

4. Equal Opportunities and Diversity

We promote a working environment in which diversity is recognised, valued and encouraged. We acknowledge the multi-cultural and diverse nature of the UK workforce and society in general. We are committed to principles of fairness and mutual respect where everyone accepts the concept of individual responsibility. It is therefore your responsibility to make sure you observe and adhere to this policy at all times. We view any breach seriously. We **will** investigate and potentially take disciplinary action. This may include dismissal in instances we consider gross misconduct.

We recognise that discrimination in the workplace in any form is unacceptable and in most cases unlawful. Our policy seeks to ensure job applicants and employees are treated fairly and without favour or prejudice. We are committed to applying this throughout all areas of employment. This includes recruitment and selection, training and development, benefits, rewards and promotion, dealing with grievances and disciplinary issues.

Our policy complies with current legislation. We review it regularly and will update it if the law changes. However, we recognise that equality of opportunity is best achieved by day to day commitment throughout the organisation. We offer support and training where necessary to achieve and maintain this.

Recruitment

The selection methods we use for recruitment are related to the requirements of the job. We do not seek irrelevant qualifications, experience or skills. Applicants for employment are short-listed/selected solely on the basis of their assessed capability for the role.

Protected Characteristics

No job applicant, employee or anyone our organisation deals with receives less favourable treatment because of their protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are:-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Your Responsibilities

Each and every one of us is a stakeholder in the success of this policy. We expect you to make a positive contribution towards maintaining an environment of equal opportunity throughout the organisation. Please make sure you observe this policy at all times. In particular, you have individual responsibility to adopt the following:

- Do not take unlawful discriminatory actions or decisions contrary to the spirit of this policy.

- Do not discriminate against, harass, abuse or intimidate anyone on account of their protected characteristics.
- Do not place pressure on any other employee to act in a discriminatory manner.
- Resist pressure to discriminate placed on you by others and report such approaches to an appropriate Manager.
- Co-operate when we investigate, including providing evidence of conduct which may amount to discrimination.
- Co-operate with any measures introduced to develop or monitor equal opportunity.

Discrimination is not just treating one person less favourably than another. It can take place because:-

- someone associates with a person with a protected characteristic;
- someone is believed to possess a protected characteristic (even though they don't);
- something particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic more than others.

We expect you to treat, and be treated by, other employees and the people our organisation deals with considerately and with respect.

If you feel subject to discrimination, make clear to the individual concerned that you find it unacceptable. Person-to-person discussion at an early stage may be enough to resolve it without involving anyone else. Alternately, seek the help of a trusted colleague and ask them to approach whoever has caused you offence.

If the behaviour continues, or you consider an instance to be particularly serious, please implement the grievance procedure. We assure you that grievances will be dealt with promptly and in a discrete and caring manner.

Should you feel an individual grievance is not appropriate to the situation, you may consider using our confidential reporting procedure.