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Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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1. Scope

This policy sets out the RTPI's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace and in the services that we provide. This means the services we provide internally, to our colleagues as well as to our external customers. It applies to all RTPI colleagues and outlines our expectations of our suppliers and contractors.

2. Purpose

At the RTPI equity, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of our values and objectives. Promoting equity, diversity and inclusion within the planning profession is one of 'The Four Pillars' of our Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2030. RTPI believes these values should apply universally within the RTPI.

RTPI is committed to ensuring that all colleagues feel included in our workplace. That means people of all ages, abilities or disabilities, sex or gender, race or ethnicities, religion or belief, cultures, sexual orientation, and family status. It takes all of us to ensure that diversity or difference is not a barrier to success or incurs less favourable treatment. So it's important that all of us are clear on the expected standards of behaviour in line with our values and with equality legislation and what to do if we witness an exclusion or discrimination.

3. Policy

- We seek to promote an inclusive, supportive and respectful environment which appreciates and values the experiences, perspectives and skills that we all bring;
- We aim to exceed our duties under current legislation and ensure that all colleagues are treated fairly and encouraged to reach their full potential regardless of gender, marital or civil partnership status, parental status, disability, age, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic origin), religion or belief, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation and socio-economic background;
- We will develop and maintain an environment in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and where everyone is able to participate and contribute fully;
- We seek to work with our people (employees and volunteers), service and partners to reasonably prevent and appropriately respond to any form of harassment or victimisation, to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote good working relations between people of different diversity groups;
- We are committed to a culture and working practices that recognise and value diversity and inclusion and are free from discrimination. Working practices include recruitment and selection, induction and learning, development and promotion, performance management, disciplinary and grievance procedures, working patterns, ending employment and service provision.
- We aim to ensure all colleagues understand the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion and apply them to their working life; and
- We understand the harmful effects of discrimination, bullying, victimisation, and harassment can have and any infringement of this policy will be fully investigated and appropriate action taken.

4. Behavioural expectations

We all have a responsibility not to behave in a way that offends, discriminates, bullies, harasses, or victimises others. We should all speak up if we learn of such instances. This includes verbal, online and written behaviour.

If any of us behaves in a way does not comply with this policy, it could lead to disciplinary action. In serious cases, discriminatory behaviour may be treated as gross misconduct and may result in employment or contracts being terminated.

Every colleague is responsible for and is empowered to:

- supporting and implementing the aims of this policy;
- ensuring that their behaviour and actions do not amount to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation in any way; and
- challenging any behaviour that falls short of the expectations in this policy.

In addition to the responsibilities included above:

The Senior Executive Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring that equity, diversity and inclusion is an integral part of all RTPI activities
- Providing leadership on equity, diversity and inclusion and acting as role models.

All managers are responsible for:

- fostering a culture in which compliance with this policy is regarded as integral to the work of the RTPI and in which equity, diversity and inclusion is actively promoted;
- ensuring their team are aware of their responsibilities in this area and flagging any possible development needs with the HR department;
- ensuring that we provide reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities or accessibility requirements to ensure they have the environment and equipment to do their role or use our service; and
- addressing any inappropriate behaviour.

The Human Resources team is responsible for:

- developing and implementing strategies and training to support and champion equity, diversity and inclusion;
- supporting managers to carefully consider reasonable adjustments for candidates or employees with a disability;
- putting in place procedures and training that equip managers to make recruitment, development or promotion decisions based on objective and appropriate criteria; and
- measuring and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.

5. Raising concerns and managing complaints

If you feel you have been, or have witnessed, harassment, discrimination or victimisation, you have a duty to tell us by:

- Reporting it to your manager if you feel comfortable doing so
- Reporting it to Human Resources if you feel comfortable doing so
- Or following our [grievance procedure or dignity at work](#) procedure

In all cases where allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are raised we will ensure the situation is handled with sensitivity and that an appropriate investigation is conducted providing support to all concerned.

6. Our commitments to you

We will put in place the right policies, principles and processes to ensure that we meet the aims of this policy.

Recruitment

We welcome applications from a diverse range of candidates and are committed to an inclusive and equitable recruitment process including but not limited to:

- All descriptions and specifications for posts will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job
- Advertisements will be clear, use inclusive language, be capability based and will not restrict access or preference someone of Protected Characteristics unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which must be clearly stated.
- All selection will be thorough, conducted against defined criteria and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the role. Where it is necessary to ask questions relating to personal circumstances, these will be related purely to job requirements and asked all candidates.
- We are all committed to ensuring that external partners active in the recruitment process, including but not limited agencies and executive search companies, are made aware of the principles and approaches of this Policy, and our commitment to implementing its goals.

Employment

Terms and conditions of employment shall be drawn up with reference to this Policy including:

- Our fixed-term and part-time colleagues shall be offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities.
- We are committed to ensuring fair treatment in terms of compensation and benefits / remuneration without relation to any of the Protected Characteristics.
- Protection from discrimination continues through to your last day with us and includes standard references regardless of termination reason.

- All of our internal policies and procedures will be applied without discrimination
- Redundancy criteria and procedures will be fair and objective and will not include criteria which are contrary to the aims of this Policy and may be considered as discrimination against the Protected Characteristics.
- Promotion and development opportunities will be based on merit and the needs of the role and will not be unlawfully discriminatory.

Reasonable adjustments

We are committed to ensuring inclusion and accessibility for disabled people. This includes but is not limited to implementing reasonable adjustments:

- Disabled colleagues are encouraged to tell their manager about their needs and reasonable adjustments required
- Any reasonable adjustments to working terms or equipment which would assist disabled people, will be accommodated where possible and proportionate to the needs of the role. We shall ensure that requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately.
- If we consider that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, the reasons for this will be explained and we shall aim to find an alternative solution (where possible).
- Facilities will be available with no unlawful obstacles and where applicable and possible adjustments will be made to enable an adjusted environment.

Training and professional development

We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and inclusion in our training and development including:

- Providing learning about diversity and inclusion available to all our colleagues. We will continue to review and develop additional learning in this area and regularly communicate our expectations of inclusive behaviour.
- Embedding inclusion and diversity within other learning modules where appropriate
- Encouraging volunteers and employees to discuss their career aspirations and development needs including training needs with their Manager or HR.
- Equal access to development and training opportunities regardless of protected characteristics.

7. Monitoring

In order to ensure RTPI is delivering on its commitment to diversity and inclusion, it is important to understand the diverse make-up, experiences, views and perspectives of our colleagues, we will ask you to provide certain personal data. You will always be given an option to select 'not disclosed' or 'prefer not to say' for personal diversity information.

Pseudo-anonymised diversity data will be periodically reviewed at aggregate level to help us identify patterns and trends for different diverse groups (e.g. men/women, different ages, disability status). No identifiable individual personal data will be used or disclosed.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed and amended in accordance with legislation and will be subject to a formal review every three years by the Human Resources department.

Appendix 1. The law

The Equality Act 2010, which applies in Scotland, England and Wales, makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

The Equality Act does not extend to Northern Ireland. However, legislation in Northern Ireland provides similar protection from discrimination plus additional duties relating to religious belief or political opinion. The Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2015 provide similar protection from discrimination in Ireland.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the RTPI for any act of unlawful discrimination and may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Examples of unlawful discrimination are included below

Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim,

For example, the gender of an actor can be specified; a delivery driver job requires applicants to be able to drive.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination), such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

For example: holding meetings late on a Friday indirectly discriminates against certain religious groups; organising meetings in the pub after work will discriminate against certain religious groups and may discriminate against women (who are more likely to have primary childcare responsibilities); organising a regular event that is to the detriment of part time workers because they do not work at that time/day and who are primarily female.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity as these characteristics are covered separately), that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

For example: deciding not to offer a job because the candidate is a carer for an elderly parent and the employer thinks they will take too much time off work as a result.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

For example: a heterosexual employee who is believed to be gay and treated differently as a result of this belief.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

For example: Denying an employee a training opportunity or promotion because they made complaint.

Appendix 2. Useful information

The following are links to some of RTPI's related policies:

[Dignity at Work Policy](#)

[Grievance Policy](#)

[Disciplinary and Capability Policy](#)

What's the difference between equality and equity?

We often talk about 'equality', diversity and inclusion but what we actually mean is 'equity'. Equality is about treating everyone the same. Equity, and inclusion, is about how equality only works if everyone is the same. We're not all the same, we need to adapt systems for different people and challenge systems that lead to disadvantage.

RTPI's code of training delivery practice

RTPI is positively committed to opposing all direct and indirect discrimination in its employment and provision of services, and to the full implementation of diversity in all aspects of its work.

The trainer should abide by the RTPI Code of Training Delivery Practice at all times:

- prejudice against people with disabilities, or who suffer social or economic disadvantage, racism, sexism, and ageism have no place in an environment which seeks to improve individuals' learning
- learners should be at the centre of the training process, programmes provided should meet the needs of the learners and where necessary, be sufficiently flexible to achieve this programmes provided should empower learners
- each learner is an individual and should feel confident that the trainer who assists them values individuality and diversity
- the learner and the trainer must reach agreement as to what is to be regarded as confidential information and thus not divulged to a third party without agreement between learner and trainer

- the trainer must consistently display high standards and should not engage in any behaviour that detracts from the image of RTPI, or adversely affects other trainers or learners
all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure a safe working environment
- trainers should respect the rights of individuals to freedom of expression and may not use their position to constrain those rights unless the rights of the group are impinged
- trainers should not use the training environment primarily as a sales opportunity for business promotion