

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY 2011

1. Policy Statement

1.1 REDSHIFT RESEARCH LTD is committed to ensuring that it provides equality of opportunity through employment and service delivery. This commitment to equality of opportunity is a core value of the company.

1.2 REDSHIFT RESEARCH LTD recognises diversity within its workforce and values this diversity as a strength and recognises that this diversity is essential to provide a service to all its customers in a diverse community. It will ensure that the different needs and expectations of its diverse workforce are met.

1.3 The Company approach to Equality and Diversity is based on the principle of inclusion. At its heart is a commitment to the value that all staff bring to the organisation because of their diverse characteristics. These cover not only race, gender and disability but also factors such as age, marital status, sexuality, religion, background, personality and workstyle.

1.4 REDSHIFT RESEARCH LTD will work hard to ensure that, as an employer, it will provide an employment environment in which people have the opportunity to contribute and develop according to their individual merits and aspirations.

1.5 The Company recognises that there is also a strong business case for placing a positive value on diversity in the workforce

1.6 The Company will not discriminate directly or indirectly through applying conditions or requirements which contravene legislation and/or which cannot be shown to be justified.

1.7 The Company is committed to promoting an environment where fair and equitable service is provided to customers.

1.8 It is the responsibility of every employee to uphold and implement this policy and it is the responsibility of managers to plan, manage, monitor and regularly review this policy.

2. AIMS & SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

2.1 The Company Equality and Diversity Policy seeks to ensure that 'equality' remains an integral and contributory part of achieving the Company objectives

2.2 This policy applies to every employee our customers and those to whom we are customers.

2.3 REDSHIFT RESEARCH LTD is committed to:

- The elimination of unfair or unlawful discrimination against its employees, job applicants and its customers.
- The positive promotion of policies, procedures and practices designed to support equal opportunity at all stages of employment, in its provision/delivery of services to customers and with its business affairs in the community.
- The use, development and retention (wherever possible) of the full range of skills and talents of its employees, regardless of race or colour; gender or marital status; disability, religion, sexuality and any other factors which are not relevant to people's ability or potential, except where this would result in a risk to the public and/or to employee safety

2.4 The Company will act within the letter and spirit of equal opportunity legislation and related codes of practice. The Company also recognises that unfair treatment can occur on grounds not covered directly by these laws (such as age, religion and sexual orientation) and will extend the principles of equal opportunity to include individuals or groups affected by these factors.

2.5 REDSHIFT RESEARCH LTD will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping.

3 LEGISLATION

3.1 The Race Relations 1976 Act (as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000)

This act makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origin.

3.2 Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986

This act makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of gender or marital status.

3.3 Disability Discrimination Act 1995

This act makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of disabilities.

3.4 Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended) 1983

This act requires that employers should provide equal pay for, broadly speaking, work of equal or equivalent value for their employees.

3.5 Trade Union & Labour Relations (Conciliation) Act 1992

This act makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against/harass an employee on the grounds of membership or non-membership of a trade union or taking part in trade union activities.

4 DISCRIMINATION

4.1 Discrimination

Prejudice is the attitude and discrimination is the act. The Company recognises that discrimination can take different forms, all of which are unacceptable.

4.2 Types of Discrimination

4.2.1 Direct Discrimination & Indirect Discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person, in a group of people with the same or similar circumstances, is treated less favourably than the others in the group because of their race, gender, disability or sexuality

Indirect discrimination is where an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied, apparently, equally on all groups of people but, in practice, its impact is greater on one particular group than on the others.

4.2.2 Institutional Discrimination

Institutional discrimination consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, ethnic origin, gender or disability etc. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance; thoughtlessness and stereotyping which further disadvantage such people.

4.3 Eliminating Discrimination

This policy sets out the Company's commitment to opposing all form of discrimination and will therefore ensure that its employees, job applicants are not discriminated against on the basis of any of the following:

- Race, colour, ethnic group or national origin
- Gender or marital status
- Disability
- Sexuality or sexual orientation
- Age
- Employment status
- Actual/suspected HIV/AIDS
- Religion and faith
- Trade union activities
- Unrelated criminal offences/ex-offenders (subject to any legal or public interest constraints)
- Responsibilities for children or dependants

5 HARASSMENT

5.1 Harassment is capable of being discriminatory and can be described as inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact which may cause offence i.e. mental or physical anxiety or hurt to an individual. It may be related to gender, race, disability, sexuality, age, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of an individual. Such action is considered as less favourable treatment in that people who are harassed may feel less comfortable in the service/working environment or may even decide not to pursue their right to receive the service.

6 VICTIMISATION

Victimisation can be described as treating an individual less favourably than one would treat others because the individual has made a complaint of discrimination, given evidence about such a complaint or raised a concern under the Public Interest (Disclosure) Act 1998 and the Company's Confidential Reporting Policy (a separate policy).

7 REQUIREMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE POLICY

7.1 Requirement

7.1.1 The Company's commitment to equality and diversity needs to be widely and effectively communicated throughout the workforce and to potential employees and contractors.

7.1.2 For this purpose:

- A statement of the Company's commitment to diversity and equal opportunity (e.g. Statement of Intent and Aim of this Policy), shall be displayed at each work location
- The principles of equal opportunity must be integrated into all Company Policies e.g. recruitment & selection, disciplinary, grievance, performance management etc.
- A copy of this Policy will be held and be available for inspection by employees.
- All new employees will be given a copy of the Company's diversity and equal opportunities statement as part of their induction package.
- Agencies and contractors working on behalf of the Company must be able to demonstrate their commitment to equal opportunities and the requirements under the Company's equality and diversity policy.
- All personnel and organisation practices will be kept under review to ensure the elimination of unjustified bias or prejudice, whether or not such discrimination is barred by legislation.
- The Company will establish performance indicators to monitor, measure and evaluate the Company's progress towards achieving its objectives.

7.2 Responsibilities

The Company will

- Create an environment where equality and diversity is valued and its employees and customers are treated fairly and on an equitable basis.
- Integrate equality and diversity within the Company's Strategic Objectives.
- Promote equality and diversity in the workplace and in providing services,
- Deter discrimination by making it clear to all that discrimination is unacceptable and will be treated as a serious matter and a disciplinary offence.
- Provide training and guidance to Managers, Supervisors, employees and others, as and where appropriate, to ensure that the Company's commitment to equality and diversity is known and understood.
- Provide appropriate training and guidance to support Managers and employees in fulfilling their individual responsibilities under this policy.
- Regularly monitor and review all systems and procedures to ensure equality, responsiveness, sensitivity and accessibility.
- Monitor organisational and employee performance and evaluate these against equalities objectives.
- Work in partnership with employees and unions in promoting equality and diversity in the workplace and in providing the service.

Managers will:

- Demonstrate commitment to the Policy by taking account of it in development plans.
- Be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the policy within their areas of responsibility.
- Ensure that the policies and strategies are communicated to all employees and allow for discussion and feedback.
- Help create a working environment which is free from discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying.
- Ensure that all employees understand their responsibilities i.e. any form of discrimination will not be tolerated and will be treated as a serious offence which could lead to disciplinary action, not excluding dismissal.
- Effectively manage and deal promptly and thoroughly with any complaints of discrimination including harassment, victimisation and bullying.
- Deal promptly with complaints of inequality from customers, and employees and ensure the matter is investigated thoroughly and any required action taken.
- Consider their actions and ensure that there is no scope for discriminatory practices. They must ensure fairness and equality of treatment in all employment practices e.g. to assess the performance and potential of any individual on merit and without regard to stereotypes and assumptions.

- Reports any complaints of inequality to the Managing Director

Employees will

- Ensure that they understand the policy and are clear about its implications i.e. that any breach of the policy will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action not excluding the sanction of dismissal.
- Ensure that they do not discriminate in any matter of employment or service by treating both colleagues and customers fairly, equitably and respectfully.
- Ensure that they work in a manner that ensures equality for all those they have dealing with and to report any factors which may impede this from being done.
- Not discriminate against, harass, abuse, intimidate or victimise other employees, suppliers or customers.
- Not induce or attempt to induce other employees to discriminate against, harass, intimidate or victimise other employees customers
- Take appropriate action if there are apparent breaches of the policy by contacting any of the following (a) your manager or the next tier manager, (b) your Trade Union or (c) Personnel Officer(s) at the corporate head office in the first instance, if you feel that you have not been treated fairly under this policy. They will ensure that a full and thorough investigation will be carried out and they will ensure that in doing so, no victimisation of any of the parties takes place.

Personnel Officers at Corporate Head office will:

- Facilitate and promote any equality related plans/programmes as and where appropriate.
- Assist in the development and support the implementation of any equality and diversity action programmes.
- Record and report on any issues of particular importance relating to equality and/or diversity.
- Assist Managers with devising their equality and diversity strategies and action plans/programmes.
- Provide corporate management information, review, monitor and evaluate equality and diversity related issues such as disciplinary, grievances, training and employment.
- Provide equality and diversity awareness and training programmes as and where required.
- Ensure that any procedures, practices, advice and guidance provided are consistent, and lie within the requirements under this Policy.
- Facilitate and provide professional advice and guidance to Managers, Supervisors, and employees, regarding this policy.
- Review and monitor progress towards the achievement of any specific local equality objectives/targets.

7.2.6 Trade Unions

The Company recognises that the Trade Unions share its objectives of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality and diversity initiatives/programmes.

8 MONITORING

The policy and procedure will be subject to regular review on the basis of good practice and monitoring any relevant data, to evaluate the success of initiatives and implementation of this policy and to provide a platform for improvement.

9 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

All employees of the Company have a responsibility and a role to play in the implementation of this Policy. The Company will actively promote this policy and do the following to ensure that this policy is fully effective:

- Review, monitor and evaluate all policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they conform with this policy.
- Communicate policies and procedures to employees and build equality/diversity targets where appropriate into staff development programmes
- Take appropriate action (using agreed procedures) if any employee breaches the conditions of this policy.
- Provide training and guidance to all employees, line managers, supervisors to ensure that they understand their responsibilities.
- Provide positive action training programmes (where legally permissible) to under-represented groups to redress current imbalances e.g. through recruitment, career planning and training.