EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Statement
The purpose of this policy is to provide diversity and equality to all in employment, irrespective of their gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexuality, religion or belief, marital status and social class. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees, whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and equally and with respect.

Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

All employees will be supported and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

This policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, which includes:

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (Equal Value Amendment 1984)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999)
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Our commitment:

- Every employee is entitled to a working environment which promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- The commitment to diversity and equality in the workplace is in line with best management practice and makes sound business sense.
- Breaches of our diversity and equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management.
- The policy is communicated to all staff and is permanently accessible.
- This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

We continue to demonstrate our commitment to this policy by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in every capacity in which we work and across all our partners and workforce
- Aiming to build a workforce which reflects our customer base, across the diverse sectors in which we operate, with the aim of having parity of representation across the company

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- Encouraging recruitment from groups currently under-represented in the department and their career progression once employed
- Treating our customers, colleagues and partners fairly and with respect
- Promoting an environment free from discrimination, bullying and harassment, and tackling behaviour which breaches this
- Recognising and valuing the differences and individual contribution that people make
- Providing support and encouragement to staff to develop their careers and increase their contributions to the organisation through the enhancement of their skills and abilities
- Building in legislative requirements and best practice to all our service delivery and employee policies and procedures, and supporting these with appropriate training and guidance

Every employee of the agency has a personal responsibility to help implement and promote these principles in their day-to-day dealings with colleagues, clients and members of the public. We will measure and report on the effectiveness of our service delivery, employee policies and processes in relation to these principles, by building performance monitoring and management information requirements into policy and product development. This information will be used to inform future policy and to enhance business processes and the working environment.

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