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Equality Statement of Intent

Firebrand

Firebrand recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the organisation and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the organisation to ensure that no employee, job applicant or customer receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) on the grounds of the Protected Characteristics.

The Protected Characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender/ gender reassignment
- Marriage/ civil partnership
- Pregnancy/ maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Our Commitment

Firebrand is committed to the following principles:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff and learners are recognised and valued.
- Every employee and learner is entitled to work in an 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.
- We will promote equality and diversity among our staff, employers, stakeholders and learners and commit to continually raise achievement levels for all of our learners irrespective of their background or protected characteristics.

Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Responsibilities of Management

Management 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:

- 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
- Records are maintained

Responsibilities of Staff

Responsibility for ensuring that there are 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

Examples of Discrimination

Direct Discrimination happens when an employer treats someone less favourably than another person against one of the protected characteristics. For example, a female job candidate who possesses the best qualifications and the most experience not getting an interview for a job whereas a male with fewer qualifications does get an interview.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a rule or policy disadvantages a group of people more than another. For example an employer insisting that employees or potential employees must not wear hats or headgear.

Discrimination by Association happens when someone discriminates against a person because they associate with another person with a protected characteristic. For example, not offering someone a job even though they have all the necessary competencies because their partner is disabled.

Perceptive Discrimination means direct discrimination against someone who is thought to have a protected characteristic, for example a person who is being verbally abused for being homosexual even though they are actually heterosexual.

Harassment is unwelcome comments or conduct which violates an individual's dignity and/or creates an intimidating, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. For example, spreading malicious rumours or making derogatory personal remarks about a person.

Third Party Harassment occurs when an employee is being harassed by someone that does not work for the organisation (a customer, contractor, client or visitor). The employer will become legally responsible if they know an employee has been harassed on two or more occasions and fails to take reasonable steps to protect the person from further harassment.

Victimisation involves treating someone less favourably because they have a claim/assisted a person in making a claim of discrimination, bullying or harassment. For example, ignoring, excluding or being uncooperative, this may cause distress and impact on a person in being able to fulfil their role.

Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they are pregnant. For example, a woman who works in a store in which heavy lifting of boxes is sometimes required asks her manager if she can be excused. The manager refuses even though another person was excused from heavy lifting after surgery. The woman is forced to leave her job.

Further information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/about/equality-and-diversity>

