



## **Policy Statement on Equality and Diversity**

### **Introduction**

At AGGORA we believe that equality, diversity and respect for people have a bearing on all aspects of our business and the environment in which we operate. As a Company which greatly values its reputation for acting ethically, we are committed to pro-actively promoting diversity and appreciating the differences that diversity provides.

We recognise the value of an environment in which people from differing backgrounds and experiences are encouraged to offer fresh ideas and perspectives.

### **Scope**

The Company is committed to ensuring that all employees, customers, contractors and suppliers are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. This policy statement encompasses the nine Protected Characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

### **Principles and Intentions**

Aggora is actively working to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and diversity and the aim of this policy is to:

- Eliminate unfair discrimination, prejudice, harassment, bullying and victimisation from within our own workplace;
- Value people and their difference and enabling all of our employees to achieve their full potential, creating vitality within the Company;
- Treat people with dignity and respect, recognising the value of each individual;
- Promote equality of opportunity and diversity awareness within the Catering Engineers Industry;
- Promote equality and diversity within our supply chain partners;
- Contribute to the diversity work of our client partners;
- Tailor our service delivery to meet the diverse needs of the communities in which we operate.

### **For our staff**

We aspire to increase motivation and productivity for all our staff by providing career opportunities based on merit and potential. We will provide a safe, secure and accessible working environment that values the diversity of our employees and future employees. As an equal opportunities employer, we recognise the value of a workforce in which people from differing backgrounds are encouraged to offer fresh ideas, experiences and perceptions. We will ensure that our employees understand diversity issues through our awareness raising programmes.

### **For our clients and customers and the end users of our services**

We wish to provide an effective service to our clients and to ensure that our approach to Diversity is in line with theirs. We are committed to delivering our services to our customers, clients and to the public in a fair, equal, inclusive, and non-discriminatory way and aim to contribute to the communities in which we work. We will work in partnership with our clients, customers, and communities to identify appropriate ways in which we can contribute.

### **For our industry**

We are committed to working with other catering engineering companies to eliminate unfair discrimination and to improve the understanding and awareness of diversity issues within our industry. Where appropriate, we will work with our supply chain partners to achieve the same. Those who have Preferred Supplier status with us are required to demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity through policy, procedure, and practice.

### **Putting Policy into Practice**

Through our 'Dignity at Work' policy Aggora complies with all statutory employment obligations by:

- Ensuring that all policies and procedures are in line with relevant employment and health and safety legislation, and good practice guides and do not restrict equality of opportunity or fair practice;
- Offering services fairly by ensuring that anyone in contact with the company is treated with respect, and making provisions where possible and appropriate for those groups whose needs and expectations are less well met;
- Targeting activities to include, where appropriate, particular groups or communities who may otherwise be excluded;
- Providing training to employees to facilitate a full understanding of this approach to equality and diversity;
- Providing an opportunity for feedback;
- Responding promptly and taking action where unfair or disrespectful treatment, discrimination, bullying or harassment are shown to have occurred;
- Exploring particular needs arising from diversity with individual staff and, where possible and practicable, accommodating these needs;
- Ensuring that employees receive fair and equal treatment in relation to their employment, regardless of whether they are full time, part-time or temporary; Eliminating unfair treatment and discrimination through human resource policies and activities;
- Recruiting and valuing a workforce based on relevant and applicable skills and ability; Protecting our employees from discrimination or harassment by other employees or by members of the public.

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination can be described as:

- Direct Discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than others on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination occurs where a provision, standard or practice puts a person at a disadvantage when compared with others.
- Associative discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably, intimidated or suffers harassment because of their association with another person.
- Perceived discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a particular Protected Characteristic. It applies even if that person does not.

In the light of the above, the Company does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. In deciding whether or not discrimination has taken place the Company recognises that discrimination affects people in complex ways and will primarily look at all of the allegations and the effect they have had on the recipient.

### **Promotion of Equal Opportunities:**

Aggora will work towards equality of opportunity in the workplace in the following ways:-

- Continually reviewing working practices to ensure they do not restrict equality of opportunity or fair practice;
- Raising management and employee awareness of equality and inclusion and ensuring equality is firmly established within the company culture;
- Regular monitoring and reporting on the workforce profile to ensure a fully integrated and diverse workforce;
- Recruiting a diverse workforce and ensuring effective integration of all employees upon joining the company, whether through a TUPE transfer or an external recruitment process;
- Ensuring the management population is effectively trained to deliver equality in recruitment, the working environment and all aspects of fair practice in employee management;
- Eliminating deliberate direct or indirect discrimination of any form and working to comply fully with relevant legislation;
- Working with our Supply Chain to promote equality and inclusion;

**Standards for Employees:**

It is the duty of all employees to accept personal responsibility for implementing and adhering to the principles of the Company's Equality and Diversity commitment and Dignity at Work policy. Every employee has a responsibility to behave in a way that is not offensive to others and to encourage others to do the same. All employees must take part in regular training in equality and diversity issues.

Should an employee believe they are a victim of discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment they should seek redress for their concerns through the company's grievance procedure. In the first instance, this will require the employee to notify their line Manager of the issue or a more senior manager if appropriate.

Should an employee be witness to unfair or discriminatory treatment to a fellow colleague it is essential that they make their own line manager, or human resources, aware.

Any employee who fails to adhere to this policy maybe subject to disciplinary action. In particular, should it be found that an employee has either discriminated against or harassed another individual or group of individuals, this may be deemed as gross misconduct and the potential outcome of a disciplinary hearing may be dismissal.

**Standards for Managers:**

It is the manager's responsibility to ensure this policy becomes a reality in the workplace, taking preventative measures to stop any form of inequality or harassment.

This can be achieved through regular communication of this policy to all employees and new starters, leading by example and taking a zero tolerance stand point should any form of discrimination or harassment actually occur.

Specifically, a manager must:-

- Undertake equality and diversity training so that they understand their responsibilities;
- Ensure that all individuals are recruited, remunerated, promoted and trained on objective criteria, having regard for their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities;
- Ensure that no individual applying for a role in the company is placed at a disadvantage by conditions or requirements which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute indirect unfair discrimination;
- Look to identify opportunities to introduce diversity and flexibility into the workforce. This may include a review of working practices and patterns, practical changes to the working environment or additional training;
- Ensure that all new employees are made aware of the Company approach to equality and diversity when they join the company;
- Ensure that all employees are clear on the procedure for raising a complaint should they feel they have been treated unfairly or without dignity whether internally or through an external party;
- Promote a tolerant and respectful working environment.

## **Recruitment and Selection**

Recruitment and selection are key activities where equality of opportunity is important and where discrimination must be avoided. Therefore, Aggora will ensure the following:

- All job performance criteria shall include those requirements which are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.
- All those involved in the recruitment and selection of new staff be trained on equality issues.
- Jobs will be advertised on the company's website to widen the group of suitably qualified and experienced people.
- All selection decisions will be based on merit and suitability.
- The recruitment and selection process will be recorded through notes and decisions will be justifiable in terms of business need and candidate suitability.
- All records will be kept for six months.

## **Training and Organisational Development**

All employees are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities offered. Aggora will not discriminate in the provision of training and development opportunities and will:

- Seek to ensure that employees are developed by the provision of appropriate and accessible learning opportunities in line with organisational needs.
- Ensure that training opportunities are not denied to any groups of the workforce.
- Ensure that promotion is based on job performance, potential and other objective criteria including the individual's merits, abilities, experience and possession of appropriate and required qualifications.
- Provide for all individuals involved in management, performance review, selection procedures and training, the appropriate training and guidance in the law relating to equal opportunities and awareness of their own personal responsibility under the law.
- Ensure that all staff are actively encouraged to understand this policy and related practices and to appreciate its underlying objectives.

## **Harassment and Bullying**

The Company is dedicated to providing a harmonious working environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment will be accepted. The following are types of behaviour that are considered unacceptable. This is a collection of examples rather than an exhaustive list.

### **Bullying and Victimisation**

- Persistent criticism and personal abuse, either in public or private, which humiliates or demeans another individual.
- Direct or indirect exclusion of an employee causing them to feel alienated.
- Malicious or spiteful behaviour towards an employee or assassination of their character to others.
- Behaviour found to cause intimidation or degradation.
- Unwanted physical conduct
- Unnecessary touching, patting or brushing against another's body.
- Physical threats, assaults, bodily harm to another or coerced sexual behaviour.
- Unwanted verbal conduct
- Unwelcome advances, derogatory or patronising titles or nicknames, lewd or suggestive comments, innuendos, offensive jokes or banter that refer to a person or group's gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political beliefs, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Offensive, unprofessional and inappropriate language.

- Unwanted non-verbal conduct
- Inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory emails, text messages, graffiti or visual displays, including the display of pornographic material

### **Company Response to Contravention**

The Company is committed to providing all of our people with equality of opportunity, where career progression is based on merit and potential. We will provide a working environment that values and respects the diversity of our current and future employees.

In the light of the above, the Company does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Where contravention of the Dignity at Work Policy is established the Company will not hesitate to take appropriate action, which may include dismissal. Discrimination, harassment and victimisation are examples of gross misconduct within employee terms and conditions of employment. In deciding whether or not discrimination has taken place the company will look at the allegations and the effect they have had on the recipient.

### **Monitoring**

In order to provide ongoing information about the effectiveness of this policy and the development of a diverse workforce, Aggora will gather and monitor equality data and information across the Company. These will include:

- Workforce and recruitment statistics analysed by equality strands;
- Results of action plans;
- Annual staff satisfaction survey;
- Customer satisfaction responses.

### **Responsibilities**

The responsibility for equality and diversity lies with everyone. Specific responsibilities for ensuring that this approach is implemented throughout the Company are:

- The Managing Director is responsible for establishing this policy across the Company.
- The Managing Director is responsible for implementing this policy within the business units and are required to promote the Company policy and to ensure that all employees are fully aware of diversity issues.
- Managers must ensure that all their staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to it and respond to any allegations of a breach of this policy.
- Employees are integral to the effectiveness of this policy and should seek to practice it in all aspects of their work. Employees should take personal responsibility for their behaviours and actions which should always be in support of the spirit and substance of this policy. If they witness any unfair, discriminatory or disrespectful treatment they should report it to their manager.
- If they feel they have been the victim of such treatment within the work context they should contact an appropriate line manager or their HR Manager.

## **APPENDICES**

### **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

The legal framework which underpins the Aggora Equality and Diversity policy approach includes:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1992
- Asylum and Immigration Act 1996
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equal treatment Directive
- Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Amendment Regulations 2008
- Maternity Rights Act 1987
- Equality Act 2010

The Company also undertakes to comply with any new or updated legislation that may be introduced from time-to-time.

Signed:



Dated: 13th January 2021

Ross Emery  
Managing Director  
AGGORA (a trading division of Bunzl UK Ltd)