

General Statement

It is our aim to provide equal opportunities ensuring a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexuality, disability, nationality or colour, religious or ethnic origins.

The policy applies to the recruitment and selection of employees, terms and conditions of employment, training, work allocation, transfer, promotion and disciplinary procedures. Any decisions made in these areas will be made on the basis of the relevant merits and abilities of the individual. There will be reviews on an on-going basis, to ensure that our Equal Opportunities policy is being correctly implemented.

All members of staff have personal responsibility for the application of this policy.

If you feel that you have in any way been discriminated against, you should complain in accordance with the Grievance Procedure.

Equal Pay Statement

We believe it is in our organisation's interest and good business practice that pay is awarded fairly and on non-discriminatory grounds.

Types of Discrimination

Discrimination may occur in the following ways:

Direct sex discrimination occurs where a woman is treated less favourably than a man or vice versa, or a married person is treated less favourably than a single person or vice versa or there is unfavourable treatment of an employee because she is pregnant.

Indirect sex discrimination occurs where a person applies to an individual a requirement or condition which applies or would apply to another of the opposite sex but which (a) is such that the proportion of the individual's sex who can comply with the requirement or condition is considerably smaller than the proportion of the opposite sex who can comply with it and (b) the requirement or condition cannot be shown to be justifiable irrespective of the sex of the individual to whom it is applied and (c) it is to the individual's detriment that he/she cannot comply with it.

Direct race discrimination occurs where an individual is treated less favourably on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, including citizenship and ethnic or national origins.

Indirect race discrimination occurs where a person applies a requirement or condition to an individual which applies or would apply equally to those of a different racial group, but which (a) is such that the proportion of the individual's racial group which can comply with the requirement or condition is considerably smaller than the proportion of another racial group who can comply with it and (b) the requirement or condition cannot be shown to be justifiable irrespective of the colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins of the complainant and (c) it is to the individual's detriment that he/she cannot comply with it.

Disability discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably for a reason related to that person's disability.

Victimisation - treating a person less favourably than another on the ground that he or she has made a complaint in good faith of discrimination or harassment through internal procedures or by external means or has assisted another in bringing such a complaint under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Discrimination against part time workers - treating a part time employee less favourably than a full time worker by virtue of his/her part time status.

Recruitment, Promotion and Training

The recruitment, and selection process is crucially important to any equal opportunities policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that those employees entrusted with selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or subconsciously, or be influenced by others' prejudices when making these decisions.

Selection, promotion, advancement and the availability of training will be made on merit and all decisions relating to these will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy. Job descriptions, where used, will be in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any Human Resources specifications.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies. Short listing /interviews are carried out by several people where possible. Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

Enforcement

We consider any breach of this policy by a member of staff to be misconduct and will take appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.

Monitoring

We will maintain and review employment records in order to monitor the progress of this policy. Monitoring may involve:

- (a) The collection and classification of information regarding the race (in terms of ethnic/national origin) sex and disability of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants;
- (b) Recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions;
- (c) The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy.

Consideration will constantly be given to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and employees

How to Report Breaches of the Policy

If you feel that you have been discriminated against then you should make a complaint in accordance with the Grievance Procedure.

If you have any questions or comments with regard to this Equal Opportunities Policy they should be addressed to Human Resources.