



**WOMEN'S ENGINEERING SOCIETY**

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**JULY 2018**

**STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The Women's Engineering Society aims to promote a productive and harmonious working environment where staff are valued, everybody is treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment will be tolerated.

**1 DISCRIMINATION**

- Discrimination is unacceptable. It is in the best interest of the Company as well as the interest of its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. Our aim is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against either directly or indirectly (see Appendix 1) on any grounds.
- The Equal Opportunities Statement (Appendix 1) will be circulated to all employees, incorporated into new staff inductions posted on notice boards and made known to applicants for employment and included in Staff Handbooks.
- The requirements in the Equal Opportunities Statement will be applicable to all staff who are employed in the Company, or who are prospective employees, whatever the nature of their employment contract. Providers of services to the Company need to be able to demonstrate that they conform to the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy.

**2. RESPONSIBILITY**

We all have a responsibility to ensure there is no discrimination and there is a requirement that individual employees at all levels will accept personal responsibility for the practical applications of the Equal Opportunities Statement.

***In particular, each individual is required: -***

- To cooperate with measures that ensure equality of opportunity and non-discrimination, for example, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy etc.
- Not to discriminate, for example as supervisors or managers or as persons responsible for selection decisions in recruitment, promotion, transfers, learning/training etc.
- Not to incite or attempt to incite other employees to practice discrimination.
- Not to victimise or attempt to victimise individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information on discrimination.
- Not to harass, abuse, bully or intimidate other employees.
- To inform management if they suspect that discrimination is taking place in the workplace.
- To comply with the Data Protection Act and the GDPR at all times.

*Managers have a particular responsibility for implementing the policy effectively. They will be required to make clear to employees the Company's policy on Equal Opportunities. They will ensure that grievances arising out of the policy are dealt with consistently.*

### **3. COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION**

We recognise that prominent and regular communication of the policy is important to ensure that individuals:

- Understand our commitment to equal opportunity and the elimination of unfair and unlawful discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- Are aware of their own responsibility regarding equal opportunity.
- Know how to raise concerns or invoke the grievance procedure and are confident that these will be handled effectively.
- We recognise the importance of working in partnership with Trade Union representatives when employees are Trade Union Members.

### **4. THE VALUE OF AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

The benefits of an Equal Opportunities policy to employees are that: -

- The recruitment and promotion of people is based solely on their ability, whilst being aware that the Company is a registered charity.
- An environment is created in which all staff are confident of fair access to opportunities within the Company.
- There are mechanisms whereby problems can be resolved.
- Adopting an Equal Opportunities Policy and practices contributes to the effective development of the Company.

There are four strands to the policy:

- Recruitment and Selection – by introducing objective selection criteria, it is the aim to recruit the most appropriate people into the Company.
- Learning/training, Promotion and Career Development – by access to learning/training and internal promotion procedures, The Company will support and utilise the talents of all its employees.
- Managing Working Lives practices – The Company recognises that employees need to be able to balance work and personal life responsibilities with their work and may need to work flexibly.
- Discipline, Capability and Grievances – all discipline, capability and grievances issues will be dealt with equally, promptly and fairly and comply with the relevant policies, procedures and legislation.

### **5. LEARNING/TRAINING, PROMOTION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

- All staff responsible for recruitment should be trained in recruitment and selection prior to undertaking any recruitment.
- The Company delivers training to its managers to cascade equality training to their teams. The training delivered covers:
- The effects which generalised assumptions and prejudices can have on selection decisions

- Direct and indirect discrimination
- Learning/training in appropriate recruitment and selection techniques.
- The Company will not discriminate in the provision of and access to learning/training and development.
- Investment in people's skills brings long-term benefits; the Company will provide learning/training to assist promotion and career development, using key competencies as applicable.
- Direct or indirect discrimination at the point of selection for learning/training and promotion opportunities is unacceptable.

## **6. POLICIES THAT AID WORK LIFE BALANCE**

The Company aims to provide employment policies where flexible work demands are balanced with individual personal and domestic needs whenever possible.

## **7. DISCIPLINARY, CAPABILITY AND GRIEVANCES**

- Any existing or potential employee who perceives a problem with recruitment, selection, learning/training, promotion, the application of conditions of service or the conduct of colleagues, should raise it through their line manager.
- Particular care must be taken to deal with all complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment effectively and promptly and specific policies are in place to do this. Speak to your HR Manager in the first instance for advice, as appropriate.

## **8. CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS NEEDS**

- Where employees request either the accumulation of annual leave or unpaid leave in order to visit overseas for religious purposes, sympathetic consideration may be given, dependent on the needs of the service.

## **9. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- The Company aims to develop positive policies to promote equality of opportunity in employment and to attract a high quality of candidates for posts.
- All Policies and Procedures, which impact on employees, will be checked to ensure that they are free from discrimination.



## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT**

The Women's Engineering Society is committed to providing an environment where all staff and customers have equality of opportunity.

The Company works to eliminate all forms of discrimination and recognise that this requires, not only a commitment to remove discrimination.

Providing equality of opportunity means understanding and appreciating the diversity of our staff, members and partners ensuring a supportive environment free from harassment.

We value the diversity and the potential that men and women with differing backgrounds, skills and abilities bring to the Company. Equal opportunities is about removing bias, prejudice and stereotyping so that all members of staff can enjoy the same standard of opportunities and be celebrated as part of a diverse workforce

It is our policy to provide employment equality to all. To ensure this, The Company recognises the nine-protected characteristic (see definitions below) of equality in its policy, strategic planning and service provision.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and beliefs
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Breaches of our Equal Opportunity Policy and practice could be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings and/or dismissal.

This policy is fully supported by the Board and Management.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT

### Definitions Statement

#### 1. DISCRIMINATION

**DIRECT** discrimination is:

When someone is treated less favourably than others who are in the same circumstances because of, for example, their gender, race, sexuality, disability or age etc.

**INDIRECT** discrimination is:

When there are rules or conditions that apply to everyone but affect one group of people more than another without good reason. For example, a complicated language test for a job which does not require mastery of the English language may indirectly discriminate against a minority ethnic group.

**This Policy is covered by all legislation, new legislation and/or previously mentioned in this policy and its subsequent amendments.**

## **PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS AS PER EQUALITY ACT 2010**

### **Age**

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (eg 32-year olds) or a range of ages (eg 18 – 30 year olds).

### **Disability**

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

### **Gender reassignment**

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same sex couple\*.

Same sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context.

### **Race**

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

### **Religion and belief**

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief, for example atheism. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

### **Sex**

A man or a woman, or someone who defines themselves as gender neutral.

### **Sexual Orientation**

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, or to both sexes.

\*Section 1, Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013

### **Other Discrimination**

Whilst the examples listed above are by far the most common forms of discrimination, there are other ways that people can be discriminated against. This includes social status, relationship status, housing etc.

The Company is adverse to all forms of discrimination and works proactively through Policies and Procedures to address any issues that arise.