and to assess the quality of investigations. We will use the information gathered to focus training, development and awareness needs appropriately.

How we enforce this Policy and handle breaches

We will investigate any complaint or allegation you raise regarding a potential breach of this Policy. If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you should contact your [line manager] as soon as possible. If you want to take formal action, you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or through our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate.

We expect you to take personal responsibility for following this Policy's aims and commitments and for drawing any actual or potential breaches to our attention.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice.

Occasionally, people make complaints in bad faith, knowing that they're not true. People might do this to avoid or deflect disciplinary action or performance management. We view any complaint made in bad faith as an act of misconduct, and this will normally lead to disciplinary action. In some cases, bad faith complaints may lead to summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

9. DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY

1 st November 2007	Issue 1	Initial Document
21 st April 2009	Issue 2	Revised Document
7 th June 2010	Issue 3	Revised and Reformatted
23 rd June 2011	Issue 4	Annual Review
12 th May 2012	Issue 5	Review
11 th May 2013	Issue 6	Annual Review
11 th May 2014	Issue 7	Annual Review
11 th May 2015	Issue 8	Annual Review
11 th May 2016	Issue 9	Annual Review
11 th May 2017	Issue 10	Annual Review
11 th May 2018	Issue 11	Annual Review
13 th May 2019	Issue 12	Annual Review
13 th July 2020	Issue 13	Annual Review
13 th May 2021	Issue 14	Annual Review
13 th July 2022	Issue 15	Annual Review
13 th July 2023	Issue 16	Annual Review
15 th July 2024	Issue 17	Annual Review
15 th Feb 2025	Issue 18	Change of Logo