

# Equality and diversity policy



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**Jenni Waugh Consulting Ltd (JWCLtd)** as an employer recognises that everyone should have an equal chance to live, learn and work free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation and prejudice and is committed to delivering a high standard of client care and ensuring all its clients receive quality services to meet their needs.

This policy sets out how JWCLtd are committed to incorporating the twin key principles of equality of opportunity and respect for diversity throughout its business.

## POLICY STATEMENT

- We believe that equality and diversity are at the heart of everything we do.
- We are committed to the principle that all clients have the right to the same high standards of provision of services.
- We are committed to ensuring that all employees are treated with dignity and respect.
- We are committed to equality and diversity and recognise the nine protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- We will make sure that the policy complies with all legal, statutory and regulatory requirements.
- We firmly believe that no one we employ should have to suffer unfair or unequal treatment from other employees, or from bodies or individuals with whom JWCLtd work with or provide services to.

## LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

JWCLtd are committed to meeting the duties of the Equality Act 2010 which effectively replaced / consolidated previous equality legislation.

The Equality Act protects people sharing 'protected characteristics' of – age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation from discrimination.

We are committed to meeting the duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to ensure that slavery and human trafficking are not taking place:

- Anywhere in our supply chains
- In any part of our business

## POLICY DEFINITIONS

**Associative Discrimination** – this is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic i.e. an employee is passed over for promotion because they disclose they have a disabled family member and the manager assumes they not concentrate on their job because of their caring responsibilities.

**Equality** – Equality between individuals, where everyone has the same opportunities. No-one should be discriminated against because of their Protected Characteristics.

**Diversity** – Valuing the fact that individuals are different. Recognising that people with different backgrounds, skills and attitudes bring fresh ideas and opinions.

**Direct Discrimination** – This occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see Perceptive Discrimination), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see Associative Discrimination).

**Indirect Discrimination** – When a condition or practice is put in place that disadvantages a person or group of people with protected characteristics, compared with others in the same group i.e. a change in working practices imposing a requirement that all employees should work on Saturday, may indirectly discriminate against an employee for whom Saturday is a religious day when work is not permitted.

**Harassment** – Unwanted behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive home/working environment.

**Perceptive Discrimination** – This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular characteristic i.e. A 40 year old employee who could pass for 25 is not promoted to a senior position because the recruiting manager thinks they look too young.

**Positive Action** – in some circumstances it may be appropriate (and legal) to take action to improve the opportunity someone with a protected characteristic has, to access a service or employment opportunity i.e. advertising a job vacancy in a specialist publication, such as 'PosAbility', as well as in the general press, increasing the likelihood of a person with a disability becoming aware of it.

**Protected Characteristics** –the Equality Act 2010 covers the same groups that were protected by earlier equality laws and extends protections to characteristics that were not previously covered. Protected Characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.

**Third Party Harassment** - The Equality Act makes employees potentially liable for harassment of their employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of the company, such as customers or clients, subject to certain conditions.

**Victimisation** – Less favourable treatment of a person because they have been involved in or brought, legal proceedings against individuals or organisations, or because they are suspected of doing so. This does not apply where the claims have been maliciously made or are proven to be untrue.

**Prejudice** – is when someone forms an opinion about something or somebody without knowing the full facts.

**Modern Slavery** – is a term used to encapsulate both offences in the Modern Slavery Act 2015, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour, and human trafficking.

**Slavery** – slavery is defined as behaviour on the part of an offender as if he/she had a right to legal ownership over a person, which deprives the victim of their freedom.

**Servitude** – is the obligation to provide services that is imposed by the use of coercion and includes the obligation for the individual to live on another person's property and the impossibility of changing his or her condition.

**Forced or compulsory labour** – is defined as all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered him/ herself voluntarily.

**Human Trafficking** – requires that a person arranges or facilitates the travel of another person with a view to that person being exploited.

This policy covers all aspects of providing services, employment and other areas of work.

Investigation under this policy may result in legal action against an individual. It may result in the company disciplinary procedures being followed where staff may be involved.

Our aim is that our directors, staff and contractors reflect the communities in which we work.

We have created our Equality and Diversity Policy and the measures to put it into place, on the basis of advice from the relevant organisations, reflecting best practice.

As a provider of services and as an employer we will ensure that:

- We will aim to eliminate discrimination and make sure we treat everyone fairly, with dignity and respect.
- We do not treat anyone receiving our services, or working for us less favourably than others and will consider appropriate positive action where legal.
- We review our policies and practices regularly and maintain up to date information on our employees and applicants for services or jobs to ensure that this policy is operating effectively.
- Staff are aware of current legislation and good practice and reflect our commitment to equal opportunities.
- All contractors, consultants and other agencies we work with meet the objectives of this policy.
- We will take effective action to tackle all forms of victimisation and harassment and we will always place the victim at the centre of what we do.

As a service provider we will:

- Seek to understand who our clients are and provide a range of services for people in the communities in which we work.
- Actively seek the views of clients and potential clients when planning, reviewing or making significant changes to our services, ensuring that our services are accessible, relevant and of use to our clients.
- Ensure that our clients understand how valuing diversity can improve their own ability to deliver better quality services and so reduce inequality.
- Provide clear and meaningful information in ways which are accessible and which meet the diverse needs of our clients.
- Investigate promptly any complaint and take immediate action where there is evidence of direct or indirect discrimination.
- Monitor and evaluate the services we provide to ensure they do not discriminate or exclude individuals or people from different groups.

As an employer we will:

- Seek to establish a workforce that reflects the local population in which we work. We will adopt recruitment, support and retention practices (for example flexible working procedures) to support this aim.
- Assist staff to realise their potential ensuring fair consideration of their training and career development needs are identified through the Personal Progress Review.
- Provide a safe, supportive and accessible working environment.
- Monitor our employment policies and practices to ensure they are fair and demonstrate our commitment to diversity.

- Ensure that staff understand how valuing diversity can improve our ability to deliver better quality services and so reduce inequality.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the policy through induction training. Further updates or training specific to an employee's role and service area will be undertaken when required, focussing on legal and good practice.

In working with others, we will:

- Promote, share information, experiences and examples of good practice of equality and diversity through links with other organisations.
- Ensure that equality and diversity is embedded throughout our procurement activity, and that slavery and human trafficking are not taking place within our supply chains.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Our Director has the overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation.

All employees and directors will be trained and provided with guidance on this policy to ensure that they clearly understand their position in law, and the implications for them.

### **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

JWCLtd will ensure that our services reflect the clients that we work with and are in line with this policy.

The company is committed to equal opportunities and as such all clients will be dealt with fairly, consistently, and no one will be discriminated against.

### **PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND TARGETS**

We will seek to ensure that our commitment to equality and diversity and the elements of this policy are implemented through:

- Monitoring our key services by equality group/ protected characteristics.  
Involving customers and partners to shape our future activities.
- Using our learning and development programmes to deliver consistent messages relating to this policy.
- Participating in forums to help improve our understanding of the issues and to receive and share best practice.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Directors and staff are ultimately responsible for this policy. Together we will monitor the effectiveness and implementation of the policy and recommend changes to improve service delivery where appropriate.

This policy and any associated procedures will be reviewed every 3 years to ensure its continued relevance, adequacy and effectiveness or as required by the introduction of new legislation or regulation.

**Implemented:** 1 March 2020

**Reviewed:** 3 February 2021

**Next review date:** 1 February 2022