

# **Equality and Diversity Policy**

**Effective from 01 May 2018**

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**Disclaimer**

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## 1.0 Purpose

The Purpose of this policy is to ensure that equality and diversity at work is encouraged, valued and managed.

The Policy applies to all employees of the Company and any individual who may come into contact with the business for example potential employees, contract workers, external agencies and the general public

- The Company recognises that employees have the right to be treated equally and with dignity at work, therefore this policy aims to outline how the Company will fulfil its legal obligations and the responsibilities of line managers and employees.
- The Company's aim is to build and maintain a workplace environment and culture that is representative of all sectors of society and is free from discrimination providing equality for all.
- The Company recognises its legal obligations to ensure that individuals are not discriminated against in any form, victimised or suffer harassment on the grounds of recognised protected characteristics.
- The Company recognises its legal obligations in line with GDPR 2018 in the use of any collated sensitive data.

## 2.0 Scope

- The Company is committed to continuously reviewing and improving equality and diversity practices.
- The following policy aims to outline the main areas in accordance with current relevant Employment Legislation.
  - The Equality Act 2010
  - General Data Protection Regulation 2018

## 3.0 Relevant Definitions

In the context of this document:

- **Protected Characteristic** means specific groups that are protected by the Equality Act 2010. There are 9 protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).
- **Direct Discrimination** means an individual is being treated less favourably because they have a recognised protected characteristic, are thought to have one, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by Association** means the less favourable treatment of an individual because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect Discrimination** occurs when there is a rule, practice or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular group, who have a protected characteristic.
- **Perception Discrimination** means that someone is treated less favourably because it is thought that they possess a protected characteristic, this applies even if the individual does not possess that characteristic.
- **Victimisation** means the unfair treatment of people due to them either making, or supporting, a complaint or raising a grievance under the Equality Act or being suspected of doing so.

- **Harassment** means unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual.
- **Third party Harassment** means the harassment of an individual by people not directly employed by the Company e.g. customers.
- **Bullying** means behaviour that is intimidating, malicious or insulting, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure another person.

## 4.0 Policy

The Company is committed to providing a work environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. A zero tolerance policy is adopted with regards to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

### 4.1 Responsibilities

- The Management team is responsible for ensuring that line managers have full understanding of the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Line Managers will be responsible for ensuring that their team receives equal opportunities with regards to training and development. Any inappropriate behaviour with regards to alleged acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination will be addressed using the Company's Disciplinary procedure.
- The Management team has the overall responsibility for ensuring their employees are fully aware of the policy and understand what is deemed as acceptable and unacceptable conduct at work.
- Employees are encouraged to read, discuss and understand this policy, seeking clarification from managers where required.
- Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Company, for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment could be guilty of a criminal offence.
- Mutual employee support is expected in the understanding and awareness of this policy.
- It is the responsibility of all employees to support and contribute to the Company's aim of providing equal opportunities for all workers, avoiding unlawful discrimination.
- The implementation and continuous review and improvement of this policy is the responsibility of the management team.

### 4.2 Communication

- Employees will receive a copy of this policy to review and sign to confirm they have understood it.
- Feedback from employees is actively encouraged.
- Employees will be notified of any changes to the policy.
- Employees are requested to contact their line manager, in the first instance, if they feel that they are not being treated fairly at work, or if they believe an act of unfair or unlawful discrimination has occurred. If this is not addressed to the employees' satisfaction then the employees have the right to raise a formal grievance using the Company's Grievance Procedure.

### 4.3 Training support

- Line managers will carry out regular one to one meetings and team meetings to ensure there is an appropriate forum for employees to feed back any concerns.

#### **4.4 Monitoring and Review**

- Management will review employment practices and policies to ensure fairness.
- The Equality and Diversity policy will be reviewed annually.

#### **5.0 Related Documentation**

- Bullying & Harassment at Work Policy
- Training & Development Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Health and Wellbeing Policy

### **6.0 Employee Declaration**

I declare that I have read and understand this policy and as an employee of the Company will behave in accordance with the expectations the Company has stipulated within it. I understand that failure to comply with this policy could lead to disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure and could result in dismissal.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Print Name: .....