

2.0. Equal opportunity policy

2.1. Introduction

We aim to ensure:

- a) That no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of his or her race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, religious or philosophical belief, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age part-time status or trade union activities.
- b) That no applicant or employee is placed at any disadvantage on the above grounds that are not justifiable in law.

This applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment, appointment, benefits, training, promotion, discipline and dismissal, conditions of work, pay and every other aspect of employment.

Selection criteria and procedures will be kept under review to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of the relevant merits and abilities.

All employees will be given equality of opportunity within the Company and will be encouraged to progress within the organisation. To ensure that direct or indirect discrimination is not occurring, recruitment, promotion and other employment decisions will be regularly monitored.

If you feel or consider that you have been disadvantaged because of your race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or age, **do not hesitate** to let your Line Manager or the Office Manager know so that the issue can be investigated and resolved. All complaints regarding discrimination will be thoroughly investigated.

If you have a disability for the purposes of the Disability Discrimination Act please let your Line Manager know so that reasonable adjustments can be considered.

We actively promote non-discriminatory behaviour and do not tolerate any discrimination, victimisation or harassment. Anyone found to be acting in such a way will face disciplinary action that could include dismissal without notice for gross misconduct. Everyone has a duty to report any such behaviour to a member of management. (The Company has a separate Harassment and Bullying policy in the Employee Handbook).

2.2. Recruitment and selection

We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions do not discriminate, whether consciously or subconsciously, in making these decisions.

Our objective is to recruit staff best able and qualified to perform the required or anticipated tasks. We will recruit using a variety of methods, for example, advertisements in local newspapers and Job Centres.

The wording of any advertisements will not place unfair restrictions or requirements on a particular group or request specific qualifications that are not necessary for the effective performance of the job. The selection processes used will measure the suitability of the applicant in terms of the requirements for the position.

2.3. Training and promotion

We are committed to maintaining high standards of training and personal development, strictly in the context of this policy on equal opportunities. Training will not be refused on an unlawful or non-objective basis. Equal Opportunity training will be provided to all new employees as part of the induction process and written instructions will be given to managers from time to time on equality in recruitment, selection, training, promotion, discipline and dismissal.

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

2.4. Discipline and dismissal

We aim to ensure there is no discrimination in our dismissal or redundancy processes and will examine current procedures and criteria to ensure that neither direct nor indirect discrimination is taking place. The Company will regularly monitor the decisions being made.

2.5. Commitment

We are committed to a programme of action to make this policy fully effective.