

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

This policy is designed to prevent discrimination and to attract the best employees. To ensure that diversity is embedded in Company culture reflected in our staff and to better serve our customers/clients, the company will endeavour to:

- Attract applications from all sections of society irrespective of race, gender, marital / civil partnership status, age, disability, religion or belief, colour, national origin or sexual orientation and ensure fair treatment throughout the recruitment process;
- Improve performance within any role, develop skills and prepare all individuals for other roles and responsibilities through effective appraisal and training procedures;
- Ensure that employment decisions are based on business needs and the individual's ability to undertake the role;
- Enhance decision-making and innovation by encouraging interaction and involvement;
- Increase the company's ability to relate to existing and potential customers / clients wherever they exist;
- Identify the various behaviours and barriers that discrimination can take, and understand the negative effect these can have on the company and its employees and customers / clients;
- Provide training for managers and employees involved in key decision-making areas on the potentially discriminatory effects of imposing practices, conditions, and criteria on minority groups, and the importance of being able to justify decisions;
- Monitor the application of this policy, and work towards eliminating any discriminatory practices which may be limiting the company's ability to achieve its objectives.

This policy covers all employees, contractors, temporary workers and job applicants including any individuals working on company premises via a third party. It applies to all aspects of employment, from recruitment and selection through to termination of employment.

To be successful, this Policy will be implemented throughout the company and therefore commitment is required from the whole workforce. The Director and Senior management have the responsibility for ensuring that this policy underpins all aspects of company policy and for promoting an organisational culture that is supportive of the benefits of diversity.

Junior / line managers will have an important role in ensuring that policies and procedures relating to diversity are implemented and communicated to all existing staff and new staff on their commencement. This will be achieved through induction training. Managers will promote a professional and positive work environment by ensuring that this policy is put into practice by challenging behaviour, actions or decisions that breach the policy.

All individual employees have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to be aware of the various behaviours and barriers that discrimination can take, and to understand the negative impact these can have on the company and colleagues. All employees will co-operate with management in the elimination of any discriminatory practices which may be identified and any instances of apparent discrimination will be reported immediately to a line manager.

Unlawful Discrimination

All managers at all levels must understand that it is unlawful to discriminate against people at work on the grounds of their: sex, sexual orientation, status as a married person/civil partner, race, colour, age, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, political or other beliefs, because of a disability, pregnancy, childbirth, maternity leave, are a member or non-member of a trade union.

It is also unlawful to discriminate against part-time or home workers. The company will comply with all relevant legislation and no individual will be unjustifiably discriminated against.

Age

The company is fully committed to promoting age diversity. In valuing the contribution of its employees, regardless of age, the company will seek to eliminate age 'stereotyping' and discrimination on the basis of age. The underlying premise of this is that employees will be assessed on the basis of their skills, ability and potential, not their age. This means that employment opportunities and personal/career development will be available, irrespective of a person's age. This will involve:

- basing employment decisions on objective, job-related criteria;
- encouraging staff of all ages to develop their careers;
- ensuring that staff of all age groups participate in training, and have the chance to improve their skills and experience;
- avoiding assumptions about the physical abilities and career intentions of older job applicants or employees.

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 covers people of all ages. It is unlawful to discriminate against young workers as well as against older workers. There is no statutory upper age limit on the right to claim unfair dismissal or to receive redundancy payments. The default retirement age is 65, making compulsory retirement below 65 unlawful unless objectively justified. In addition, all employees have the right to request to work beyond 65 (or any other retirement age set by the company) and the company will give such requests consideration.

Equal pay

Men and women doing equal work and work rated as of equal value are entitled to equal pay.

Race, religion or belief

The company recognises it's unlawful to discriminate against a job-seeker, worker or trainee on the grounds of race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins or because of their religion or belief or lack of religion or belief. The company is sensitive to the cultural and religious needs of employees and makes provision to accommodate any formal requests that are made.

Disability

The company recognises its responsibility towards disabled employees and seeks to eliminate unjustified discrimination on the grounds of disability by:

- Recognising the wealth of talent and skill possessed by disabled people;
- Interviewing all disabled job applicants who meet the minimum selection criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities;
- Ensuring that all disabled employees are smoothly and effectively inducted into the company;
- Identifying and providing any 'reasonable adjustments' to working arrangements or the working environment necessary for the effective performance of their job;
- Making every effort to retain employees who become disabled whilst in the employment of the company.

Monitoring

The company will maintain records of the age, race, gender, marital/civil partnership status, and disability of job applicants and existing employees. Any patterns of under representation (for example, where one gender or race appears to have a consistently reduced chance of promotion) will be fully investigated and any discriminatory practices identified and eliminated.

Bullying and Harassment

All staff will expect to be treated with dignity and respect whilst at work, and have an equal responsibility to treat their colleagues similarly.

The company is committed to creating a harmonious working environment which is free from harassment, including discrimination, victimisation and bullying, and which protects the dignity of female and male employees irrespective of their race, religion or belief, colour, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. Harassment is offensive and prejudicial to a productive working environment. It is indicative of a lack of respect for the person harassed, undermines his or her position and may have a negative impact upon health, job performance and sense of personal security.

Grievances

Any employee who feels they have not been treated in accordance with this policy will make a complaint using the company's Grievance Procedure. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. If a member of staff is found to have breached the Diversity Policy they may be subject to disciplinary action under the company's Disciplinary Procedure, which could result in dismissal.

Equal Opportunities - Statement of Intent

Owls Hall Environmental Ltd believes that diversity is a positive asset and values the contribution made by all members of society. We believe that equality of opportunity has a positive impact on people lives and that it has an important role to play in addressing discrimination, disadvantage and social exclusion in society.

Owls Hall Environmental Ltd is committed to equality of opportunity both in our work as a provider of professional advocacy and empowerment services and as a responsible and ethical employer.

In keeping with our values and beliefs Owls Hall Environmental Ltd will not discriminate against anyone applying to work with us, wishing to receive a service from us or applying to become a trustee or volunteer because of any of the following:

- Their race, ethnic origin, or colour,
- Their age, disability, or experience of mental ill health,
- Their religion or creed,
- Their sexual orientation or gender,
- Their marital, parental or carer status,
- Their employment status, financial status or criminal record,
- Their health including their HIV status or any other irrelevant distinction

Owls Hall Environmental Ltd recognises the need to continuously develop and review our employment and service delivery policies, procedures and processes to ensure decisions are made on the basis of competency, performance, need or ability as appropriate and are not inadvertently discriminatory.

Specific responsibilities for ensuring equality of opportunity fall upon managers, those supervising staff and individuals involved in recruitment and employee administration.

We expect all our staff to promote equality in the workplace and in the services we deliver and to work with us in ensuring fairness towards colleagues and the community we serve.

We are committed to playing our part in the development of a society in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity and their rights are upheld.

Signed on behalf of Owls Hall Environmental Ltd.



Craig Finbow
Director of Health and Safety
26th August 2015

Review Date: 25th August 2016