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Equal Opportunity Employment Policy

Plan drawn up by:	Georgia Shepherd	Signature:		Date:	02-02-2022
Approved by:	William Valler Managing Director	Signature:		Date:	02-02-2023

Amendments

Date	Version	Summary of changes made:	Changes made by	Approved by
30-04-2014	Original	N/A	N/A	
30-04-2015	01	No changes made	N/A	
11-04-2016	02	No changes made	N/A	
02-05-2017	03	No changes made	NA	
28-03-2018	04	No changes made	N/A	
28-03-2019	05	New Managing Director	T Clare	
11-02-2020	06	New H&S Manager	Georgia Shepherd	
01-03-2021	07	No changes made	N/A	
02-02-2022	08	No changes made	N/A	

Equal Opportunity Employment Policy

An effectively implemented Equal Opportunities Policy will help us to:

- Provide an environment conducive to the promotion of fair and equal opportunities to all staff
- Ensure fair treatment for all job applicants and existing members of staff
- Ensure fair treatment for all others with whom we have contact e.g. contractors and customers
- Make the best possible use of our existing and potential workforce
- Improve employment practices and staff morale
- Attract, develop and retain the good quality staff who are essential for the achievement of our business objectives
- Avoid unlawful or unfair discrimination

WBS believes that it is in everyone's best interests to ensure that the experience, talents and skills available throughout the company are considered when employment or development opportunities arise.

What has it got to do with me?

Equal opportunities impose rights and responsibilities for every member of staff. Everyone has a right to fair and dignified treatment. This means that no-one will be discriminated against nor harassed. Every member of staff has an obligation to ensure fair and dignified treatment. The contribution of everyone will be valued and everyone will be treated purely on their merits. Everyone must act fairly, within WBS policy and the law. Any allegations of a failure to meet these standards may lead to disciplinary action.

The WBS Equal Opportunities Policy is issued to all members of staff and job applicants.

Policy statement

W. B. Simpson & Sons Limited (WBS) aims to recruit and retain the best staff and endeavours to provide employment opportunities on a fair and equitable basis, taking into account the skills and experience required to perform each job. It strives to ensure that neither its policies nor practices act to disadvantage or discriminate against any individual.

Our aim is to be fair to everybody and to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives more or less favourable opportunities or treatment on the grounds of, for example:

- Age
- Race
- Colour
- Ethnic or national origin
- Nationality (subject to nationality rules)
- Sex / Gender
- Transgender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Disability
- Religion or religious affiliation / Belief
- Part-time working
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Trade union membership and duties

There may be limited exceptions for positive action which is allowed by relevant legislation.

No-one will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be genuinely necessary for objective reasons. In addition, care should be taken when selection criteria such as shift conditions are set as some applicants may find these more difficult to meet due to their gender, race, marital status or disability etc.

Equal opportunities and equal treatment are the cornerstones of our recruitment and employment policy.

All job applicants and current employees must provide evidence to support their right to work in the UK.

Personal development

WBS is committed to encouraging all staff to make full use of their skills and talents and to helping staff progress through the company and reach their full potential. Everyone will have equal access to any course which is appropriate to an individual's current job or development within WBS. We will encourage the development of the individual's skills and knowledge for use in their work.

WBS Key concepts explained

A brief explanation of some key equal opportunity's concepts is explained below.

Discrimination

Discrimination is unequal treatment of an individual because of their membership of a particular class or group, such as sex, race or trade union. It may be direct, for example, refusing to send someone on a training course because they are married or have children. It may be indirect, for example, declaring a post as being suitable only for a full-time member of staff without proper justification (that means establishing the need for a full-time member of staff rather than part-timers or job sharing).

Discrimination may be subtle and unconscious. It may not be easy to identify. For example, discrimination sometimes results from general assumptions about the capabilities, characteristics and interests of particular groups or individuals, which are allowed to influence the treatment of staff or job applicants.

Without appropriate awareness and safeguards, discrimination may occur in any area of recruitment and employment including:

- Inappropriate questioning at interview
- Inappropriate appointment to post
- Allocation of volumes and/or type of work
- Transfer decisions
- Promotion and progression opportunities
- Annual leave allocation
- Special leave requests
- Application of disciplinary action

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment may involve unwelcome sexual comments or innuendos, looks and gestures, displays of pin-ups or physical contact by one individual aimed at another, and which is only directed at that other person because of their sex.

Sexual harassment cannot be dismissed as a 'bit of harmless fun'. It can lead to an uncomfortable and alienating working environment.

Racial harassment

Racial harassment is offensive or hostile behaviour, which has the purpose or effect of creating discomfort, distress, exclusion or isolation and is based upon someone's race (colour, nationality or ethnic origins) or is directed at them because of their race. If the comment or behaviour is offensive to the individual, it will amount to racial harassment.

Harassment/bullying

As with sexual or racial harassment, any form of harassment or bullying will have the effect of causing undue stress on individuals and of de-motivating them. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated and serves to undermine the good team spirit which WBS wishes to encourage.

Sex/Gender Harassment

Unlawful sex discrimination happens when someone is treated unfairly because of their gender. Women, men and transsexual people can all experience sex discrimination. Sex discrimination also includes treating someone less favourably because they are married or in a civil partnership: for example, by not hiring married women.

Disability harassment

Offensive or hostile behaviour or comments aimed at an individual because he or she is disabled will also be harassment.

Resolving problems

Everyone must be sensitive to the effects their words and actions have on their colleagues and need to ensure that their attitudes towards others carry no trace of discrimination which can affect working relationships, behaviour or judgement.

Staff who are experiencing or are concerned about discrimination or harassment should discuss the problem with their line manager who must take appropriate action to try to resolve it, if possible. (If you do not feel able to discuss the problem with your line manager initially you should contact the Managing Director). The advice of the Trade Union Representatives may also be sought.

Managers should be aware of any problem developing at an early stage and take corrective action to ensure that the situation is resolved in a conciliatory and effective manner and that staff do not feel excluded.

Staff are encouraged to make clear to their colleagues if conduct or comments are offensive to them.

Complaint's procedure

If there are reasons why you do not feel you are able to speak to your line manager in the first instance, you can speak to:

- A Director of WBS

However, the duty of confidentiality does not apply if:

- There has been a breach of the law
- There has been a breach of WBS Disciplinary Procedures
- There is a risk of harm to the individual or to others
- The disclosure is in the context of legal or disciplinary procedures

In any event, if the manager fails to act effectively to stop the discrimination or harassment, the individual should arrange to speak to the Managing Director.

Where appropriate, a full enquiry will be conducted into the complaint and if it is considered that the behaviour of the individual is unlawful, unfair or unacceptable, disciplinary action will be taken by WBS against that individual.

All staff are subject to the disciplinary rules and should remember that unfounded allegations of unfair treatment can themselves be distressing to the recipients of such complaints. Such unfounded allegations may lead to further disciplinary proceedings.

Further information and relevant legislation

Training on Equal Opportunities is given to all members of staff. As part of our training, we provide further information on relevant legislation including:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2006 – (sections 23- 29)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2014