

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Gillespie Macandrew LLP is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and demonstrating that we value the diversity of our workforce. The aim of this policy is to do our best not to unfairly discriminate against any job applicant or employee, when recruiting or at any time during employment, and in all cases only to consider factors which are relevant to someone's ability to perform the job well. It is also the Firm's responsibility to prevent anyone being treated unfairly, victimised or being harassed for any reason during employment, and the Firm will take appropriate action when necessary to ensure all employees abide by this policy at all times.

2.0 SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all employees (and potential employees) recruited specifically for, and engaged exclusively on, Firm work, regardless of their employment status.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the HR Manager to regularly review the Equal Opportunity Procedure to ensure its continuing compliance with relevant employment legislation. All employees, and in particular Supervisors, Managers etc., have responsibilities to ensure the continuing success of the implementation of the Procedure by:-

- Refraining from harassment and discrimination
- Bringing to the attention of Management any suspected practices in breach of this Procedure
- Ensuring that selection for promotion, training, work allocation etc., is carried out in a non-discriminatory manner
- Working together to promote a harmonious working environment and eliminating discrimination and harassment.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

For explanatory purposes all the definitions are contained within Clause 5.

5.0 OUR COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING EQUALITY AND VALUING DIVERSITY

We believe:

- in a fair society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and prejudice
- that the diversity of the (the Firm) is an asset to our community
- in fighting discrimination.

GILLESPIE MACANDREW

Gillespie Macandrew LLP is committed, under this policy, to do its best to protect its staff from unfair discrimination because of:

AGE

Age Discrimination occurs when a person is treated either more or less favourably on the grounds of age than a person of a different age would be treated in the same or not materially different circumstances. Such discrimination may be direct or indirect.

DISABILITY

The definition of Disability under the Disability Discrimination Act is: "A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People who have a disability and people who have had a disability, but no longer have one, are covered by the Act."

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Regardless of a person's role within the Firm, on a full time basis, fixed term contract basis or part time basis, their input is vital to our success and all employees will be treated fairly under the rules of this policy.

ETHNIC OR NATIONAL ORIGINS, RACE OR COLOUR

Racial grounds include race, colour and nationality (citizenship or ethnic/national origin).

MARITAL STATUS

People at Gillespie Macandrew LLP are treated fairly and equally in the workplace irrespective of their marital or family status.

RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL BELIEFS

A Religion or Belief is defined as being any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. This does not include any philosophical or political belief unless it is similar to religious belief. Responsibilities for children or dependants

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CHILDREN AND DEPENDENTS

Parents and people with dependents are treated fairly in the workplace irrespective of their commitments to their dependents.

GENDER AND GENDER IDENTITY

People who plan to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone gender re-assignment are protected against all forms of discrimination and harassment.

SEXUALITY

Occurs when a gay person is treated either more or less favourably on the grounds of sexual preference than a heterosexual person would be treated in the same or not materially different circumstances. Such discrimination may be direct or indirect.

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.

TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES

Trade union representatives are entitled to perform their duties without any negative impact on themselves from their peers or the Firm.

UNRELATED CRIMINAL CONVICITONS, where this is possible

People with unrelated criminal convictions are treated fairly in the workplace, and confidentiality will at all times be preserved.

The policy sets out our commitment to opposing all forms of discrimination.

The policy applies to every employee and member.

We will work with other organisations to try to meet the needs of all equality groups.

5.1 DIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Occurs when a person is treated less favourably, on the grounds of their sex, race, disability age, employment status or religious opinion or belief.

5.2 INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Occurs when an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied equally to both men and women, disabled persons or persons from a particular race but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one group because the proportion of the one group which can comply with it is much smaller than the proportion of the other group.

If such a requirement cannot be justified by the employer, it may be deemed unlawful. An employment tribunal may deem a finding of unlawful discrimination even though an employer has no intention to discriminate.

6.0 VICTIMISATION

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others would be because he/she has done something by reference to the provisions of this Policy, the Equal Pay Act, Race Relations

Act, Sex Discrimination Act or the Disability Discrimination Act. It is therefore unlawful to victimise an individual for a complaint made in good faith about discrimination or for giving evidence about such a complaint.

7.0 HARASSMENT

For the purpose of this Policy, harassment is regarded by the Firm as repeated unwelcome looks, comments, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is considered objectionable and offensive to an individual or group of employees and which might threaten an employee's job security or create an intimidating working environment.

8.0 BREACH OF THIS PROCEDURE

Discrimination, victimisation and harassment are disciplinary offences and will lead to action being taken against the offending employee that may result in dismissal. It should be noted, however, that if any employee raises a complaint, which upon investigation is proven to be deliberately malicious, then that employee themselves would become the subject of disciplinary action. Any employee found to be in breach of this Procedure will be the subject of disciplinary action, which may lead to dismissal

9.0 GILLESPIE MACANDREW LLP CODE OF PRACTICE

9.1 RECRUITMENT

The recruitment process must result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job. Job advertisements will encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people, through either internal and/or external advertising. Advertisements must be carefully worded to ensure that no intent of either direct or indirect discrimination is interpreted nor is there indication of stereotyping of roles.

9.2 SELECTION PROCESS

It is vital that the selection process is carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels within the Firm and that it is seen to be fair and non-discriminatory. Selection criteria and procedures are intended to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

9.3 INTERVIEWS

Personnel who conduct recruitment/promotion interviews must ensure they have read and understood this Procedure. They should ensure that they take an unbiased approach towards candidates and only ask questions which relate to the job and which are non-discriminatory (e.g. questions about marriage plans and intention to have a family may be construed as showing discrimination against women).

9.4 EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Firm is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in terms of access to training in order to increase employees' knowledge and skills and to provide opportunities to develop their potential.

10.0 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Any employee, who believes that they have been the subject of harassment, victimisation or discrimination on any of the grounds contained within this Policy, should follow the Firm Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure, a copy of which may be obtained from the HR Manager or via the Intranet.

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