



Equal Opportunities Policy

Overview

Resources for Autism are committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. We are committed to ensuring that our employees and all job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment or sexual orientation (these are known as protected characteristics).

Our aim is to ensure that you achieve your full potential and that all employment decisions and actions are not taken on a discriminatory basis.

Purpose

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, benefits, training and development, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

Discrimination

All employees 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 clients, suppliers, supporters or other work-related contacts), and on work-related trips or events including social events.

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 sexuality.
- (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, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time could potentially adversely affect women because more women than men generally work part-time hours. 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 disadvantages caused by a disability.

Recruitment and selection

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted based on merit, against fair and objective criteria that avoid discrimination.

Vacancies will 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.

Job applicants will not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a protected characteristic. For example, applicants would not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants will 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 will not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

Disabilities

If you suffer from any form of disability, whether it be physical or mental, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate to help you perform to the best of your abilities.

We understand that you may feel uncomfortable disclosing details of your disability but we are committed to being sensitive to any disability which you may have and will use our best endeavours to ensure any information disclosed is kept confidential in accordance with your wishes.

Part-time and fixed-term work

Part-time and fixed-term employees will 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.

Breaches of this policy

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.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination in breach of this policy you can raise the matter through our grievance procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

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.