



Promotion of Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement of policy

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Group Managing Director, Board of Directors, and senior management team to the promotion of equality of opportunity across the Acorn Group of Companies.

The Acorn Group of Companies operates in line with the following legislation (and all associated amendments):

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Employment Equality Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

It is our policy to provide equality to all, within the work environment, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All job applicants, registered temporary workers, and learners will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

We recognise that the promotion of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense. Our equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.



Scope of the Policy

- Job applicants and potential applicants
- Registered temporary workers on a Contract for Services
- Trainee workers and students on work experience or placements
- Learners

Equality commitments

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct and taking the appropriate remedial action

This policy is fully supported by the Board of Directors and the Senior Management team.

Implementation

The Group Managing Director has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each director, manager, and team leader also has responsibilities and we expect all our employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment, which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Promote the policy to employees, job applicants, registered temporary workers, prospective temporary workers and learners
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate, including training on induction and management courses.



- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques
- Incorporate the promotion of equal opportunities into general communications practices (e.g., staff newsletters, intranet, websites, handbooks, etc.)
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

Monitoring and review

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy.

The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly and at least annually, and action taken as necessary. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address the imbalance.

Complaints

Any person who believes that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation is entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Date: 1st April, 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Shull".

Signature:

Group Managing Director