

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Bowman Riley is committed to achieving a working environment which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation. This policy aims to remove unfair and discriminatory practices within the practice and to encourage full contribution from its diverse community. We are committed to actively opposing all forms of discrimination.

The practice also aims to provide a service that does not discriminate against its clients and customers in the means by which they can access the services and goods supplied by Bowman Riley. We believe that all employees and clients are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.

Objectives of this policy

- To prevent, reduce and stop all forms of unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act
- To ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity.

Definition of discrimination

Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation. Discrimination may be direct or indirect.

Types of discrimination

Direct discrimination - This occurs when a person or policy treats a person less favourably than another on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

Discrimination by association - This occurs when a person or policy treats a person less favourably than another on the grounds of to age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, and sex.

Indirect discrimination - This occurs when an employer has a condition, rule, policy or practise that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if employers can show they acted reasonably in managing their business. This applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership, disability and gender reassignment. This does not apply to pregnancy or maternity.

Harassment - This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation - This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings, or they have given or intend to give evidence.

Unlawful reasons for discrimination

Sex - Under the equality act, it is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of sex. Sexual harassment can be found to constitute sex discrimination.

Gender reassignment - The act protects anyone who proposes to start, starts or has completed a process to change their gender from discrimination. This includes someone who is not currently undergoing medical supervision or a transgender individual who decides they do not want to have any medical procedures.

Marital or civil partnership status - Under the Equality Act civil partners must be treated in the same way as married people in a wide range of matters. Benefits given to married employees must also be offered to civil partners, including flexible working, statutory paternity pay, paternity and adoption leave, health insurance and survivor pensions.

Pregnancy or maternity - Under the Equality Act, a woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. During this period, pregnancy and maternity discrimination cannot be treated as sex discrimination.

Age – It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their age. This does not currently apply to the calculation of redundancy payments.

Disability - It is not permissible to treat a disabled person less favourably than a non-disabled person. Reasonable adjustments must be made to give disabled people as much access to any services and ability to be employed, trained, or promoted as a non-disabled person.

Race - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their race, the colour of their skin, their nationality or their ethnic origin.

Sexual orientation - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their sexual orientation. For example, an employer cannot refuse to employ a person because they are homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual.

Religion or belief - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their religious beliefs or their religion or their lack of any religion or belief.

Reasonable adjustments

We will actively seek to make reasonable adjustments, where there is a need to ensure that a disabled person has the same access to everything as a non-disabled person, as far as is reasonable. We will take positive and proactive steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles faced by a disabled individual, as far as is reasonable.

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy

Employees, subcontractors and agents of Bowman Riley are required to act in a way that does not subject any other employees or clients to direct, discrimination by association or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of their sex, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs.

The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this policy. Senior employees are expected to follow this policy and to try to ensure that all employees, subcontractors and agents do the same.

Employees may be held independently and be individually liable for their discriminatory acts by the practice and in some circumstances, an employment tribunal may order them to pay compensation to the person who has suffered as a result of the discriminatory act.

We take responsibility for achieving the objectives of this policy, and endeavours to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and codes of practice.

Employees engaging in discriminatory conduct

Behaviour or actions found to be contrary to this policy and the general spirit of the laws on which it is based will be considered as a serious disciplinary matter. In the most severe of cases, the employee responsible may face dismissal. Any such employees will have the right to appeal against such a summary dismissal by following the practice grievance procedure.

Discrimination leads to an unpleasant and non-productive work environment. No employee has the right to discriminate against another. If an employee is executing the practice policy that may be indirectly discriminatory, the practice will not typically hold the employee responsible for any negative effects of that policy. Employees should inform HR or a director if they become aware of any discriminatory effects that a policy may have.

If a grievance is received by the practice that cites the actions of an employee have been discriminatory against another member of staff, the practice will deal with the breach of policy through the disciplinary procedure.

The extent of the policy

We will seek to apply this policy in the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development and promotion of all employees.

This policy does not form a part of any employment contract with any employee and its contents are not to be regarded by any person as implied, collateral or express terms to any agreement made with the practice.

We reserve the right to amend and update this policy at any time.

Director name: Michael Feather

Signed: 

Date: 15th January 2024

Review date: January 2025