

# GROUP POLICY

## Equality and Diversity

June 2023

**McLaughlin  
& Harvey**

**BUILDING TOGETHER.  
UNLOCKING POTENTIAL.**

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# Group Policy Statement

01

- 1.1 McLaughlin & Harvey (“the Company”) are passionate and committed to ensuring fairness, equality and inclusion.
- 1.2 The Company is committed to embracing diversity by acknowledging, understanding and appreciating the differences between individuals and developing a workplace that enhances their value. The Company has adopted an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to eliminate any unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation providing an inclusive environment for all.



Director  
June 2023

# To Whom does this Policy Apply

# 02

## To Whom does this Policy Apply

- 2.1** This policy applies to all of the Company's employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed term contracts, to job applicants and to individuals such as consultants, contractors and those supplied by agencies who are not our employees, but who work at the Company (collectively "workers").
- 2.2** All workers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and therefore to treat colleagues with dignity at all times whether in the workplace, outside the workplace and on work related business and events (including social events).
- 2.3** This policy also applies to the treatment of any person outside of the Company including, but not limited to, our visitors, clients, sub-contractors and suppliers by our workers.

# Purpose of Policy

# 03

## Purpose of Policy

- 3.1** The Company considers that any form of discrimination or less favourable treatment on the grounds of an individual's age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief (including political opinion in NI) or the fact that they are a part-time worker or fixed-term employee is entirely unacceptable.
  
- 3.2** The aims of this policy are to:

  - Support diversity within our organisation;
  - Promote equal opportunities in employment;
  - Promote a positive and inclusive working environment where diversity is celebrated
  - Prevent any form of, discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
  - Create an inclusive environment where workers feel welcome and valued
  
- 3.3** This Policy applies to all stages of the employment life cycle including recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, benefits, facilities and pay, health and safety and conduct at work, grievance and disciplinary procedures and to termination of employment, including redundancy.
  
- 3.4** The Company will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of workers' religions, cultures and domestic responsibilities.

# Forms of Discrimination

04

- 4.1** Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of a 'protected characteristic' (set out in paragraph 3.1). Direct discrimination includes discrimination by perception and associative discrimination.
- 4.2** Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of a protected characteristic (set out in paragraph 3.1).
- 4.3** Discrimination also includes victimisation (less favourable treatment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard) and harassment.
- 4.4** Discrimination by association is the direct discrimination of someone because of their association with someone with a protected characteristic.
- 4.5** Discrimination by perception is the direct discrimination where an individual is discriminated against because someone perceives they have a protected characteristic. It applies regardless of whether the person has the protected characteristic or not.

# Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

# 05

- 5.1** The Company works to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment due to any of the protected characteristics listed in paragraph 3.1. Recruitment, Selection and Promotion procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and that sufficiently diverse sectors of the community are reached. This is to ensure all appointments are made fairly on the basis of the best candidate for the job.
- 5.2** The Company shall take steps to ensure vacancies are advertised fairly and appropriately in the labour market. Where appropriate, the Company may use lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups or comply with social clauses as detailed within contracts awarded. Vacancy advertisements shall include an appropriate short statement about our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and a copy of this policy is available to applicants upon request.
- 5.3** If a particular group is underrepresented in the local working population or at a particular level, positive action may be considered to encourage/promote applications from such groups but appointments will still be made on merit.
- 5.4** The Company is committed to inclusive recruitment and selection, including making reasonable adjustments for candidates with a disability as part of the process.
- 5.5** All promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit and fairly applied.
- 5.6** The composition of workers throughout the organisation will be regularly reviewed to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps may be taken to identify and remove unnecessary barriers and to provide reasonable adjustments to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

# Learning and Development

06

- 6.1 Training materials must not stereotype, prejudice or discriminate in any way. All staff will have access to learning and development opportunities based on the requirements of their role.
- 6.2 Reasonable adjustments to training will be made for staff with disabilities/conditions that affect their ability to learn e.g. training materials provided in vision friendly formats.



# Cultural and Religious Needs

07

- 7.1 The Company will endeavour to accommodate particular cultural or religious needs including, but not limited to, observing prayer time or wearing specific clothing. However, operational needs and health and safety will take priority.

# Disability

08

## Disability

- 8.1** The Company is committed to attracting, recruiting, promoting, and retaining employees with a disability.
- 8.2** Where possible, the Company will make reasonable adjustments in the workplace for employees with a disability, those whose disability worsens during their employment, or employees who become disabled during their employment with the Company.
- 8.3** Where it is not possible for a member of staff to remain in their current job as a result of their disability, the Company will look for alternative jobs and/or retraining.

# Termination of Employment

09

- 9.1 The Company will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and do not directly or indirectly discriminate against employees.

# Individual and Managers Responsibilities

# 10

- 10.1** Individuals at all levels must accept personal responsibility in the practical application of this Policy. Both the individual employee and the Company could be found liable for any acts of discrimination within the workplace. If an individual is found to have breached the terms of this policy, they will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.
- 10.2** Workers are required to draw to the attention of their Line Manager if they witness any apparent instance of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- 10.3** All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example, ensure adherence and promote the aims and objectives of this policy. Managers will be given appropriate training.

# Dealing with Complaints

11

- 11.1** Workers who believe that they are being discriminated against, harassed or victimised on any of the grounds specified in paragraph 3.1 of this Policy should refer to the Companies Grievance and Bullying and Harassment Policies.
- 11.2** Workers who make a complaint in respect of alleged discrimination or harassment will be protected from victimisation.

# Breaches of this Policy

# 12

- 12.1** The Company will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this Policy. If, after investigation, any worker is proven to have discriminated against, harassed or victimised any other worker (or those listed in 2.3) on the grounds set out in paragraph 3.1 or to have otherwise acted in breach of this Policy, will be subject to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

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Process Owner:	Group Human Resources Director

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