

## Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Company is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst its workforce. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and that each employee feels respected and able to give their best.

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and to prevent unlawful discrimination because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, religion or belief, and sexual orientation (these are known as 'protected characteristics').

All employees, whether part-time or full-time, permanent or temporary, will be treated fairly, and with respect and dignity. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

We will also aim to provide a service that does not discriminate unlawfully against our customers in the means by which they can access the services which we supply. The Company believes that all customers are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.

The Company is committed to compliance with relevant equality legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, Codes of Practice and relevant best practice guidance. This policy pursues and builds on the statutory position to ensure that we have in place effective measures to promote equality and diversity.

### Our commitment

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our employees are recognised and valued
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated



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- Training, development and opportunities for progression are available to all employees
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness
- Breaches of this policy will be regarded as either misconduct or gross misconduct, depending on the nature of the breach, and will lead to formal disciplinary action
- This policy is fully supported by management and will be subject to regular monitoring and review

## This Policy

- Explains what we mean by equality and diversity.
- Sets out the legal protections in this area.
- Explains the importance of equality and diversity to the business.
- Sets out the role you can play in ensuring that the workplace is a diverse, inclusive, and supportive environment for all, focused on the goal of equality.
- This Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend 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.

## Types of unlawful discrimination

Unlawful discrimination can take various forms. The types of unlawful discrimination described within the Equality Act 2010 are set out below:

- **Direct discrimination** - occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. In limited circumstances, employers can directly

discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

- **Indirect discrimination** - occurs when an organisation's practices, policies or procedures have the effect of disadvantaging people who share certain protected characteristics, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Harassment** - occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can consist of verbal abuse, racist jokes, insensitive comments, leering, physical contact, unwanted sexual advances, ridicule or isolation. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the behaviour.

The Company has a separate Bullying and Harassment Policy, which deals with these issues.

- **Associative discrimination** - occurs where a person is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership).
- **Perceptive discrimination** - occurs where a person is directly discriminated against or harassed because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership). It applies even if the person does not actually possess that protected characteristic.
- **Victimisation** - occurs where a person is treated less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint of discrimination, e.g. raised a grievance, given evidence, or acted as a companion; or that it is suspected that they intend to do so.
- A person is not protected from victimisation if they act in bad faith, i.e. where they give information that they know to be false.
- **Failure to make reasonable adjustments** - occurs where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage

compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Examples of the kind of reasonable adjustments that the Company will consider in order to fulfil its legal duty are:

- Making adjustments to premises
- Re-allocating some or all of a disabled employee's duties
- Transferring a disabled employee to a role better suited to their disability
- Relocating a disabled employee to a more suitable office
- Giving a disabled employee time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation
- Providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee
- Supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled employees; or
- Any other adjustments that the Company considers reasonable and necessary provided such adjustments are within the financial means of the Company.

If an employee has a disability and feels that any such adjustments could be made by the Company, they should discuss this with their Manager.

## Positive Action in Recruitment

'Positive action' in recruitment and promotion means the steps that the Company can take to encourage and improve equality for people who share a protected characteristic to apply for positions within the Company. For example, people from groups with different needs or with a past record of disadvantage.

If the Company chooses to use positive action in recruitment this will not be used to treat people with a protected characteristic more favourably, but in the event of a 'tie-break' situation, when there are two candidates of equal merit applying for the same position.

## Responsibilities for the implementation of this Policy

All employees, subcontractors and agents of the Company are required to adhere to, and assist the Company in achieving, the aims of this policy. The Company will provide

equality and diversity training to Managers and employees to help them understand their rights, responsibilities and what they can do to help the Company achieve the aims of this policy.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Company for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure. Serious acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation are considered gross misconduct and will result in dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

### **Acting on discriminatory behaviour**

If you consider that you have been the subject of, or witness to, the type of discriminatory behaviour described in this policy, please refer to either the Company's grievance procedure or Bullying and Harassment Policy as appropriate. The Company takes all complaints seriously.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be monitored periodically by the Company to evaluate its impact and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. As part of the monitoring process the Company will gather information on the composition of the workforce and job applicants, such as gender, race, disability and age. The Company will review the policy in accordance with the results gathered and implement any necessary changes accordingly.

Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Signed:



Charlie Brown  
Managing Director

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