Equality, diversity and Inclusion Policy

Principle 6 of the new SRA principles says that we **must** act in a way that **encourages** equality, diversity and inclusion.

This policy aims to ensure that the firm never discriminates unlawfully in relation to our clients and others. The requirement not to unlawfully discriminate applies to the following protected characteristics:-

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnerships
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion and belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

We offer a service to the public. The service is available to all members of the public and it is against the law to unlawfully discriminate in terms of who we offer our services to. We want to appeal to as many clients as possible and we would never want to cut whole groups of people because of unlawfully discriminating. We know that clients will feel reassured if they are aware that we do not unlawfully discriminate.

We also work in an environment where we encourage equality, diversity and inclusion. We recognise that if people cannot be themselves and if they are treated unfavourably because of a protected characteristic, then that is very bad for staff morale and for the firm. We need to get the best out of our staff and we will get the best out of them if they are allowed to be themselves. Our staff are trained and are aware of the importance of not unlawfully discriminating. If there is any suggestion that our staff do unlawfully discriminate, it is dealt with as a disciplinary matter and taken very seriously. Unlawful discrimination on the basis of any of the protected characteristics listed above may result in dismissal.

The Equality Act 2010

This Act harmonises, simplifies and modernises equality law. It replaces 9 different pieces of legislation. The Act refers to “protected characteristics” (listed above) and people are able to bring a claim of unlawful discrimination (on the basis of one of the protected characteristics) to a tribunal.

Recruitment

We advertise vacancies in the local press (Cardiff) and with the Job Centre in Cardiff as well as online. The advert should reach the whole of the community in Cardiff/South Wales who are seeking employment and as such, should attract a cross section of the community.

Any job description that is placed is a factual description of the role and should never refer to age, gender etc. This results in everyone who is interested being able to apply for a role.

Candidates send in their CVs. Joni May Treharne looks through them and picks the best candidates by reference to their relevant experience and qualifications and the shortlist is prepared for interview.

Candidates are interviewed by Joni May Treharne, the office manager, and a relevant Partner (depending on which role is being filled in which department). Decisions are based on which candidate is best for the job.

Flexible working

We confirm in our welcome pack given to all members of staff that you have the right to request flexible working and the partners will treat that request seriously and will only say no if there are sound business reasons to do so. The firm is very aware of the need for all staff to feel fully supported in their roles as carers and the firm will always try and be flexible to accommodate needs as long as the firm's business is not compromised. We are aware that we will get the best out of our staff if they feel supported in their roles as carers and who feel happy in their working environment.

Generally

We do not discriminate when it comes to staff training, discipline or dismissal. We treat victimisation and harassment extremely seriously.

Reasonable adjustments

When clients first contact our firm, we ask if any reasonable adjustments need to be made to accommodate the client's needs such as offering a downstairs room if there are mobility issues, offering a home visit if the client is not able to visit the office, offering letters in larger font, offering Teams meetings or telephone calls and offering interpreting services etc.

Discipline for breach of this policy

Unlawful discrimination is treated seriously and in our welcome pack we outline the disciplinary procedure at the firm.

Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and the COLP is responsible for keeping up to date with relevant legislation.

Responsibility for this policy

Joni May Treharne is responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure. Joni May Treharne is responsible for communicating the policy to all staff via the induction process and via her regular staff training sessions in her role as COLP.

Publication of policy on website

This equality, diversity and inclusion policy will be published on the firm's website together with the communication policy that confirms how we communicate this policy to staff and others.