

Equality

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

Declaration of intent

Joanne Wood Design (JWD) is an Equal Opportunities organisation and has a legal and ethical responsibility to act fairly, as an employer, and in the provision and delivery of its services. This means that JWD will do everything possible to ensure that every client is treated fairly, and that every potential job applicant/employee has equal access to employment opportunities, training, promotion and is treated with dignity and respect.

- 1.1 JWD is committed to taking positive action to fight unlawful discrimination in every respect of its work.
- 1.2 JWD is an equal opportunities employer. The aim of its equal opportunities policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, HIV antibody status, AIDS, age or disability, nor should they be disadvantaged by requirement. JWD will strive to redress any imbalance that may become evident.
- 1.3 JWD will endeavour to establish a broad base for consultation to identify priorities and needs as reflected by the black and minority ethnic population at large, and in all campaign work will maintain the objectives stated above.
- 1.4 The Director shall review the content and effectiveness of the policy whenever a new staff appointment is to be made, and at other times as may be necessary. The Director is responsible for the policy's day to day implementation.
- 1.5 JWD will monitor and review the composition of its executive committee with the aim of promoting a broad-based representation.
- 1.6 JWD will endeavour to ensure that suppliers adhere to the same standards.

Recruitment of staff

- 2.1 A written job description and person specification shall be prepared in respect of every vacancy that arises and every new post that is created. It shall be checked and agreed by the staff and honorary officers for direct and indirect discrimination, including culture-bound assumptions and ageism before the recruitment procedures commence. Applicants should be made aware that general life experience and voluntary as well as paid work are valued.
- 2.2 All jobs will be advertised externally and as widely as possible. Adverts should clearly state the minimum requirements for the post.
- 2.3 At both the short-listing and the appointment stage, brief notes shall be made on each application indicating clearly why the applicant has or has not been short-listed or appointed.

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- 2.4 All interview panels must include women. Members of staff will be involved at all stages of the selection process in an advisory role. Whenever possible, an external assessor shall be invited to join the panel in a non-voting capacity.
- 2.5 An open invitation will be given to short-listed applicants with a disability to discuss their specific needs and requirements. JWD will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the specific needs of disabled employees are met.
- 2.6 During each interview, notes should be taken and at the end of the interview a report will be produced, assessing their response to the topics and themes raised. These should be reviewed at the end of the interview process by the panel to see that each candidate has been treated fairly.
- 2.7 Questions on the following topics are forbidden in an interview. Any candidate who is asked these questions has the right to refuse to answer. It is the responsibility of the Chair, or any other member of the panel to stop such questions being asked:
- marital status
 - sexual orientation
 - occupation of partner
 - number of children/domestic arrangements
- 2.8 An equal opportunity section should be included on the application form. The equal opportunities policy and the purpose of monitoring should be clearly explained.

Training

- 3.1 New staff should be inducted into the staff development and training policy and made aware of training opportunities available to them, and be positively encouraged to take them up. All reasonable facilities will be offered to staff to take study leave.

Support

- 4.1 All workers should have access to support. If a worker feels isolated, provision should be made for support from other parts of JWD or outside the organisation. The setting up of like minded support groups by employees should be actively encouraged.

Discipline and grievance procedures

- 5.1 It will be made clear to all employees that discrimination, abuse or harassment on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality—if proven—is a dismissible offence.

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The scope of this policy

6.1 This policy applies to:

- all staff employed by JWD irrespective of funding agent.
- all aspects of promotional, educational, and campaigning functions of JWD.
- members and affiliate organisations. JWD would expect its membership to concur with and actively promote these objectives.

Implementation

JWD recognises the importance of legislative measures and seeks to ensure that equality of opportunity in employment and service provision is available for all. JWD recognises and is mindful of the following legislation:

- Equal Pay Act (1970).
- Sex Discrimination Act (1975).
- Race Relations Act (1976).
- Disability Discrimination Act (1995).
- Human Rights Act (1998).
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001).
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000).
- EU Equal Treatment Framework Directive (2000).
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations (2003).
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003).
- Civil Partnership Act (2004).
- Gender Recognition Act (2004).
- Disability Discrimination Act (2005).
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (2006).
- Equality Act (2006).
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006).

In addition, JWD is mindful of future planned legislation that may have an impact on employment and service provision.

In order to implement this equal opportunities policy, JWD accepts that it needs to ensure that all members and staff involved in selection and recruitment within the organisation are given adequate and appropriate training in:

- interview techniques.
- codes of practice.
- disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Equal opportunity in service delivery

8.1 JWD is committed to ensuring equality of access to all its services. The Director will take action to provide genuine equality of opportunity to counter past discrimination and to monitor the outcome. The companies staff will aim to ensure

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that no sector of the community shall be denied access or receive a poor service on the grounds of age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnicity or religious belief.

The staff will aim to ensure that all its services will be provided in line with this anti discrimination policy.

8.2 Corporate Organisational Arrangement

- The Director will be responsible for the overall implementation of the equal opportunities policy their respective services.
- All staff have a duty to implement JWD's equal opportunities policies.

Review

- 9.1 JWD will monitor and review the effectiveness of this equal opportunities policy on an annual basis.

Information

- 10.1 This document shall be circulated to all employees and job applicants.