



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

(Formally 'Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy')

Version	4.0
Approved by	Exec Team
Approved on	February 2023
Access	BreatheHR
Review Date	July 2024

Introduction

The Company is committed to the principles of equal opportunity, valuing diversity and inclusion, recognising the importance of adhering to these principles at all times. Equality, diversity and inclusion together form a positive approach to recognise that everyone is different and can make and bring their own unique contribution, experience, knowledge and skills to the organisation.

The Company has a zero-tolerance policy of discrimination and actively requires the fair and ethical treatment of all its employee, directors and contractors, ensuring that this is reflected throughout its working practices and policies, in line with and beyond minimum legal requirements. The Company will only work with organisations and individuals that share these values, principles, and objectives.

This policy's purpose is to provide equality, fairness, respect and dignity for all in our employment and those who are interacting with employees from the Company.

Discrimination

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts), and on work-related trips or events including social events.

The following examples of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or sexual orientation.
- Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Bullying & Harassment Policy.
- Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- Disability discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

The Company will oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- Pay & benefits
- Terms & conditions of employment
- Dealing with grievances, appeals, disciplinaries and dismissals
- Redundancy
- Leave for parents
- Requests for flexible working
- Selection for employment, promotion, training and all other development opportunities

Protected Characteristics

The following are classed as protected characteristics under the Equality Act of 2010:

- Age
- Disability

- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The Company's Policy

The Company is an equal opportunity employer and is fully committed to a policy of treating all its employees and job applicants equally and fairly.

The Company will base its judgements for appointments and promotion solely on the basis of an individual's ability to contribute to the Company's business aims and objectives irrespective of an individual's age, gender, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

The Company will also take all reasonable steps to provide a work environment in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity and that is free of harassment based upon an employee's age, gender, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

The Company will not condone any form of harassment, whether engaged in by employees or by outside third parties who do business with the Company.

Employees have a duty to co-operate with the Company to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Action will be taken under the Company's disciplinary procedure against any employee who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation. Serious breaches of this equal opportunities and diversity policy will be treated as gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal.

Employees should also bear in mind that they can be held personally liable for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence.

As well as with its employees, the Company acknowledges its relationships with its board members and the selection processes for contractors and, as far as is appropriate, affirms the applicability of its equal opportunities policy to them.

The Company makes its equal opportunities policy work in the following areas:

Recruitment, advertising & selection: The recruitment process will be conducted in such a way as to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in terms of relevant experience, abilities and qualifications. The Company is committed to applying its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion practices contained in the policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. See the Recruitment, Selection & Induction Policy located on Breathe for more information.

Advertisements will encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people. When advertising job vacancies, in order to attract applications from all sections of the community, the Company will, as far as reasonably practicable:

- Ensure advertisements are not confined to those publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants of a particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group
- Avoid prescribing any unnecessary requirements which would exclude a higher proportion of a particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group or which would exclude disabled

job applicants

- Avoid prescribing any requirements as to marital or civil partnership status
- Where vacancies may be filled by promotion or transfer, they will be published to all eligible employees.

The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. All applications will be processed in the same way. The employees responsible for shortlisting, interviewing and selecting candidates will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and of the need for their consistent application.

Person specifications and job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Wherever possible, all applicants will be interviewed by at least two interviewers and all questions asked of the applicants will relate to the requirements of the role.

The selection of new employees will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do, or to train for, the job in question.

With disabled job applicants, the Company will have regard to its duty to make reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria and practices or to work premises in order to ensure that the disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

If it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect the performance of the job (for example, if the job involves unsociable hours or extensive travel), this will be discussed objectively, without detailed questions based on assumptions.

Training and promotion: The Company will train all line managers in the Company's policy on Equal Opportunities and help them in identifying discriminatory acts or practices or acts of harassment or bullying. Line managers will be responsible for ensuring they actively promote equal opportunity within the departments for which they are responsible. The Company will also provide training to all employees to help them understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to dignity at work and what they can do to create a work environment that is free of bullying and harassment.

Where a promotional system is in operation, it will not be discriminatory and it will be checked from time to time to assess how it is working in practice.

Terms of employment, benefits, facilities & services: All terms of employment, benefits, facilities and service will be reviewed from time to time, in order to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination.

Should any employee become disabled the Company will seek to ensure, as far as is reasonable, that they can continue to work for the Company by making reasonable adaptations and/or by providing appropriate advice, guidance and training.

Equal pay: Instructus is committed to equal pay in employment. It believes its employees, regardless of gender identity, should receive equal pay for like work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value. In order to achieve this, the Company will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria with a minimum of an annual review conducted by an appropriate committee.

Awareness: All employees and applicants for roles, directors, and potential contractors are made aware of the Company's commitment to equal opportunities.

Training: Training and guidance will be given to those responsible for recruitment, selection, placement, management, supervision and development of employees, and directors. All employees will undertake as a minimum the prescribed Equal Opportunities training upon induction with annual refresher opportunities where relevant.

Monitoring equal opportunities: - dignity at work & valuing diversity.

The Company will regularly review its Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy to ensure that it is compliant with the law and that it continues to ensure fairness to all.

The Company will regularly monitor the effects of selection decisions and pay practices & procedures to assess whether equal opportunity and dignity at work are being achieved. This will also involve considering

any possible indirectly discriminatory effects of its working practices. If changes are required, the Company will implement them.

The Company recognises that access to records is a sensitive issue and will only use them neutrally and in line with the law governing data protection and agreed safeguards as to access and/or misuse.

Other Useful Resources

- Recruitment, Selection & Induction Policy
- Periods & Menopause Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy