

APPENDIX E – EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Skipton recognises that people are our greatest asset and expect everyone within Skipton to adhere to the policy. The policy describes how to promote an inclusive and diverse environment, to enable everyone to have equal opportunities. All colleagues within Skipton have responsibility for ensuring that the policy is adhered to consistently.

This policy applies to all colleagues; whether permanent, temporary, casual, reduced hours or on fixed-term contracts, to ex colleagues, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency workers, consultants and volunteers who are not our colleagues, but work at Skipton. The policy also applies equally to the treatment of our visitors, clients, customers and suppliers.

Everyone has a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, not discriminate against or harass other colleagues. Skipton is committed to ensure that colleagues are supported, engaged, and enjoy working for Skipton. In some situations, Skipton may be at risk of being held responsible for the acts of individual colleagues and will not tolerate any discriminatory practices or behaviour.

2. PRINCIPLES

Skipton is committed to treating all colleagues and job applicants equally at all times. No colleague, or potential colleague, shall be treated less favourably or unlawfully discriminated against on the grounds of sex, pregnancy or maternity, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, health, age, carer status, reduced hours or contracted status, trade union membership, qualifications or requirements which cannot reasonably be justified as necessary on operational or business grounds.

There should be no discrimination against disabled persons on the grounds of their disability where they are able to carry out a job within the medically advised limits of that disability, or where reasonable adjustments can be made to enable them to fulfil the position applied for.

Skipton will recruit, train, develop and promote on the basis of merit, ability and job requirements.

Skipton does not discriminate with regards to pay or other conditions of employment, nor in the provision of benefits, facilities and services.

The principles detailed apply to the:

- advertising of jobs.
- recruitment and selection.
- training and development.
- opportunities for promotion.
- conditions of service.
- benefits.
- facilities.
- pay.
- health and safety.
- conduct at work.
- grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- termination of employment, including redundancy.

The principle of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity applies equally to the treatment of visitors, clients, customers and suppliers by members of our workforce and also, in some circumstances, ex-colleagues.

Skipton will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of a colleague's religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities.

3. WORKPLACE ADJUSTMENTS

Skipton is committed to support all colleagues, including future and ex colleagues who they know or could reasonably be expected know that an individual has a disability, or a long-term condition. The colleague's Manager will discuss with the colleague what workplace adjustments to their working conditions or environment might be of assistance. Colleagues are encouraged to suggest any adjustments that they believe will be of benefit. You Line Manager will work with HR to undertake careful consideration to suggested adjustments and where reasonable adjustments will be made. There may however be circumstances where Skipton is unable to accommodate if the adjustment is unreasonable, however Skipton will make alternative adjustments to support the colleagues.

4. RECRUITMENT

- 4.1 All internal and external recruitment advertisements shall require only those qualities which are essential to the performance of the role and described in a way which will not deter a suitably qualified person from applying.
- 4.2 The selection process shall be carried out in a consistent manner at all levels, irrespective of the applicant's sex, pregnancy or maternity, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, health, age, carer status, reduced hours or contracted status, trade union membership, and be based on agreed criteria.
- 4.3 Where selection tests are used these should be relevant to the position and administered and scored in a consistent and non-discriminatory way.
- 4.4 All colleagues involved in interviewing should have received the appropriate training and should only ask questions which are job related and non-discriminatory and interpret answers in a similar way.

5. TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Skipton is committed to all colleagues receiving an equal opportunity to develop their potential and achieve career progression through a consistent approach based on objective appraisal and assessment.
- 5.2 Training will be provided to those colleagues involved in the management, control and implementation of Equal Opportunities to allow them to satisfy the requirements of the policy.

6. RAISING CONCERNS

We would ask colleagues to speak to their Line Manager or Human Resources in first instance. If necessary Skipton's Grievance Procedure or Dignity at Work Policy may be instigated to raise concerns in relation to discriminatory conduct.

Any colleague who is found to have made a false accusation or proven to have discriminated against or harassed a client or supplier, will be subject to disciplinary action.