

Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction 60.1

The Company seeks to be a good employer with a courteous, honest, and open relationship with all employees. Employment conditions and basic practices are designed to create an open and inclusive workplace culture in which everyone feels valued. We want all employees to have the opportunity to maximise their potential and enhance their self-development and their contribution to the organisation. We are committed to providing a positive work environment, promoting equal opportunities in all aspects of employment, and opposed to any form of discrimination or harassment.

60.2

The Company is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforces. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.

Policy statement 60.3

To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and not to discriminate because of age, disability, gender, reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination

60.4

Employees are required not to engage in or permit any fellow employee to engage in any sexual, racial or other harassment of or unlawful discrimination against any person (whether or not a Company employee) in the course of their employment by The Company.

60.5

If a grievance is raised or any instance of discrimination comes to light, The Company will carry out an investigation to establish the facts and disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an illegal act of discrimination. Statutory obligations

60.6

The Equality Act 2010 simplifies current laws and puts them all together in one piece of legislation. The act covers:

1. race
2. sex
3. sexual orientation (whether being lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual)
4. disability (or because of something connected with their disability). Prevents discrimination against disabled people in employment.
5. religion or belief
6. being a transsexual person (transsexuality is where someone has changed, is changing, or has proposed changing their sex – called 'gender reassignment' in law)

7. having just had a baby or being pregnant
8. being married or in a civil partnership (this applies only at work or if someone is being trained for work), and
9. age (this applies only at work or if someone is being trained for work)

60.7

It is also unlawful for an individual to be victimised for having brought proceedings under the Act, or for giving evidence or information relating to such proceedings, or for alleging that discrimination has occurred.

60.8

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates the European Convention of Human Rights into UK law. Article 8 guarantees the right to respect for private and family life. Article 14 prohibits discrimination on any reasonable ground (which will include sexual orientation).

60.9 All staff must be aware that it is unlawful to behave in a way that may offend another person, violate their dignity, or create a hostile environment. See also our Dignity at work policy (Section 63).