

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

This policy extends to RSCDS employees, contractors working on behalf of the RSCDS and voluntary workers, and to any place or venue where work is carried out which is deemed to be a work environment.

Discrimination is unacceptable, the RSCDS (Society) has made the decision, therefore, to adopt a formal Equal Opportunities Policy (EOP) and ensure this is built into the culture of the Society. Alleged breaches of the EOP by employees, relevant contractors and voluntary workers will be subject to a full investigation and, for employees could lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.

Aim of Policy

The aim of our policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against directly or indirectly on the grounds of:

- Race, colour, nationality or national or ethnic origin ("race");
- Sex or marital status including civil partnerships;
- Disability (e.g. a long term mental or physical impairment);
- Sex change status;
- Sexual orientation;
- Religion or philosophical belief;
- Political belief;
- Trade union activity or
- Age

The Society's policy is to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for all persons
- Eliminate, as far as is reasonably possible, discrimination and harassment from the workplace;
- Encourage all employees/voluntary workers to take an active role against all forms of discrimination and harassment;
- Deter all employees/voluntary workers from participating in discriminatory behaviour or harassment;
- Demonstrate to all employees/voluntary workers that they can rely upon the Society's support in cases of discrimination or harassment at work

To create conditions in which the aim can be achieved, the Society is committed to identifying and eliminating unlawful discriminatory practices and procedures to support this commitment and assist in its realisation in all possible ways.

Legal Responsibilities

Over and above the provisions set out in its own policy and procedures, the Society is bound by certain legal responsibilities in the field of equal opportunities. These include:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986 (as amended)
- Race Relations Act 1976 and 2000 (as amended)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Equality Act 2006

Recruitment and Selection

The Society undertakes to ensure this policy is circulated to any agency responsible for its recruitment, a copy is available to all employees, relevant contractors, voluntary workers and any other persons involved in RSCDS recruitment and selection and the content is made known to all applicants for employment.

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any EOP. We will endeavour through appropriate training, provision of key documents such as job descriptions and person specifications, short listing and other selection materials and procedures to ensure employees and any other persons engaged in RSCDS selection and recruitment do not discriminate, consciously or unconsciously in the decision-making processes.

In line with the policy, the following statements will be adhered to in practice:

- Job descriptions and person specifications accurately reflect job requirements and comply with our EOP and best practice.
- We employ a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies, ensuring wide and appropriate coverage.
- All applicants applying for jobs with us receive fair treatment and are considered solely on their ability to do the job.
- All employees/other persons involved in RSCDS recruitment select on the agreed criteria to comply with job requirements and avoid unlawful discrimination
- Short listing and interviewing are carried out by more than one person where possible.
- Interview questions relate to the job requirements and are not of a discriminatory nature.
- We do not disqualify any applicant because s/he is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.
- Internal promotion and advancement are based on merit, with all relevant decisions taken within the overall framework and principles of this policy.
- Selection for redundancy is based upon a clear statement of policy, with all relevant decisions taken within the overall framework and principles of the EOP.

Monitoring

We review job applications and maintain the employment records of all employees, contractors and voluntary workers to monitor the progress of this policy. Monitoring may involve:

- The collection and classification of information regarding race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current employees;
- Examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the success rate of applicants and the distribution of employees; and
- Recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, decisions reached and the reason(s) for those decisions.

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunity to all applicants and staff.

Application of the Equal Opportunities Policy

The Equal Opportunities policy applies to all aspects of employment including:

- Recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, person specifications, short listing, interview and selection procedures
- Training
- Promotion and career development opportunities
- Terms and conditions of employment, and access to employment related benefits and facilities
- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures
- Selection for redundancy