

TITLE: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

PURPOSE: To ensure that no element in a person's working life (e.g. recruitment, training, development or conditions of employment) is influenced by considerations of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or any other condition other than that person's suitability and that no-one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

AUTHORISED: *Suzanne Jacks*

PROCEDURE:

"It is this organisation's policy to treat job applicants and employees in the same way, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Further, the organisation will monitor the composition of the workforce and introduce positive action if it appears that this policy is not fully effective."

- 1) The company is an equal opportunity employer. Equal opportunity is about good employment practices and efficient use of our most valuable asset, our employees. Every manager and employee has a personal responsibility for the implementation of the policy. Any instance of doubt about the application of the policy, or other questions, should be addressed to the Human Resources Department, as should any requests for special training.
- 2) The company will not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- 3) The policy applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment and appointment to them, training, conditions of work, pay and to every other aspect of employment. The policy also applies equally to the treatment of our customers/clients. Staff involved in recruitment in particular should request training if they have any doubt about the application of this policy.
- 4) Employees should note that the imposition of a condition or requirement which has an adverse impact on someone, because of his or her age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is more likely to be affected by it, will also be unlawful unless it can be justified on grounds of business need. (By way of example a height requirement of 5'10" will eliminate some men, but proportionately more women, and so be unlawful). In all such situations the Human Resources Department should be consulted.
- 5) Employees who are disabled or become disabled in the course of their employment should inform and may also wish to advise the company of any "reasonable adjustments" to their employment or working conditions which they consider to be necessary or which they consider would assist them in the performance of their duties. Careful consideration will be given to any proposals of this nature and, where reasonable and reasonably

practicable, such adjustments will be made. There may however be circumstances where it will not be reasonable and reasonably practicable for the company to accommodate those proposals and where less favourable treatment may be justified in accordance with the statutory provisions.

- 6) Any member of staff may use the grievance procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to sexual or racial harassment or harassment on the basis of disability or age then the grievance may be raised directly with the Human Resources Department. The company is concerned to ensure that staff feel able to raise such grievances and no individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance unless it is untrue and made in bad faith.
- 7) **Discipline** – Any employee who harasses any other employee on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics as stated in this policy will be subject to the organisation's disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and, as such, will result in summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances.
- 8) **Monitoring** – All employees and job applicants will be asked to complete a form denoting their sex, race, age, ethnic origin and any disabilities. The company guarantees that this form will be used for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy only.
- 9) **Positive Action** – The composition of the workforce and of job applicants will be monitored on a regular basis. Should inequalities become apparent, positive action will be taken to redress the imbalance, including such measures as:
 - advertising jobs in ethnic or female interest publications, as appropriate
 - advertising jobs in publications that are accessible to all age groups
 - introducing assertiveness training
 - introducing English language training
 - encouraging under-represented groups to apply for suitable training posts
 - making contact with disabled people via the local Job Centre.