

PRCA

EQUALITY POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Equality Act came into force in 2010 and it forms the legal framework to help reduce discrimination in many parts of our lives including, but not limited to, the following:

- in the workplace
- in education
- as consumers
- when using public services

PRCA recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the Company and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the Company to ensure that no employee, apprentice or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (the **protected characteristics**).

Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee, apprentice or job applicant feels respected and able to give of their best. We expect all partners and employers with whom we engage to have an approach to equality and diversity that aligns with this policy and will not contract with those where we believe this not to be the case.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment or on our apprenticeship programme.

All employees and apprentices will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees and apprentices will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Our employees and apprentices will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass customers or clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the Company's goods and services.

This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

OUR COMMITMENT

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff and apprentices are recognised and valued.
- Every employee and apprentice are entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff and apprentices.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Director General. The Senior Management Team will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

- all their staff/apprentices are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- proper records are maintained.

The Senior Management Team will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees, apprentices and job applicants, including periodic audits.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF, APPRENTICES AND APPRENTICE EMPLOYERS

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff, apprentices, and apprentice employers, and the attitudes of staff and apprentices are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, staff, apprentices, and apprentice employers should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day-to-day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff, apprentices or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

THIRD PARTIES

Third-party harassment occurs where a PRCA employee or apprentice is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or customers. PRCA will not tolerate such actions against its staff or apprentices, and the employee or apprentice concerned should inform their line manager/Head of Apprenticeships at once when this has occurred. The

Company will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The Company policies will be reviewed regularly and any identified discriminatory elements removed.

RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE

The Company attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee or apprentice who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice and guidance from external agencies where appropriate to maintain disabled people in employment);
- include disabled people in training/development and apprenticeship programmes;
- give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

EQUALITY TRAINING

A series of regular briefing sessions will be held for staff on equality issues. These will be repeated as necessary. Equality information is also included in induction programmes. The Head of Apprenticeships will brief apprentices on equality issues. These will be repeated as necessary.

Training will be provided for managers on this policy and the associated arrangements. All managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process will receive training.

MONITORING

The Company deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, a monitoring system will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.

The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees and/or apprentices by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff or apprentices who declare themselves as disabled will also be maintained.

There will also be regular assessments to measure the extent to which recruitment to first appointment, internal promotion and access to training/development opportunities affect equal opportunities for all groups.

We will maintain information on staff or apprentices who have been involved in certain key policies: Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying & Harassment.

Where appropriate, **equality impact assessments** will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect of the Company policies and our services / products may have on those who experience them.

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

If monitoring shows that the Company, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the Company, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, Company policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

Head of Apprenticeships promotes Equality and Diversity with all employer partners engaged with and is prepared to challenge any indication of discrimination.


GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE

Employees and apprentices have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Company Grievance or Harassment Procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Company Disciplinary Procedure.

REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Director General.

Date	Status/Summary of Changes	Approved By	Signature	Next Review
January 2022		Karen Wilkinson		January 2023

By signing this, you confirm you have read and understood.

Apprentice name:

Date: