

Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

Bray and Slaughter Ltd are a leading regional contractor with over 100 years of experience in the fit-out, refurbishment and new-build sectors. The business operates from its regional base in Bristol serving clients in the South West of the UK.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate our approach to equality and diversity and to demonstrate our commitment to eliminate all bias and unlawful discrimination in relation to employees, job applicants, our business partners and members of the public.

Bray & Slaughter Ltd is committed to building an organisation that makes full use of the talents, skills, experience, and different cultural perspectives available in a multi-ethnic and diverse society; where people feel they are respected and valued, and can achieve their potential regardless of race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex (including pregnancy and maternity), marital status (including civil partnership status), gender reassignment, disability, age, trade union membership or non-membership or employment status (for example part time, sub-contractors or agency workers).

We will follow the recommendations and guidance of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and this policy encompasses the following groups:

- Existing employees
- Potential employees
- Sub-contractors
- Clients
- Workers (including agency temps)
- Partners
- The self-employed
- Members of the public
- Suppliers

Aims of the Policy:

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- No-one receives less favourable treatment, on grounds of any protected characteristic (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation); or is disadvantaged by any conditions (for example trade union membership or non-membership, employment status), requirements, provisions, criteria, procedures or practices that cannot be justified on any other grounds.

- No-one is victimised for taking action against any form of discrimination or harassment, or instructed or put under pressure to discriminate against, bully or harass, someone on the above grounds.
- Discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is not tolerated by Bray & Slaughter; any person who breaches this Equality & Diversity Policy will be shown zero tolerance and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- The organisation is free of unwanted conduct that violates the dignity of workers or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, offensive, or humiliating environment.
- Opportunities for employment, training and promotion are equally open to all candidates, candidates from all racial groups, candidates with or without disabilities, candidates of any age, and of any sexual orientation, religion or belief and candidates with any other protected characteristic.
- Selection for employment, promotion, transfer, training, and access to benefits, facilities and services, will be fair and equitable, and based solely on merit.

This policy applies to all aspects of employment, from recruitment to dismissal and former workers' rights.

Definitions:**Protected Characteristics**

Personal and social characteristics for which is it against the law to discriminate against, these include:

- Age
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Partnership status
- Pregnancy and parental leave
- Disability
- Race
- Colour
- Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Religion or belief system

Direct Discrimination

When a person is treated less well, in comparison with someone else, because of his or her racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Examples of direct discrimination: a company refusing to hire suitably qualified people simply because they are of a certain race or ethnic origin, or an employer who specifies in a job advert that only young people should apply even though the job in question could be done perfectly well by an older person

Indirect Discrimination

When an apparently neutral specification, criteria or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.

Examples of indirect discrimination: a translation company insists that all those applying for jobs as translators have driving licenses because there is an occasional need to deliver or collect work from clients. Since this prevents some people with disabilities from applying and as driving is not a core requirement for doing the job, the company is effectively discriminating against this particular group of people, unless it can demonstrate that there is an objective reason to justify this measure.

A department store prohibits its employees from wearing hats when serving customers. This rule means that people whose religious beliefs require them to cover their heads, such as Muslim women, are prevented from working in the shop. The store is indirectly discriminating against this group of people unless it can demonstrate that there is an objective reason to justify the policy.

Bray and Slaughter will take the following steps to put the policy into practice and make sure that it is achieving its aims:

1. The policy will be a priority for the organisation.
2. Mr Joe Payne, (Director) will be responsible for the day to day operation of the policy.
3. The policy will be communicated to all workers and job applicants, and will be placed on the company's website.

4. Workers and their representatives and trade unions will be consulted regularly about the policy, and about related action plans and strategies.
5. All workers will be trained on the policy, on their rights and responsibilities under the policy, and on how the policy will affect the way they carry out their duties. No-one will be in any doubt about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable conduct in the organisation. Unacceptable conduct includes discrimination and harassment at work-related social functions.
6. Managers and workers in key decision-making areas will be trained on the discriminatory effects that provisions, practices, requirements, conditions, and criteria can have on some groups, and the importance of being able to justify decisions to apply them.
7. Complaints about discrimination or harassment in the course of employment will be regarded seriously, and may result in disciplinary sanctions, and even dismissal. The grievance procedure will be published in a form that is easily accessible.
8. Opportunities for employment, promotion, transfer and training will be advertised widely, internally and externally, and all applicants will be welcomed, irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or belief.
9. All workers will be encouraged to develop their skills and qualifications, and to take advantage of promotion and development opportunities in the organisation. All employees carrying out work of 'equal value' will receive equal pay, regardless of their sex, race or any other protected characteristic, and equal pay audits will be carried out as necessary.
10. Selection criteria will be entirely related to the job or training opportunity.
11. We will make reasonable changes to overcome physical and non-physical barriers that make it difficult for disabled employees to carry out their work, and for disabled customers to access our services.
12. We will take a flexible approach to working arrangements. We will consider requests for changes carefully and objectively, and will accommodate them unless it would cause significant difficulties to the business or employees.
13. Information on the ethnic and racial background, gender, disability, and age of each worker and applicant for employment will be collected and analysed, to monitor each stage of the recruitment process. The information will be held in strictest confidence and will only be used to promote equality of opportunity. Information about the religion/belief and sexual orientation of employees may also be monitored. Monitoring may include promotion and training if necessary.
14. If the data shows that people from particular groups are under-represented in particular areas of work, lawful positive action training and encouragement will be considered for workers and others from that group, to improve their chances of applying successfully for vacancies in these areas.

15. Grievances, disciplinary action, performance assessment, and terminations of employment, for whatever reason, may also be monitored by gender, racial group, age, disability, religion/belief and sexual orientation if necessary.

16. Requirements, conditions, provisions, criteria, and practices will be reviewed regularly, in the light of the monitoring results, and revised if they are found to, or might, unlawfully discriminate on any of the above grounds. We will also regularly review advertising, recruitment and application materials and processes, and this policy.

17. All contracts between Bray & Slaughter Ltd and contractors to supply goods, materials or services will include a clause prohibiting unlawful discrimination or harassment by contractors and their staff, and by any sub-contractors and their staff. The clause will also encourage contractors and potential contractors to provide equality of opportunity in their employment practices.

18. The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored regularly. A report on progress will be produced each year, and published via the intranet, the website, the staff newsletter, notice boards, and the annual report.

19. Customers and clients will be made aware of the policy, and of their right to fair and equal treatment, irrespective of race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origins, sexual orientation, gender, religion/belief, disability or age.

20. Fair and equal treatment will be given to customers and members of the public by all staff. The business will investigate any complaints from staff that they are being harassed by a customer for reasons linked to protected characteristics, and take suitable action to prevent further incidents.

21. The business will take all necessary steps to ensure that employees are legally entitled to work in the UK, making sure that employees from outside the EU have permission to work here by checking the validity of documents and keeping copies of them for two years after the employment has come to an end.

22. The company will draw up an Action Plan detailing how this policy will be implemented in practice.

23. Bray and Slaughter aims to pro-actively tackle discrimination and aims to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason.

Table of Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Everyone	All Bray and Slaughter employees will take full responsibility for their actions and behaviour with regard to equality and diversity within B&S. Each individual is liable for their actions, they must ensure that they are always in adherence with this policy and actively welcome different cultures, opinions and views. Everyone is required to attend the appropriate level of training in diversity awareness as set by B&S.
Managers	Bray and Slaughter's Managers are responsible for ensuring that all employees abide by the equality and diversity guidelines set in this policy and that they are embedded into company culture. They will ensure that all employees are fully aware of this policy and that they understand what it means and what their responsibilities are. Managers will ensure that any issues are immediately flagged up and they will release staff for training and also attend training as required.
Directors	The Directors are committed to equality and diversity and are focussed on ensuring that this Policy is implemented and followed in all areas of the business. They will support the Managers and dedicate company time and money to equality and diversity Training as well as ensuring that E&D is on the agenda for all Management Meetings. They will attend relevant training to ensure that they are briefed appropriately regarding the law and their responsibilities.
H&S/E&D Director	The H&S/E&D Director will support the application of equality and diversity in employment practices and will ensure that all employees abide by this Policy. They will also ensure that E&D is continuously a priority for the company throughout meetings and other business practices.
HR	Human Resources oversee this Policy and make sure that it is kept relevant and within the law. They will deliver this plan and provide advice and guidance to employees as required. HR will also develop further policies and procedures where necessary that will further promote equal opportunities.

Bray and Slaughter Recruitment Procedures

Vacancy Advertising

- Wherever possible, all vacancies will be advertised simultaneously internally and externally.
- Wherever possible, vacancies will be notified to job centres, careers offices, schools and colleges etc.
- All vacancy advertisements will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunity.

Selection and Recruitment

- Selection criteria (job description and employee specification) will be kept under review to ensure they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.
- Wherever possible, more than one person must be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process.
- Wherever possible, women, minorities and disabled persons will be involved in the short listing and interviewing processes.
- Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies must be recorded.

Positive Action – Training, Promotion and Conditions of Service

Wherever possible, efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary, unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged and/or under represented groups.

Employment Law

The Equality Act banning of discrimination in employment covers:

- Application Forms
- Interview Arrangements
- Proficiency Tests
- Job Offers
- Terms of Employment
- Promotion, Transfer and Training Opportunities
- Work-related benefits
- Dismissal and redundancy
- Pay
- Discipline, grievances and harassment

This policy has been endorsed by Mr Joe Payne, (Director), and has the full support of the management / board.

The policy was approved on 22 May 2009 following consultation with senior managers, workers, workers' representatives, and trade unions.

Overall responsibility for the effectiveness of the policy lies with Mr Joe Payne. For more information, please contact:

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