

## **DIGNITY AT WORK**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

We are committed to ensuring that our people, customers and supply chain partners are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. This is done by ensuring the promotion of equal opportunities and the elimination of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation. The Company recognises the nine Protected Characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex (gender);
- sexual orientation.

We recognise that diversity goes beyond visible differences and extends to the intersection of various identities, such as race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, age and religion. Our commitment to intersectionality acknowledges the unique experiences and challenges faced by individuals with multiple identities. For example, while a white woman may face gender-based discrimination, a black woman may face discrimination due to her race, as well as gender-based discrimination. As an equal opportunities employer, we recognise the value of an inclusive environment in which people from differing backgrounds are encouraged to offer fresh ideas, experiences and perceptions.

It is essential that our working environment is free from attitudes or behaviours that have a negative or harmful effect on any individual or group. Such behaviours can subject individuals to fear, stress and anxiety, placing great strain on both work and personal life. This in turn may lead to illness, accidents, absenteeism, poor performance and ultimately individuals leaving the Company. This affects Company safety, the morale of our people and organisational effectiveness.

This policy is designed to prevent any behaviour that is found to be offensive, abusive, intimidating or degrading and to implement a practice of fairness and equality. Should it be found that any behaviour contradictory to this policy has occurred the Company will not hesitate in taking appropriate action. Inappropriate behaviours may be deemed as gross misconduct and the potential outcome of a disciplinary hearing may be dismissal.

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## **2. PROMOTION OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, FAIRNESS, INCLUSION AND RESPECT**

Positive action towards securing equality, diversity, fairness, inclusion and respect in the workplace is undertaken in the following ways:

- Continually reviewing working practices to ensure they do not restrict equality of opportunity or fair practice;
- Raising awareness of equality, diversity, fairness, inclusion and respect and ensuring this is firmly established within the Company culture;
- Regular monitoring and reporting on the make-up of the business to ensure a fully inclusive and diverse workforce;
- Clear focus on recruiting a diverse workforce and ensuring effective integration of all our people upon joining the Company, whether through a TUPE transfer or an external recruitment process;
- Ensuring managers are effectively trained to deliver equality in recruitment, the working environment and all aspects of fair practice in management;
- Eliminating deliberate direct or indirect discrimination of any form and working to comply fully with relevant legislation.

## **3. DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination can be described as:

- Direct Discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than others on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination occurs where a provision, standard or practice puts a person at a disadvantage when compared with others.
- Associative Discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably, intimidated or suffers harassment because of their association with another person.
- Perceived Discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a particular Protected Characteristic. It applies even if that person does not actually possess that characteristic.

The Company is committed to providing all of our people with equality of opportunity, where career progression is based on merit and potential. We will provide a working environment that values and respects the diversity of our current and future people. In light of the above, the Company does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

In deciding whether or not discrimination has taken place the Company will primarily look at all of the allegations and the effect they have had on the recipient.

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#### **4. HARASSMENT AND BULLYING**

The Company is dedicated to providing a harmonious working environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment will be tolerated. The following are types of behaviour that are considered unacceptable, whether or not associated with a protected characteristic. This is a collection of examples rather than an exhaustive list:

##### **A. Bullying and victimisation**

- Persistent criticism and personal abuse, either in public or private, which humiliates or demeans another individual.
- Direct or indirect exclusion of an individual causing them to feel alienated.
- Malicious or spiteful behaviour towards an individual or assassination of their character to others.
- Behaviour found to cause intimidation or degradation.

##### **B. Unwanted physical conduct**

- Unnecessary touching, patting or brushing against another's body.
- Physical threats, assaults, bodily harm to another or coerced sexual behaviour.

##### **C. Unwanted verbal conduct**

- Unwelcome advances, derogatory or patronising titles or nicknames, lewd or suggestive comments, innuendos, offensive jokes or banter that refer to a person or group's gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political beliefs, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Offensive, unprofessional and inappropriate language.

##### **D. Unwanted non verbal conduct**

- Inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory emails, messages (including texts or other e-messaging), graffiti or visual displays, including the display of pornographic material.

It should be noted, however, that managers have the right to manage. A distinction must be made between the type of conduct described in 'A' above and a manager asking and encouraging an employee to carry out their duties to the required Company standards. As part of our processes, managers are required to monitor an employee's progress and give constructive feedback on a regular basis. This is good management practice, which is designed to support the employee; it does not constitute bullying, harassment or victimisation.

#### **5. STANDARDS FOR OUR PEOPLE**

All our people are expected to accept personal responsibility for implementing and adhering to the principles of this policy. Our people have a responsibility to behave in a way that is not offensive to others and to encourage others to do the same.

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They are also expected to take part in regular training in support of this policy and the Equality and Diversity policy.

Should an individual believe they are a victim of discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment they should raise their concerns through the Company's grievance procedure. In the first instance, this will require the individual to notify their line manager of the issue. This may require escalation to a more senior manager if appropriate.

Should an individual witness unfair or discriminatory treatment to a fellow colleague it is essential that they make their own line manager, local Head of People or the People Support Centre, aware.

Any individual who fails to adhere to this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. In particular, should it be found that an individual has either discriminated against or harassed another individual or group of individuals, this may be deemed as gross misconduct and the potential outcome of a disciplinary hearing may be dismissal.

## **6. STANDARDS FOR THE MANAGER**

It is the manager's responsibility to ensure this policy becomes a reality in the workplace, taking preventative measures to stop any form of inequality or harassment. This can be achieved through regular communication of this policy to all our people and new starters, leading by example and taking a zero tolerance stand point should any form of discrimination or harassment actually occur.

Specifically, a manager must:

- Undertake training so that they understand their responsibilities in relation to this policy and the Equality and Diversity policy;
- Ensure that all individuals are recruited, remunerated, promoted and trained on objective criteria, having regard for their relevant skills and abilities;
- Ensure that no individual applying for a role in the Company is placed at a disadvantage by conditions or requirements which are not necessary to the performance of the job, or which constitute indirect unfair discrimination;
- Look to identify opportunities to introduce diversity, inclusion and flexibility. This may include a review of working practices and patterns, practical changes to the working environment or additional training;
- Ensure that all new starters are made aware of this policy when they join the Company;
- Ensure that all new starters are made aware of the Company approach to equality and diversity when they join the company and carry out all mandatory online training;
- Ensure that all individuals are clear on the procedure for raising a complaint should an employee feel they have been treated unfairly or without dignity;

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- Promote a tolerant, fair, respectful and inclusive working environment and take action if a member of your team is harassed by a third party.

If you have any queries regarding this policy, please speak to your line manager or the People Support Centre.



**RICHARD LEE**  
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**WILLMOTT DIXON HOLDINGS LIMITED**

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