

## **Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

We are committed to supporting equal opportunities and equal rights, and to ensuring that our employees feel safe from harassment and discrimination at work. This policy outlines how we achieve this.

***See also: Equal Opportunities Policy; Complaints Policy; Grievance Policy; Harassment Policy.***

We are an equal opportunity employer and will not tolerate any worker or potential worker being unlawfully discriminated against, on any of the following grounds:

- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins;
- Sex, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or age;
- Gender (including perceived gender, gender identity, gender presentation, and gender reassignment);
- Pregnancy, parental status, marital status or civil partnership;
- For being a member or non-member of a trade union.

Protected groups:

A protected group member is an individual who falls within a group that is qualified for protection under equal employment laws. These include classes such as :

- Race.
- Color.
- Religion or creed.
- National origin or ancestry.
- Sex.
- Age.
- Physical or mental disability.
- Veteran status.
- Genetic information.
- Citizenship

We are committed to ensuring that people at work are treated with dignity and respect. This commitment to equal treatment applies to the advertising of jobs; recruitment and selection; training and development; opportunities for promotion; terms and conditions of service; benefits and facilities; health and safety; and to conduct at work and to all other policies within this handbook. Selection of workers will be based fairly upon aptitude and ability.

The requirements of job applicants and existing workers who have or have had a disability will be reviewed to ensure that wherever possible

reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to enter into or remain in employment with us.

This policy will be made known to all employees and must be adhered to by all such individuals at all times. Furthermore, we will endeavour to ensure that all employees are made aware of what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. Any breaches of this policy may give rise to the Disciplinary Procedure, which may include summary dismissal.

Our policy is designed to ensure that current and potential workers and volunteers are offered the same opportunities regardless of race, nationality, ethnic origin, age, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, domestic circumstances, disability, pregnancy, gender, civil partnership or any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job. We seek to ensure that no one suffers, either directly or indirectly, as a result of unlawful or unfair discrimination. **This extends beyond the individual's own characteristics, to cover discrimination by association and by perception.**

We recognise that an effective equal opportunity policy will help all staff and volunteers to develop to their full potential, which is clearly in the best interests of both our staff and our business. We aim to ensure that

we not only observe the relevant legislation but also do whatever is necessary to provide genuine equality of opportunity.

We expect everyone who works for us to be treated and to treat others with respect. Our aim is to provide a working environment free from harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form that may affect the dignity of the individual.

We further recognise the benefits of employing individuals from a range of backgrounds, as this creates a workforce where creativity and valuing difference in others thrives. We value the wealth of experience within the community in which we operate and aspire to have a workforce that reflects this.

## **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The main piece of legislation which covers equal opportunities and discrimination is the Equality Act 2010.

In addition, the following should be taken into consideration:

- the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- the Protection from Harassment Act 1997;
- the Human Rights Act 1998;

- the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999;
- the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006;
- any Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission; and
- any amendments to the above legislation.

Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and can take different forms, for example:

- Treating any individual less favourably than others on grounds of a protected characteristic (sex, race, marital status, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, age, pregnancy, gender reassignment or civil partnership);
- Expecting a person, solely on the grounds stated above, to comply with requirements that are different to the requirements for others, for any reason whatsoever;
- Imposing on individual requirements that are in effect more onerous than they are on others. This would include applying a condition (which is not warranted by the requirements of the position) which makes it more difficult for members of a particular group to comply than others not of that group;

- Harassment, i.e. unwanted conduct which has "the purpose, **intentionally or unintentionally**, of violating dignity, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment" for the individual;
- Victimisation, i.e. treating a person less favourably because they have committed a "protected act". "Protected acts" include previous legal proceedings brought against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at tribunal, or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer or their alleged discriminatory practices;
- Discrimination by association, i.e. someone is discriminated against because they **associate** with someone who possesses a protected characteristic;
- Discrimination by perception, i.e. discrimination on the grounds that the person is **perceived** as belonging to a particular group (e.g. discrimination because someone is assumed to be pregnant; gay; transgender; a member of a particular race or religion; disabled, etc.), irrespective of whether or not this is correct;

- Any other act or omission of an act, which has the effect of disadvantaging one person against another, purely on the above grounds.

On all occasions where those in control of employees are required to make judgements between them, for example disciplinary matters; selection for training; promotion; pay increases; awards, etc., it is essential that merit, experience, skills, and temperament are considered as objectively as possible.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY**

The overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy rests with the senior management of Paperworks.

Managers and supervisors have a crucial role to play in promoting equality and diversity and equality of opportunity in their own areas of responsibility.

All staff and volunteers, irrespective of their job or seniority, will be given guidance and instruction, through our induction and other training, as to their responsibility and role in promoting equality of

opportunity and not discriminating unfairly or harassing colleagues or job applicants, nor encouraging others to do so or tolerating such behaviour. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken against any employee found guilty of unfair discrimination or harassment.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

We aim, through written instruction, appropriate training, and supervision to ensure that all staff responsible for recruitment and selection are familiar with this policy and apply it in conjunction with our recruitment policy.

Selection will be conducted on an objective basis and will focus on the applicants' suitability for the job and their ability to fulfil the job requirements. Our interest is in the skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude, and the potential of individuals to do their jobs.

Person specifications will be reviewed to ensure that criteria are not applied which are discriminatory, either directly or indirectly, and that they do not impose any condition or requirement which cannot be justified by the demands of the post. Questions asked of candidates will relate to information that will help assess their ability to do the job. Questions about marriage plans or family intentions or any other issues



which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination should not be asked. Selection tests will be specifically related to the job and measure an individual's actual, or inherent, ability to do or train for the job.

Job adverts should encourage applications from all types of candidates and should not be stereotyped.

Reference to this policy will also be made on job and person descriptions.

When advertising a position which has traditionally been done by one sex, adverts should specify they are open to all sexes / genders.

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Paperworks recognises that equal opportunity responsibilities do not end at selection, and is committed to ensure that wherever possible all staff and volunteers receive the widest possible range of development opportunities for advancement.

All employees and volunteers will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their manager.

Opportunities for promotion and training will be communicated and made available to all staff on a fair and equal basis.

The provision of training will be reviewed to ensure that provisions are made where necessary to enable part-time, shift, or remote workers or those returning to work following a break to benefit from training. No age limits apply for entry to training or development schemes which are open to all employees.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

We will ensure that all of our policies including compensation, benefits, and any other relevant issues associated with terms and conditions of employment are formulated and applied without regard to race, nationality, ethnic origin, age, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, domestic circumstances, disability, pregnancy, gender reassignment, civil partnership or any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job.

These will be reviewed regularly to ensure there is no discrimination. Length of service as a qualifying criterion for benefits will not exceed five years unless clearly justifiable.

## **GRIEVANCES, DISPUTES AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

Staff and volunteers who believe they have been discriminated against and have not been able to resolve this informally are advised to use our internal grievance procedure. An employee who brings a complaint of discrimination must not be less favourably treated.

Harassment or bullying will not be tolerated, and any employee who feels that they have been subjected to harassment or bullying, or who witnesses an instance of harassment or bullying, should report this to a manager or appropriate member of staff.

When dealing with general disciplinary matters, care is to be taken that employees who have, are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic are not dismissed or disciplined for performance or behaviour which could be overlooked or condoned in other employees. See **12.2 GRIEVANCE POLICY** for more information.

## **POSITIVE ACTION**

We also recognise that passive policies will not reverse the discrimination experienced by many groups of people. To this end, if

certain groups are under-represented within our business we will actively seek to encourage applications from those groups.

Any measures taken to encourage applications should not be construed as positive discrimination. The decision as to which applicant is offered a post must be based entirely on the merit of the individual.

### **COMMUNICATION OF THIS POLICY**

All job applicants, employees, volunteers, and workers will be made aware of this policy and a copy will be given to all employees and volunteers on joining us. Customers/clients will also be made aware of this policy. In addition, staff will be reminded of the policy through such means as advertisements, job descriptions (which will refer to this), application forms, posters, training courses, and memos.

### **PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Our personnel policies and procedures will be reviewed regularly to improve, amend or adapt current practices to promote equality of opportunity within our business.

### **IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY**

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis following its implementation and may be changed from time to time. Relevant data will be collected to support this policy. Personal details provided by employees or job applicants for the purposes of equal opportunity monitoring is confidential, will be kept apart from all other records and not used for any other purpose.

Date adopted by the Board...1<sup>st</sup> December 2017.....

Signed by Member of the Board.....

Name (in Capitals please) .....

To be Reviewed.....30<sup>th</sup> November 2018