

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI) POLICY

A) INTRODUCTION

We are committed to creating a workplace where everyone is treated fairly, feels valued, and has the opportunity to thrive. This policy sets out our approach to promoting equality, celebrating diversity, and fostering an inclusive culture where discrimination, harassment and victimisation have no place.

B) SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All employees (permanent, temporary and fixed-term)
- Contractors, consultants and agency staff
- Job applicants
- Volunteers and interns
- Visitors and suppliers
- Anyone representing the organisation

It applies to every stage of the employment lifecycle — from recruitment and onboarding through to development, progression, performance, and exit.

It also applies in all work-related settings, whether in the office, working from home, travelling for business, attending events, or using social media.

C) OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We are committed to:

- Ensuring equality of opportunity in all our practices.
- Making fair and objective decisions based on merit, capability and organisational need.
- Valuing the strengths that people of different backgrounds, identities and experiences bring.
- Creating a culture where individuals feel respected, listened to and able to be themselves.
- Ensuring that no one is disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Our equal opportunities obligations are fully embedded within this policy.

D) PRINCIPLES OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Equality

We are committed to ensuring fairness and consistency in all decisions relating to employment. Individuals will not be treated less favourably because of personal characteristics or circumstances unrelated to their ability to perform their role.

Diversity

We recognise the value that comes from a diverse workforce — in creativity, decision-making, organisational performance and the experience we offer to those we serve. We seek to create a workforce that reflects a broad range of identities, skills and perspectives.

Inclusion

Inclusion means creating an environment where people feel they belong, are respected and can contribute fully. We want colleagues to feel confident speaking up, sharing ideas, and raising concerns without fear of negative consequences.

E) EQUALITY ACT 2010 and PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

This policy supports our compliance with UK legislation including the Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from being discriminated against, harassed, or victimised because of the characteristics listed below:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We also uphold wider employment rights and human-rights principles that underpin fair and respectful treatment.

F) EQUALITY ACT – PROTECTION FROM DISCRIMINATION

The Act protects people in various settings. We expect everyone to act in a way that upholds our values and this policy. We have **zero tolerance** for discrimination, harassment, bullying, or any behaviour that undermines dignity or inclusion. People are specifically protected from:

- **Direct discrimination**
This means treating one person worse than another person because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination**
This can happen when an organisation puts a rule or a policy or a way of doing things in place which has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one.
- **Harassment (including sexual harassment)**
This means people cannot treat you in a way that violates your dignity, or creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation**
This means people cannot treat you unfairly if you are taking action under the Equality Act (like making a complaint of discrimination), or if you are supporting someone else who is doing so.
- **Bullying**
Bullying can be defined as intimidation on a regular and persistent basis or as one off, which serves to undermine the competence, effectiveness, confidence and integrity of the person on the receiving end. This may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people.
- **Behaviour that undermines dignity or inclusion**
This refers to actions that intentionally weaken an individual's authority, confidence, or ability to perform their role effectively.

Reports of such behaviour will be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

G) RESPONSIBILITIES

Creating an inclusive workplace is everyone's responsibility. People are expected to perform their duties to the best of their abilities and conduct themselves in an appropriate way.

Leaders are responsible for:

- Setting expectations and modelling inclusive behaviours
- Embedding EDI principles in our culture, strategy and decision-making
- Ensuring teams understand and follow this policy

Line Managers play a critical role and must:

- Set a good example in how we act and communicate
- Foster a welcoming environment within teams
- Address and manage any behaviour that does not align with our values
- Apply policies consistently and fairly
- Consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate

Employees are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Avoid discriminatory behaviour or language
- Be open to listening and considering different viewpoints
- Speak up if they experience or witness exclusion, harassment or unfair treatment

HR will:

- Provide guidance and training
- Monitor workforce data and trends to identify opportunities for improvement
- Ensure policies, systems and processes remain inclusive and legally compliant
- Support investigations into any concerns raised under this policy

H) RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT & PROGRESSION

We aim to ensure that:

- Recruitment and selection processes are fair, consistent and transparent
- Job adverts and materials use inclusive language
- Decisions are based on relevant skills, capability and potential
- Development opportunities are accessible and fairly allocated
- Progression is based on merit and demonstrated contribution

We will consider reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment and employment journey to support individuals to perform at their best.

I) RAISING CONCERNS

Anyone who feels they have been treated unfairly or has witnessed behaviour that breaches this policy is encouraged to raise their concerns through:

- Their manager
- HR
- The grievance procedure
- Whistleblowing channels (where appropriate)

No one will be disadvantaged for raising a concern in good faith.

J) MONITORING & REVIEW

We will:

- Review workforce data where individuals have chosen to share it.
- Assess the fairness and impact of our policies and practices.
- Monitor recruitment, retention and progression trends.
- Review this policy annually.

Feedback from colleagues and stakeholders will shape our ongoing improvement.

This policy links to	Employee Handbook Code of Conduct Policy Sexual Harassment Policy Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
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