

## OT GROUP DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

### **Policy Statement**

OT Group is committed to complying with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

(This act replaces the Equality Act 2006, the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and seeks to harmonise a number of previous pieces of equal opportunity legislation).

The Company is committed to providing diversity and equality to all employees whether full time, part time or temporary. We therefore wholeheartedly accept our legal obligations under the legislation, identified below, which makes it generally unlawful to discriminate directly or, indirectly in recruitment, employment or after employment on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Sexual orientation
- Sex
- Religion or belief

These are known as '**protected characteristics**'.

We also undertake not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of trade union membership and activity, political or religious belief and unrelated criminal convictions.

There are two types of discrimination that are unlawful: direct and indirect discrimination.

**1. Direct discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably because of their race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age.

**2. Indirect discrimination** is where the employer applies a practice, requirement or condition which applies equally to all individuals, but which:

- has an adverse disproportionate impact on a group of people because of their race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age and the employer cannot show it to be justified, and it causes detriment to the individual.

Selection for employment promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. (Refer also to Recruitment Policy and Procedure).

Every employee is entitled to a working environment which promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying, harassment or victimisation will be tolerated. (Refer also to Dignity At Work Policy).

The Company is committed to implementing equality of opportunity in carrying out all its various functions. We are committed to the development of effective strategies and standards and to the introduction of monitoring and information systems to review and evaluate progress towards the achievement of equality of opportunity.

The Company recognises the effects of historical disadvantage and past discrimination, and will, where appropriate and within the law, take positive action to achieve equality of opportunity.

We believe much can be achieved by developing policies, practices and procedures to eliminate unlawful and unfair discrimination and realise that real progress toward equality of opportunity requires a programme of action, which involves the commitment and participation of all staff.

The Company believes that equal opportunities require a genuine commitment to this policy from everyone. For us this also means a duty to adhere to the key guidance in establishing, monitoring and evaluating our responses to the Equality Act, Disability Discrimination Act [ODA]; Sex Discrimination Act and Race Relations Act and all Amendments related to those Acts.

All members of staff together with those involved in Company activities are required to conduct themselves in accordance with our Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy. They are required to take personal responsibility in this area and work towards promoting respect for individuals. This will entail identifying and removing inappropriate behaviour and changing practices which perpetuate inequality and taking necessary action to challenge unfair, discriminatory or racist practices.

Members of staff can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of the Company, for any act of unlawful discrimination. Staff who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the company's disciplinary procedure.

## **Race Equality Policy**

### Rationale

The Company acknowledges that the society within which we live is enriched by the ethnic diversity, culture and faith of its citizens.

We believe staff have a professional commitment to ensure that we know how to make effective personalised provisions for employees, including those for whom English is an additional language or who have special educational needs or disabilities, and how to take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion in our training.

OT Group strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of our company is such that, whatever the heritage and origin of our employees, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect.

All employees will be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity. The definition of institutional racism is "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to employees because of their culture, colour or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people."

### Definition of a racist incident

- Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Any racist incident will be recorded and reported to the HR Department. Any such incident will be resolved sensitively, in a manner which supports the victim and both sanctions and educates the perpetrator.

Our Aims:

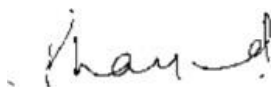
Our aims for promoting racial equality and challenging racial discrimination include:

- ensuring that staff from all racial groups are encouraged to achieve to their full potential.
- maintaining an inclusive ethos
- acknowledging the existence of racism and being proactive in tackling and eliminating racial
- discrimination.
- promoting at every opportunity the Company ethos of welcoming and valuing everyone irrespective of their race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, age or sexual orientation
- ensuring that equality is an integral part of all our training.

## Grievance

If an individual feels this policy does not support them or that it is being implemented inadequately, they should report their grievance to the HR Department.

If an individual regards any matter as requiring formal resolution under this policy then such matters should be referred to the OT Group Grievance Procedure.



P Maynard  
Company Secretary  
5/6/2022