

Date Reviewed: April 2026
Approved by: Senior Management Team
Next Review Due on: April 2027

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

Paces Sheffield is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce and any job applicants and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our clients, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing services - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of clients or the public.

This policy applies to all job applicants, employees, workers and volunteers of Paces Sheffield.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

Purpose

This policy's purpose is to set out our approach to:

(a) Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.

(b) Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

(c) Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes, (but is not limited to):

- recruitment
- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and disciplinaries
- dismissal

- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, volunteers, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts) and on work-related trips or events, including social events.

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

Our Commitments

Paces Sheffield commits to:

- (a) Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- (b) Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. The Senior Management Team are responsible for this policy and any necessary training relating to it. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, volunteers, clients, suppliers and the public.

- (c) Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, volunteers, clients, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- (d) Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- (e) Make decisions which concern staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

- (f) Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- (g) Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy that will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.