



Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy

EXTERNAL EMPLOYEES

STATEMENT OF POLICY

This policy document seeks to set out the principles of equality, inclusion and diversity we will apply to internal and contractor employees alike. The principles remain valid and we undertake to deliver on them within the restrictions placed on us by the contractor employee/employer relationship.

The terms equality, inclusion and diversity are at the heart of 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 contractors are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a long-standing feature of our employment practices and procedure, we have made the decision to adopt a formal policy. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All contractors are covered by this policy. 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 aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, contractor or worker is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

The **(insert job title)** has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality, Inclusion 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.

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 contractors 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.

We will maintain a neutral working environment in which no contractor or worker feels under threat or intimidated.

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 contractor to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Company.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

All contractors, workers or self-employed contractors whether part-time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. While not always appropriate or applicable to contractor employees, our recruitment and selection processes including selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All contractors 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 Company.

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equality, inclusion and diversity policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Promotion and advancement of internal employees will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Key to these principles are:

Our interview invitations include clarity around the dress code specifically around religious/traditional dress to help foster a culture that allows our contractors to bring their authentic selves to work.

Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with this policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.

We will hide applicant names during the recruitment and selection process to avoid any risk of unconscious bias affecting the recruitment and selection procedure.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources that provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.

All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Shortlisting and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible.

We will strive to conduct interviews using the most diverse interview panel available to us.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

We will not disqualify any applicant because they are unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

After the recruitment and selection procedure, we will carry out follow-up appointment audits to actively monitor our hiring managers to ensure no external factors or biases have influenced key decisions in the process.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

We recognise that some individuals may require flexible options in the workplace, for example, single parents may only be able to work if they can find a role that allows flexibility. However, due to the nature of your engagement as a contractor providing services to our end client, we cannot directly influence our end clients' policies and procedures but we will ensure we work alongside them to promote equality in this area.

TRAINING AND PROMOTION

Senior staff will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.

All promotion will be in line with this policy.

OUR COMMITMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

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

3. Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
4. Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
5. We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

OUR COMMITMENT AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

1. We aim to provide 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, offending past, caring responsibilities or social class.
2. We will make sure that our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients.
3. This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with contractor representatives.
4. This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.
5. We have clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and contractors to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
6. Breaches of our Equality and Diversity Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

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;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people; and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring the availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation.

RACE

We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs;
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents; and
- actively promote race equality in the Company.

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 organisations 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; and
- promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities.

RELIGION OR BELIEF

We will:

- ensure that contractors' 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 and during maternity leave;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy and maternity leave; and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of pregnancy or maternity leave and that we take account of the needs of our contractors during pregnancy and during maternity leave.

MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our contractors; and

- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of their marriage or civil partnership status.

EQUAL PAY

We will work with third party partners towards

- ensuring that all contractors 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.

MONITORING

We will maintain and review the employment records of all contractors in order to monitor the progress of this policy.

Monitoring may involve:

- the collection and classification of information regarding the race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current contractors;
- the examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the distribution of contractors and the success rate of the applicants; and
- recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all contractors, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.

