

Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

Policy Statement

Our key objective from this policy is to remain committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all employees and job applicants. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals can make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment and in which all decisions are based on merit.

We do not discriminate against employees based on their sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, disability, or age (“protected characteristics”). The principle of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity applies equally to the treatment of former employees, visitors, client, and suppliers by members of our staff.

All employees have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and therefore to always treat colleagues with dignity and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, former staff, visitors, client, and suppliers. In some situations, we may be at risk of being held responsible for the acts of individual members of staff and will not therefore tolerate any discriminatory practices or behaviour within our workplace and workforce in its overall entirety.

This policy and accompanying procedure do not form part of any employee’s contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. The Company may also vary any parts of this procedure, including any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

The policy assumes an involvement of HR within the process to train and uphold the values in this policy.

Legislation and Codes of Practice

This policy conforms to the current international legislation and relevant codes of practice in the countries within which the Company operates. We will continually monitor this policy to ensure we are compliant with the requirements of relevant underpinning legislation and aim to exceed the requirements of legislation wherever possible

Definitions

The policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, home-workers, part time and fixed term employees, casual, agency employees and volunteers (collectively referred to as “employees” in the Policy).

Scope

This policy applies to:

- The advertising of jobs, recruitment, and selection
- Training and development
- Opportunities for promotion
- Conditions of service
- Benefits and facilities and Pay
- Annual Leave
- Conduct at work
- Grievance and Disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment

Personnel Responsible for Implementing the Policy

The Company Board of Directors (the Board) has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and for the effective operation of this policy and delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating this policy and procedure to all Line Managers.

Line Managers responsibilities:

- Holding a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the Company's' aims and objectives regarding equal opportunities.
- To seek support from HR in addressing training needs where appropriate.

Human Resources responsibilities:

- To support and guideline Managers and employees in understanding and complying with the policy
- Review and provide training to the Company in Equality and Diversity.

All employees' responsibilities:

- All employees are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives.

Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination by or against an employee is prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to one or more of the protected characteristics set out in the Policy statement. For example, rejecting a job applicant on the grounds of their race because it is considered that they would not “fit in” could be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. Such a requirement would have to be objectively justified.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else’s complaint.

Bullying is also prohibited. Bullying is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

Recruitment and Selection

Management will ensure that recruitment, selection, training, development and promotion procedures result in no job applicant, employee or worker receiving less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010 which are race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin and caste; religion or belief; disability; sexual orientation; pregnancy or maternity; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; and age.

Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Job descriptions and their selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and not disproportionate.

Job advertisements should avoid stereotyping or use words that may discourage particular groups from applying.

Advertisements for all job vacancies will be placed with the Job Centre nationally with specific local advertising where appropriate. We will actively engage with local employment providers to supply a selection of candidates reflective of the local demographics.

Competency/Evidence Based Interviews are conducted and provide objective criteria. Combined with evidence supplied by the candidates of how they meet the required specification, can conduct tasks and responsibilities of the post-holder will lead to the short listing of candidates. The highest scoring applicants will be offered the position.

Applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which apply to specific jobs. For example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Formal qualifications and standards of literacy and numeracy will only be considered when they are recognised as necessary for a particular job, for example: Master, Chief Engineer, Group Financial Accountant. Also note the special rules regarding recruitment of Seafarers, below.

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective staff, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a valid passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from our recruitment team, recruitment@briggsmarine.co.uk and from the UK Border Agency.

We aim to provide feedback to candidates within a seven-day period from receipt of request. All complaints regarding the recruitment service can be placed with hrrsupport@briggsmarine.co.uk.

Recruitment of seafarers

Where the language of the vessel on which a seafarer is based is not their native language, we will assist with language training for the candidate to undertake an approved language certification.

Certification of seafarers

Determining on the role held, appropriate medical certification is required e.g., ML5 and ENG1. Where restrictions are placed, e.g., no lone working, solo watch keeping we will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

Disclosure Scotland and CRB

For certain positions we will request enhanced disclosure. This requirement will be clearly stated during the job application process.

Induction

All employees will be required to follow an appropriate induction process to ensure they are equipped to conduct their job.

Recruitment Monitoring

All applicants will be asked to complete an anonymous monitoring form as part of the application pack (to be returned in a separate envelope and not to the recruitment team).

Upon appointment, employees will be asked to complete a monitoring form.

Monitoring forms will monitor Equality and Diversity data for statistical analysis. Recruitment statistics will be produced on an annual basis, presented to the Board, and associated stakeholders for review. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

Staff Training and Promotion and Conditions of Service

Staff training needs will be identified through regular staff reviews. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made based on merit.

The composition and movement of staff at various levels will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

All vacancies will be advertised internally and externally, where appropriate.

Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all employees who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Pay

Pay grades are regularly reviewed against a cross selection of market rates, data analysis of Pay and Total Reward is produced and are reviewed annually by the Board. These mechanisms are designed to ensure that pay awards are based on objective criteria, free from discrimination and have due regard to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.



Annual Leave and Religious Holidays

We will not ask about an employee's religion and will not discriminate against anyone wishing to celebrate their festivals. Employees are required to use part of their annual holiday entitlement to cover time off for these and must follow the normal holiday booking procedure.

Termination of Employment

We will monitor redundancy criteria and procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures are conducted fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in the giving of disciplinary warnings, dismissal, or other disciplinary action.

Disability Discrimination

Disabled employees, candidates or those who become disabled in the course of their employment are encouraged to discuss their condition with their Line Manager and or HR. This is enabling the Company to support as appropriate.

If difficulties are experienced at work due to a disability, then the individual should discuss with their Line Manager and or HR reasonable adjustments that could be considered to overcome or minimise the difficulty.

We may engage the assistance of an Occupational Health medical professional and or your medical adviser (s) or medical adviser (s) as appointed by the Company to assist with the identification of reasonable adjustments.

We would consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

We encourage employees to seek support from Access of Work to support and provide guidance to them in relation to considering reasonable adjustments. Contact details are available from HRSupport@briggsmarine.co.uk and Direct.gov.uk.



Fixed Term Workers and Agency Workers

We monitor our use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion, and permanent employment opportunities. We will, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

Part-Time Workers

We monitor the conditions of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately and follow a compliant Flexible Working procedure.

Contractors and Consultants

All contractors and consultants are requested to review our policy and comply with the behaviour we expect in our workplace.

Clients

Any client complaints received should be referred directly to the associated Divisional Director.

Breaches of the Policy

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against, subjected to harassment, victimisation or bullying you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed acts of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Continual Improvement

We will actively seek to continually improve our stance and compliance with Equality and Diversity.

We will engage and consult with all Clients, Social Partners, and all other associated stakeholders to ensure engagement in this process.





Marine & Environmental Services

Related policy documents

All policy and procedure documents are located on QPulse. Contact Human Resources in the first instance to discuss related policy and procedure documents associated and referred to in this policy.

Direction of Queries

Any additional issues relating to this Policy not expressly covered in this document should be referred in writing to Human Resources in the first instance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Collieson Briggs".

Collieson Briggs

Managing Director

Briggs Marine and Environmental Services

March 2022

