

## Equal Opportunities Policy

The Company is committed to providing a working environment in which you are able to realise your full potential and to contribute to business success irrespective of your gender, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, age or mental or physical disability, pregnancy or any other protected characteristic. This is a key employment value to which all employees are expected to give their support.

In order to create conditions in which this goal can be realised, the Company is committed to identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices, procedures, and attitudes throughout the company. The Company expects you to support this commitment and to assist in its realisation in all possible ways.

Specifically, the Company aims to ensure that no employee or job applicant is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, race, marital status, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, age or disability or any other protected characteristic. This commitment applies to all the aspects of employment outlined below:

- Recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, interview and selection procedures.
- Training.
- Promotion and career development opportunities.
- Terms and conditions of employment, and access to employment related benefits and facilities.
- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures
- Selection for redundancy.

### Types of unlawful discrimination -

**Direct discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

**Indirect discrimination** is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

**Harassment** is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity which are covered by direct discrimination provisions in the Equality Act 2010) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or is reasonably considered by that person to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

**Associative discrimination** is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and (according to guidance from the Government and ACAS) pregnancy and maternity).

**Perceptive discrimination** is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

**Equal Opportunities** practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation change. The Company will keep its policies under review and will implement changes where these could improve equality of opportunity. This commitment applies to all the Company's employment policies and procedures, not just those specifically connected with equal opportunity.