

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Introduction

The Company recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination. This policy sets out the Company's position on equal opportunity in all aspects of employment, including recruitment and promotion, and provides guidance and encouragement to employees at all levels to act fairly and prevent discrimination on the grounds of sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability.

Definition of Discrimination

- Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Both forms of discrimination must be avoided.
- Direct discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another on grounds of sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Indirect discrimination occurs where a requirement is imposed which can be complied with by a smaller proportion of persons of a particular sex, sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability, than persons in another group and which is not objectively justifiable in the given situation. Examples include:
 - seeking job applications only from persons under 26 years of age and with five years' post-graduate experience;
 - demanding technical qualifications for a job which are not strictly necessary
 - sending only full time employees on training courses

Statement of policy

- It is the policy of Premier Paper to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. The Company is committed not only to its legal obligations but also to the positive promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment.

Statement of policy (continued)

- The Company recognises that adhering to the Equal and Diversity Policy, combined with relevant employment policies and practices, maximises the effective use of individuals in both the organisation's and employees' best interests. Premier Paper recognises the great benefits in having a diverse workforce with different backgrounds, solely employed on ability.
- The application of recruitment, training, and promotion policies to all individuals will be on the basis of job requirements and the individual's ability and merits.
- All employees of the Company will be made aware of the provisions of this policy.

Recruitment and promotion

- Advertisements for posts will give sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post. Information about vacant posts will be provided in such a manner that does not restrict its audience in terms of sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Recruitment literature will not imply a preference for one group of applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits the post to this particular group, in which case this must be clearly stated.
- All vacancies will be advertised internally.
- All descriptions and specifications for posts will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.
- All selection will be thorough, conducted against defined criteria and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job. Where it is necessary to ask questions relating to personal circumstances, these will be related purely to job requirements and asked to all candidates.

Employment

- Premier Paper will not discriminate on the basis of sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability in the allocation of duties between employees employed at any level with comparable job descriptions.
- Premier Paper will put in place any reasonable measures and/or adjustments within the workplace for those employees who become disabled during employment or for disabled appointees.
- All employees will be considered solely on their merits for career development and promotion with equal opportunities for all.

Employment (continued)

- Premier Paper recognises that it can not terminate an employee's employment on any grounds solely on the basis of sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age of disability.

Training

- Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of sex, trans-gender status, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age of disability.
- All employees will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their line manager or the HR Department.

Monitoring

- It is the responsibility of the HR Director to ensure that all aspects of this policy are kept under review and are operated throughout the organisation.
- Where it appears that applicants/employees are not being offered equal opportunities, circumstances will be investigated to identify any policies or criteria which exclude or discourage certain employees and, if so, whether these are justifiable.

Grievances and victimisation

- Premier Paper emphasises that discrimination is unacceptable conduct which may lead to disciplinary action under the Company's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- Any complaints of discrimination will be pursued through the Company's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Ruth Jackson
HR Director
December 2016