

Equality and Diversity Policy 2018

January 2022

Authorised by – J Price

Employer responsibility

Diversity and inclusion statement

Diversity & inclusion statement Individuals with different cultures, perspectives, and experiences are a key component in which internal mechanisms are viewed and formed. Our aim is to instil diversity and recruit, develop and retain the most talented people possible, regardless of their background. Different views create different results. Vision is guided by its values and modern-day culture and recognise that being a diverse and inclusive employer helps Vision fulfil its responsibility to make a difference for its clients.

Vision has developed a working environment where all employees are treated as individuals and communicated in a fair and consistent way. Vision works within the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenging discrimination, should it ever arise. We will remove unnecessary barriers for our employees seeking opportunities through training and development, promotion and career planning.

We will continue to support our leaders, managers, and employees to demonstrate the principles of diversity and inclusion in their everyday activities, roles, and functions.

Director
Robin G Downey

Secretary/Partner
Joseph Price

Equality and Diversity Policy

1) Purpose

This policy sets out Vision's approach to equality and diversity. Vision is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work. Vision aims to be an inclusive organisation, committed to providing equal opportunities throughout employment including in the recruitment, training and development of employees, and to proactively tackling and eliminating discrimination.

2) Equality and diversity

Vision believes that equality assists in breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups both in employment and to goods and services. We consider diversity to mean celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but also for Vision as an organisation. We acknowledge that equality and diversity are not inter-changeable but interdependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed.

3) Scope

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all employees, whether part-time or full time on a substantive or fixed-term contract, and to associated persons such as secondees, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service. Vision's senior leadership are responsible for the application of this policy. As part of the employee induction, staffing/employment team are expected to read and familiarise themselves with this policy, ensuring the understanding of this policy in which properly observed and fully complied with. This policy has major relevance to directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions that affect others.

4) Vision's commitment

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality, and respect. Vision will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of a particular characteristic:

- sex
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- disability
- sexual orientation
- religion and or belief
- age

Discrimination based on work patterns (part-time working, fixed-term contract, flexible working) which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated.

All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development, and progression opportunities. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability.

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If employees/staff/colleagues believe that you may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, individuals should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with their line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. Vision will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably by Vision as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under Vision's Discipline Policy. A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under Vision's Discipline Policy. Employees may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

5) When does this policy apply?

This policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to work (e.g. at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues) or which may impact Vision's reputation, and could be linked in any way to Vision as an organisation). Specific areas of application are set out below:

a) Recruitment

Selection for employment at Vision will be based on aptitude and ability. Further detail is set out in Vision's Recruitment and Selection Policy. Where possible, Vision will capture applicants' diverse demographics as part of its recruitment processes to promote the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

b) Training

New and/or existing employees may also be required to participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of this policy.

c) Promotion

All promotion decisions will be made based on merit and will not be influenced by any of the characteristics listed within this document. Promotion opportunities will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers to promotion.

d) During employment

The benefits, terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to Vision employees will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means and to provide appropriate conditions to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

6. Vision's legal duties

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by Vision leadership/management to assess its effectiveness and may be amended from time to time. This policy is for guidance only and does not form part of employees/staff contract of employment.

7) Equality And Diversity Declaration:

By reading this policy it should be understood and clear of Vision's Equality and Diversity Policy goals. Vision will continue and strive to meet expected standards. Regardless of individual background and circumstances, Vision agree's to treat all colleagues and visitors with respect and dignity whilst duties and responsibilities of individuals are carried out.

This policy has been in operation since January 2018 and is reviewed annually.