



# Equal Opportunities Policy

Area: Equality & Diversity  
VERSION 1.0 Effective November 2017

# Equal Opportunities Policy

## Policy Statement

It is this organisation's policy to treat all job applicants and employees fairly and equally, regardless of sex, pregnancy, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status, civil partnership status, age, race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origins or disability. Furthermore, the organisation will monitor the composition of the workforce to ensure that this policy is effective.

Through this policy and procedure and the training and development of managers and staff, the organisation will do all it can to promote good practice in this area in order to eliminate discrimination and harassment as far as is reasonably possible.

## Procedure

1. The organisation is an equal opportunity employer. Equal opportunity is about good employment practices and efficient use of our most valuable asset, our employees. Every manager and employee has *personal* responsibility for the implementation of the policy. Any instance of doubt about the application of the policy, or other questions, should be addressed to their line manager as should any requests for special training.
2. The organisation will not discriminate on grounds of sex, trans-gender status, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, marital status, civil partnership status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origins, disability or age, or any other grounds (whether prohibited by legislation or otherwise).
3. The non-discrimination principle inherent in this policy includes the prohibition of discrimination against an individual because he or she associates with someone of a particular race, religion, sexual orientation, age, etc., for example an employee who is married to someone of a minority ethnic origin or who socialises with gay or lesbian friends.
4. The prohibition on discrimination applies equally to situations where someone thinks or perceives (whether rightly or wrongly) that a colleague is of a particular race, sexual orientation, religion, age, sex or that he or she has a disability, is a trans-gender person, or is pregnant.
5. The policy applies to the process of recruitment and selection, promotion, training, conditions of work, pay and benefits and to every other aspect of employment, including general treatment at work and the processes involved in the termination of employment.
6. Where increased pay and/or enhanced benefits are offered to employees on the basis of length of service, these are intended to reward loyalty, maintain motivation and reflect higher levels of relevant experience.
7. The policy applies to job applicants (both internal and external) and all employees and other workers whether full time, part time, temporary, seasonal or contract.

8. Employees should note that the imposition of any provision, criterion or practice which has a disproportionate adverse impact on someone for a reason related to sex, trans-gender status, race, married status, civil partnership status, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability or age will be unlawful unless it can be objectively justified. In the event of any query or doubt, their line manager should be consulted.
9. When establishing criteria for recruitment and promotion into vacant posts, the employer will consider carefully whether any minimum or maximum number of years of relevant experience is necessary for effective performance of the job. Such restrictions will not be imposed unless there is a proper job-based reason why they are necessary.
10. The employer does not operate any compulsory retirement age, and each employee may choose for him/herself when to stop working, subject to him or her continuing to be sufficiently fit to perform his or her job to a satisfactory standard.
11. Employees who are disabled or become disabled in the course of their employment should inform the organisation about their disability. Management will then arrange to discuss with the employee what reasonable adjustments to his or her job or working conditions or environment might assist him or her in the performance of his or her duties. The employee will also be encouraged to suggest any adjustments that he or she believes would be helpful. Careful consideration will be given to any proposals and, where reasonable and reasonably practicable, such adjustments will be made. There may, however, be circumstances where it will not be reasonable or reasonably practicable for the organisation to accommodate proposals put forward by the employee.
12. Any member of staff may use the Grievance Procedure or Bullying and Harassment Procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to sexual or racial harassment or harassment on the basis of disability, sexual orientation, trans-gender status, religion or belief or age, then the complaint may be raised directly with the departmental manager or a member of The Board if the complaint involves their departmental manager. The organisation is concerned to ensure that staff feel comfortable about raising such complaints. No individual will be penalised for raising such a complaint unless the substance of the complaint is untrue or the complaint is made in bad faith, for example out of malice.
13. Where an employee is falsely accused of discriminatory conduct, then he or she may implement the organisation's grievance procedure.
14. Any employee who makes a false accusation of harassment will be subjected to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal.
15. All employees and job applicants will be asked to complete a form denoting their sex, race, ethnic origin, age and any disabilities that they have. The organisation guarantees that the information provided on this form will be used solely for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy.
16. This policy will be monitored on a regular basis by senior management. Where there are issues with the way the policy is working, these will be looked at closely with a view to identifying measures to improve the effectiveness of the policy.