

Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy

Stef & Philips is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity, providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It also seeks to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

Stef & Philips values people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles, and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy, and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended, if necessary, to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct, or indirect, overt, or latent exists.

The HR Manager has responsibility for implementing and monitoring the equality and diversity policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

All employees, workers, or self-employed contractors whether part-time, full-time, or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of Stef & Philips.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in Stef & Philips as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of their employees. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout.

Our commitment as an employer

We are committed to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued.
- Entitling every employee, worker or self-employed contractor to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Providing training, development, and progression opportunities to all staff.
- Understanding equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- Reviewing all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

Our commitment as a service provider

We are committed to:

- Providing services to which all clients are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities, or social class.
- Making sure our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients.
- Fully supporting this policy through senior management and ensuring agreement has been reached with employee representatives.
- Selecting those for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit purely based on aptitude and ability.
- Monitoring and reviewing this policy annually.
- Having clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
- Treating breaches of our equality and diversity policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- Encouraging all staff to come forward with any issues they need our assistance with, and understanding with, no matter their background, identity, or circumstances, such as if they are victims of domestic abuse or have caring commitments.

Equal Opportunity Policy Statements

Age

We will:

- Ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development, and promotion opportunities; and

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disabilities

We will:

- Provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people; and

Race

We will:

- Challenge racism wherever it occurs.
- Respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents; and
- Actively promote race equality.

Sex

We will:

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men.
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against women and men.
- Offer equal access for women and men to representation, services, employment, and training.

Gender reassignment

We will:

- Provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.
- Prohibit and respond to all instances of discrimination, both from colleagues and externally.

Sexual orientation

We will:

- Ensure that we consider the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals; and

Religion or belief

We will:

- Ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible; and
- Respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity.

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees.
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees' pregnancy or maternity.

Marriage or civil partnership

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees; and
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we consider the needs of our employees' marriage or civil partnership.

Ex-offenders

We will prevent discrimination against our employees regardless of their offending background (except where there is a known risk to children or vulnerable adults).

Equal pay

We will ensure that all employees, male or female, have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

Unconscious bias

We recognise the dangers of unconscious bias arising at work, which is where an opinion is formed on an individual by a manager or colleague without them necessarily being aware they have formed it.

There are many different forms of unconscious bias, ranging from an affinity towards those of a similar background to placing too much significance on what has been identified as a negative trait.

Stef & Philips will work against forms of unconscious bias in all decisions taken for employment, including recruitment, promotion, and training opportunities, with a focus on promoting diversity and inclusion.

Stef & Philips will implement the following:

- Blind recruitment.
- Omitting all personal questions from job interviews.
- Maintaining a diverse panel to make decisions.
- Referring to specific job criteria when making recruitment decisions.
- Discounting any favourable personal relationships with staff.

- Making decisions collectively between HR and management.