

Equality & Diversity Policy

Introduction

AGS values the benefits that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation and is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination in the workplace. AGS understands and takes seriously its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

AGS will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, social class, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will strive to build a culture that values openness, fairness and transparency. In addition, discrimination on the basis of work pattern (full-time, part-time, fixed term, contract or flexible) will also not be tolerated.

Our Aim and Commitment

AGS will continually strive to ensure that everyone in its workforce is:

- Treated fairly and without discrimination during their time working with AGS, commencing with the recruitment process.
- Selected for employment, promotion, training or any other work-related benefit, on the basis of aptitude, ability and merit.
- Fairly appraised and rewarded for their contribution to the organisation, taking into account internal and external comparisons and affordability.
- Able to work in a healthy and safe workplace environment.
- Able to access opportunities for training and development to develop to their full potential.
- Supported in balancing work and home life commitments and has requests for support/ flexibility considered objectively.
- Treated with dignity and respect in a fair and consistent manner in an environment where inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable.
- Not subject to intimidation, bullying or harassment in the workplace.

Roles & Responsibilities

All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy. Behaviour, actions or words that breach this policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with AGS' Disciplinary Policy.

Scope

The policy is applicable to all employees, clients, communities, suppliers and subcontractors, whether permanent or temporary, with whom AGS interacts. The policy applies to all processes relating to employment and training and to any dealings with communities and clients. Decisions relating to communities and clients will be based on business-related criteria only and any irrelevant information will not form part of the process.

Implementation

AGS implements this policy via the following:-

- **Leadership** - top-level ownership in the beliefs and principles of this policy, with a commitment to provide awareness and fairness throughout the organisation to ensure staff and management maintain AGS' aims of equality and diversity.

- **Measurement** - workforce metrics are collected and compared with sector and best practice organisations, as well as with in-house objectives set by the Board. These metrics are reviewed at the Management Review held by the Board and Senior Management Team every 6 months.

Opportunity exists to review these metrics also on an ad hoc basis when completing tender bids for client contracts.

- **Training and HR** - diversity and equality competencies are embedded into development programmes and assessment and selection processes, for both recruitment and training purposes.
- **Communication and consultation** - key lines of communication exist across the business, supported by a 360° communications plan developed through consultation with key stakeholders. Communication wording, imagery and graphics are inclusive of all members of the workforce. Mainstream business communications reinforce the inclusive messages and are reflected in day-to-day processes.
- **Integration and diversity within work teams** - staff are actively encouraged to work within other teams where possible to aid integration of new people into the business, breaking down barriers and pre-conceived ideas where they may exist and improving working relations within AGS as a whole. Our experience shows that diversity within the teams enables the business to benefit from mixed skills, ideas and innovative working methods, which in turn helps the business and the individuals within it to thrive.
- **Audit** - sample checks are undertaken to ensure this policy is being adhered to in practice, (for example) via review of recruitment and selection processes, review of the application of promotion criteria, content of communications, and by seeking feedback from the workforce.
- **Managing potential breaches of this policy** - allegations of potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with our procedures. Individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result of having voiced their concerns. However, false allegations of potential breaches which are found not to have been made in good faith will be dealt with via our Disciplinary Policy.

The policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis to reflect changes in the law, demographics and internal business requirements.



Signed

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Andrew Sim, Group Managing Director

Date: 22 January 2024