EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

POLICY STATEMENT

Options Resourcing embraces diversity and aims to promote the benefits of diversity in all of our business activities. We seek to develop a business culture that reflects that belief and strive to ensure that our clients meet their own diversity targets.

Options Resourcing is committed to diversity and will promote diversity for all employees, workers and applicants. We will continuously review all aspects of recruitment to avoid unlawful discrimination. Options Resourcing will treat everyone equally and will not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's "protected characteristic" under the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) which are age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

All staff have an obligation to respect and comply with this policy. Options Resourcing is committed to providing training in equal opportunities and diversity and inclusion.

Options Resourcing will not discriminate unlawfully when deciding which candidate/temporary worker is submitted for a vacancy or assignment, or in any terms of employment or terms of engagement for temporary workers, Options Resourcing will ensure that each candidate is assessed in accordance with the candidates' merits, qualifications and ability to perform the relevant duties for the role.

Options Resourcing will endeavour to:

- Create a work culture that values diversity, inclusiveness and respect, and empowers our staff to reflect those values in their dealings with the client and all other stakeholders.
- Promote equal access to the Senior Management.
- Provide clear, meaningful information about what we do and how we do it to our customers, potential customers and other stakeholders in ways that best suit their needs.
- Ensure that we provide an accessible service to all our customers, and that our processes allow us to provide that service.
- Identify as early as possible any individual requirements that may be needed to ensure a customer is able to fully access our service.
- Explain clearly what we are able to do to meet the individual needs of our customers.
- Be responsive to changing needs and requirements.

DISCRIMINATION

Under the Act unlawful discrimination occurs in the following circumstances:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic. Treating someone less favourably means treating them badly in comparison to others that do not have that protected characteristic.

It is unlawful for a recruitment consultancy to discriminate against a person on the grounds of a protected characteristic:

- in the terms on which the recruitment consultancy offers to provide any of its services;
- by refusing or deliberately omitting to provide any of its services;
- in the way it provides any of its services.

Direct discrimination can take place even if the individual does not have the protected characteristic but is treated less favourably because it is assumed he or she has the protected characteristic or is associated with someone that has the protected characteristic.

Direct discrimination would also occur if the recruitment business accepted and acted upon instructions from an employer which states that certain persons are unacceptable due to a protected characteristic, unless an exception applies. The Act contains provisions that permit specifying a requirement that an individual must have a particular protected characteristic in order to undertake a job. These provisions are referred to as occupational requirements.
Where there is an occupational requirement then the client must show that applying the requirement is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, i.e. the employer must be able to objectively justify applying the requirement. An occupational requirement does not allow an employer to employ someone on less favourable terms or to subject a person to any other detriment. Neither does an occupational requirement provide an excuse against harassment or victimisation of someone who does not have the occupational requirement.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice (PCP) is applied but this results in people who share a protected characteristic being placed at a disadvantage in comparison to those who do not have the protected characteristic. If the PCP can be objectively justified it will not amount to discrimination.
Indirect discrimination would also occur if the recruitment business accepted and acted upon an indirectly discriminatory instruction from an employer.
If the vacancy requires characteristics which amount to an occupational requirement or the instruction is discriminatory but there is an objective justification, Options Resourcing will not proceed with the vacancy unless the client provides written confirmation of the occupational requirement, exception or justification.
Options Resourcing will use best endeavours to comply with the Act and will not accept instructions from clients that will result in unlawful discrimination.

HARASSMENT

Under the Act, harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that relates to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. This includes unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.

Options Resourcing is committed to providing a work environment free from unlawful harassment.
Options Resourcing will ensure that the consultants do not harass any individual.

Examples of prohibited harassment are:

1. verbal or written conduct containing derogatory jokes or comments;
2. slurs or unwanted sexual advances;
3. visual conduct such as derogatory or sexually orientated posters;
4. photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures which some may find offensive;
5. physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or any interference because of race, disability, sex or any other protected characteristic basis;
6. threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favours;
7. retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

If an individual believes that they have been unlawfully harassed, they should make an immediate report to the HR Department followed by a written complaint as soon as possible after the incident. The details of the complaint should include:

- Details of the incident
- Name(s) of the individual(s) involved
- Name(s) of any witness(es)

Options Resourcing will undertake a thorough investigation of the allegations. If it is concluded that harassment has occurred, remedial action will be taken.
Any individual who Options Resourcing finds to be responsible for harassment will be subject to the disciplinary procedure and the sanction may include termination.

VICTIMISATION

Under the Act victimisation occurs when an individual is treated unfavourably because he/she has done a 'protected act' which is bringing a claim for unlawful discrimination or raising a grievance about discrimination or giving evidence in respect of a complaint about discrimination.

COMPLAINTS AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

Options Resourcing has in place procedures for monitoring compliance with this policy and for dealing with complaints of discrimination. Any discrimination complaint will be investigated fully.

Options Resourcing recognises that an equal opportunities policy requires regular reinforcement and monitoring of its effectiveness and therefore:

- The Directors will have responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of the stated policy.
- Ensure that all personnel policies and procedures are regularly updates in the light of their practical application and that these policies and procedures include reference to equal opportunities.
- Ensure regular consultation with staff to review progress and amendments to policy and procedures.
- Ensure that the policy will be accessible to all employees electronically and can be obtained from the HR department upon request.

AUTHORISED BY:

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