

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

- 1.1 Joint Operations is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best. The organisation – in providing goods, services or facilities – is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.
- 1.2 We are committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. You and any job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics).
- 1.3 We oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in; pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, request for flexible working and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

2. ABOUT THIS POLICY

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether full time, part time or temporary and all those that work alongside us. It sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of your engagement with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment or contract.

3. OUR COMMITMENTS

The organisation commits to:

- 3.1 Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
- 3.2 Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
- 3.3 Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment

may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- 3.4 Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- 3.5 Make decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- 3.6 Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Monitoring this policy will include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plans are working in practice, reviewing them regularly and considering and taking action to address any issues.

4. DISCRIMINATION

- 4.1 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 or when wearing a work uniform) and on work-related trips or events including social events.
- 4.2 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:
 - (a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
 - (b) **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, a height requirement to perform a role could put women at a disadvantage. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
 - (c) **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.
 - (d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
 - (e) **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 disadvantage caused by a disability.

5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- 5.1 Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination.
- 5.2 Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.
- 5.3 Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.
- 5.4 Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law: for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.
- 5.5 Further information on our Recruitment and Selection can be found in our full Recruitment and Selection policy.

6. DISABILITIES

- 6.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

7. PART-TIME AND FIXED-TERM WORK

- 7.1 Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

8. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

- 8.1 We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.
- 8.2 If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
- 8.3 You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.