

ETHICS, ETHOS & BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

17. Equal Opportunities

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The success of our business depends on our people. Capitalising on what is unique about individuals and drawing on their different perspectives and experiences will add value to the way we do business.

By accessing, recruiting and developing talent from the widest possible pool we can gain an insight into different markets and generate greater creativity in anticipating customer needs. We will constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed.

We all have a responsibility to embrace and support this vision and must continue to challenge behaviour and attitudes that prevent us from achieving this. Using fair, objective and innovative employment practices, our aim is to ensure that:

- All employees, and potential employees, are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment.
- All employees have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour, whether based on sex, trans-gender status, marital status, civil partnership status, pregnancy, race, national origin, caste, disability, age, political affiliation, union membership, religious belief or sexuality.
- All employees have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination.
- We avoid unlawful discrimination in employment and, equally, against customer, suppliers and the society we work in.

The law says that it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment, employment or after employment ends because of a protected characteristic.

Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 simplifies discrimination legislation and creates a more consistent framework, while at the same time extending discrimination protection. The Act defines direct discrimination as less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic, outlined under the Equality Act 2010 as

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

We are liable for acts of unlawful discrimination committed by our employees against other employees or customers in the course of their employment unless we can demonstrate that we have taken reasonable steps to prevent those acts.

McFT Staff Handbook – individual policy

We must ensure that we make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. In addition, we will think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing our services.

Dignity at work

The Company is committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Some harassment is unlawful discrimination and serious harassment may be a criminal offence. This is explained in more detail on our Inappropriate Behaviour Policy.

Your responsibilities

Everyone is required to assist us to meet our commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Acts of discrimination against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure. Conduct of this type will often be gross misconduct which can lead to dismissal without notice.