

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Company is an equal opportunity employer. The Company is committed to ensuring, within the framework of the law, that its workplaces are free from unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender (including gender reassignment), sexual orientation, age, marital status or disability.

We aim to ensure that our staff achieve their full potential and that all employment decisions are taken without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria. We have adopted the following policy as a means of helping to achieve these aims.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage on discriminatory grounds in relation to his or her employment. Direct discrimination may occur even when unintentional.

Indirect discrimination occurs where the individual's employment is subject to an unjustified condition which one sex or race/nationality finds more difficult to meet although on the face of it the condition or requirement is 'neutral'.

Victimisation occurs where an individual is treated less favourably than colleagues because he/she has taken action to assert their statutory rights or assisted a colleague with information in that regard.

We are committed to ensuring that all our staff and applicants for employment are protected from unlawful discrimination in employment.

Implementing Equality of Opportunity

Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. Our selection procedures are reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are appropriate for achieving our objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination. The terms and conditions of employment, including remuneration, are decided without reference to discriminatory criteria.

The requirements of job applicants and existing members of staff who have or have had a disability will be reviewed to ensure that, wherever possible, reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to enter into or remain in employment with us. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that disabled staff participate fully in the workplace.

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements, which are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Interviews will be conducted on an objective basis and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions.

In accordance with recommended practice the ethnic and gender composition of our staff and applicants for jobs will be monitored at all levels.

Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to implement and uphold our commitment to equality of opportunity.

Working patterns will be reviewed so as to enable us to offer flexible working to staff with carer responsibilities where possible. Where necessary, special provision will be made for training for staff returning to work following a break for domestic reasons.

Consideration will be given to developing action programmes to promote equality of opportunity. This will include, where appropriate, a programme of positive action to encourage the development of those who are comparatively underrepresented in certain positions so that they can benefit from employment opportunities on equal terms.

All staff have a right to equality of opportunity and a duty to implement this policy. Breach of the equal opportunity policy is a serious matter and will be dealt with under the Company's Disciplinary Procedure. Anyone who believes that he or she may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds is entitled to raise the matter through the Grievance Procedure.

