



Equality and Diversity Policy

Interfood is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our employees and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Our aim is to create a supportive and inclusive environment where our employees can reach their full potential, without prejudice or discrimination. We are committed to a culture where respect and understanding is fostered and the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances will be positively valued.

Scope

This policy covers all members of staff whether employed or contracted and the Company - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

Policy

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Company as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect.

Through this policy and procedure and the training and development of managers and staff, the organisation will do all it can to promote good practice in this area, in order to eliminate discrimination and harassment as far as is reasonably possible. The Company will also continue to work towards its dedicated goal of encouraging and promoting equality and diversity within the workforce. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

The Company will take complaints seriously, of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the Company's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.



The policy aims to achieve equality by removing any potential discrimination in the way that our employees are treated by fellow employees or the Company, including:

- people with disabilities
- people of different sexual orientations
- transgendered and transsexual people
- people of different races
- people on the grounds of their sex
- those of faith and of no faith
- in relation to their age
- in relation to their social class or medical condition
- people who work part-time
- those who are married or in a civil partnership
- women who are pregnant, have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

Discrimination can be either direct or indirect discrimination. Some of the above are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and discrimination is prohibited, unless there is a legal exception under the Equality Act.

Direct discrimination

This is where someone is treated less favourably due to one (or more) protected characteristics. It can be intentional or unintentional discrimination. Occasionally the discrimination may occur due to a protected characteristic of another person, so the discrimination may be because of association. An example is an advert for a job that requires 'men only' or 'under 30s only'.

Indirect discrimination

This is where someone is disadvantaged by an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice (PCP) that is applied 'across the board' or 'equally across a particular group'. The PCP may have the consequence (usually unintended) of causing a disadvantage, which then actually affects somebody. For example, a PCP relating to clothing or headwear could be applied 'equally', but may cause someone with a protected characteristic to be disadvantaged. The PCP could be justified if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Victimisation

This is not the same as the common meaning of victimisation, but is specifically regarding treating someone less favourably because they have complained about or given information about discrimination or harassment, either regarding themselves or someone else.

Harassment

This is part of the Equality Act 2010 which applies to how employees treat fellow employees, visitors, suppliers and former employees. The Act also applies to customers/clients.

The Company is committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.



The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Company.

Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff. The HR department has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the equality and diversity policies and, as part of this process, all HR policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

There will be monitoring and reviews of the effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy, including a review of job applicants and the benefits/career progression of existing employees. Comments and suggestions on the policy can be directed to the Head of HR.

If you have any queries with this document or Interfood's equality and diversity policy, please contact the HR department on 01844 265 359 or email h.r@interfoodtechnology.com.

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