Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

The Foundation is committed to ensuring that employees are recruited, remunerated, developed and promoted on the basis of skills and suitability for the work performed. We are committed to ensuring that no employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, race, disability, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership status, maternity / pregnancy, sexual orientation or gender reassignment status. These factors are referred to as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010.

All employees will be made aware of the provisions of this policy and are required to ensure that the policy is carried out in its entirety. No employee will be disadvantaged by Foundation conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that the Foundation has access to the widest labour market and secures the best employees for its needs. The Foundation aims to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment and that wherever possible, they are given the help they need to attain their full potential to the benefit of the Foundation and to themselves.

Scope

This policy applies to all Foundation staff whether permanent, temporary, casual or on fixed term contracts. It also applies to ex-employees, to job applicants and to other people such as agency staff, contractors and consultants.

Law relating to equalities

The Equality Act 2010 provides a structure to prevent discrimination and promote equality and fairness in employment. The Equality Act identifies nine protected characteristics against which it is unlawful to discriminate. These are **outlined in the introduction section** of this policy.

Responsibilities

Managers have a responsibility to set the standards of acceptable behaviour expected of staff. Managers should act with fairness and equity at all times.

All managers are responsible for implementing fair, non-discriminatory practices within their work areas. Managers should ensure that those involved in selection of staff decisions are aware of equalities legislation and practice.

All employees are required to support this policy and to ensure that discrimination does not occur in the workplace. Employees have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and therefore to treat colleagues with dignity and respect at all times and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff.

Equalities in the provision of goods and services

The Foundation will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of goods and services. We will aim to make reasonable adjustments to address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Equalities in employment

The Foundation aims not to discriminate on any protected grounds in all aspects of employment including recruitment and promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits and selection for redundancy.

Job descriptions and job selection criteria will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are justifiable, non-discriminatory and only include those requirements which are necessary for the effective performance of the job.

Job vacancies will be circulated as widely as possible so as to potentially reach all groups of people.

Short lists and interviews will be conducted on an objective basis and deal only with suitability for the role.

All employees will be given access to training to enable them to progress within the Foundation.

Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all employees who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to access. This includes pay policies and all benefits.

We will monitor redundancy criteria and procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and do not directly or indirectly discriminate against employees.

Making reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on employers to put in place reasonable adjustments for employees and potential employees who have disabilities.

Reasonable adjustments can include such actions as:-

- Making physical adaptations to premises and the workplace;
- Acquiring or modifying equipment;
- Allowing staff some time off for medical treatment;
- Varying the employee's duties;
- Assigning the employee to a different location;
- Providing instructions or reference manuals in alternative formats e.g. Braille, large print etc.

A reasonable adjustment may help an employee to overcome potential barriers at work and stop a disabled employee from being put at a substantial disadvantage.

Grievances

All complaints in respect of Equal Opportunities (excluding complaints of harassment which are dealt with in the Foundation's policy for Bullying and Harassment in the workplace) should be reported formally to the Company Secretary who will arrange an investigation in accordance with the Foundation's Grievance

Procedure as set out in this Foundation Handbook. All complaints will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not prejudice an employee's future employment in any way.

Enforcement

Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to be in breach of this policy. Serious breaches including harassment on any of the protected grounds will be treated as gross misconduct.

Each Line Manager is responsible for implementing the policy within their team and ensuring that any problems are dealt with promptly.