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Equal Opportunities / Welfare Policy

Reviewed: 18 March 2021

<https://www.kernock.co.uk/acatalog/equal-opportunity-policy.html>

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to the advertising of jobs and recruitment and selection, to training and development, opportunities for promotion, to conditions of service, benefits and facilities and pay, to health and safety and to conduct at work, to grievance and disciplinary procedures and to termination of employment, including redundancy

We will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of workers' religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities. Our policies on Health and Safety, Sickness Absence, Bullying and Harassment, Whistle Blowing, Disciplinary and Family Friendly should be consulted for specific guidance on our approach to these issues and your entitlements.

FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

"Direct discrimination" occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to one or more of the grounds set out. Rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because it is considered they would not "fit in", could well be direct discrimination.

"Indirect discrimination" occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for instance, their sex or race. For example, a height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with sex, it would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex.

Discrimination also includes "Victimisation" (less favourable treatment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard) and harassment *because* a person belongs to a particular minority group (which is dealt with under our *Bullying & Harassment Policy*).

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

We aim to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and that sufficiently diverse sectors of the community are reached. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are essential for the effective performance of the job and therefore justified on non-discriminatory grounds.

We take steps to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches a wide labour market and, where relevant, groups underrepresented in our organisation. Where appropriate, use may be made of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably-qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups. Vacancy advertisements shall include an appropriate short statement on this *Equal Opportunities Policy* and a copy of this policy shall be sent to those who enquire about vacancies.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to recruitment and selection and the other areas identified above, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be under-represented in employment, we monitor applicants' racial origins, gender, disability, sexual orientation and religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. We also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format, solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of the data obtained provide the basis for taking appropriate steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and implement this policy.

STAFF TRAINING, PROMOTION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Staff training needs will be identified through regular staff appraisals. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on merit.

We shall monitor the composition and movement of staff at different levels regularly, to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, we shall take steps to identify and remove unjustifiable barriers and to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that all workers should have access to these things do so.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

We will monitor redundancy criteria and procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures are carried out fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in the giving of disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

If you are disabled, or become disabled, you should tell your supervisor/Manager and the Personnel Manager about your condition so we can support you as much as possible. You may also wish to advise them of any reasonable adjustments to your working conditions or the duties of your job which you consider to be necessary, or which would assist you in the performance of your duties.

Your supervisor/Manager and/or the Personnel Manager may wish to consult you and/or your medical adviser(s) about possible reasonable adjustments. We shall give careful consideration to any such proposals, which are reasonably practicable and proportionate to the needs of your job. However there may be circumstances where we cannot reasonably be expected to agree to a particular adjustment, in which case we shall provide you with information on the reasons for our decision not to make any adjustments.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where possible and proportionate, we will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

PART-TIME, FIXED-TERM EMPLOYEES AND AGENCY WORKERS

We monitor our use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. We will, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

We monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. Requests to alter working hours will be dealt with appropriately under our *Flexible Working Policy*.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through our *Grievance Procedure*. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter through our *Bullying & Harassment Policy*. If you believe that you have witnessed a breach of this policy of which you were not a victim, you should report this in accordance with the *Whistle-blowing Policy*. If you are uncertain which applies to you or need advice on how to proceed, speak to your supervisor/Manager, or the Personnel Manager.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Workers who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our *Disciplinary Procedure*.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed acts of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.