

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

SMITH
PARTNERSHIP
SOLICITORS

Smith Partnership are committed to eliminating discrimination, and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our business.

We will take all steps necessary to ensure equality and diversity are maintained:

1. For all staff in our workplaces.
2. When providing services to our clients.
3. When dealing with third parties, such as instruction of barristers or experts, in our dealings with the general public, and when selecting suppliers.

This policy is intended to assist us to put the above commitments into practice.

Non-discrimination

We will not intentionally unlawfully discriminate against any person, and shall treat everyone equally regardless of their:

- age
- disability
- sex
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- race, including colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins
- religion or beliefs
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity

The above are the "protected characteristics" as covered by the Equality Act 2010.

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we and our staff do not unlawfully discriminate against any person, in line with equality legislation in force which relates to discrimination in employment and the provision of goods, facilities or services, in particular the Equality Act 2010.

Our staff

We operate an Equal Opportunities Policy in relation to our staff, which sets out our commitment to ensure that we treat all staff and job applicants equally and fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against them. This applies equally to voluntary positions and anyone undertaking work experience with us. This will, for example, include arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotions and transfers, grievance and disciplinary processes, demotions, selection for redundancies, dress codes, references, bonus schemes, work allocation and any other employment related activities.

We recognise the benefits of having an inclusive and diverse workplace and we take steps to ensure that:

- we endeavour to recruit from the widest pool of candidates practicable;
- ensure employment opportunities are accessible to all; and
- ensure recruitment selection criteria and processes do not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic.

We treat all staff equally and create a working environment which is free from unlawful discrimination and which respects the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of staff members. Employment terms will comply with equality legislation at all times.

Where appropriate, we will endeavour to provide appropriate facilities and terms of service which take account of the specific needs of our staff which arise from any protected characteristics.

Career development within Smith Partnership will be made without reference to any protected characteristics and will be open to all and based on merit alone. Our promotion and career development selection criteria and processes will be monitored to ensure that there is no unjustifiable discriminatory impact on any particular group.

Appointments to all jobs will be based solely on merit. All employees will have equal access to training and other career development opportunities appropriate to their experience

and abilities. However, we may take appropriate positive action measures (as permitted by the anti-discrimination legislation) to provide special training and support for groups which are under-represented in our workplace.

Implementing our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The ultimate responsibility for implementing this policy rests with our Partners. The Partners have appointed, Kevin McGrath, Managing Partner, to be responsible for the operation of this policy. However, all staff are expected to comply fully with this policy and equality legislation at all times when undertaking their jobs and representing Smith Partnership.

Acts of unlawful discrimination based upon any protected characteristic, or a failure to comply with this policy, by any staff members of the firm, will result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

Complaints of discrimination

We will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the protected characteristics made by staff, clients, barristers or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with our grievance procedure or complaints procedure and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

We will also monitor the number and outcome of complaints of discrimination made by staff, clients, members, barristers, and other third parties.

Monitoring

We monitor, record and publish equality data about our staff on the basis of protected characteristics.

We store equality data as confidential personal data and restrict access to this information. Equality information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equality monitoring.

We monitor all elements of:

- recruitment to employment

- promotion and career development
- training
- terms and conditions of employment
- the services we provide to our clients

to ensure equality is maintained.

We will review the operation of this policy annually as a minimum (or more regularly if we identify any non-compliance or problem concerning equality, diversity and inclusivity issues with clients, staff or third parties). We will take remedial action if we discover non-compliance under this policy or barriers to equality.