

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY

**September 2008**

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## 1) Policy statement

The success of the Standards Board for England depends on our people. We are committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality for everyone at the Standards Board. Competent and motivated employees are essential in today's competitive environment and therefore the Standards Board needs to ensure the best use of human resources in its workforce. We recognise the varied contributions that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation and we are committed to drawing on the different perspectives and experiences of individuals which will add value to the way we operate.

The aim of the policy is to ensure that all job applicants and employees receive fair treatment regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic and national origin, disability, age, trade union membership, religious beliefs, work location and working hours. We do this by adhering to all equal opportunities legislation and ensuring that we are fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination in all of our systems, processes, procedures, activities and decisions. Unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated.

The Standards Board aims to recruit, retain and develop employees based on merit, competence and potential. We are committed to promoting a positive work environment for our employees and ensuring employees are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential.

The Standards Board has a Dignity at Work Procedure for dealing with any discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation, which may occur in the workplace. We also carry out diversity impact assessments on all our policies to ensure they are compliant with legislation and adhere to the spirit of this policy.

## 2) Policy scope

This policy applies to all employees, agency workers and visitors to the Standards Board. The success of an Equal Opportunities Policy will involve the commitment and support of all managers and employees alike.

## 3) Responsibilities

The Chief Executive, as diversity champion has overall responsibility for ensuring the correct application and implementation of the policy.

All managers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure the non-discriminatory treatment of all job applicants and employees and promote equality of opportunity.

- Identify and remove discriminatory attitudes and practices within the organisation.
- Raise the level of employee awareness of the policy's existence.
- Deal fairly and speedily with any discriminatory issue raised in the course of employment.
- Support and contribute to the monitoring and review process.
- Be aware of the diverse needs of employee and support them appropriately and fairly.

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Support this vision and continue to ensure that the principles of equal opportunities and diversity in the workplace are upheld.
- Treat colleagues and stakeholders with dignity and respect.
- Have due regard to equal opportunities in the work they do and decisions they make.
- Promote diversity in the workplace.

#### **4) Legislative basis**

The acts listed below set out the legal basis of equal opportunities. They also provide for rights of appeal and sanctions to be invoked where discrimination is proved. The relevant acts are:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976 and 2000 as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Part-time Workers (Prevention of less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1994
- The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

#### **5) Managing diversity**

The Standards Board is committed to improving the diversity of its workforce and will seek to adopt employment practices that ensure diversity and a flexible approach including positive action which serve to support this objective. Our Diversity Equality Scheme has been designed to ensure that the concept of equal access is integral to the planning and performance process flow both ways from our higher level strategy to the individual planning process it is a clear statement

of our intent that all members of the organisation are responsible for the consideration of diversity in the way that they work.

## 6) Implementation

To effectively implement this policy, the Standards Board will take steps to ensure that:

- Through our policies, procedures and systems, job applicants or employees will be treated in accordance with this policy and other related policies.
- Any employment requirements or conditions will be justifiable and reasonable.
- All employment policies, procedures and practices, including this one, will be reviewed and impact-assessed regularly to ensure that they are, and remain, non-discriminatory.
- All managers and others involved in the implementation of the organisation's employment policies will receive appropriate training including diversity, recruitment and selection, performance management etc.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made in the workplace to help people with disabilities achieve their full potential.
- Employees will receive training during induction and at other appropriate times during their employment to ensure awareness and understanding of this policy and diversity in general.
- Statistics on under-represented groups will be recorded and reported to the Board and senior management team to ensure that the makeup of the workforce is monitored and remedial actions identified.
- A diverse workplace is promoted and celebrated through our policies and how we operate.

The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy will be reviewed in September 2010, unless new legislation is introduced that needs to be reflected in the policy.