

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

1.0 Statement of Intent

- 1.1 It is the aim of Sherwood Prestige Services to be an equal opportunities employer. The Company commits itself to promote and develop equal opportunities and will keep under review its policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they accord with the principles of equal opportunities and are consistently applied.
- 1.2 The Company recognises that discrimination is unacceptable and that it is in its own best interest, as well as the interest of its employers, to utilise the skill of the total workforce.
- 1.3 The aim of the equal opportunities policy is to ensure that no present or future employees or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, creed, religion, ethnic or national origin, nationality, sex, marital status, disability, sexuality or social status, or is disadvantaged by any conditions or requirement which cannot be shown to be necessary.
- 1.4 In the promotion of the policy, the Company will endeavour to meet in full the statutory requirements of the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Codes of Practice relating to these and the measures relating to the employment of people with disabilities.
- 1.5 Whilst it is expected that all staff of the Company will accept personal responsibility for practical application of the policy, lead responsibility for its implementation will rest with the Chief Executive and fellow directors. To ensure that it is consistently applied, co-ordinating responsibility is assigned to the Company's Training Officer who will have responsibility to the Chief Executive for monitoring the operation of the policy.
- 1.6 The Training Officer will have responsibility to the Chief Executive for monitoring the operation of the policy for both employees and job applicants and for initiating periodic departmental audits.

2.0 Recruitment and Selection

- 2.1 The intention of the recruitment procedure is to ensure the most appropriate response to any vacancy in the Company. The Company wishes to ensure the highest quality of candidates and will advertise vacancies within the organisation. Use will be made of job centres, career service, the media and appropriate external vacancy advertising outlets.
- 2.2 The selection process is of crucial importance and must therefore be carried out according to objective, job-related criteria. The effectiveness of the policy will be carried out according to a great extent by this aspect of the employment procedure.

3.0 Training and Promotion

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- 3.1** All steps will be taken to ensure access to opportunities for training and promotion. The Company will endeavour to provide appropriate training to enable staff to perform their jobs efficiently and pursue career development opportunities.
- 3.2** Training and guidance for implementation will be given to members and senior officers of the Company to increase their awareness of their role in the implementation of the policy, and training and guidance in appropriate techniques will be provided for staff involved in recruitment and selection.
- 3.3** Equal opportunities information will be incorporated in the Company's induction and management training courses.
- 3.4** Where possible and practicable, advantage will be taken of the provisions of the Acts positive action.
- 4.0 Pay**
- 4.1** The Company supports the principal of equal opportunities in employment and believes as part of that principal the male and female staff should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.
- 4.2** The Company understands the right to equal pay between men and women free of sex bias, is a fundamental principal of the European Community law and is conferred by United Kingdom legislation.
- 4.3** It is in the Company's interest and good business practice that pay is awarded fairly and equitably.
- 4.4** The Company recognises that in order to achieve equal pay for employees doing equal work it is necessary to operate a pay system that is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from sex bias.
- 5.0 Discipline and Grievance**
- 5.1** Direct discrimination and instances of sexual, racial or other harassment will be treated as disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.
- 5.2** An employee who has in good faith taken action under the Race Relations Act or Sex Discrimination Act, or complains about racial, sexual or other abuse and /or discrimination, shall not for that reason receive less favourable treatment than any other employees, for example by being subjected to disciplinary action.
- 5.3** Particular care will be taken to deal effectively with all complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment.
- 5.4** All employees have the right to seek redress for their grievances and the Company will ensure that this right is made known.
- 5.5** Complaints by staff will normally be processed through the agreed grievance procedure. It is recognised, however, that employees often find it difficult to approach their immediate manager in cases involving discrimination or harassment. The first point of contact in incidents of this nature may therefore alternately be the Training

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Officer, Should the employee continue to feel aggrieved, then the formal procedure should be followed.

6.0 Cultural and Religious Needs

6.1 The Company will endeavour to take measures to ensure that existing policies and procedures are modified to accommodate cultural and religious needs of staff which may conflict with existing work requirements, wherever such measures are compatible with the safe and efficient running of the Company and its service.

7.0 Code of Practice

7.1 A detailed Equal Opportunities Code of Practice has been drawn up, copies of which are available to all employees from the Company's Training Office. The Code of Practice gives further information and guidelines on implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy.

8.0 Review of Policy

8.1 The Policy will be subject to regular review by the appropriate Company Staff