



Cert. no. GB17229



Pet&r

Personnel, Equality, Training and Recruitment

Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out Pet&r LLP's approach for achieving equality. Its purpose is to make clear the Partnership's commitment to adopting and actively supporting policies, procedures and practices designed to achieve equality.

We have made a series of decisions about what sort of organisation we wish to operate. The implementation of this policy will support our core philosophy and beliefs.

- ◆ We believe that equality and diversity are crucial for organisational success, and essential for individual well-being.
- ◆ Flexibility and the willingness to innovate are the keys to helping individuals achieve work-life balance.
- ◆ We are committed to helping individuals and organisations, through support and example, to behave in a manner that is consistent with the principles of fairness and efficient management practice.
- ◆ The activities and materials used, and the behaviour of the Partners or associates involved in any project will at all times reflect current legal requirements and recognised best practice. In particular we will comply with any company or departmental policy and procedure made known to us as long as it meets the minimum requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Scope

This policy relates to the provision and purchase of services, as well as the Partners' voluntary activities in the community, and their engagement of associates, employees, workers, etc. People covered by the provisions of the policy include: Partners; associates; volunteers; workers; students, pupils, or trainees; suppliers; providers of services; representatives of partner organisations; clients, participants, candidates, and service users.

Policy Statement

As Partners in Pet&r LLP we support equality of opportunity for everyone and are committed to providing services fairly to all sections of the community. We recognise that people may experience discrimination and disadvantage or may be affected by previous discrimination or disadvantage. Therefore we will seek to identify and eliminate unjustified discrimination in our own activities, and to challenge it elsewhere.

Partners: Peter R. Hammond, BSc (Hons), MA, DipPM, Chartered FCIPD, MBPSS, MInstLM, FITOL, MBILD and Lynne E Hammond BSc(Hons), MA, MInstLM, MCMI,
Tel: 01642 576405 Fax: 01642 337562 E-mail: peter@petandr.co.uk Web-site: www.petandr.co.uk
6 Fen Moor Close, Hemlington, Middlesbrough, TS8 9RQ

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As providers of services we will continue to pursue equality of opportunity through the development and review of our policies, procedures and practices. We will seek to recognise and meet individuals' needs, whilst remaining within our legal powers and available resources. In accordance with current legislation we aim to ensure that we do not discriminate unfairly in relation to any of the protected characteristics directly or indirectly, by perception, association, or through discrimination arising out of disability. The protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex (gender); and sexual orientation. Furthermore, we will ensure that an individual's breastfeeding requirements, do not result in them receiving a lower standard of service from the partnership or our associates.

When purchasing services we will seek to ensure that provider organisations operate to similar standards and provide services in a manner which complies with our policy. Any suppliers who are found to discriminate in relation to any aspect of the Equality Act 2010 will be removed from the suppliers list. This includes first and third party harassment under the Act.

Any associates used will be suitably qualified, experienced and fully briefed. We will only use people that we trust with our reputation and whose skills and experience fit the project. Associates will be selected purely on merit.

Through voluntary work, the Partners will promote the principle of equality and encourage good practice throughout the local community.

Implementation

This equality and diversity policy will be communicated in writing and explained to everyone involved at the start of any projects during induction and in our memoranda of understanding, proposals, tenders, and / or programme handbooks. It is also available on our web site.

However, equality will not be achieved simply by distributing a policy statement. Effective implementation depends upon everyone understanding his or her individual responsibilities. Implementation of the policy will therefore be supported through the delivery of relevant training and guidance.

Identifying the need for action

Appropriate action aimed at achieving equality will be identified as part of the Partnership's service planning and review processes; as well as in response to complaints and comments by individual service users. The Partners will be responsible for considering and giving approval for any necessary action.

In addition we recognise the value of positive action in addressing issues of disadvantage, and will use it where we believe that:-

- People who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage associated to that characteristic;

- People who share a protected characteristic have needs that are different from the needs of people who do not have that characteristic;
- Participation in an activity by people who share a protected characteristic is disproportionately low.

Provided that the conditions about the disadvantage are met, and the action is balanced or proportionate, we will use positive action for:-

- Enabling or encouraging people to overcome or minimise disadvantage;
- Meeting different needs;
- Enabling or encouraging participation;

We recognise that positive discrimination is not allowed except where necessary to remove a barrier in respect of disability.

Complaints

Harassment (including third party harassment) is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating dignity, or which is hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive to someone with a protected characteristic or in a way that is sexual in nature. Victimisation is treating someone unfavourably because they are taking, might take, or are supporting someone taking action under the Equality Act 2010.

Allegations of discrimination, victimisation or harassment towards or by clients, associates, participants or third parties will be treated seriously and investigated fairly and thoroughly by the Partners. If the investigation upholds complaints of this nature the following penalties will apply:

Associates – will be coached as to correct behaviour and our expectations. We will monitor performance and if there is no improvement or any repetition, they will be removed from the associates list and will not receive work from Pet&r in the future. In cases of a significant breach or unprofessional behaviour, they may be removed from our associate list immediately.

Participants – will be coached as to correct behaviour, given time to improve and their employer informed. If they persist, or the complaint is particularly serious, they will be removed from the course and may not be allowed to attend future Pet&r courses.

Clients - will be coached as to correct behaviour and given time to amend their approach. If they persist, or the complaint is particularly serious, they may be removed from our client list.

If issues of Equal Opportunity are raised by participants or candidates in relation to their employer's attitude to their attendance on courses etc. these will be raised with the employer in a sensitive and professional manner. If necessary we may withdraw from a client if we feel that they are in significant breach of Equal Opportunities legislation.

Monitoring and Review

Participant equality data is gathered and recorded for every course and project, subject to client approval. Equality is a standard agenda item for quarterly project review meetings and biannual business development meetings. At these meetings a report is given which briefly describes the characteristics of cohort make up and any equal opportunity issues which have arisen since the last meeting. This data is kept on file for auditing purposes.

Issues relating to this policy will be monitored and reviewed as part of the Partners' approach to continuing professional development. Where appropriate we will seek professional guidance or undertake training.

The equality and diversity policy will be reviewed annually by the Partners in line with all other corporate policies and practices.

The Partners of Pet&r LLP fully support this Policy.

Anyone wishing to discuss this policy can contact Peter Hammond, Partner on 01642 576405 or via e-mail to peter@petandr.co.uk



Partners: Peter Hammond



Lynne Hammond