

## *Equal Opportunities Policy*

### Introduction

[Integrated Services Design Ltd](#) is committed to provide Equality of Opportunity for all job applicants and employees. Recognising the importance of good employment practices and efficient use of the Company's most valuable resource, its employees, the Company will ensure that individuals are selected, trained, promoted and otherwise treated on the basis of their aptitudes, skills and abilities. It will exclude consideration of an applicant's/employee's sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, religion, political opinion, sexual orientation, disability or age. The Company will not directly or indirectly discriminate on any of the above grounds.

- 1.1 Every employee has personal responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy. Overall responsibility for the operation of this policy lies with the Directors who will:
  - i) periodically review the operation of the policy to take account of changing circumstances
  - ii) monitor the composition of the workforce and job applicants, as specified in Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, and
  - iii) carry out the statutory periodic review of employment procedures and practices as specified in Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.
  
- 1.2 The Company's management at all levels has responsibility for the successful application of this policy by:
  - making the policy known to all employees.
  - not discriminating against or harassing job applicants or, in the course of employment, employees.
  - not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination.
  - outlawing harassment or bullying of any description
  - bringing to the attention of employees that they will be subject to disciplinary action for failure to adhere to the policy.
  - maintaining a neutral environment and not permitting on the premises the display of any flags, emblems, posters, graffiti, or the circulation of materials, or the deliberate articulation of slogans or songs which are likely to give offence or cause apprehension among particular groups of employees.
  
- 1.3 All employees have the responsibility to ensure that they assist the Company in implementation of the policy by :
  - not discriminating in the course of employment against fellow employees, job applicants or members of the public with whom contact is made.
  - not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination.
  - reporting to the management any discriminating action.

- refraining from participating in any action which is likely to give offence or cause apprehension among particular groups of employees.
- 1.4 Any employee who harasses or bullies any other employee on the grounds of race, sex, religion, political belief, age, disability, physical appearance or who otherwise breaches this policy, will be subject to the Company's disciplinary procedure.
- in serious cases, discrimination, harassment or bullying will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and, as such, will result in summary dismissal, in the absence of mitigating circumstances.
- 1.5 Recruitment and selection for employment will be conducted in accordance with the Company's Recruitment and Selection Policy and decisions taken on the basis of merit.
- 1.6 The Company will adopt appropriate affirmative action measures, as necessary, including the setting of goals and timetables, to ensure the provision of equality of opportunity and fair participation.

## **Statement of Policy**

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Senior Management Team to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Integrated Services Design Ltd.

It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

Gender, marital or family status  
Religious belief or political opinion  
Disability  
Race<sup>1</sup> or ethnic origin  
Nationality  
Sexual orientation

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All full-time and part-time employees and job applicants (actual or potential) will be treated fairly and selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice, it also makes sound business sense. Our equal opportunities policy will help all employees to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

We are committed to:

Preventing any form of direct or indirect discrimination or victimisation  
Promoting equal opportunities for women and men  
Securing fair participation for Catholics and Protestants  
Promoting equal opportunities for people with disabilities  
Promoting equality opportunities for ethnic minorities  
Promoting a good and harmonious working environment where all men and women are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment will be tolerated  
Fulfilling all legal obligations under the relevant legislation and associated Codes of Practice  
Taking any necessary positive/affirmative action, including setting goals and timetables.

Breaches of our equal opportunity policy and practice will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

## **Implementation**

The Managing Director has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each director, manager and supervisor also has responsibilities and we expect all of our employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment, which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy, we will ensure that:

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document the word “race” is to be understood, in line with the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order, to include colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins. Irish Travellers are recognised by the Order as being members of a racial group.

The policy is communicated to all employees, through induction training, display on notice board, written statement main terms and conditions of employment, and made known to job applicants  
All employees are aware of their responsibilities through appropriate and regular training  
An equal opportunities programme will be developed and will include a range of initiatives, indicating where appropriate affirmative/positive action, with targets and timetables  
Appropriate training and guidance will be provided, including training on induction and management courses. In particular, all those involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory recruitment and selection techniques  
Consultation will take place with recognised trade unions/employee representatives on the implementation of this policy and any amendments to practice  
An information system will be established to assist the effective implementation of this policy and guidelines will be drafted for assessing the provision of equality of opportunity  
Adequate resources are made available to fulfil the aims of this policy

### **Affirmative Action**

Where appropriate, lawful positive action measures such as special encouragement in advertisements or special training will be developed. These measures are available to us in certain circumstances, for example where there is an under-representation of a particular group in specific areas of work.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The provision of equality of opportunity between women and men will be monitored through the collection and analyses of statistical data on the sex, marital status and family status of all full-time and part-time employees and job applicants. We will also monitor our workforce composition and undertake periodic reviews as required by Section 31 of the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1989.

Progress on the implementation of this policy and any equal opportunities and affirmative/positive action programmes will be reviewed annually in consultation with the recognised trade unions/employee representatives. A joint employer/employee equal opportunities committee will be established for this purpose.

### **Complaints**

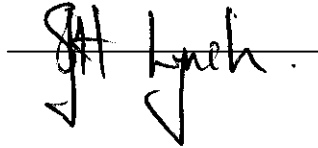
Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures. A copy of these procedures is available from the office manager. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

These internal procedures do not replace or detract from the right of the employees to pursue complaints under the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 to an industrial tribunal or, under the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1976, to a Fair Employment Tribunal. Information on definitions of discrimination and time limits for raising complaints are set out in the Glossary to this statement.

Every effort will be made to ensure that employees making complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

*Date:* 26<sup>th</sup> June 2007

*Signature:*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. H. Lynch", written over a horizontal line.

Managing Director

## **GLOSSARY**

### **Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another on the grounds of their sex, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, race, nationality or ethnic/national origin.

### **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination can occur when a requirement or condition, which can not be justified on grounds other than sex, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, race, nationality or ethnic/national origin, is applied equally but has the effect in practice of disadvantaging a considerably higher proportion of persons in one or other of the above groups.

In order to establish a complaint of indirect discrimination, and applicant must show the following:

- (i) That a requirement or condition has been applied
- (ii) That the said requirement or condition adversely impacts against the person because of his/her religious belief, political opinion, sex, marital status, race, nationality or ethnic/national origin
- (iii) That he/she has suffered detriment by reason being unable to comply with the condition or requirement

### **Disability Discrimination**

Disability discrimination occurs when, for a reason related to his/her disability, a disabled person is treated less favourably than other people and this treatment cannot be justified. It also occurs when an employer fails to comply with the duty to make a reasonable adjustment in relation to the disabled person and the failure cannot be justified. An employer cannot justify less favourable treatment if, by making a reasonable adjustment, it would remove the reason for the treatment.

### **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because that person has, for example, asserted rights under any of the discrimination laws or has helped another person to assert such rights or given information to the relevant statutory body, or because it is suspected that the person might do any of these things.

### **Complaints**

Complaints of sex/marital status, race/nationality/ethnic/national origin and disability discrimination should be lodged with the industrial tribunal within three months from date of the alleged act of discrimination.

In respect of equal pay, the complaint can be lodged at any time while the person is in the job or within six months of leaving the job.

Complaints to a fair employment tribunal must be lodged within three months from which a complainant first knew, or might reasonably have known, of the act of discrimination or within six months from the date when the act occurred, whichever is earlier.

