

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

The United House Group is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. 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.

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and not to discriminate on grounds of gender, pregnancy, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or gender reassignment. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees, whether part-time, full-time, contracted or temporary including others engaged to work at United House, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be considered purely on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be supported and encouraged to develop their full potential. The talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

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
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- We will review all of our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness and develop an action plan accordingly
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- This policy is fully supported by senior management
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

Implementation of the Policy

The implementation of the Policy will be a priority for senior management. The HR Manager will be responsible for the day to day implementation of the Policy. The Policy will be communicated to all employees and job applicants and will be placed on our intranet and website.

All staff will receive training on the policy, on their rights and responsibilities under the policy and how the policy will affect the way they carry out their duties. This will ensure all are aware of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable conduct. Additional training will be provided for managers and key decision makers.

Complaints about discrimination and harassment in the course of employment will be regarded seriously and may result in disciplinary sanctions, and even dismissal. The procedure for complaints is available to all staff via the intranet.

Opportunities for employment will be advertised widely internally and externally and all applicants will be welcomed irrespective of gender, pregnancy, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or gender reassignment. Selection criteria will be entirely related to the job or training opportunity.

Monitoring information will be collected and analysed as part of the recruitment process to monitor the effective implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy. The information will be held in strictest confidence and will only be used to promote equality and prevent unlawful discrimination.

If monitoring data shows that people from particular groups are under-represented in particular areas of work, lawful positive action training and encouragement will be considered for staff to apply successfully for vacancies in these areas.

Grievances, disciplinary action, performance assessment and terminations of employment will also be monitored.

Job requirements, conditions, provisions and criteria and practices will be reviewed regularly in the light of monitoring results, and revised if they are found to or might discriminate unlawfully.

All contracts between United House and our sub-contractors to supply goods, materials or services will include a clause prohibiting unlawful discrimination or harassment by contractors or their staff. This clause will also encourage contractors and potential contractors to prove equality of opportunity in their employment practices.

An equality and diversity action plan will be drawn up with targets and timetables to show what steps United House plans to take to achieve the aims of this policy.

The effectiveness of the policy and the plan will be monitored regularly. A report on progress will be produced each year and published on both the United House intranet and website.

Clients will be made aware of the policy and their right to fair and equal treatment irrespective of gender, pregnancy, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or gender reassignment.