

## SOP401 – Equal Opportunities and Diversity

### Purpose & Scope

The Company recognises the benefits of a diverse workforce and is committed to providing a working environment that is free from discrimination. The Company will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity in all its dealings with employees, workers, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors, recruitment agencies and the public.

### Responsibilities & Authorities

All employees and those who act on the Company's behalf are required to adhere to this policy when undertaking their duties or when representing the Company in any other guise. Only the HR Team have the authority to amend this policy.

### Regulations & Standards

The main piece of legislation governing equal opportunities and diversity is the Equality Act 2010.

### Your Entitlements and Responsibilities

#### 1. Unlawful Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination of any kind in the working environment will not be tolerated and the Company will take all necessary action to prevent its occurrence. Specifically, the Company aims to ensure that no employee or job applicant is subject to unlawful discrimination, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic origin), disability, sexual orientation, marital status, part-time status, age, religion or belief, political belief or affiliation or trade union membership. This commitment applies to all aspects of employment, including:

- 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; and
- Selection for redundancy.

Equal opportunities practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation change. The Company will review all policies and implement necessary changes where these could improve equality of opportunity.

#### 2. Recruitment of Ex-offenders

The Company actively promotes equality of opportunity for all candidates, including those with criminal records where appropriate. The Company requires you to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. Any such information should be sent in a separate confidential letter to the designated person. Only those who need to see it as a formal part of the recruitment process will have access to this information. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent you from being appointed.

Any recruitment decision will be dependent on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence(s). The Company will discuss with you the relevance of any offence to the job in question. If you fail to reveal any information relating to disclosures it may lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment.

#### 3. Career Development

While positive measures may be taken to encourage under-represented groups to apply for employment opportunities, recruitment or promotion to all jobs will be based solely on merit.

All employees will have equal access to training and other career-development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities.

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SOP401	Issued: 10/2013	Last Reviewed: 08/2022	Rev: 4
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However, the Company will take appropriate positive action measures (as permitted by equal opportunities legislation) to provide specialist training and support for groups that are under-represented in the workforce and encourage them to take up training and career-development opportunities.

### Procedure

#### 1. Complaints of Discrimination

The Company will treat seriously all complaints of discrimination made by employees, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors or other third parties and will act where appropriate. If you believe that you have been discriminated against, you are encouraged to raise the matter as soon as possible with your manager or other senior employee using the Company's Grievance Procedure (SOP403).

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated thoroughly. If you make an allegation of discrimination, the Company is committed to ensuring that you are protected from victimisation, harassment, or less favourable treatment. Any such incidents will be dealt with under the Company's Disciplinary Procedures (SOP404).

#### 2. Investigating Accusations of Unlawful Discrimination

If you are accused of unlawful discrimination, the Company will investigate the matter fully. During the investigation, you will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation of your actions.

If the investigation concludes that the claim is false or malicious, the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action. If the investigation concludes that your actions amount to unlawful discrimination, you will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal without notice for gross misconduct.

### Related Documents

Other documents within the IQA management system which are relevant to this procedure should be listed here.

Document Name	Document Number
Grievance Procedure	SOP403
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure	SOP404



Pablo Cardell Bilbao  
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