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Equality & Diversity Policy

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Equality & Diversity Policy

1: Introduction

WELL Associates Ltd undertakes to promote equality and diversity and not to discriminate between employees or job applicants in respect of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or age, gender reassignment, HIV status or trade union membership and also recognises that it is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to enforce this policy.

This policy will also apply as appropriate to those individuals who, although not directly employed by WELL Associates Ltd are partner delivery organisations and freelance consultants, etc.

In implementing this policy WELL Associates Ltd will ensure that the statutory provisions of the Equality Act 2010 are adhered to in line with the 9 protected characteristics.¹



¹ KeepingHRSimple.com

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2: General Principles

WELL Associates Ltd is committed to building a workforce which is valued and whose diversity reflects the communities it serves, enabling it to deliver the best possible service to all.

WELL Associates Ltd also committed to enabling everyone at the organisation to achieve his or her full potential in an environment characterised by dignity and mutual respect. Equality of opportunity means that diversity is viewed positively and that different individuals can contribute unique combinations of experience, knowledge and skills.

WELL Associates Ltd strives to be a place where people want to work, and to be an employer of choice, as well as meeting all legal anti-discrimination requirements. Equality and diversity are monitored in accordance with the statutory Codes of Practice.

3: Responsibilities

WELL Senior Management Team:

The WELL SMT has the primary legal responsibility for ensuring that its employees comply with the requirements of this policy.

Senior Managers carry lead responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy ensuring that: -

- they carry out their responsibilities in a manner consistent with the policy,
- staff are made aware of their responsibilities under the policy,
- any allegations of a breach of the requirements of this policy are properly investigated and that disciplinary action is taken where appropriate,
- Appropriate records of employment decisions (recruitment and selection, promotion, training, grievance, discipline and dismissal) are maintained.

All WELL Employees:

All employees are expected to observe this policy in their behaviour towards other employees and the public.

Employees should:

- Comply with the requirements of this policy
- Co-operate in the implementation of measures introduced by management to foster equality and diversity

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- Inform management of any case where they consider that this policy has been breached.
- It is recognised that employees may find it difficult to approach their immediate Managers in cases involving discrimination or harassment, and therefore the appropriate HR Manager may be an alternative point of contact.

HR Staff:

The Lead for Human Resources (Lianne Russell) has responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and the related monitoring provisions.

Other staff supporting Human Resources staff are responsible for advising and assisting in the effective implementation of the policy and the related employment procedures.

This includes communication of the policy to existing and potential employees and the general public.

4: Recruitment, Selection & Promotion

Recruitment procedures shall be operated in accordance with the WELL Associates Ltd Recruitment & Selection Policy, which is designed to ensure that the requirements of this policy are implemented.

The following specific action will be taken:

- Recruitment and promotion procedures are regularly monitored to identify where and how they can be improved.
- Equality of access to opportunities for the development of skills applies regardless of hours worked or any other non-standard term in the contract of employment.
- Recruitment Agencies used for finding permanent or temporary staff are informed of this policy and expected to follow fair and objective selection procedures.
- Opportunities for flexibility are assessed to ensure that the advertisement attracts as diverse and talented a group of applicants as possible.
- Each job has a detailed Job Description and Person specification.
- These will be reviewed every time a vacancy occurs to ensure that they remain relevant and are flexible, including making reasonable adjustments should people with disabilities apply.
- Person specifications should outline the genuine minimum requirements necessary for the job to be done effectively.
- Emphasis should be places on quality rather than length of experience, and consideration should be given to experience gained outside paid employment.

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- Selection for promotion of internal transfer opportunities is a competitive process except where a member of staff is being redeployed to accommodate their disability, health or maternity needs.
- All interviewees are entitled to know the reasons why their application has been unsuccessful.
- Internal and external advertisements will be designed and placed to attract as wide a group of suitably qualified applicants as possible.
- Advertisements will be expressed in clear language and further information will also be available in large print and similar advice given to all applicants.
- Selection decisions are carried out by a Panel and decisions made on clear criteria in line with the job requirements and person specification.
- All shortlisted applicants will be asked if they require any particular arrangements to be made in the selection process to enable ease of participation.
- Recruitment advertisements shall contain the statement that WELL Associates Ltd is "An Equal Opportunities Employer".

5: Training and Development

- In considering and approving applications for training and development, the decisions shall be based on the needs of individuals and the requirements of WELL Associates Ltd in delivering and developing its services.
- Every new employee will undergo an induction, which will include information on equality and diversity.
- Every employee will have a personal training and development plan, which is reviewed annually.
- Information on training and development opportunities is widely publicised and the take up of such opportunities monitored as part of the auditing process.
- The Training and Development Policy will be implemented consistent with the requirements of this policy.
- Training will be provided to ensure that this policy is understood and implemented by employees, managers, and HR staff.

6: Terms and Conditions of Service

Terms and conditions of employment will be applied fairly and consistently throughout the organisation in accordance with the provisions of this policy. All policies and procedures will be developed to ensure that they are compliant with this policy.

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7: Dignity at Work

As part of its overall commitment to equality for a diverse workforce, WELL Associates Ltd aims to create a culture in which all staff has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. To achieve this policy objective, WELL Associates Ltd has a policy for dealing effectively with cases of harassment and bullying.

8: Working Arrangements

WELL Associates Ltd strives to develop positive non-standard working arrangements that allow employees to balance work responsibilities with other aspects of their lives.

WELL Associates Ltd will positively consider non-standard working arrangements as part of its commitment to flexible working as described in the organisations policy on flexible working.

9: Communication of Policy

WELL Associates Ltd will publicise its commitment to equality and diversity by the following means:

- Through recruitment advertisements and other literature associated with the recruitment process,
- Through the normal means of promulgating information to staff.
- By its incorporation into staff training at all levels ranging from induction courses for new employees to training workshops for all staff
- Through staff consultation

10: Monitoring

The Lead for Human Resources is responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring of the equality and diversity. This will include:

- An on-going review of employment practices and procedures to ensure that they operate to promote equality and diversity,
- Analysis of employment records, particularly those concerned with recruitment, training and promotion,
- Analysis of the composition of the workforce.

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- To facilitate this process WELL will maintain records of sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, disablement and age of all existing employees, new employees and job applicants.

11: Discipline and Grievances

An employee who considers that this policy is not being applied appropriately to themselves or to another employee should raise the matter in the first instance with the appropriate Manager and HR Lead.

The Manager and HR Lead are responsible for ensuring that the complaint is properly investigated. If the employee remains aggrieved, he or she may pursue the matter in accordance with the WELL Associates Ltd Grievance Procedure.

Should the investigation reveal a complaint to have substance, subsequent disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the WELL Associates Ltd Disciplinary Policy.

An employee who has in good faith made a complaint shall not for that reason receive less favourable treatment than any other employee, for example, by being subjected to disciplinary action.

12: Review of Policy & Procedures

This policy and the related procedures and practices will be subject to regular review in the light of developments in legislation, future issues of codes of practice, other examples of good practice e.g. the ESFA strategy on equality and diversity and analyses of monitoring data in consultation with accredited representatives.