

Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Rebound seeks to employ a workforce that reflects the diverse community within which the Business operates. As part of our commitment to the highest standards of employment practice, we aim to provide equality of opportunity and fairness to all employees. Diversity in our workforce is not only ethically right and legally sound, but is also to the benefit of the Business and its customers.
- 1.2 By wholeheartedly supporting equal opportunities through our selection, learning and development policies and talent management we can ensure that the best people are recruited and retained and the potential of all employees is recognised and developed.
- 1.3 We recognise that discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying are damaging for individuals causing stress, anxiety and placing strain on work and personal life.
- 1.4 We value the talents, skills, experience and different cultural perspectives brought by people and aim to provide our employees with a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origins, colour, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, religion and belief or associated reason.
- 1.5 We will not tolerate acts that breach this policy and any allegations of such behaviour will be taken seriously. Disciplinary action may be taken as appropriate and breaches may constitute gross misconduct under the Rebound disciplinary policy.
- 1.6 People in our care or supervision, contractors and suppliers are subject to, and protected by, these same standards.
- 1.7 We recognise the need to ensure the communications needs of the diverse groups we employ and in our care are met. We will comply with the relevant provisions of the Welsh Language Act and provide, where appropriate, language translation support services.
- 1.8 We are also committed to treating employees fairly and equally and ensuring that all decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career opportunities, terms and conditions of employment are based solely on objective and job related criteria.
- 1.9 Employees have a responsibility to incorporate the principles of equal opportunities into the way they work, not to induce others or to be influenced by discriminatory practice and not to victimise, harass or bully individuals who have made complaints or provided information either during or after the employment relationship has ended. Where these standards are not met, the Business will take appropriate action.
- 1.10 This policy and procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. The Business reserves the right to change or cancel provisions of this policy in its entire discretion at any time.

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 All employees have responsibility for the application of the Diversity and Equality Policy and managers have responsibility for ensuring that all employees are aware of this policy and to ensure that employees are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
- 2.2 The Business will not tolerate discrimination, victimisation or harassment on any grounds and has a zero tolerance to such behaviour.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 **Diversity** is about valuing and promoting inclusivity, respecting the differences between people and committing to equality of opportunity and fairness. Diversity encompasses valuing differences of culture, ethnicity, race, gender, nationality, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, life experiences, opinions and beliefs. Diversity is about changing attitudes and eliminating barriers so that everyone who has the ability to do so is able to progress as far as they would like within the Business.
- 3.2 **Discrimination** occurs as a result of prejudice, misconception and stereotyping. Often these are based on assumptions, however they can prevent us from making the right decision and stifle the development of the talents and abilities of our employees. Discrimination can be direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional.
 - **Direct discrimination** is where a person is, or would be, treated less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances.
 - **Indirect discrimination** is where a condition or requirement is applied to all people, but in practice is such that people in certain groups are disadvantaged or unable to comply and it cannot be shown to be objectively justified or a proportionate means of delivering a legitimate aim.
- 3.3 **Harassment** is unwanted conduct, which violates the other person's dignity or creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may include offensive physical, verbal and non-verbal behaviour on the basis of sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, age or other personal characteristics. Harassment can be determined by the perception of the victim and may be intentional or unintentional.
- 3.4 **Bullying** is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- 3.5 **Victimisation** is treating a person less favourably because they have made a complaint or intend to make a complaint about harassment or discrimination or have given evidence or information in a case or is suspected or intends to do so.

4 Disability

- 4.1 We are committed to focusing on 'individuals' abilities, not disabilities. This extends to people with any form of disability, which may be for example, of a mental, physical, learning or sensory nature, and whether they are registered as disabled or not.
- 4.2 We aim to prevent both direct and indirect discrimination against people with disabilities during the recruitment process and whilst they are employed. We are committed to making a particular effort to offer employment to suitably qualified people with disabilities.
- 4.3 We are also committed to making reasonable adjustments to the working environment where practicable, to accommodate the needs of a disabled employee.
- 4.4 We aim to retain wherever possible existing employees who develop disabilities during the course of their employment.
- 4.5 We will avoid unintentional or passive discrimination by communicating relevant facts about employment and disability and by continually questioning assumptions relating to disability.

5 Cultural and Religious Beliefs

- 5.1 Where employees have particular cultural beliefs including any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief, which may conflict with existing work requirements, we will consider whether it is reasonably practical to vary or adapt these requirements to enable such needs to be met.
- 5.2 Consideration will be given to employees requesting either the accumulation of annual leave or unpaid leave in order to visit relations overseas. We recognise that members of certain religions may request the opportunity to observe prayer times and other religious rites.
- 5.3 We will seek to offer appropriate translation facilities, for example in the communication of grievance and disciplinary procedures, and use alternative or additional methods of communication where employees find it difficult to understand health and safety requirements.

6 Age

- 6.1 We are committed to preventing discrimination based on a person's age.
- 6.2 We will offer employment to candidates with the required qualifications, skills and experience.
- 6.3 Owing to the nature of our work and the requirements of relevant legislation, individuals under the age of 18 years will only be employed in non operational roles and those under the age of 16 years will not be employed.
- 6.4 Our normal retirement age is 65 and we will consider requests to remain in employment beyond this.

7 Race

- 7.1 We will prevent discrimination against anyone directly or indirectly because of their colour, race, religion, nationality and ethnic or national origins.
- 7.2 We are committed to promoting racial equality and aim to identify, and as far as possible, remove the barriers that prevent people from minority ethnic groups from gaining access to employment, promotion and training opportunities.

8 Gender and Gender Reassignment

- 8.1 We are committed to providing equal opportunities to all employees whether they are male or female. The Business will not tolerate discrimination, victimisation, intimidation or harassment on the basis of someone's gender or gender reassignment.

9 Sexual Orientation

- 9.1 We are committed to providing equal opportunities to all employees irrespective of their sexual orientation. The Business will not tolerate discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the basis of someone's sexual orientation.

Procedures

10 Procedure for Handling Complaints about Discrimination or Harassment

- 10.1 In line with our grievance and harassment policies all internal complaints of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment will be investigated sensitively and the Business will undertake a full investigation of any allegation that is made.
- 10.2 Complaints against service users, contractors and suppliers should be reported and the manager of the department informed.

11 Practice and Monitoring

- 11.1 The Division is committed to providing training and education about the ways in which diversity and equality can be promoted and discrimination, victimisation and harassment can be prevented.
- 11.2 Complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly, sensitively and without prejudice, and employees will be encouraged to speak to their manager immediately in the event of a problem of this nature.
- 11.3 All employees and job applicants are asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form denoting their gender, race, ethnic origin and disabilities. We guarantee that this information will only be used for the purposes of monitoring the effectiveness of the Business's diversity and equality policy during the recruitment process.
- 11.4 Diversity and equality information during employment will be monitored to analyse underlying trends to take actions to avoid indirect discrimination in our policies and procedures. These include recruitment and selection, performance assessment, promotion, grievance, discipline and retention.

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