

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Encore Personnel Services believes that our success is a direct result of the experience and quality of our employees. We are, therefore, committed to focusing our employment procedures and practices on maximizing the potential of each unique individual. We believe this is best achieved by developing our employees' talents, whilst recognising their differences.

Encore Personnel Services is committed to diversity and will promote diversity for all employees, workers and applicants. Encore Personnel Services will treat everyone equally and will not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's "protected characteristic" under the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) which are age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We will not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's membership or non-membership of a Trade Union.

By treating people fairly and equally and by accepting and embracing their diversity, we can also improve our market competitiveness, foster innovation, enhance our corporate social responsibility and create an inclusive and positive working environment for all employees.

It is the policy of the Company that no person acting on our behalf shall discriminate in any situation against another individual or group, directly or indirectly, because of age, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief or sexual orientation. Encore Personnel Services also endorses the principle that the workforce at each location should reflect, as far as is reasonably possible, the community within which it operates.

These principles apply to recruitment selection, training, promotion, transfer, pay and benefits and performance appraisal procedures, in addition to all terms and conditions of employment.

SCOPE

This policy covers all Encore Personnel Services' employees, regardless of position or status, and contractors and subcontractors.

AIMS

- To ensure equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and community
- To offer fair treatment in every aspect of working life in Encore Personnel Services, from our written procedures through to every decision made
- To promote a culture where each employee and colleague is treated with respect and dignity and recognises the value that a diverse workforce can bring

To achieve these aims, Encore Personnel Services commits to the following:

- Ensure that the principles of this Policy are embedded in HR strategy and all policies and procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed

- Provide awareness training and guidance to all employees and managers to ensure Encore Personnel Services commitment to diversity is known and understood. This will be achieved mainly through Diversity Awareness Training as part of our Induction, Managers Training Academy, our Employee Handbook and Encore Personnel Services connections Managers' Guide
- Challenge and investigate discriminatory behaviour and enforce the disciplinary procedure, when this is considered necessary
- Communicate and regularly review the positive initiatives that have been implemented and ensure ever-wider access to them
- Support the communities in which we live and work to ensure that we are involved, accessible and socially responsible
- Work with external groups and advisory bodies to keep up to date with market practice and how issues are dealt with

RECRUITMENT

Encore Personnel Services recruitment and selection procedure is based solely on the necessary and justifiable job requirements and the individual's suitability.

Job profiles and person specifications are drawn up for every post to be filled. Where posts are advertised externally, consideration is given to the most appropriate outlets to ensure that a wide range of potentially suitable applicants have the opportunity to apply.

Selection methods, including interviews, are conducted in accordance with documented and standardised procedures and checklists, designed to ensure that discrimination forms no part of the recruitment process. The objective is to make each appointment on the grounds of selecting the most suitable candidate for the post.

Encore Personnel Services ensures that all staff are given an opportunity to take part in both job specific training and have an individual Personal Development Plan designed to promote their opportunities and career advancement within Encore Personnel Services. The appraisal process is carried out in accordance with clear and laid down criteria to ensure that its application is free from discrimination at every stage.

SELECTION FOR PROMOTION

Whenever undertaking processes to select between groups of staff, for instance for promotion or in redundancy situations, Encore Personnel Services undertakes to ensure that a fair and consistent procedure is applied and that the selection criteria applied are free of discrimination and based on objective assessments of competence. Promotion opportunities are available to all of our employees on an equal basis.

FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST

Encore Personnel Services recognises the benefits of flexibility in working arrangements. Furthermore, we recognise the rights of all employees working under such arrangements to be treated fairly and consistently in comparison to fulltime, permanent employees and to be given the same opportunities for development.

The treatment of pay and benefits for employees on flexible working arrangements is consistent with full time entitlements, wherever possible, these are provided on a pro rata basis.

PAY AWARDS

Encore Personnel Services arrangements for determining employees' salaries are based on the principle of rewarding individual merit and of providing equality of pay and reward for all employees.

We operate a variety of pay review mechanisms which are designed to ensure that pay awards are based on objective criteria, free from discrimination and have due regard to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

While it is hoped and intended that most problems relating to employment in Encore Personnel Services can be resolved on an informal basis, the Grievance Procedure exists so that causes of genuine concern can be dealt with equitably.

Any employee who believes he/she has been discriminated against should raise the matter under the Grievance Procedure, or where appropriate, the Bullying and Harassment Policy, or by using the Open Door Policy (where any employee can discuss any matter with her/his manager or another manager or any Director, in complete confidence).

By having clear and well-publicised grievance and harassment procedures in place, Encore Personnel Services ensures that every opportunity is given to address any area or situation where discrimination is perceived to have arisen.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Encore Personnel Services takes a serious view of any and all discrimination and breaches of this Policy are deemed as misconduct. Any such actions will be investigated as possible disciplinary offences and dealt with in accordance with the Company's Disciplinary Procedure.

All staff have a shared responsibility to ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy is adhered to and to promote dignity and equality of opportunity and outcome at work.

PART TIME WORKER

This policy also covers the treatment of those employees and workers who work on a part-time basis, Encore Personnel Services recognises that it is an essential part of this policy that part-time employees are treated on the same terms, with no detriment, as full-time employees (albeit on a pro rata basis) in matters such as rates of pay, holiday entitlement, maternity leave, parental leave and access to our pension scheme. Encore Personnel Services also recognises that part-time employees must be treated the same as full-time employees in relation to training and redundancy situation.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT POLICY

Encore Personnel Services recognises that any employee or worker may wish to change their gender during the course of their employment with the Company.

Encore Personnel Services will support any employee or worker through the reassignment.

Encore Personnel Services will make every effort to try to protect an employee or worker who has undergone, is undergoing or intends to undergo gender reassignment, from discrimination or harassment within the workplace.

Where an employee is engaged in work where the gender change imposes genuine problems Encore Personnel Services will make every effort to reassign the employee or worker to an alternative role in the Company, if so desired by the employee.

Any employee or worker suffering discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment should have recourse to the Company's Grievance Procedure.

RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

Where Encore Personnel Services has registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and has the authority to apply for criminal records checks on individual because they are working with children or vulnerable adults or both, we will comply with the DBS's Code of Practice which includes having a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders.

DISABLED PERSONS

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated unfavourably as a result of their disability.

Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied by or on behalf of an employer, or any physical feature of the employer's premises, places a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

When a disabled person or anyone with special needs applies for a job in Encore Personnel Services, we always consider applications based on relevant skills, experience and knowledge. If you are disabled or have special needs, Encore Personnel Services will do its best to adapt the job and the workplace to meet the needs of individuals.

In recruitment and selection there may be a requirement to make reasonable adjustments. For example, it might be necessary to have different application procedures for partially sighted or blind applicants that enable them to use Braille. With testing and assessment methods and procedures, tests can only be justified if they are directly related to the skills and competencies required for the job. Even then, it might be appropriate to have different levels of acceptable test results, depending on the disability. For example, an applicant with a learning disability might need more time to complete a test, or not be expected to reach the same standard as other non-disabled applicants.

Reasonable adjustments in recruiting could include:

- modifying testing and assessment procedures
- meeting the candidate at alternative premises which are more easily accessible
- having flexibility in the timing of interviews
- modifying application procedures and application forms
- providing a reader or interpreter

Wherever possible Encore Personnel Services will make reasonable adjustments to hallways, passages and doors in order to provide and improve means of access for disabled employees and workers. However, this may not always be feasible, due to circumstances creating such difficulties as to render such adjustments as being beyond what is reasonable in all the circumstances.

Encore Personnel Services will not discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the arrangements i.e. application form, interview or arrangements for selection for determining whom a job should be offered
- in the terms on which employment or engagement of temporary workers is offered
- by refusing to offer, or deliberately not offering the disabled person a job for reasons connected with their disability
- in the opportunities afforded to the person for receiving any benefit, or by refusing to afford, or deliberately not affording him or her any such opportunity
- by subjecting the individual to any other detriment (detriment will include refusal of training or transfer, demotion, reduction of wage, or harassment).

Encore Personnel Services will make career opportunities available to all people with disabilities and every practical effort will be made to provide for the needs of staff, candidates and clients.

Under the Act, it is unlawful to directly or indirectly discriminate against or to harass or victimise a person because of age. Age discrimination does not just provide protection for people who are older or younger. People of all ages are protected.

A reference to age is a reference to a person's age group. People who share the protected characteristic of age are people who are in the same age group.

Age group can have various references including:

- Under 21s
- People in their 40s
- Adults

Encore Personnel Services will not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any person on the grounds of their age. We will encourage clients not to include any age criteria in job specifications and every attempt will be made to encourage clients to recruit on the basis of competence and skills and not age.

Encore Personnel Services is committed to recruiting and retaining employees whose skills, experience, and attitude are suitable for the requirements of the various positions regardless of age. No age requirements will be stated in any job advertisements on behalf of the company.

If Encore Personnel Services requests age as part of its recruitment process such information will not be used as selection, training or promotion criteria or in any detrimental way and is only for compilation of personal data, which the company holds on all employees and workers and as part of its equal opportunities monitoring process. In addition, if under age 22, to adhere to Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Business Regulations 2003 and other relevant legislation applicable to children or young candidates.

Where a client requests age or date of birth, this will have to be under an occupational requirement or with an objective justification which should be confirmed in writing.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Whilst we all have a collective responsibility to ensure this Policy is successfully adopted, there are specific responsibilities within this:

The Group Board

The Board of Directors fully endorses this Policy and holds ultimate responsibility for reviewing and achieving its aims. The Board of Directors recognises its role in being responsible and accountable for the development of diversity awareness in Encore Personnel Services and, as such, will lead by example.

Managers

All managers are responsible for implementing and enforcing this Policy and ensuring that their teams and employees are aware of their responsibilities. Managers should promote, respect and encourage each employee to reach their full potential and deal appropriately with any breach of this Policy. Managers will ensure all employees are trained and made aware of their responsibilities under this Policy, through Diversity Awareness Training, induction, Managers Training Academy, our Employee Handbook and Encore Personnel Services connections.

Employees

All employees of Encore Personnel Services, at every level, have an individual responsibility for ensuring equality of opportunity and adherence to this Policy. This can be achieved by respecting the right to work in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination, exhibiting the correct behaviours and challenging colleagues who fall short of these expectations.

Human Resources

This Policy is owned by the HR Director, who is responsible for its effective implementation and regular review. This is continuously reviewed across all related policies. HR will monitor employment practices and provide relevant advice and support to managers in championing diversity across the Company.

Monitoring

We continuously review this Policy, together with all of our employment policies and practices to maintain our focus on equality of opportunity.

To ensure that this Policy and other procedures are operating effectively, HR will continue to monitor and measure the records of our employees, benchmark our performance as a Company and ensure that any patterns or trends are identified and resolved.

To achieve the aims and commitments of this Policy, the HR team will ensure that further regular monitoring will take place. This will be in the form of:

- HR monitoring of our central employee database, to ensure the application and effectiveness of this Policy.
- Raising any issues or trends regarding diversity with the Divisional Directors.