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# Sanctuary Personnel Ltd

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

### POLICY STATEMENT

1. Sanctuary Personnel Ltd recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the Company and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the Company to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the **protected characteristics**).
2. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.
3. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment.
4. All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Our staff will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass customers or clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the Company's goods and services.
6. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

### OUR COMMITMENT

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions and/or employee representatives.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Managing Director. Directors / Managers will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

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- all their staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
  - grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
  - proper records are maintained.

The Head of Support Services will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees and job applicants, including periodic departmental audits.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF**

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

## **THIRD PARTIES**

Third-party harassment occurs where a Company employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or customers. Sanctuary Personnel Ltd will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform their manager / supervisor at once that this has occurred. Sanctuary Personnel Ltd will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS**

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The Company policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed.

## **RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE**

The Company attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

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## MONITORING

- The Company deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, a monitoring system will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.
- The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff who declare themselves as disabled will also be maintained.
- There will also be regular assessments to measure the extent to which recruitment to first appointment, internal promotion and access to training/development opportunities affect equal opportunities for all groups.
- We will maintain information on staff who have been involved in certain key policies: Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying & Harassment.
- Where appropriate **equality impact assessments** will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect of the Company policies and our services / products may have on those who experience them.
- The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.
- If monitoring shows that the Company, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the Company, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, Company policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

## RECRUITMENT & SELECTION OF STAFF

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to our equal opportunities policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications

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## ADVERTISING

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies. We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and require them to demonstrate full commitment to it.

For all job applications received, a note is taken of how the applicant heard about the vacancy. This is monitored annually to ensure opportunities are being advertised openly in media likely to reach a diverse audience. Wherever possible, a link to this procedure is displayed and all applicants receive a copy with their application form.

We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources, which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group. Open recruitment methods are used for all vacancies, including internet advertising, press advertising, job centres and careers services.

All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

We will not disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

## ANTI - DISCRIMATORY PRACTICE

Sanctuary is working to eliminate discrimination wherever it may occur in its operations. We also recognise that the efforts of every member of staff are critical in the drive to change or remove attitudes and assumptions that discriminate against other people.

Our channels for complaint and whistle-blowing are secure and robust.

Our procedures for collecting and monitoring the characteristics of newly appointed employees allows us to address any discriminatory practices in our recruitment process.

Improved understanding is an important means of combating prejudice. All members of our organisation should assist in learning about and raising awareness of cultural and other minority differences.

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Every member of staff is required to co-operate in any measures introduced by management designed to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination. They should also actively challenge and draw the attention of management to suspected discriminatory acts or practices.

Members of staff should support colleagues and services users who feel themselves to be victims of discrimination or harassment. Staff should make themselves aware of avenues of complaint and ensure that they can advise and encourage victims.

## **GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE**

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Company Grievance Procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Company Disciplinary Procedure.

## **PROVISION OF WORKS**

Sanctuary's services to customers shall be consistent with this policy. As well as observing the requirements in respect of recruiting temporary workers, staff must also:-

- support and advise customers to promote equal treatment
- not accept instructions from customers that would be unlawful or that would extend less favourable treatment to groups referred to by this policy
- seek guidance from the Managing Director if they are concerned about any instruction from a customer
- not express or endorse any opinion to customers that would contradict this policy
- demonstrate respect for Equal Opportunities at all times

Any negative remark on the subject, or any remark which could be considered offensive will be investigated in the manner prescribed for a formal complaint - even if intended by the member of staff to be humorous.

## **REVIEW**

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Managing Director.