

POL HR_011

Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work and in Recruitment Policy

1. Specific Policy

1.1 Our commitment

The organisation is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and against partners, donors, clients and suppliers.

1.2 The law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

It is generally unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise a member of the public based on any of the protected characteristics in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

1.3 Dignity at work

The organisation is committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Some harassment is unlawful discrimination and serious harassment may be a criminal offence.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end.

Examples of bullying would include picking on someone or setting her/him up to fail or making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics, which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age, that:

- has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating her/his dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for her/him, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Examples of harassment would include: physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault; unwelcome sexual advances; demeaning comments about a person's appearance; unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age; excluding an individual because she/he is associated or connected with someone with a protected characteristic, eg her/his child is gay, spouse is black or parent is disabled; repeated name-calling related to an individual's religion or belief, ignoring an individual because she/he is perceived to have a protected characteristic (whether or not she/he does, in fact, have that protected characteristic), eg an employee is thought to be Jewish, or is perceived to be a transsexual; the use of obscene gestures; and the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person, e.g. magazines, calendars or pin-ups.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to her/him and to have her/his feelings respected by others. Behaviour that any reasonable person would realise would be likely to offend will be harassment without the recipient having to make it clear in advance that behaviour of that type is not acceptable to her/him, e.g. sexual touching. It may not be so clear in advance that some other forms of behaviour would be unwelcome to, or could offend, a particular person, e.g. certain "banter", flirting or asking someone for a private drink after work. In these cases, first-time conduct that unintentionally causes offence will not be harassment but it will become harassment if the conduct continues after the recipient has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to her/him.

A single incident can be harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

If you think you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to sort out matters informally. The person may not know that her or his behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. You may feel able to approach the person yourself, or with the help of someone else at the organisation. You should tell the person what behaviour you find offensive and unwelcome, and say that you would like it to stop immediately, if you feel comfortable doing so.

If an informal approach does not resolve matters, or you think the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint by using the organisation's grievance procedure. In the case of grievances about bullying or harassment, the normal grievance procedure is modified so that you can choose whether to raise your grievance with your manager or with another manager.

All complaints will be investigated promptly and, if appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser. You will have the right to be accompanied by a work

colleague of your choice at any meeting dealing with your grievance. You will be kept informed of the general progress of the process of investigation and the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings.

The organisation will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible.

You have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint in good faith, even if the complaint is not upheld. However, making a complaint that you know to be untrue may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

1.4 Equal opportunity and diversity in recruitment

Flowminder is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and equitable workplace where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. We firmly believe in the value of diversity and are committed to providing equal opportunities for every candidate, irrespective of their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, or any other protected characteristic. Our recruitment process is designed to reflect this commitment and promote fairness, transparency, and non-discrimination.

1.4.1 Key principles

- **Non-Discrimination:** Flowminder strictly prohibits discrimination of any kind during the recruitment process. We are committed to ensuring that no candidate is subject to unfair treatment, bias, or disadvantage based on any personal characteristic.
- **Equal Access:** All candidates shall have equal access to job opportunities within Flowminder. Our recruitment process is designed to provide a level playing field, allowing candidates to showcase their skills, qualifications, and potential without facing any barriers.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** We recognize that diversity in our workforce enriches our organisation and enhances our ability to fulfil our mission. We actively seek candidates from diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences to create a vibrant and innovative work environment.
- **Accommodations:** Flowminder is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to candidates with disabilities to ensure they can fully participate in the recruitment process. Candidates are encouraged to communicate their accommodation needs during the application process.

1.1.2 Practices and implementation

- **Unbiased Screening:** Our screening and shortlisting processes are structured to eliminate bias and ensure that all candidates are evaluated based on their qualifications and abilities relevant to the job.
- **Diverse Panel:** Whenever possible, interview panels will comprise individuals from diverse backgrounds to minimise unconscious bias and provide a comprehensive assessment of candidates.

- **Inclusive Language:** All job descriptions, communication, and materials used in the recruitment process will use inclusive language that welcomes candidates of all backgrounds.
- **Training and Sensitisation:** Employees involved in the recruitment process, including hiring managers and interviewers, will receive training on diversity and inclusion principles to ensure a fair and unbiased process.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We regularly review our recruitment practices to identify opportunities for enhancement in promoting diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity.

1.5 Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist the organisation to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation, for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, partners, or donors are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary procedure. Conduct of this type will often be gross misconduct which can lead to dismissal without notice.

2. Related Documents

POL HR_007 Disciplinary Procedure

POL HR_003 Grievance Procedure