

FW | **FRESHWATER**

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Made available in larger print and braille

COMMUNICATION THAT DELIVERS. RESULTS THAT MATTER.

1. Introduction

The Freshwater Group recognises that unlawful discrimination is unacceptable in any form, and is committed to treating individuals with dignity and respect.

As an organisation Freshwater is dedicated to providing an environment that is free from any form of harassment, intimidation, victimisation, or discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

2. Policy Statement

Freshwater will ensure that it is fully aware of its responsibility towards the promotion of equal opportunities and is properly equipped to take account of the diverse needs of particular groups when providing services.

As an organisation, Freshwater will endeavour to look beyond the traditional concept of disadvantaged groups and recognises the need to value each individual in their own right. The organisation values will also inform the conduct of all people within the organisation, and individuals will be afforded equal treatment regardless of:

- Race, ethnicity, nationality/citizenship.
- Gender.
- Transgender.
- Social background.
- Ability/disability.
- HIV/AIDS.
- Religion/belief.
- Age.
- Marital status/civil partnership.
- Sexual orientation.
- Responsibilities as carers.
- Pregnancy or maternity.

We are therefore committed to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.
- Promote good relations between people of different races.
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others.
- Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities.
- Eliminate harassment.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, people of all ages, races, regardless of gender, sexual orientation or religion or belief .
- Eliminate discrimination and harassment that is unlawful under the Single Equality Act 2010 including the provisions and requirements regarding equal pay.
- Promote the use of Welsh language in our service provision.
- Promote equality of opportunity between all individuals.

In order to ensure best practice in all areas of employment we shall develop, implement and monitor employment policies and procedures for:

- Recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, interview and selection procedures.
- Training and development.
- Promotion and career development opportunities.
- Terms and conditions of employment, and access to employment related benefits and facilities.
- Harassment and Bullying.
- Absence.
- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures.
- Selection for redundancy.

The Freshwater Group will keep its policies under review and will implement changes where these could improve equality of opportunity and diversity. This commitment applies to all the company's employment policies and procedures, not just those specifically connected with equal opportunities.

3. Our Commitment

Many people in our society experience exclusion and discrimination for many reasons and as an employer we are committed to addressing all forms of discrimination and valuing diversity in our workforce.

We commit ourselves to promoting an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect and dignity.

In support of this commitment we undertake to:

- Develop an equality and diversity action plan and set realistic, yet challenging goals and targets to help us meet our aims.
- Ensure The Freshwater Group's commitment to equality and diversity will be highlighted in all our recruitment documentation, advertising, brochures and publications.
- Provide full and fair consideration for all job applicants including Welsh speaking candidates, providing access to our brochures, policy documents and other publications through the medium of Welsh.
- Require all those involved in recruitment and selection to undergo training in the principles of fair selection.
- Provide training and support for all employees to help them meet their full potential, career aspirations and meet organisations goals.
- Monitor and modify our employment practices and premises to ensure accessibility and to reduce barriers to employment and training.
- Monitor and review all our practices and policies to ensure they are fair and reflect best practice.
- Promote best practice in all areas of the workplace through clear guidance regarding equality of opportunity and establishing key principles and monitoring arrangements.
- Encourage mutual respect within a caring environment through celebrating and valuing diversity and challenging and removing unfair practices.
- Raise awareness through induction, training and sharing good practice.
- Meet and exceed the legal obligations required by the relevant legislation.
- Review and update policies and procedures to ensure new and existing legislation and best practice is embedded.

- Challenge and remove unfair practices by developing policies and procedures where grievances, concerns and complaints can be raised and appropriate, speedy action taken.

All employers and subcontractors of The Freshwater Group are expected to contribute to meeting the following challenges to the benefit of the business:

- Understand, value and welcome diversity.
- Ensure that our clients receive fair and equal treatment.
- Treat everybody with respect, consideration and without prejudice.
- Promote the same levels of behaviour with their colleagues and associates.

We require that all employees and subcontractors recognise and discharge their responsibilities for contributing to the success of this policy. Directors, managers and staff, will be expected to provide evidence of their contribution to its successful implementation and are provided with training to ensure awareness of legislation and best practice.

This will entail all employees identifying and removing inappropriate behaviour and changing practices that perpetuate inequality and taking the necessary action to challenge unfair practices.

All subcontractors, managers and staff, are required to conduct themselves in accordance with this Equality and Diversity Policy. They are required to take personal responsibility in this area and show evidence of their commitment to fairness and equality in their service provision.