

Document: EDPS01

Issue 04

Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Statement

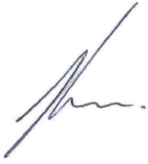
M2L is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices and activities and aims to establish an inclusive culture free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity, courtesy and respect. M2L is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation¹ and to fostering good relations between different groups. The company also ensures that it will only employ or utilise staff that are legally entitled to be employed within the United Kingdom.

This commitment supports the organisational principles of the company and upholds the ethos of establishing a culture based on dignity, courtesy and respect.

This policy builds upon the foundation of equality legislation and anti-discrimination guidance and strives, not only to comply with legal requirements, but to use these to ensure that M2L endeavours to exemplify best practice.

The Equality and Diversity policy underpins the Mission of M2L and is integral to the success of the company as a first-class organisation and an employer of choice.

The policy applies to all applicants for posts within the company, to all staff employed on a full time or part-time basis, to all staff on permanent or temporary contracts, to agency staff and visitors undertaking duties in the name of the company and to sub-contractors undertaking work on the company's sites and to all visitors.

Signed... 
M2L

March 2025

Legislative Background

Under Equality legislation it is unlawful to:

¹ Under the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The protected characteristics (section 4) under the Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.

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- Discriminate directly against anyone and treat him/her less favourably than others on the grounds of the protected characteristics of: age (unless this can be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim), disability (including discrimination arising from a disability and failure to make reasonable adjustments), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This also includes discrimination based on perception of the person e.g. a belief that someone is gay or a belief that someone is disabled even if this is not actually true.
- Discriminate against someone for reasons relating to their association with a person on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation e.g. discriminating against an employee/student because they have a disabled dependant.
- Discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people with a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Subject someone to harassment for reasons relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This includes behaviour that an individual finds offensive on these grounds even if the behaviour is not directed at the individual. It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because they either submit to, or reject, sexual harassment or harassment related to their sex. An employer also has responsibilities relating to harassment of employees by third parties as outlined in the Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
- Victimise someone because s/he has made, or intends to make, a complaint or allegation or has given or intends to give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination in line with the Equality Act.

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Objectives:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that in carrying out its activities the company will have due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity, across all the activities of the company between different groups.
- Fostering good relations between people of a diverse background.

In the implementation of this policy the company will aim to:

- Develop and promote a culture of equality and diversity throughout the company;
- Develop and promote a culture of dignity, courtesy and respect;
- Support all staff and clients, including provision of relevant support relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.
- Work to prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination;
- Deal with all forms of discrimination consistently and effectively;
- Ensure that the Equality and Diversity policy influences and informs the culture of the company.

Role of Staff

- To actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy;
- To support the aims of the Equality and Diversity policy;
- To be aware of equality and diversity issues.

Role of Managers/Team Leaders

- To ensure that they work to promote equality and diversity as an integral part of the services they provide and the policies and procedures they both develop and apply.

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Strategic Workforce Sustainability / Resilience / Workforce Planning

- To ensure that M2L has an adequate supply of people with the skills, knowledge and experience required to achieve its strategic objectives efficiently and effectively both in the short and long term. This includes assessing future demand, assessing future supply, establishing a plan for recruiting, hiring, educating, appraising, compensation and scheduling employees.
- Analyse current workplace profile to look at the current staff, with a view to retaining key talent. Where required, develop an action plan, introduce strategies to help close any identified gaps.

Application of the Policy: Staff

Recruitment and Selection

- Recruitment advertising will encourage applications from all sectors of the community reflecting the company's commitment to equality and diversity;
- Recruitment advertising will appear in publications appropriate to the audience capable of producing the best candidates (subject to budget considerations);
- Job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements will be written on the basis of the essential and justifiable requirements of the position;
- Short listing, appointment and rejection decisions will be transparent and justifiable and will be supported by written comments.

Grading and Promotion

- All grading and promotions criteria and procedures will be free from prejudice and must be applied equitably and consistently.

Staff Development

- All staff will have equal access to induction, personal and career development opportunities and facilities.

Performance Management

Probation and appraisal procedures will be clear and transparent and will be applied fairly across all staff.

Discipline and Grievance

- Disciplinary and grievance procedures will be applied fairly and transparently for all staff;
- Allegations of discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedures for staff.