

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Purpose and scope

The purpose of this Equal Opportunities Policy is to communicate our commitment to equality of opportunity in employment with the aims of ensuring that all employees and job applicants are treated fairly and equally and supporting the Floorskills Limited objective of providing a working environment that is free from all forms of discrimination.

The policy applies to all staff within the company, including employees and other workers, such as contractors. All staff are expected to put this policy into practice.

A copy of this policy will be distributed to all employees and can also be found on the company notice board in reception, the shared drive and in the employee handbook. It will also be made available to other workers on their engagement. Job seekers and applicants can request a copy of the policy and it will be sent upon request. In addition, all employees will receive training on this policy during their induction.

Any questions about the policy should be directed to the Director, Matthew Bourne.

This policy does not form part of employees' contracts of employment and the company may amend it at any time.

This policy includes our approach to

Promotion of the policy to our staff, learners and employers we work with

Gaining engagement towards the policy

Training our employees in implementing the policy

Utilising this policy to inform our approach to recruiting, delivering apprenticeship training and working with employers and apprentices

The policy is reviewed annually and may be amended at any time.

Policy statement

Floorskills Limited is fully committed to providing equality in the workplace and all opportunities for, and during employment, will be afforded to individuals fairly and irrespective of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race including colour, ethnic or national origins and nationality, religion or belief or sexual orientation ("the protected characteristics"). We aim to create a working environment that is free from discrimination and harassment in any form, in which all staff, clients and suppliers are treated with dignity and respect.

Floorskills Limited will not unlawfully discriminate in the arrangements we make for recruitment and selection or in the opportunities afforded for employment, training or any other benefit. All decisions will be made fairly and objectively. We aim, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure that all our working practices are applied fairly and consistently and, where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to avoid or overcome any particular disadvantage these may cause and to promote equality.

Floorskills Limited respects an individual's right to choose whether or not to belong to a trade union and membership status will have no bearing on an applicant's suitability for employment or result in any detrimental treatment when working for Floorskills Limited.

Specific Responsibilities

Floorskills Limited has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated legislation and for observing relevant Codes of Practice.

The company director is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy and for ensuring that all employment-related policies, procedures and practices adhere to this policy.

All staff have a responsibility not to discriminate or harass other staff, learners, customers and business associates and to report any such behaviour of which they become aware to the company director.

The company Director is responsible for implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy and must apply the policy as part of their day-to-day management of the company.

Forms of discrimination

The following are forms of discrimination that this policy aims to avoid:

Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic that they either have or are thought to have. Direct discrimination can also occur by way of association, which is when a person is treated less favourably because, for example, their spouse or partner or other relative has the protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but has a disproportionately adverse effect on people who share a particular protected characteristic. A person with the protected characteristic who is disadvantaged in that way has the right to complain.

To be justified the provision, criterion, or practice must be necessary for legitimate business reasons in circumstances where less discriminatory alternatives are not reasonably available.

Victimisation occurs where someone is treated unfavourably because he/she has raised a complaint under this policy or taken legal action, in relation to any alleged act of unlawful discrimination, against the company or because he/she has supported someone else in doing this.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment can take many different forms and may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments, emails or physical contact that causes offence or are objectionable.

Harassment may involve a single incident or persistent behaviour that extends over a period of time and can occur even if someone did not mean to cause offence. It also means that a person

can be subjected to harassment by behaviour that is not aimed at them directly but which they nonetheless find unpleasant.

Harassment is always unacceptable and where it relates to a protected characteristic it will amount to an unlawful act of discrimination.

Discrimination arising from Disability - In addition to the above, it is unlawful to treat a person unfavourably because of something that is the result, effect or outcome of their disability, unless the treatment is necessary and can be objectively justified. Furthermore, employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled applicants, employees or other workers are not substantially disadvantaged.

Creating equal opportunities in the workplace

There are several ways in which Floorskills Limited aims to ensure equal opportunities in the workplace, including:

Recruitment and selection

Recruitment and selection procedures will be free from bias or discrimination. Recruitment procedures will be conducted objectively and will be based upon specific and reasonable job-related criteria. Decisions regarding an individual's suitability for a particular role will be based on aptitude, ability and subject to two suitable references.

Floorskills Limited will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process to ensure that disabled applicants are not substantially disadvantaged.

Wherever possible, vacancies will be advertised as being suitable for flexible working, to encourage applications from individuals seeking work on a part time basis.

Floorskills Limited will consider taking appropriate positive action to enable or encourage applications from persons with a protected characteristic that is under represented in the organisation.

We recognise the need to consider, where appropriate, flexible working patterns such as job share, term time only, part-time working or home working where an employee has a need to reduce their working hours. These methods of working will be considered dependent on business needs.

Wherever appropriate vacancies will normally be advertised within the Company in order to provide an equal opportunity for all interested persons to apply.

One exception to the above applies when special arrangements are made for the redeployment of personnel who would otherwise be at risk of redundancy within the Company.

Where it is appropriate an external application form can be used. This should be designed to obtain all the necessary information for a fair and instructive interview and for the screening and selection of applicants. Personal details which are not necessary for a recruitment decision to be made - such as marital status, number of children, next of kin, gender, age, race, or religious

belief are, therefore, not specified. Additional details of this nature will be needed for recording and monitoring purposes and as such will be kept by the Human Resource Department on a separate confidential form.

Training in interviewing skills and equality and diversity will be given for all those concerned with recruitment. Prior to the selection process, managers will examine all selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and are not discriminatory.

Consideration should be given as to whether practical experience or actual achievements in previous employment may act as a satisfactory substitute for higher education or professional qualifications. In assessing qualifications, it will not be assumed that overseas diplomas or degrees are of a lower standard than their UK equivalents although their validity will still be checked. Wherever possible experience may count as an equivalent to professional qualifications. Careful consideration will be given as to whether any minimum or maximum number of years relevant experience is necessary for effective performance of the job. Such restrictions will not be imposed unless there is a proper job-based reason why they are necessary.

All appointments will be made solely on merit.

Disclosure and additional support provisions

Before starting and during learning, apprenticeship or employment, individuals will be given opportunity (in confidence) to disclose any disability, learning difficulty or additional need they may have. This is to ensure we put in place additional or alternative support or adapted working practices where reasonably practical and possible. We will explain why this information is being sought and how it will be used. We will ask individuals to let us know of any personal commitments or barriers which can affect their commitment or time in learning, an apprenticeship or employment and offer help/alternative ways of training or working to minimise their impact.

Additionally: For apprentices and learners: Where a learner discloses a disability, learning difficulty or additional need, we will identify what additional or alternative support provisions need to be put in place in discussion with them. We will endeavour to secure and provide any additional support for the duration of the apprentices or learner's learning programme where reasonably practical and possible and in full, agreed disclosure by the apprentice or learner. We will also work in partnership with the apprentice employer to support them to identify and provide additional or alternative support provisions to ensure that employment is accessible, where this is reasonably accessible. Support could be in the form of additional/alternative assistance, provision of a specialist service, involvement of personal carers/support workers, provision of alternative or adaptive equipment or learning/training environment etc. Where it is not reasonably possible to provide required and sufficient (specialist) support to enable an apprentice/learner to achieve, we will signpost to more suitable provision.

Where barriers to learning cannot be minimised to such an extent to make learning/training with us viable, we will refer the apprentice/learner to a referral agency and/or signpost them to alternative provision.

For staff: Where a staff member declares a disability, reasonable steps will be taken to accommodate this by making reasonable adjustments. The company may consider

redeployment and appropriate re-training to enable the staff member to remain in employment wherever possible.

For apprentice employers: We will, where appropriate and with the apprentice or learner's permission, share information on any disability, learning difficulty, additional needs and/or barriers to learning and where appropriate require support/ provision from the apprentice employer to accommodate these in the apprentice's learning, training and employment

Career development and training

All staff will be given an appropriate induction to enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of their role.

All employees will be encouraged to develop their full potential and we will not unreasonably deny an employee access to training or other career development opportunities. These will be identified as part of an ongoing performance management process and will be determined objectively, taking into account the needs of the business and available resources.

Promotion, Training and Development

All staff, apprentices, learners, and employers will receive an induction training session including equality, diversity and inclusion and the policy will be disseminated during this time and after each policy revision/review.

This will include:

- An explanation of what the policy means to Floorskills, staff, apprentices, learners or employers.
- An explanation of the form's discrimination can take (direct, indirect, victimisation and segregation).
- Guidance on the danger of generalised assumptions and prejudices.
- Contextualised examples of good practice in equality, diversity and inclusion and the impact of discrimination relevant to their role and responsibility.
- Teaching, learning, and assessment staff are given additional training to support equality, diversity, and inclusion in teaching, learning and assessment practice (please see below).
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion will be mandatory on all meeting agendas to reinforce this and to identify and address any emerging training needs.

All staff will be appraised annually and there will be positive encouragement to discuss suitable development and training opportunities.

All staff will be required to complete mandatory annual equality and diversity training, both externally and inhouse to ensure contextualisation and full understanding of the policy. This will also be reinforced by the observation of teaching, learning and assessment process (please see below).

Apprentices and learners will receive training on equality, diversity, and inclusion, which will be embedded and delivered within their apprenticeship/programme (please see below).

Equality and Diversity Promoted in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Apprentice's and learner's additional support needs related to disabilities, diagnosed special education needs, learning difficulties or additional needs are planned for and where an apprentice or learner is studying or completing an apprenticeship, Floorskills will follow the guidelines set out in the relevant Adjustment Policies published by each awarding organisation to ensure fair and equal access to assessments and examinations, where applicable.

All teaching, learning and assessment staff will be trained to apply an equality analysis to their scheme of work and lesson plans to ensure that:

- Materials and teaching, learning and assessment methods foster good relations, are sensitive to and promote equality of opportunity.
- That needs of individuals are planned for in teaching sessions to ensure that they can achieve, progress and flourish.

Our management will apply its observation of teaching policy, annual appraisal, and performance management systems to ensure that:

- Teaching, learning, and assessment staff have consistently high expectations in ensuring that learning activities motivate and engage all apprentices and learners, whatever their age, ability and cultural background, and that they are suitably demanding.
- All teaching, learning and assessment staff are highly adept at working with and developing knowledge, skills and behaviours in all apprentices and learners and demonstrate this in a range of learning environments.
- Equality and diversity is integrated fully into the learning experience and teaching, learning and assessment staff manage apprentices' and learners' behaviour skilfully; they show great awareness of Fundamental British Values and equality and diversity in teaching sessions.
- All staff, apprentice and learner requirements will be reflected in the delivery and support given. We will consider how support can be given for SEND or learning disabilities. Where appropriate we will provide the resources and equipment needed to enable all staff, apprentices, and learners to engage with their roles and responsibilities, as well as their learning/training.

Promoting and Supporting Equality and Diversity

The following list details some of the ways that we will support diversity throughout the business. This is not; however, an exhaustive list and we will continue to seek and adopt new methods for supporting the individual needs of apprentices, learners and staff.

- Recognise that all staff, apprentices, and learners are individuals and will therefore respond to them, and their social identity, in an individual manner.

- Ensuring that employment opportunities are available as full or part time roles wherever possible and that we can be flexible about working hours to suit individual needs.
- Ensuring that roles can be performed at home, if necessary, in most cases, to support individual needs.
- Offering both paper portfolios and e-learning to our apprentices and learners, to ensure that we can support all apprentices and learners, including those who are disadvantaged, and those who are based in remote locations. We will support apprentices and learners to gain access to IT equipment to support them in their training.
- Conducting thorough initial assessments to ascertain details of any learning difficulties, cultural requirements, or other pertinent information, which will allow teaching, learning and assessment staff to support individual apprentice or learner needs, and use assessment methods that are most appropriate to the apprentice or learner.
- Using plain English for all marketing and communication and will ensure that all literature is available in larger fonts, and different print colour combinations if desired.
- We will utilise a range of methods to communicate with staff, apprentices, and learners, including letters, emails, SMS, Live-Chat facilities, face-to-face meetings and graphical presentations, to ensure that messages are conveyed accurately, and in a way that the recipient is comfortable with.
- Undertaking training to increase our knowledge and understanding of aspects of social identity that may be different from our own, and how to support people with different social identities.
- Resources, materials, and literature are presented in a way that is sensitive to equality and diversity, and that consideration is taken to represent the diverse range of individuals who access the provision.

Terms and conditions

Our terms and conditions of service will be applied fairly, and benefits and facilities will be made available to all staff who should have access to them, as appropriate.

Floorskills Limited operates a pay and benefits system that is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias to ensure that all employees are rewarded fairly.

Terms and conditions of employment for part-time employees will be provided on a pro-rata basis to full-time employees.

Employment policies and practices

Floorskills Limited aims to ensure that employment policies and practices, including any rules or requirements, do not directly or indirectly discriminate and are applied in a non-discriminatory manner. In particular we will ensure that all disciplinary decisions are fair and consistent and that selection for redundancy is based on objective criteria.

Floorskills Limited will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the working environment or any work arrangements that would alleviate any substantial disadvantage these cause disabled staff.

We will aim as far as reasonably practicable to accommodate the requirements of different religions and cultures and will consider requests from employees to vary or change their working hours to enable them to care for a dependant.

Working environment

All individuals have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and the company takes reasonable steps to protect staff from discrimination, bullying or harassment and, in the event of a complaint, we will take appropriate action to prevent, as far as possible, a further occurrence.

All staff are encouraged to report any incidents of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour at work or that occurs during the course of employment, on or off premises, including at work social events (whether organised by the company or not) or at formal or informal events involving staff, learners, customers or other work-related contacts.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

The company will monitor the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

As part of this process we monitor:

- The composition of job applicants and decisions in recruitment
- The composition of our workforce
- Access to training, promotion and other opportunities and benefits
- The impact of our employment policies
- Dismissals and other terminations

Information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

Raising a complaint of discrimination

The company will also take seriously any malicious or, in its opinion, unwarranted allegations of discrimination and will take appropriate action, disciplinary or otherwise, where necessary. Formal complaints should be made in writing to the Director.

Signature



Name: Matt Bourne

Position: Director