

ASHDOWN SITE INVESTIGATION LTD

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Ashdown Site Investigation Limited is committed to equal opportunities in all aspects of employment.

The aim of the Equal opportunities policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employees receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, age, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability or sexual orientation.

Ashdown Site Investigation Limited will promote positive employment practices designed to eliminate discrimination, thereby ensuring adherence to the appropriate Acts of Parliament and Codes of Practice.

POLICY STATEMENT

All employees will be recruited, promoted, transferred and trained on the basis of ability, job requirement and fitness for the job. Selection criteria and procedures relating to recruitment, promotion, transfer and training must satisfy this policy.

Employees will not be discriminated against or made redundant on the grounds of sex, age, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

Employees will not be discriminated against in performance appraisals and any performance review system will reflect this policy.

Employees will not be discriminated against in the operation of grievance disputes and disciplinary procedures.

The health, mental and physical ability of the employees and prospective employees will only be considered in so far as it reflects their ability to perform the job.

Certain posts carry a genuine occupational qualification. These will be few, and the need for such a title will be reviewed whenever such a post falls vacant.

Ashdown Site Investigation Limited will set up and maintain such records as are necessary to enable monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. These records will be made available to staff.

A copy of the Companies Policy will be given to all new employees and the Induction Training of new employees will include a reference to the policy.

Additionally, induction training will point out the employees' own responsibilities under the various Acts and Codes of Practice.

A copy of the Companies policy will be posted on Notice Boards and will be provided to the Operations Manager who must advise current employees on the Policy. Necessary training to ensure the effective implementation of this Policy will be carried out by the Company.

Any employees who consider that he or she is suffering from unequal treatment on the grounds of sex, age, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion, disability or sexual orientation may raise a complaint through the agreed grievance procedure.

The Company recognises that the existence of sexual harassment can create a threatening or intimidating work environment which adversely affects job performance,

health and well being. Appropriate action, which may include disciplinary proceedings, will be taken to deal with all complaints.

All staff have the right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment.

All staff should be aware of their behaviour towards other staff and ensure that they do not behave in a way that could be regarded as harassment.

The Directors have a duty to establish and maintain a working environment free from sexual harassment.

All staff are encouraged to report incidents of sexual harassment in the knowledge that complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

This Policy will be reviewed in the light of changing legislation or guidance from the DSS, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Department of Education and Employment or the Manpower Services Commission. This will be carried out in conjunction with staff through the established consultative machinery.

A copy of the Companies policy will be given to all new employees and the induction training of new employees will include reference to the Policy. Additionally, induction training will point out the employee's own responsibilities under the various Acts and appropriate Codes of Practice.

A copy of the Companies policy will be posted on Notice Boards and will be provided to the Departmental Managers who must advise current employees on the Policy. Necessary training to ensure the effective implementation of this Policy will be carried out by the Company.

Any employees who consider that he or she is suffering from unequal treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or disability may raise a complaint through the agreed grievance procedure.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Managing Director will have a co-ordinating responsibility for this Policy which will apply to all employees of the Company.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Advertisements will not be confined to publications which exclude or disproportionately reduce the number of applicants of a particular group.

All job descriptions must be reviewed to ensure that they are in line with the policy on equal opportunities, and that they reflect accurately the requirements set out in each candidates specifications. Job descriptions and, wherever possible, person descriptions must accompany all requests for advertisements. Selection criteria which have the effect of restricting potential applicants on the grounds of sex, age, marital status, religion, disability, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins.

Application forms will not be used as a test for literacy where this is not a requirement of the job.

Job advertisements shall not necessarily be limited to a single method. Posts shall not be advertised in such a way as to exclude minority and/or disadvantaged groups e.g., " word of mouth recruitment".

All applicants who apply for jobs with the Company will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job. All instances where disabled candidates

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are disadvantaged for a job solely because of lack of reasonable facilities, shall be reported immediately to the Managing Director to identify and advise how this might be overcome.

All interviews will be conducted as objectively as possible and will be for the purpose of assessing the candidates suitability for the post and their ability to undertake the duties as outlined in the job description. Selection tests will be checked to ensure that they are related to the jobs requirement and that they have been ethically validated.

Staff responsible for recruitment, shortlisting, interviewing and selecting candidates must:

- establish and apply selection criteria which do not discriminate;

- be aware of the effects which generalised assumptions and prejudices about race, creed, disabilities etc. can have on selection tests;

- be aware of the possible misunderstandings that can occur in interviews between persons of different cultural backgrounds.

Where a particular qualification is required, it will be ascertained to what extent overseas qualifications, degrees, diplomas, are comparable with UK qualifications, and will be accepted as equivalents (subject to acceptance by the Institute of Civil Engineers and other membership bodies relevant to the Company).

Shortlisting and interviewing still to be carried out by more than one person and as per specification. Where possible the Managing Director shall be actively involved in the shortlisting process.

Where a post involves regular or unsociable hours of travel, the full facts should be referred to in the job description and other recruitment literature.

Interview questions must be related to the requirements and circumstances of the job and must not be of a discriminatory nature.

All applicants will be given equal consideration for appointment. Criteria for shortlisting must be clearly established and equally applied to all candidates.

Selection decisions must not be influenced in relating to the sex, marital status, disability, religion, creed, race, nationality, age, ethnic or national origins, unless for genuine occupational reasons. Neither should they be influenced by perceived prejudices of other staff.

Recruitment records, which detail appropriate information of all applicants to enable accurate and meaningful equal opportunities shall be kept. The Companies Equal Opportunities Policy is a joint exercise with staff, and records will be made available to them on request.

Each candidate should be assessed according to their personal capability to carry out a given job. General assumptions must not be made that a candidates race, sex or disability would disqualify them from carrying out certain kinds of work.

Age limits should be retained only if they are necessary to the job. An unjustifiable age limit could constitute unlawful, indirect discrimination

All applications should be processed in exactly the same way. There should not be a separate list of male and female, married or single applicants. Neither should there be separate lists of able bodied and disabled applicants.

Where the job involves unsociable hours, this should be discussed objectively at interview, without detailed questions based on assumptions about marital status, children and/or domestic obligations, as they could be construed as showing bias against women.

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Information necessary for personal records can be collected after a job offer has been made.

TRAINING, PROMOTION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Training and guidance will be provided and regularly reviewed for all managers in key decision making areas, to ensure that they fully understand the Equal Opportunities Policy established by the Company.

This training and guidance is particularly relevant for those managers who make decisions on issues relating to recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, dismissal, appraisal, terms of employment, benefits, facilities, grievances, disputes and disciplinary procedures. Staff with authority to recruit must be trained in recruitment and selection techniques within two years of the implementation of this policy, and/or within six months of their appointment.

The selection criteria for training opportunities will be reviewed by training officers annually to ensure that they do not discriminate either directly or indirectly.

Equal Opportunities training will cover race relations and sex discrimination legislation as well as the appropriate Codes of Practice concerned with all other areas of equal opportunity. Staff should receive training as soon as possible after their appointment, and preferably as part of an induction programme.

Every effort will be made to encourage staff with language difficulties to attend outside language programmes. In addition, arrangements may also be made for the Industrial Language Training Unit or similar organisation to visit particular departments on site. In this way, it is hoped to assist staff who deal directly with the public, or who are put at a disadvantage in promotion opportunities.

All eligible staff should be made aware, by their appropriate managers, or the job and training opportunities available to them such that no group of staff is disadvantaged.

When/where considered reasonable and where practicable, equipment at the work place should be adapted to suit the requirements of disabled staff in order that they may carry out the job effectively.

Consideration will be given in induction procedures as to whether a new disabled member of staff, or a member of staff who has become disabled, has any special needs in order to settle smoothly into the job. Such needs will be discussed with the member of staff concerned and the appropriate manager or supervisor. Where such needs are identified, all reasonable and practicable steps should be taken to meet them.

Advice on the above can be obtained from the Disablement Services of the Manpower Services Commission.

Approved: 7 May 2002

Review Date: 7 May 2008

Signed:

