

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Association aims to provide a service that does not discriminate against its clients and customers in the means by which they can access the services supplied by the Association. The Association believes that all employees and clients are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.
- 1.2 FeRFA is committed to achieving a working environment which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.
- 1.3 This Policy aims to remove unfair and discriminatory practices within the Association and to encourage full contribution from its diverse community. The Association is committed to actively opposing all forms of discrimination.

### 2.0 Objectives of this Policy

- 2.1 To prevent, reduce and stop all forms of unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.2 To ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity.

### 3.0 Definition of Discrimination

- 3.1 Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and includes discrimination by perception and association.

### 4.0 Types of Discrimination

#### 4.1 Direct Discrimination

This occurs when a person or a policy intentionally treats a person less favourably than another on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil



partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

#### 4.2 **Indirect Discrimination**

This is the application of a policy, criterion or practice which the employer applies to all employees, but which is such that:

- It is detrimental to a considerably larger proportion of people from the group that the person the employer is applying it;
- The employer cannot justify the need for the application of the policy on a neutral basis; and
- The person to whom the employer is applying it suffers detriment from the application of the policy.

#### 4.3 **Harassment**

This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

#### 4.4 **Victimisation**

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings, or they have given or intend to give evidence.

### 5.0 **Unlawful Reasons for Discrimination**

#### 5.1 **Sex**

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of sex, marital status, civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment or transgender status. This applies to men, women and those undergoing or intending to undergo gender reassignment. Sexual harassment of men and women can be found to constitute sex discrimination.

Example: Asking a woman during an interview if she is planning to have any (more) children constitutes discrimination on the ground of gender.

#### 5.2 **Age**

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their age. This applies to people of all ages. This does not currently apply to the calculation of redundancy payments.

#### 5.3 **Disability**

It is not permissible to treat a disabled person less favourably than a non-disabled person. Reasonable adjustments must be made to give the disabled person as much access to any services and ability to be employed, trained, or promoted as a non-disabled person.



#### 5.4 **Race**

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their race, the colour of their skin, their nationality or their ethnic origin.

#### 5.5 **Sexual Orientation**

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their sexual orientation. For example, an employer cannot refuse to employ a person because s/he is homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual.

#### 5.6 **Religion or Belief**

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their religious beliefs or their religion or their lack of any religion or belief.

### 6.0 **Positive Action in Recruitment**

Under the Equality Act 2010, positive action in recruitment and promotion applies as of 6 April 2011. 'Positive action' means the steps that the Association can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past record of disadvantage or low participation, to apply for positions within the Association.

If the Association chooses to utilise positive action in recruitment, this will not be used to treat people with a protected characteristic more favourably, it will be used only in tie-break situations, when there are two candidates of equal merit applying for the same position.

