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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Revised Nov 2019

1. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**
2. We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a long-standing feature of our employment practices and procedure, we have developed a formal equal opportunities policy in line with the Equality Act 2010. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.
3. The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee, worker, member representative, visitor, student or apprentice is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation in line with the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.
4. We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.
5. The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.
6. We will maintain a neutral working environment and an inclusive culture in which no employee, worker, member representative, visitor, student or apprentice feels under threat or intimidated.

**2) RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

1) The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any 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.

2) 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.

3) 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.

4) We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

5) We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.

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

7) 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.

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

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

10) 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.

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

**3) STUDENTS AND APPRENTICES**

1. NEUPC students and apprentices are classed as adults for DBS purposes in that they are in full-time employment in the HE sector, and are all 18+.
2. All students and apprentices will be introduced to NEUPC’s approach to Equality and Diversity at their induction to their programme of learning.
3. Apprentices are also introduced to British Values of respect and tolerance as part of the PREVENT initiative, both as part of their induction and in their Leeds City College Apprentice Handbook
4. The NEUPC CIPS Student Handbook also identifies that “The learner will engage with the Course Leader, Tutors and other learners on the programmes in a respectful and appropriate manner” as part of section 15 - Expectations of Learner conduct and commitment.
5. Tutors are encouraged to build an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and people feel confident to bring their whole selves into the learning environment.
6. Tutors are encouraged to treat learners with respect and dignity in their interactions and maximise opportunities for building awareness of equality and diversity into the curriculum.
7. If Tutors become aware of a discrimination or lack of tolerance by a student or apprentice, they will in the first instance discuss it with them, but may be escalated to the Employer and could ultimately lead to removal from their programme of study.
8. Equality and Diversity issues relating to either Tutors or NEUPC should be raised by students and apprentices through the relevant complaints procedure, and may ultimately leads to a disciplinary investigation and action.

**4) EMPLOYEES**

1. All employees will be introduced to NEUPC’s approach to Equality and Diversity at their induction and their knowledge refreshed whenever the policy is amended.
2. Employees are encouraged to treat fellow employees and others with respect and dignity in their interactions.
3. If Employees become aware of a discrimination by a fellow employee or Manager, they are encouraged to discuss it with them in the first instance, but may be escalated to the Manager or formally through the NEUPC Grievance Procedure.

Breaches of the policy may lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.