



# **ARCUS CONSULTING LLP**

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

### **POLICY DOCUMENT**

**June 2010 - June 2011** (Web Revision 01)

# Equal Opportunity Policy

## 1. STATEMENT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

- 1.1** The Company is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment and declares its opposition to any form of less favourable treatment, whether through direct or indirect discrimination accorded to employees or job applicants, on the grounds of their race, religion or belief, creed, colour, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, marital/parental status, sex or sexual orientation.
- 1.2** The Company recognises its obligations under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended), Equal Pay Act 1970, Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended), Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended), Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the spirit and intent of the related Codes of Practice:
- for the elimination of discrimination on grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment;
  - for the elimination of discrimination on grounds of race and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment;
  - for the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of disability and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment;
  - for the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment;
  - for the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of age and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment.
- 1.3** This policy applies to our members and staff whether full time, part time, agency staff or consultants. We will inform suppliers and partners about our policy so that they understand our commitment and expectations. We will also encourage suppliers and partners to adopt similar policies as a minimum standard for working with us.
- 1.4** Clive Sellers, Managing Partner has overall responsibility for coordinating implementation and monitoring and review of this policy.

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## **2. GENDER IDENTITY**

- 2.1** Arcus are aware that people face disadvantage and discrimination because of their gender and gender identity.
- 2.2** Arcus will try and meet the needs of different gender group and transgender people by:
- Carrying out duties under the law for Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Equal Pay Act 1970 and the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulation 1999 to stop discrimination and provide equality of opportunity.
  - Challenging sexism by employees, other organisations and users of our service.
  - Supporting all women employees to fully develop their potential.
  - Aiming to develop an overall workforce that better reflects an equal balance of women and men, especially at senior level.
  - Supporting all genders in areas where they experience inequality and discrimination.

## **3. BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES**

- 3.1** Black and minority ethnic groups can face discrimination and disadvantage because of attitudes and actions based on the belief that one race is better than another.
- 3.2** Arcus will try and meet the specific needs of Black and minority ethnic communities by:
- Carrying out duties under the law, including the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, to stop discrimination provide equality of opportunity and promote good race relations.
  - Challenging racism by our members, employees and supply chain partners.
  - Dealing effectively and consistently with racial harassment and violence both in the workplace, on site and in the communities which we work.

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- Taking positive action when placing adverts to ensure that Black and Minority Ethnic employees are not disadvantaged by Arcus' employment procedures.
- Supporting all Black and Minority Ethnic employees to fully develop their potential.

## **4. DISABLED PEOPLE (Including learning disabilities and mental illness)**

- 4.1** Disabled people can face discrimination and disadvantage because of attitudes and actions based on the belief that disabled people are less able than others.
- 4.2** Arcus will try and meet the specific needs of disabled people by:
- Carrying out duties under the law, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, to stop discrimination and provide equality of opportunity.
  - Dealing effectively and consistently with any harassment and violence towards disabled people.
  - Developing our services and the environments we deliver them from to remove barriers preventing disabled people from having the same access as others.
  - Supporting disabled staff and people who become ill or disabled while employed with us by making reasonable adjustments to their working condition where possible.
  - Supporting all disabled employees to fully develop their potential.

## **5. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

- 5.1** Arcus are aware that people from various religious faiths face disadvantage and discrimination because of the attitudes and actions based on views and beliefs.
- 5.2** In order to support the rights of individuals to worship freely or hold beliefs Arcus will:
- Carry out duties under the law including the Employment (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, to stop discrimination and provide equality of opportunity.
  - Challenge religious and other intolerance by members, employees and supply chain partners

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- Through consultation provide opportunities within our working environment for people to practice their faith and worship.

## 6. AGE

- 6.1** Arcus understands that young people and older people face disadvantage and discrimination because of the attitudes and actions based on views and beliefs held about younger and older people.
- 6.2** Arcus will try to meet the needs of young and older people by:
- Carrying out duties under the law as it develops to stop discrimination, provide equality of opportunity.
  - Challenging ageism by members, employees and supply chain partners.
  - Reviewing our policies in relation to the retirement age of staff and employment of staff over retirement age;
  - Dealing effectively and consistently with harassment and violence towards young people or older people both in the workplace, on site and in the communities which we work.

## 7. DELIVERING OUR SERVICES

When delivering our services we will aim to do the following.

- 7.1** Promote good relations with local communities by working with clients, building users and other community groups to develop our services to ensure we deliver them fairly and that they provide value for money.
- 7.2** When reviewing our services we will consult with clients, building users and other community groups, and where necessary, will make special arrangements to include those from under-represented groups who are often left out of traditional types of consultation.

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- 7.3 Promote best practice relating to equality and diversity amongst our business partners by sharing policies, best practice and information on new ways of working.
- 7.4 We will consider equality and diversity when planning and delivering our services by including equality and diversity in the Best Value process and by monitoring and managing equality targets.
- 7.5 We will make sure we set aside enough resources for the training and development of our staff to meet Arcus' and our client's equality objectives.

## 8. GENERAL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

- 8.1 The Company states its wholehearted support for the principles and practices of equal opportunity and recognises that it is the duty of all employees to accept their personal responsibility for fostering a fully integrated community at work by adhering to the principles of equal opportunity and maintaining a harmonious working environment.
- 8.2 The Company will actively promote equal opportunities throughout the organisation through the application of employment policies which will ensure that individuals receive treatment that is fair and equitable and consistent with their relevant aptitudes, potential, skills, experiences and abilities. All managers and supervisors will seek to ensure that all employees comply with these principles.
- 8.3 The Company will ensure that individuals are recruited and selected, promoted and trained on objective criteria having regard to the relevant aptitudes, potential, skills, experiences and abilities. In particular, no applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by any practices which, although they are applied to all, have the effect of disadvantaging people of a particular race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute indirect discrimination. Reasonable adjustments will be taken where a disabled person is put in a detrimental position and such reasonable adjustments remove the detriment.
- 8.4 The Company recognises the problems that harassment may cause at work and is committed to ensure that such unacceptable behaviour does not take place. Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them having regard to all the circumstances including the perception of the victim. All forms of harassment are abhorrent and will not be tolerated by the Company.

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Harassment in any form is regarded as unlawful discrimination and additionally may also be subject to criminal proceedings. All such cases will be dealt with under the Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure.

- 8.5** The Company recognises that the detriment a disabled person endures as a consequence of their disability can, in many instances, be removed by the adoption of reasonable adjustments. The Company is committed to ensure that such adjustments will be effected where reasonably practicable and where the detriment is substantial.

## **9. MONITORING AND REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS**

- 9.1** The Company recognises that the regular monitoring of employees and job applicants is essential to the thorough review of the effectiveness of this Policy and to this end the Company will initiate equal opportunity monitoring.
- 9.2** The successful implementation of this Policy depends upon the regular examination and progress towards equal opportunity.
- 9.3** The Company will review the physical features and arrangements affecting any newly disabled employee and will take such steps as is reasonable to prevent substantial disadvantage.

## **10. GRIEVANCE, DISCIPLINARY AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

- 10.1** The Company will ensure that any individual or group of employees who believe that they have experienced direct or indirect discrimination are properly represented in any grievance proceedings. Any employee who feels that he or she has been treated unfairly in connection with their employment should raise their grievance through the Grievance Procedure when every effort will be made to secure a satisfactory resolution. In addition the Company will ensure that any employee making a complaint of unfair discrimination (or any employee assisting or representing) will be protected from any victimisation. Where the complaint relates to alleged harassment, the procedure outlined at Section 13, should be followed.
- 10.2** The Company will continue to treat unfair discriminatory conduct by any member of staff as a serious disciplinary offence.

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## 11. IMPLEMENTATION

- 11.1** The Company will train, develop and promote on the basis of merit and ability only. The Company will seek to encourage employees and job applicants of under represented groups by using the positive action measures available to the Company through the relevant legislation.
- 11.2** When vacancies are advertised both internally and externally, the Company will continue to ensure that such advertising, both in placement and content, is compatible with the terms of this Policy. To this end, opportunities will be taken through language, images or declarations, as appropriate, to show that the Company is an equal opportunities employer. In practical terms this means that the wording of advertisements will be carefully scrutinised to ensure that any hidden discrimination is avoided or that discriminatory loaded wording is avoided. Every effort will be made to ensure that the advertisements are placed in newspapers and publications so that as wide a readership as possible has access to the vacancies. This may include the placing of advertisements in ethnic publications and women's magazines.
- 11.3** To this end, "word of mouth" advertising, personal contacts and family relationships will be discouraged as the only means of recruiting new staff or promoting existing staff.

## 12. COMMUNICATION

- 12.1** The principles in this Policy will be brought to the attention of all staff by means of a publication and CD in the Employee Handbook issued during their induction programme.
- 12.2** Ongoing Training will be provided as a means by which the Policy and supporting policies are communicated to the staff.
- 12.3** All employees are encouraged to bring to the attention of their immediate superior any act of discrimination they observe.
- 12.4** Employees who are newly disabled are encouraged to bring this to the attention of their immediate superior to enable a review of their treatment to be made. This review will include an assessment of physical features and arrangements to ensure that these do not place the disabled person at a substantial disadvantage. Where they do, then adjustments will be effected where reasonable to do so.



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## 13. HARRASSMENT

### 13.1 Preamble

Harassment in the employment situation is unlawful under discrimination legislation and as a consequence is unlawful behaviour. It is also improper and inappropriate behaviour which lowers morale and interferes with the effectiveness of people at work.

It is the policy of this organisation to make every effort to provide a working environment free from all forms of harassment and intimidation.

All employees are expected to comply with the policy and to ensure that such conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action including summary dismissal for serious offences will be taken against any employee who violates this policy.

### 13.2 Definition

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them having regard to all the circumstances including the perception of the victim.

### 13.3 Examples

The following are examples of inappropriate behaviour covered by this Policy:-

Physical conduct of a sexual nature: unwanted physical contact including unnecessary touching, patting, pinching or brushing up against another employee's body, assault.

Verbal conduct by nature of a sexual, racial, sexually oriented, or on the grounds of religion or belief: unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity, continued suggestions for social activity outside the workplace after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome, offensive comments on religious grounds, suggestive remarks, innuendoes or comments on sexual orientation.

Non-verbal conduct of an offensive nature: the display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects or written materials, leering, whistling or making sexually suggestive gestures.

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Conduct which denigrates, ridicules, is intimidatory or physically abusive to an employee because of his or her sex, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief such as derogatory or degrading abuse or insults which are so motivated and offensive comments about dress or appearance or physique, hygiene etc.

## 14. DUTIES OF MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

All supervisors and managers are responsible for eliminating any forms of harassment or intimidation of which they are aware. Failure to do so will be treated as a failure to fulfill all the responsibilities of their position. Similarly, all supervisors and managers are responsible for eliminating less favourable treatment of disabled persons for a reason or reasons which relate to their disability. Again, failure to do so will be treated as a failure to fulfill all the responsibilities of their position.

No supervisor or manager shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's rejection of sexual advances or resistance to any racial abuse or abuse on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion or belief will be used as a basis for an employment decision affecting that employee. Such conduct shall be treated by the Company as a serious disciplinary offence by the supervisor or manager.

## 15. HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

It is clearly inappropriate for the normal grievance procedure to be used for complaints of harassment particularly where the manager is the alleged harasser.

- 15.1** Wherever possible the person who believes that they are the subject of harassment should ask the person responsible to stop the harassing behaviour. Where this does not stop or some employment consequences result then a complaint under 15.2. below should be made.
- 15.2** An employee who believes that they have been the subject of harassment should report the alleged act to the appropriate line manager, Director or a nominated officer of the employee's choice.
- 15.3** A timely investigation will be conducted into the complaint in a confidential manner. All parties will be guaranteed a fair and impartial hearing.

In any serious case of alleged harassment either or both of the parties may be suspended on full pay pending the completion of the investigation.

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The victim will be interviewed preferably by a person of the same sex/race where appropriate. Confidentiality will be assured. A diary should be kept by the victim of the details of the allegations and dates when they occurred.

- 15.4** If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, senior management will give it its prompt attention and disciplinary action will be taken to stop the harassment immediately and prevent its recurrence. In such circumstances if relocation proves necessary, every effort will be made to relocate the harasser and not the victim.
- 15.5** Employees shall also be protected from intimidation, victimisation or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Retaliation against an employee for complaining about harassment is a disciplinary offence and is also actionable through the Employment Tribunals.

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clive Sellers".

**Name:**

Clive Sellers, Managing Partner

**Last Review Date:**

1<sup>st</sup> June 2010

**Next Review Date:**

1<sup>st</sup> June 2011