

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND HARRASSMENT POLICY

Policy

It is the policy of this company to provide equal opportunities in employment irrespective of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic origin (which includes colour, race, nationality and national or ethnic origin), gender identity, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity or disability.

All Search Associates are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity and the company will not tolerate the victimisation, bullying or harassment of Search Associates on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity or disability.

All Search Associates have a personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Application of Policy

This policy applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment and appointment, training, conditions of work, pay, any references issued and to every other aspect of employment. All terms and conditions of employment and related benefits shall be non-discriminatory, other than where there are legal grounds for discriminating such as in the case of gender specific jobs. Applicants for employment will be assessed according to their skills, experience and suitability for the job.

This policy also applies to the treatment of our clients and customers.

If Search Associates have any doubts as to the applicability of this policy, advice should be sought from your Search Consultant.

Remedies

If any Search Associate believes that he or she has been discriminated against on any of the grounds referred to above, he or she may raise the matter informally with his or her Search Consultant or the company's Human Resources department. If the Search Associate wishes to raise the matter further, he/she should invoke the company's grievance procedure.

HARRASSMENT

Policy

Harassment is a distressing, unpleasant experience and the company seeks to maintain a non-discriminatory working environment which is free of harassment and bullying, particularly of a sexual (including sexual orientation), racial, religious, age or disability based nature.

All allegations of harassment will be dealt with sensitively, thoroughly, promptly and, where possible, in confidence.

Harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics is prohibited and is unlawful, and both the company and the harasser may be legally liable.

Harassment may take many forms, from “banter” to actual physical violence. It may be repeated behaviour, or in serious cases, may involve only a single incident.

Examples of harassment

- Insults, derogatory comments, ridicule, pranks or “jokes” of a sexual, racial or religious nature or regarding someone’s age or disability
- Lewd or suggestive comments about appearances or personal life and sexual activities
- Inappropriate body contact
- Display or circulation of sexually suggestive material (e.g. pin-ups), or racist material
- Requests for sexual favours, including the threat of dismissal, loss of promotion for refusal
- The issuing of menial or demeaning tasks simply on the grounds of someone’s age or disability.

The above are examples only of what may be considered inappropriate. It must be borne in mind that it is for each individual to determine what behaviour is acceptable to them and what they consider offensive.

Remedies

Search Associates who feel that they are being harassed, or are uncomfortable about an aspect of the work environment should make it clear to the harasser that the behaviour is unacceptable. The company recognises that the employee may feel unable in some cases to approach the harasser directly, and advice can be sought from their Search Consultant on how the matter can be dealt with informally.

If any informal approaches are ineffective, or in the cases of serious harassment or bullying, Search Associates should bring a formal complaint in writing under the Company’s grievance procedure. In view of the sensitivity of the complaint, the Search Associate may wish to approach their Search Associate or the Human Resources Department at first instance directly.

Any Search Associate who is accused of harassment or bullying will be dealt with under the company’s disciplinary procedure. Depending on the nature of the complaint, it may be necessary to temporarily transfer the alleged harasser to another department, or where this is not possible to suspend him or her on full pay.

All parties involved in any complaint are expected to respect the need for confidentiality during the resolution of any complaints, and disciplinary action may be taken against any party who breaches this.

Where a Search Associate is found guilty of an act of harassment or bullying, he or she will be dealt with in terms of the company’s disciplinary procedure. In serious cases of harassment or bullying, the harasser may be summarily dismissed.

No detriment will occur against any Search Associate who brings a complaint of harassment or bullying, unless it can be shown that the complaint was brought in bad faith or spitefully. In this case, the Search Associate will be dealt with through the company’s disciplinary procedure.