

Equal Opportunities Statement

Policy statement

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for its employees and job applicants and will value and respect their diversity. We recognise that everyone has a contribution to make and will aim to ensure that all organisations and individuals with whom we have contact will be treated fairly and in an unbiased way. We are committed to taking action to promote equality and to value diversity and will work to address unfair treatment, discrimination and prejudice where found within the workplace and in its work in the sector. We will work within current legislative frameworks and promote best practice.

It is expected that these beliefs will underpin all of our work. At all times we aim to:

- Select, recruit, develop and promote the very best people, basing judgement solely on suitability for the role;
- Ensure all applicants and employees receive fair and equal treatment;
- Act with respect and in a manner which recognises diversity as an asset and does not discriminate in respect of race, gender, disability and/or learning difficulty, age, sexual orientation or religion and belief;
- Maintain a supportive and inclusive working environment free from harassment and intimidation;
- Ensure that existing and incoming legislative Acts based on a stated right to equal treatment are strictly adhered to;
- Deal efficiently and effectively with any complaints of alleged discrimination and/or harassment, ensuring all such complaints are fully and fairly investigated and that remedial action is taken where necessary.

Harassment

Harassment can take many forms and can be aimed at or be delivered by an individual or a group. By way of example people can be subjected to harassment on the following grounds:

- Race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, sex or sexual orientation;
- Religion or political conviction;
- Willingness to challenge harassment, leading to victimisation;
- Disability, sensory impairment or learning difficulties;
- Age or youth, whether actual or perceived.

IFL will take reasonable steps to ensure the elimination of harassment. Harassment of any type or degree will not be tolerated and deliberate harassment is considered gross misconduct.

Employee responsibility

Employees are expected to fully comply with the equal opportunities policy and may be disciplined if they are found to be in breach of it. Deliberate acts of discrimination or harassment are considered gross misconduct.

Discrimination or harassment procedure

If you are the subject of harassment, your complaint can be made formally or informally. In either case, it will be dealt with promptly.

Informally, you may either speak to your Manager or ask a colleague to speak in confidence on your behalf. They will offer advice and may investigate further. Formally, employees should use the grievance procedure. In the event of the grievance being against your direct Manager, you should make your complaint directly to a Council Member. Employees must appreciate that the Institute may only be able to take formal action if a formal complaint is made.

Employees are assured that allegations of harassment will be dealt with quickly and taken seriously. Under no circumstances should it be feared that an employee would be victimised for making or being involved in a complaint. Victimisation of a complainant is in itself a disciplinary offence.