

GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY



[FIRM STAMP]

GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

ADOPTED:	
CONTACT OFFICER:	
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FORMAL REVIEW OF POLICY BY:	
POLICY LINKS:	THIS POLICY LINKS TO ALL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND STRATEGY DOCUMENTS ADOPTED BY Specific reference is made to the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures• Grievance and Complaints Procedure• Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

BRIEF POLICY SUMMARY:

This policy was developed by the Irish Centre for Diversity and sets out how **will achieve its aims to promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion as an employer and supplier of services. It outlines how gender equality, diversity and inclusion will underpin all areas of the firm's work and service provision, including the communities within which it operates.**



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1. PURPOSE

1.1. Policy Statement

recognises that its clients and staff come from diverse backgrounds, with varying experiences and needs. We are committed to ensuring gender equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into our day-to-day working practices.

actively promotes fairness, respect, gender equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement and is committed to continuous improvement.

1.2. Through our policies and in our day-to-day work and fulfilment of our legal responsibilities, is committed to promoting equality and fairness and combating discrimination. This applies to everyone, regardless of their gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race (includes race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins) or membership of the Traveller Community.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. In order to effectively implement its commitment to being an equal and diverse firm, has identified the following objectives:
- Provide the firm's leaders with the skills and knowledge to fully embed fairness, respect, gender equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement into the firm's culture, strategy and processes.
 - Provide gender equality, diversity and inclusion training to all staff and leaders, which will include content on their responsibilities, relevant legislation, and this policy.
 - Ensure that no client or potential client receives less favourable treatment than any other person, making adjustments to services where necessary in order to facilitate this.
 - Ensure opportunities are accessible to all, introducing reasonable accommodations to facilitate this where required.
 - Gather data to enable the monitoring of clients and staff satisfaction (whilst ensuring compliance at all times with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)) to identify and address any negative trends by the nine protected grounds of discrimination.
 - Create an environment where staff and clients are treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
 - Enforce a zero-tolerance approach in relation to discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, and inappropriate behaviour, thoroughly investigating any reported incidents and taking appropriate actions.
 - Ensure fair treatment for job applicants, which is free from bias.
 - Make the best possible use of our existing and potential workforce through effective talent management and training.
 - Provide a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment where everyone can contribute to their fullest potential.
 - Challenge discrimination and promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion.
 - Provide training to staff on approach to gender equality, diversity and inclusion, its commitment to zero tolerance in relation to discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour and the contents of this policy.
 - Act as role models to partner firms and other external stakeholders.
 - Undertake Equality Impact Assessments on all policies, processes, and procedures in order to ensure that no direct or indirect discrimination exists within these.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. This policy applies to the firm, its leadership team, employees, partners and to any external stakeholders that are supported by or engage with the firm.
- 3.2. Gender equality, diversity and inclusion imposes rights and responsibilities on every member of staff. All employees and the leadership will be informed that a Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (the "Policy") is in operation and that they are bound to comply with its requirements. The Policy will also be drawn to the attention of external stakeholders, job applicants and clients.
- 3.3. The Policy ensures that our statutory equality duties outlined in the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 (as amended) and the Equal Status Act 2000 (as amended) (together 'the Acts') are met.
- 3.4. The nine discriminatory grounds are defined under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 (as amended) as being:
 - Gender
 - Civil status
 - Family status
 - Sexual orientation
 - Religion
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Race (includes race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins)
 - Membership of the Traveller Community.

4. KEY EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONCEPTS

- 4.1. Diversity can be defined as the visible and non-visible differences between individuals. These differences can be related to race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender, as well as the many differences in values, attitudes, beliefs, cultural views, skills, knowledge, education, background, employment, parenthood, marital or civil status, and life experiences of every individual.
- 4.2. Equal Opportunities can be defined as ensuring all those involved with or wishing to be involved with the firm, regardless of their diversity, are provided with opportunity based on their ability or potential to perform the required activity.
- 4.3. Discrimination is unequal treatment of an individual because of their membership of a particular class or group, such as sex, race, or trade union.
 - (a) Direct discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been, or would be treated in a comparable position on the basis of one or more of the nine grounds as set out above: for example, refusing to send someone on a training course because they are married or have children.
 - (b) Indirect discrimination occurs where a person is subject to an apparently neutral provision that puts them at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons because of, for example, their race or gender: for example, declaring a post as being suitable only for a full-time member of staff without proper justification (i.e., establishing the need for a full-time member of staff rather than for part-timers or job sharing).

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- 4.4. Discrimination may be subtle and unconscious and may not be easy to identify. For example, discrimination sometimes results from general assumptions about the capabilities, characteristics and interests of particular groups or individuals, which are allowed to influence the treatment of staff or job applicants or clients. This includes unconscious bias.
- 4.5. Harassment or bullying covers any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds that has the effect of causing undue stress on individuals and of de-motivating them. Harassment, sexual harassment or bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and serves to undermine the safe, supportive, and welcoming environment that wishes to encourage.
- 4.6. Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Similar to harassment, it is defined as conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

5. MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY OF THIS POLICY

- 5.1. Fairness, respect, gender equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement are the responsibility of everyone within .
- 5.2. The leadership team of is committed to embedding gender equality, diversity and inclusion within the business, ensuring that everything we do and the manner in which it is done makes reference to and considers the impact upon our equality objectives.
- 5.3. uses the procurement process to ensure that its partners and external stakeholders operate their businesses with similar equality objectives and delivers its services with the same ethos.
- 5.4. It is the responsibility of to implement, monitor and evaluate the Policy in terms of employment practices (selection, recruitment, and retention), training and service delivery. The [Managing Partner] is also under a duty to ensure that the leaders are regularly kept updated in terms of the Policy's implementation. Additionally, the implications for the leaders arising from the decisions it makes and the policies it introduces must be made clear to the leaders.
- 5.5. The Policy Statement (at paragraph 1.1) will be communicated to all staff, clients and other stakeholders using a variety of methods, such as the staff intranet, the website, displayed in offices and prominent places and, where appropriate, included in publications.
- 5.6. Annual work plans are in place that specifically address the gender equality, diversity and inclusion aspects of all areas of work for staff and the leadership team; these support the delivery of the objectives contained within this Policy.
- 5.7. Staff will receive appropriate training to ensure they understand their responsibility not to discriminate and to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Staff are expected to be aware of personal prejudices, unconscious bias and stereotypes and avoid labels at all times.
- 5.8. Existing processes will be used to review and investigate any complaints in relation to discrimination, harassment or bullying, as follows:

- Staff – the employee is encouraged to raise the matter through the Grievance Procedure if the employee believes that s/he has been treated less favourably than another based on any of the discriminatory grounds. The employee is encouraged to raise the matter through the Bullying and Harassment Policy if the employee believes they may have been harassed on any of the nine discriminatory grounds.
- Clients (those using our services) – clients should raise the matter through the Complaints Procedure.

5.9. All complaints will be treated with fairness, sensitivity, respect, and confidentiality for all parties concerned, and the employee will be advised of the correct procedure to undertake as a result of the concerns raised.

5.10. It is expected that when staff or leaders represent at any time, including through attendance at committees, meetings with external stakeholders and contact with clients, they will ensure that the gender equality, diversity and inclusion principles and practices outlined in this Policy are adhered to.

5.11. When representing on the committees of other agencies, each staff member or leader will endeavour to ensure that diversity and inclusion principles and practices are adopted by those agencies.

6. SELECTION, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

6.1. aims to promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion as an employer. It also aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of the policy.

6.2. Selection, recruitment, training, promotion, and employment practices generally will be subject to regular review to ensure they comply with this Policy. In particular, selection and recruitment procedures will be reviewed annually in order to constantly improve gender equality, diversity and inclusion practices and respond to changes in legislation. will monitor data on all applicants as well as those that are successful in order to identify any practices that unintentionally discriminate against specific groups. The firm will ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) at all times.

6.3. We will take whatever positive action is required where it can be shown that under-representation of any particular group has occurred in recruitment. Where appropriate and legally permissible, employees from under-represented groups will be given training and encouragement in order to promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion within

6.4. Employees involved in the selection and recruitment process, and in the management of staff, will receive appropriate training to ensure they recognise when they are making stereotypical assumptions or judgements about people, and avoid any discriminatory practices in the way in which they shortlist, recruit, or manage employees. This will include unconscious bias training.

6.5. We regard discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, clients or of others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as serious

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- 6.6.8. We will not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's sex or on the grounds of sexual orientation, providing everyone, where possible, with exactly the same opportunity to achieve their goals.
- 6.7. As part of its talent management strategy, will operate an annual staff appraisal system. Training or education development to enhance potential within the existing job, arising out of needs identified through appraisal or from other circumstances, will, where appropriate or possible, be provided. We may, in certain circumstances, allow for paid or unpaid leave for training or educational purposes.
- 6.8. retention, reward and progression processes are fair and take account of the social, domestic, cultural and physical obstacles to people progressing. We seek to identify where these exist for individuals and take actions to limit these where necessary.
- 6.9. We undertake review of pay and continually work towards eliminating any unfair pay gaps where these are identified.
- 6.10. All training opportunities will be published widely through Line Managers to all appropriate employees, and not in such a way as to exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants from a particular group. In all training opportunities, we will pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination on the grounds set out in this policy.

7. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 7.1. We will use a variety of methods to regularly consult with our clients. We will gather their views on existing and planned services, including changes to provision.
- 7.2. We will make public our commitment to combating discriminatory attitudes, where these are encountered, by publishing this policy widely amongst staff, partners, recognised trade unions and external stakeholders and in a variety of formats.

8. PROCUREMENT

- 8.1. is committed to working with a wide range of suppliers and contractors, from local businesses through to large multi-nationals across a wide range of different types of contracts and purchases.
- 8.2. Gender equality, diversity and inclusion will be considered during the procurement process and, on the award of contracts, there will be an expectation that contractors comply with the relevant legislation and principles of this policy.
- 8.3. Each contractor that engages in the procurement process will be required to hold the appropriate certification and qualifications for the works and services they are submitting a bid to carry out. The application process will require the contractor to provide evidence of a formal gender equality, diversity and inclusion policy, further supported by evidence of training delivered to staff, the provision of information, and a commitment to on-going support and training.

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- 8.4. The extent of compliance will be dependent on the nature of the work and size of the contractor, but examples of compliance requirements may include contractors being required to:
- Provide gender equality, diversity and inclusion training for all of their staff, or for their staff to attend such training.
 - Carry out gender equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring of their staff and to take action to deal with any under-representation of particular groups.
 - Undertake 'reasonable accommodations' when delivering services for clients and those with disabilities.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 9.1. will systematically evaluate its services and the effectiveness of its Policy by a variety of means.
- 9.2. Information gathered through the complaints, grievances, disciplinary or other appropriate processes will be analysed by the nine discriminatory grounds, where this information is available, to identify any particular trends. Where any negative trends are identified, these will be investigated fully, and recommendations made to the leadership team.
- 9.3. We will report annually to the leadership team on the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities, including any trends in relation to the particular nine discriminatory grounds.

10. REVIEW CYCLE

- 10.1. Responsibility for review of this Policy sits with .
- 10.2. A formal review will be completed annually.
- 10.3. Additionally, an interim review would be conducted in the following circumstances:
- A change is made to relevant legislation, including but not limited to the Acts.
 - The investigation into a negative trend indicates a review of this policy is appropriate.
 - An external review of our services identifies the need for a policy review.