



**The
Birtenshaw Group**
Transforming Lives

Equality and Diversity

Policy and procedure

Legislation References	
Employment Rights Act (ERA) 1996	Equality Act 2010
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)	Data Protection Act 1998

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Scope

Policy Summary

Birtenshaw is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our employees. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and for each employee to feel respected and able in their own right.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that Birtenshaw complies with the Equality Act 2010, creating a climate of equal treatment of all, which ensures that the talents and resources of the workforce are fully utilised and valued to maximise the efficiency of the organisation. This policy is a guide for both managers and employees.

Introduction

Birtenshaw employees will be given the same opportunities in recruitment, training and promotion, regardless of:

- Age
- Disability
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation

Background

All employees and volunteers, whether full time, part time or temporary, 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 volunteers will be helped and encouraged to develop to their full potential. The talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Birtenshaw recognises the considerable task involved in creating an environment that is both free from discrimination, and which maximises the contribution of each individual to the achievement of our mission, vision and values. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential that managers apply the Appraisal and Supervision Policies and guidelines with all employees.

Birtenshaw will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their ability and potential, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic

or national origin), religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation or any other inappropriate distinction.

Core Principles

Employees rightly expect to be treated fairly and considerately and this expectation is supported By the Equality Act 2010. All employees are expected to abide by the requirements of legislation and this policy by:

- Providing equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part time or full time.
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality act 2010 protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender re assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- Opposing and avoiding all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working and selection for employment.
- Creating a working environment that is free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment and prevent bullying or harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

Birtenshaw will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination in the course of their employment against fellow employees, service users and members of the public.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisations grievance and / or disciplinary procedures. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997- which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

Make opportunities for training, development and progress to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to reach their full potential, so that their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Details concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exceptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

Fairness in recruiting

No permanent vacancy or long term secondment should be advertised or publicised (internally or externally) in a way that discourages applicants from any sector of the population, unless there is a genuine and justifiable requirement for the post. If in doubt contact HR.

All applications will be considered on merit. Each individual will be assessed so far as practical against a set of objective, non- discriminatory criteria that will be directly related to the demands of the particular vacancy.

All advertisements, application forms and other recruitment material should clearly state that Birtenshaw is committed to equal opportunities.

All interviews should be conducted in accordance with the terms and spirit of this policy. The interview questions will be closely related to the selection criteria and will be asked in order to elicit information that will give a fair assessment of that particular applicant's ability to perform the tasks required by the vacancy.

Birtenshaw will, where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to its arrangements for interviews and conditions of employment in order to ensure that the applicants with disabilities are not disadvantaged. In addition, as a disability confident employer Birtenshaw undertakes to interview all applicants who declare a disability and meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy.

Promotion

Vacancies will, if practical, be filled through internal advertising. Assessment of internal applicants should be made objectively and without bias by using the selection criteria related to the demands of the vacancy.

Training

Employees involved in recruitment and the management or supervision of others should receive initial and ongoing training to help them understand and comply with the law and our policy.

All employees will have equal access to training. Specific and/or additional training may be made available for employees with disabilities as part of Birtenshaw's reasonable adjustments.

Religious holidays

Birtenshaw respects an individual right to hold and practice their religious beliefs, as long as these beliefs do not infringe upon the rights of service users or others.

The manager's primary concern must be to adequately cover the needs of the service. However, managers will be expected to demonstrate that they have made every attempt to be flexible where leave for religious holidays has been requested. Such leave can be taken as (paid) holiday leave or as unpaid leave.