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Policy Statement

The Company recognises that it is in the interests of the organization and its employees to utilize the skills of the total workforce and that discrimination is unacceptable. It is our aim to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment on grounds of sex, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin or religion are placed at a disadvantage by imposed conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified.

This policy shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, it will take account of any Codes of Practice issued by the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Disability Rights Commission, the Department for Work and Pensions and other statutory bodies.

Definitions

There are two types of discrimination covered by statute – direct and indirect.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person or group is treated less favourably than others.

Segregating a person or group on the basis of their race, sex or disability is unlawful. It also is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a job applicant whose conviction is spent.

Discrimination may also take place after employment has ended, if the act of discrimination arises out of and is closely connected to the relationship such as withholding references or giving a bad reference.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied or a condition or requirement is imposed which is such that:

- The proportion of persons of a group who can comply with it is significantly smaller than the proportion of persons not of that group who can comply with it;
- The employer cannot show it as being justifiable based upon the needs of the job;
- It is to the detriment of the individuals concerned because they cannot reasonably comply with it.

For example, a dress policy which prevents women wearing trousers discriminates against women of a particular race or religion; a higher language standard than is actually needed to do the job discriminates on the grounds of nationality / race; a training policy which excludes part-time staff may discriminate against women, who fill the majority of part-time jobs.

Rights of Disabled people

The Company attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- Make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours.)
- Include disabled people in training/development programmes
- Give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job

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Harassment

Harassment means behaviour or abuse affecting the dignity of men and women at work which is unwanted and offensive to the recipient. It will include unwelcome physical, verbal or non verbal conduct particularly but not exclusively limited to that which is based upon sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, religion, politics, status, age, disability or personal characteristics.

- Behaviour can be regarded as harassment and is unacceptable if:
- It is unwanted, unreasonable and offensive to the recipient
- Rejection or submission to such conduct is used to influence decisions regarding access to promotion, training, earnings, allocation of work or any other employment matter
- It creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating working environment for the recipient.

Victimisation

Discrimination by victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because he/she had asserted his/her rights under the Acts relating to discrimination or had helped another person to assert those rights.

There is a separate policy dealing with all forms of harassment.

Managerial Responsibility

The responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with Management. Directors shall ensure that they and their staff operate within the policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination.

Each manager will ensure that:

- All their staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy
- Grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible
- Proper records are maintained

Employee Responsibility

Whilst the responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with management, the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- Comply with the policy and arrangements
- Not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so
- Not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups on the grounds specified in the policy statement
- Inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice