



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Post Office is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in all of its practices and aims to establish an inclusive culture, that celebrates diversity, is free from discrimination and based on values of dignity and respect.

Post Office recognises diversity as one of our most important resources because we believe that diversity in our workplace helps us:

- Attract, retain and motivate employees from the widest possible pool of talent.
- Foster a culture that reflects our Ways of Working.
- Improve innovation, creativity and inspire critical thinking.
- Create a dynamic environment that leads to higher performance and well-being and greater employee engagement and satisfaction.
- Improve the connection between our people and the communities we serve.

To demonstrate our Ways of Working and achieve our aims, this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy reinforces the behaviours that we expect to see in everyone employed by Post Office. We and our customers will benefit

from a diverse employee base that reflects the diversity of people that we serve; one that is inclusive, flexible and responsive.

We see equality legislation as setting the minimum standards and we want to go beyond just ticking boxes. In promoting equality, we want all of our people to be treated fairly and to be given the same access to jobs, training and development opportunities.

By inclusion we mean valuing the contribution of everyone who works for Post Office, and encouraging an environment that is receptive, welcoming and inclusive for all our people. For example, we use MS Teams for calls to reduce employee travel, we have flexible working which can allow employees who have caring responsibilities to look after people who depend on them, and we make reasonable adjustments so that employees with disabilities or long term health conditions (both visible and non-visible) are supported to work here.

By making sure we promote equality, diversity and inclusion we will be helping everyone to perform at their best and realise their potential.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Post Office Limited employees, contractors, temporary workers and job applicants including people working on Post Office premises via a third party.

It applies to all aspects of employment which will include for example; recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotions and transfers, conduct, grievance and dignity at work processes, selection for redundancy, work allocation and other employment related activities through to termination of employment.

3. PRINCIPLES

Our objective is to be an open, diverse and inclusive company. To realise this, we are committed to providing a great working environment which recognises that people from different backgrounds, and with different experiences and abilities can bring fresh ideas and innovation to improve our business and practices.

We acknowledge the role that our Trade Unions can play in working jointly to develop a more diverse and inclusive culture in the organisation. The Company commits to working within the existing agreements or to develop these by working together

collaboratively in order to help deliver this equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

We want to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in our culture, and reflected in our people and behaviours, all of which will help us to better serve our customers.

We will endeavour to:

- Provide fair and open access to development opportunities in order to fully utilise the talents of all Post Office employees.
- Improve the recruitment and retention of people from diverse backgrounds.
- Ensure that employment decisions are objective.
- Enhance decision-making and innovation, by encouraging positive interactions and involvement throughout the business.
- Increase our ability to relate to existing and potential customers wherever they exist.
- Build effective and productive relationships in the wider community through partnerships and community-based groups and stakeholders.
- Be committed to exceeding the minimum legal requirements.
- Ensure that people are treated fairly and protected from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation and to take appropriate steps where complaints arise.
- Be committed to reviewing all existing policies within Post Office to ensure they demonstrate our equality, diversity and inclusion values.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone working at Post Office is responsible for ensuring that our values and behaviours are demonstrated through our actions and the way we conduct business.

THE BOARD AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The Board has responsibility for:

- Leading by example and promoting an organisational culture that is supportive of the benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensuring that this policy underpins all aspects of our work by implementing it in their particular business areas, including business plans and objectives throughout the organisation.

The Talent, Diversity and Inclusion Director through the Diversity and Inclusion Manager has responsibility for:

- Developing the culture in which this policy can operate effectively.
- Ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- Reporting annually to the Board on its effectiveness.
- The operation, monitoring and review of the policy.
- Promoting the value and importance of equality, diversity and inclusion.

PEOPLE TEAM

The People team is responsible for ensuring that managers and employees alike are aware of the commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and to work to achieve a more open, inclusive and diverse organisation. The People Team are expected to:

- Lead and support Post Office in creating an inspirational, inclusive and diverse environment.
- Be the custodians of equality, diversity and inclusion and provide constructive challenges when behaviours do not promote or demonstrate equality, inclusion and diversity.
- Coach and support managers to take responsibility of their own behaviours and the behaviours of those they manage.
- Ensure regular reviews and development of this policy are consistent with the equality, diversity and inclusion principles.
- Lead Post Office in meeting its statutory responsibilities. In particular, to lead Post Office in fulfilling its Public Duty under the 2010 Equality Act which includes annual

equality information reporting, equality analysis, monitoring and consultation.

MANAGERS

Additional and specific responsibilities apply to those who manage employees and to those who are involved in recruitment, promotion, training and development. Managers are expected to:

- Ensure that policies and procedures relating to equality, diversity and inclusion are implemented and communicated to all existing employees and new employees when they begin working for us.
- Ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential, identifying appropriate development to meet the needs of their respective areas.
- Promote a professional and positive work environment by being inclusive and open, and challenging behaviour or decisions that breach this policy.
- Raise awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion, act as a role model for others and develop personal skills to promote diversity and inclusion.
- Take accountability for the timely and appropriate action to address and resolve discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation in the work area, in line with People policies, including the [dignity at work](#) and [conduct code](#) policies and procedures where appropriate and necessary.
- Ensure that contractors and suppliers receive a copy of this policy and agree to comply with it.
- All hiring managers must complete Unconscious Bias training on [SuccessFactors](#).
- Complete the Dignity at Work training on [SuccessFactors](#).

EMPLOYEES

All employees are expected to put this policy into practice. We require a personal commitment from every employee to treat each other with respect and dignity and set an

excellent standard of behaviour for others to follow.

Each individual employee has a responsibility to:

- Understand the value and benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Promote a professional and positive work environment and be a role model at all times.
- Promote a culture of inclusivity where differences are accepted, valued and celebrated.
- Inform their line manager of any instances of apparent discrimination or any perceived problem in relation to employment or to the provision of products and services.
- Comply with, and promote, Post Office policy and procedures with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion.

5. HOW WE DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENT

We will ensure that this policy is put into practice by developing an overarching equality, diversity and inclusion strategy, linked to our business plan and strategy. We will take the following steps:

- Provide regular communications about equality, diversity and inclusion via 'One', Yammer, team meetings, notice boards and other appropriate channels.
- Establish monitoring systems that enable the business to understand where it is making progress and where it needs to improve.
- Provide support to our existing diversity and inclusion networks (acting as representatives for employees across the business) and facilitate the introduction of new employee led diversity and inclusion networks.
- Provide ongoing training and development on the positive impact of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Create an environment where people can challenge potentially discriminatory

behaviours, in particular we will have zero tolerance of ageism, classism, disablism, homophobia, racism, sectarianism, sexism and any less favourable treatment of those employee's belonging to a trade union.

- Managers and key decision makers will be trained about equality legislation and its key implications on the business.
- Managers will receive unconscious bias training and diversity and inclusion awareness training to ensure their decision making related to people (with specific regard to recruitment, promotion and providing access to opportunities) is free from any prejudice or bias.
- Opportunities for employment and promotion opportunities will be advertised widely and decision making will purely be based on merit. All applicants will be welcomed, irrespective of gender or marital/family status, race, colour, nationalist, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, belief or any other characteristics protected by law.
- Complaints about discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation will be taken seriously and investigated, which may result in disciplinary sanctions with Post Office.
- [Employee complaints of harassment by customers will be taken seriously and addressed as outlined in the Harassment by Customer Policy.](#)
- Working arrangements such as working hours, maternity and other leave arrangements, performance review systems and any other conditions of employment will not unlawfully discriminate against any employee in a way that cannot be justified on the basis of the protected characteristics.
- Where appropriate, Post Office will endeavor to provide appropriate facilities and working arrangements which take into account the specific needs of employees which arise from their having any of, or being associated with, the protected characteristics.

- Training and development opportunities will be provided in a non-discriminatory way.
- The effectiveness of the policy and the diversity and inclusion strategy will be monitored at regular intervals and progress published annually to the relevant bodies.
- We will ensure that suppliers are aware of our standards and expectations of their practices in diversity. We will seek to use agencies or companies who have clear values on equality of opportunity and diversity.

6. OUR CUSTOMERS AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities and valuing diversity in all our roles as service provider, employer and community champion. We believe that value is created and maximised when we meet the needs of our customers, employees, and the communities where we live and operate.

This means we will:

- Act as community champion.
- Promote cultural and community harmony.
- Maximise opportunities for communities to live, work and learn together so that individuals can reach their full potential.
- Seek customers of all backgrounds and meet their individual needs, fostering enterprise in minority groups.
- Consult with community leaders listening to people's views and responding to them.
- Work with other key organisations in the business community to tackle institutional racism, sexism, classism and other similar kinds of unfair treatment.
- Encourage and support people to be active in community life.
- Encourage others to adopt this policy, including those who provide goods and services on behalf of Post Office.
- Celebrate and respect the variety of lifestyles, culture and religions within all communities.

- Listen and respond to the views of our communities through appropriate and widespread public consultation.

7. MONITORING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We will regularly collect, monitor and analyse diversity data, including information about the gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability of employees and job applicants to make sure our employment processes are fair and are achieving the aims of this policy. In particular, Post Office will as appropriate and where possible, monitor and record:

- The protected characteristics and whether someone has caring responsibilities. This information is collated on a voluntary basis via [SuccessFactors](#) which securely holds age, gender, disability, ethnic and national origins, sexual origination, religion or belief and disability data for employees and partners.
- The number and outcome of any complaints of unlawful discrimination made by employees in relation to the company and its business.

The information will be held in the strictest confidence and will only be used to illustrate and promote equality, diversity and inclusion and prevent unlawful discrimination.

Any patterns of under-representations, for example, where people with certain identities consistently appear to have reduced chances, of recruitment, promotion or training, will be fully investigated in conjunction with the People team and positive steps to remove any barriers or discrimination and promote diversity and inclusion will be taken.

We will monitor the impact of re-organisations to check that the approach has been fair.

We commit to undertaking a formal review of this policy every two years.

8. WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT?

All employees should treat each other with dignity and respect whilst at work. Any employee who feels they have been bullied, discriminated against, harassed, or victimised should raise the matter through the [Dignity at Work Policy](#).

All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

If an employee is found to have breached the equality, diversity and inclusion policy they may be subject to disciplinary action via the [Conduct Code](#) which could result in dismissal.

9. EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

All employees, including those newly appointed will be made aware of this policy and the responsibilities of both Post Office and the individual to observe and commit to its aims. We will ensure that access to a copy of this policy is provided to all employees upon joining the company.

We will ensure that all employees, job applicants and customers have access to this policy through the Post Office intranet and website.

This policy will be further communicated to all employees through induction, management training and displayed on notice boards. Whenever appropriate this policy will feature in relevant training courses and guidance notes and booklets.

All our policies, including those relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, will be monitored for clarity and plain English.

10. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

This policy is part of our [Code of Business Conduct](#).

Other Policies

- [Conduct Code](#)
- [Dignity at Work](#)
- [Flexible Working](#)

The Equality Act 2010

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnerships
5. Pregnancy & Maternity
6. Race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)

7. Religion or Belief
8. Sex (formally Gender)
9. Sexual orientation

These are known as "protected characteristics".

In addition, the Act also defines specific types of discrimination.

For further information on protected characteristics and types of discrimination see [Equality Act Guidance](#) and the [Dignity at Work Policy](#).

DOCUMENT CONTROL RECORD

SUMMARY			
GE Policy Sponsor	Policy Owner	Policy Implementer	Policy Approver
Group Chief People Officer Karen McEwan	People Director – Talent and Capability Hawa Abdul-Sydique	E,D and I Manager Ben Spencer-White	Policy Sponsor Policy Owner
Version	Document Review Period	Policy – effective date	Policy location
1	24 Months	19/11/2018	UK

REVISION HISTORY			
Version	Date	Changes	Approved by
2	07/01/20	Updated 'GE Policy Sponsor' and 'Policy Approver' contact	Janene Mellor
3	06/11/20	- Updated 'Policy Owner' & 'Policy Implementor' - Updated references of HR to People - Removal of reference to the previous Valuing Diversity Policy, which was replaced by this policy	Ben Spencer-White
4	09/02/21	Updated HR references to People	Janene Mellor
5	29/06/22	- Updated section 1 title from 'Outline' to 'Introduction' (section 1, pg3) - Updated values (section 1, pg3) - Changes conference call to MS Teams (Section 1, pg3) - Clarity policy is for POL (section 2, pg3) - Added completion of DAW training in manager responsibilities (section 4, pg5) - Link to Flex working and leave policies (section 10, pg8)	Janene Mellor
6	26/09/22	- Updated to new POL branding - Updated policy sponsor - Updated review date	Janene Mellor
7	05/10/23	- Updated policy Sponsor	Juliet Lang
8	01/07/24	- Updated policy Sponsor	Hawa Abdul-Sydique

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION STATUS			
Distribution	Mark x as appropriate	Document Sensitivity	Mark x as appropriate
Internal	x	Non-sensitive	x
External		Sensitive	

QUALITY STATEMENT	
Quality Control	Next Review Date
This document is periodically reviewed, and at least every 24 Months from the effective date.	November 2024

