

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer. Our intention is to follow the principles set out in the Codes of Practice issued by the relevant Commissions. This policy aims to eradicate all forms of institutional and individual discrimination in all aspects of our employment practices.

Policy Objectives

We are an equal opportunities employer committed to providing equal opportunities to all without discrimination.

In support of this fundamental and overriding policy, we are committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and harassment. In particular we will not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on:

- Gender
- Marital or non-marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Race, ethnic origin, nationality or colour
- Religion or belief
- Disability

This policy has been established in order to ensure that:

- (a) All employees are aware of our intention to eradicate all forms of discrimination.
- (b) All employees and job applicants will be given equal opportunity, irrespective of their sex, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or religious affiliations in all aspects of employment, and that no-one is placed at a disadvantage by practices which can not be justified.
- (c) All employees co-operate with measures introduced by us for employees to inform their line manager if they suspect that discrimination is taking place.
- (d) All employees are aware of the action that may be taken where discrimination may be apparent.
- (e) We comply with all relevant employment legislation.

All forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, whether or not they are referred to above, will not be tolerated. It is immaterial that such behaviour may be unintentional, disguised or indirect. All employees are required to respect and act in accordance with this policy.

COMMUNICATION

This Equal Opportunities Policy forms part of the employee's contract of employment and this must be adhered to.

RECRUITMENT

Our job advertisements will state that we are an Equal Opportunity Employer. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds. Any person specification that is used as an aid to selection shall only include requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of that post. Selection criteria procedures will be reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and in all other ways treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

We aim to ensure that all employees involved in recruitment and selection attend relevant courses to give them an understanding of Equal Opportunities, and the legislation safeguarding individuals, when recruiting and selecting new employees.

We are firmly committed to the principle that opportunities for advancement, regarding and promotion should be available equally to all employees. Promotion is based solely on merit. We will ensure that criteria used for advancement, regarding and promotion are fair and open, and that decisions are made consistently in accordance with these criteria.

TRAINING

Our philosophy of Equal Opportunities for all is an important part of our workplace culture. Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of sex, marital status, race, age religion, disability or sexual orientation. All employees will be encouraged to discuss their training needs with their line manager to whom they are responsible.

MONITORING

Information collected about employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief may be used for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.

CONSEQUENCES OF DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

All employees should be aware that perpetrators of discrimination or harassment may: -

1. be subject to the Employer's disciplinary procedure;
2. be subject to dismissal and that extremely serious acts could lead to immediate summary dismissal;
3. be held personally liable for acts of harassment in the event that legal proceedings result from such acts, or otherwise;
4. commit a criminal offence leading, amongst other penalties to a fine or imprisonment. Any such conviction would normally lead to dismissal.

DUTIES OF THOSE IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

All Director's & Management are responsible for the implementation of this policy. They are also responsible for discouraging and preventing discrimination

EXAMPLES FOR GUIDANCE

The following are examples of the kinds of behaviour that are against the Employer's policy: -

- Direct Discrimination – where a person is less favourably treated because of for example, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, religion, race or disability.
- Indirect Discrimination – where a practice, criterion or provision that cannot be justified is applied equally to all groups but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one particular group.
- Victimisation – where someone is treated less favourably than others because he/she has taken action against the Employer under one of the relevant acts.
- Sexual harassment - unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or conduct based on sex, affecting the dignity of women or men at work.