



Rexel UK Ltd

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Version 1
Head of HR – Rexel UK Ltd

Rexel UK Limited. Registered in England No 434724. Registered Office and address: 5th Floor, Maple House, Mutton Lane, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 5BS

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Equality & Diversity Policy

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to promote equal treatment for all employees or potential employees, in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Company is committed to equality of opportunity in all its employment practices, policies and procedures. No employee or potential employee will be discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which employees treat visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former employees.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all permanent and fixed-term, full and part-time employees, contractors and agency staff as well as all job applicants. This policy has particular relevance to all those concerned with recruitment, training, promotion procedures and/or decisions, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

This policy is non-contractual and the Company reserves the right to amend or withdraw it at any time where the Company deems this necessary.

Please also refer to the Bullying & Harassment Policy.

Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary proceedings being initiated as per the Disciplinary Policy.

This policy supersedes all previous versions.

3. OVERVIEW

Responsibilities:

Employees:

- Adhere to this policy;
- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity;
- Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices;
- Not induce or attempt to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination;
- Not victimise anyone as a result of them having reported or provided evidence of discrimination;
- Not harass, abuse or intimidate others on account of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or any other reason.

Line Managers:

- Ensure this policy is enforced;
- Keep all sensitive personal data confidential;
- Review the effectiveness of the policy and all associated action plans.

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Human Resources Department:

- Ensure that this policy and all procedures relating to it are maintained in line with current and developing legislative requirements;
- Any queries on the application or interpretation of this policy must be discussed with the Human Resources department prior to any action being taken.

4. DEFINITIONS

Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above in the policy statement. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that is applied to everyone equally and also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage in circumstances where such a requirement cannot be objectively justified. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics (or for any other reason) is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if they create an offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Harassment Policy.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint. It is important therefore that the Company promotes diversity whereby people's differences, both visible and non-visible, are valued.

Diversity means more than recruiting and fostering a diverse workforce. It is a way of thinking differently and making sure we are getting the best ideas, effort and performance from all of our people. The Company recognises that building an inclusive workforce allows us to leverage the contributions of all of our people as we strengthen our competitiveness in the global marketplace. Innovative ideas arise from a diverse workforce, ideas that ultimately transform into action and success for our customers and employees.

5. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS AND PROMOTIONS

The Company aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. The Company's recruitment and promotion procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate. Short-listing of applicants should be done by more than one person wherever possible.

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Job advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.

The Company takes steps to ensure that vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market. Applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which should only be used with HR approval.

For example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments);
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment;
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons;
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Applicants should not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy.

Applicants should not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment (without the approval of HR, who should first consider whether such matters are relevant, necessary and may lawfully be taken into account).

6. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

If an employee is disabled or becomes disabled, the Company encourages them to raise their condition so that the Company can support them as appropriate.

If an employee experiences difficulties at work because of their disability, they may wish to contact their Line Manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Line Manager may wish to consult with the employee and their medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. The Company will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the employee's needs within reason. If the Company considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable they will explain their reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

The Company will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they place disabled workers or job applicants at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, the Company will take steps to improve access for disabled employees and service users.

7. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

All Line Managers should be trained and employees made aware of this policy during their induction to the Company, which should include:

- An explanation of what the policy means to the Company and to all employees;
- An explanation of the forms discrimination can take (e.g. direct, indirect, victimisation and harassment);
- Guidance on the danger of generalised assumptions and prejudices;
- Training on Diversity and Respect in the workplace.

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The criteria for selecting employees for training opportunities must be non-discriminatory. These will be based upon the employee's merits and abilities, business needs, and the availability of appropriate work-related courses. Whenever practicable, training will be arranged so that all categories of employees may attend (e.g. part-time employees).

The Company aims to appraise all employees annually and there will be positive encouragement to discuss development and training needs and opportunities.

8. REDUNDANCY AND REDEPLOYMENT

With reference to the appropriate policies, the selection for redundancy and/or redeployment must be conducted in a manner that avoids discrimination.

9. OTHER POLICIES

All Company policies, remuneration opportunities, hours of work, unsocial hours, appraisal scheme, disciplinary procedure and benefits are designed to promote equal opportunity and protection for all employees.

The Company is also committed to ensuring that it recognises cross-cultural differences. To this end, the Company acknowledges different religious/festival requirements and aims to take steps to accommodate reasonable requests for annual holiday during such periods.

10. MONITORING

To ensure that this policy is being implemented effectively the Company may carry out monitoring on an ongoing basis including collecting data from applicants and employees. The resultant statistics will be kept by the Human Resources department in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

11. GRIEVANCES

Any employee who believes they have been discriminated against should raise the matter using the Company's grievance procedure. Where there is a concern regarding harassment, the Bullying and Harassment Policy should be followed.

Any employee, prospective or otherwise, may request a copy of this policy and may submit a complaint, (in writing), to the Human Resources department. Allegations of potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and an investigation will be conducted. The individual lodging a grievance in good faith will receive a written report as to the outcome within a reasonable timeframe.

Any breach of this Equality and Diversity Policy will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. Breaches of this policy may be treated as gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.