

RACE RELATIONS & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

Purpose of This Document

1. To establish firmly AA Woods commitment towards equal opportunities both for existing employees and in recruitment of new employees.
2. To act as a training document for all employees engaged in the employment, training and supervision of staff in order that they recognise both the company's legal obligations and that they understand the management's commitment to equal opportunity within the company.
3. To make it clear to all employees that the ultimate authority and responsibility for this policy rests with the Managing Director. This policy sets out the framework for recruitment, promotion and training of staff, with regard to equal opportunity and race relations for the company.

Signed:



David Petri
AA Woods

Date: 25/11/05

Statement of Company Policy

It is the policy of AA Woods that no job applicant or employee shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration than any other because of their sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, sexual preference, age, disability, trade union activity or political or religious beliefs.

Selection procedures and criteria, will be kept under review to ensure that individuals are selected, trained, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

All employees will be given equality of opportunity within the company and encouraged to progress within the organisation.

This company is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and is an equal opportunity employer.

AA Woods fully accepts its obligations under all relevant legislation.

Signed:



David Petri
AA Woods

Date: 25/11/05

The Policy in Practice

1. Recruitment

All employees should be recruited on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. In order to achieve this aim all personnel involved in the recruitment process should follow the following guide-lines.

- a) "Word of Mouth" recruitment (i.e. "do you know someone who wants a job") must not be practiced. As well as being unlawful this does not give the company access to the largest pool of available talent.
- b) Employment vacancy advertising should be carried out using the widest range of available media, newspapers, job centres, careers offices and other appropriate areas.
- c) Advertisements should state that we are "an equal opportunity employer" and nothing in the format of the advertisement should limit the applicants in a discriminatory fashion. "Applicants should wear short skirts and be blonde" are not acceptable criteria. Advertisements should however be to the point about qualifications and experience required by the company from an applicant.

2. Selection

This company will select employees strictly on their ability to do the job required.

In order to achieve this selection, interviews should be carried out to award the job to the candidate most suited by virtue of objective criteria, the persons ability, relevant experience and potential contribution to the company.

Wherever possible interviews should be carried out by more than one person to ensure that potential bias or discrimination is eliminated.

If tests are used in the selection process, they should be relevant to the vacancy and not biased in favour of any group.

3. Promotion

Promotion within the company will be based on merit alone. Promotion procedure should be carried out in a non-discriminatory fashion. The decision to promote should be based purely on the ability of the employee to do the job, on the employee's ability, training, aptitude and experience. Recommendations for promotion from less senior members of staff should be questioned with regard to the above criteria and alternative candidates considered.

4. Transfer

In the event that it is deemed necessary to transfer employees, that transfer should be on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. In order to achieve this:

- a) Employees that complain of discrimination should not automatically be transferred as a quick solution. Allegations of discrimination should be investigated within the usual grievance procedures laid down in the company "guide to employees" and with reference to section 7 of this policy.
- b) Any transfer of staff should bear in mind the policy of equality of opportunity and the ethnic origin of transferred staff would be monitored.

5. Training

Managers are provided with training in Racial/Equal Opportunities prior to any recruitment or Selection process. Any employee that is involved in the control of other employees, particularly those involved with recruitment, selection, training promotion and transfers should be aware of the company policy and how to carry it out in a positive manner.

Training of employees will enable them to comply with the relevant legislation and to achieve the aim of equal opportunity for all within.

6. Monitoring and Positive Action

The mix of employees within the company and the mix within grades of employment should be monitored by the manager relevant to that area of the companies' activity. If it is found that an imbalance of groups exists then positive action to encourage a more representative mix should be taken. These could include, but are not limited to, advertising jobs in areas targeted to make minorities aware of opportunities within the company or encouraging suitable employees to release their potential for promotion or further training.

We monitor Job Applications for different Ethnic Groups and review the policy every two years and make any necessary changes that are required.

7. Grievance, Disciplinary and Disputes Procedures

Complaints of discrimination must not be treated lightly or ignored. It is too easy to dismiss these allegations as the result of over sensitivity on the part of the employee. Allegations should be thoroughly investigated by the department head and another manager not involved directly with the employee(s) concerned. A report of the investigation of any such complaint must be submitted to the Managing Director.

The offence of racial discrimination, including racial harassment, verbal abuse or physical violence will be deemed to be gross misconduct and the offending employee dealt with under the procedures as laid out in the guide to employees.

8. Victimisation

All employees should be aware that it is unlawful to victimise any individual who has pursued a case, complaints or allegations of racial discrimination by:

- a) Disciplining them.
- b) Dismissing them.
- c) Transferring them.
- d) Subjecting them to any other deterrent.

9. Quality of Opportunity

The Company have a commitment to ensure that Selection, Discipline and Dismissal procedures are carried out within this policy.

Signed:



David Petri
Managing Director

Date: 25/11/05

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ANTI-HARASSMENT & BULLYING POLICY

This policy document applies to employment at AA Woods. The "Organisation" and all other Organisation sites that you may be asked to work at from time to time. For any policy to be effective it must be applied throughout the Organisation, this policy therefore applies to all staff regardless of position or seniority.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This Organisation is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to ensuring that the terms and conditions of employment of the employee and potential employee are equitable and non-discriminatory. This means that job applicants and employees will be treated fairly regardless of their sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, ethnic origin, disability, religion or religious beliefs and age.

1.2 The Organisation will seek to promote equal opportunities and prevent harassment and bullying by publicising and communicating this policy; by providing appropriate training and guidelines for those with designated responsibilities and by raising awareness through staff development.

1.3 Further, the Organisation will continually monitor its policies and practices to ensure that these principles are upheld. It is the employee's right to be treated with dignity and respect, which in turn will be conducive to performance, self-development and career advancement. Every executive, manager and employee has a responsibility to implement this policy.

2. Definitions

2.1 Discrimination

For the purposes of this policy, discrimination means treating people less favourably than others on the grounds of their sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, ethnic origin, disability, religion or religious beliefs and age, whether this be direct or indirect by applying a provision, criterion or practice, which disadvantages such persons.

2.2 Sexual Orientation

For the purposes of this policy, sexual orientation means sexual orientation for a person of the same sex, different sex or for persons of both sexes. It does not include sexual practices or preferences. Discrimination can occur based on a perception of a person's sexual orientation, even if that perception is wrong. It can also include discrimination against a person by reason of the sexual orientation of someone they associate with.

2.3 Gender Reassignment

For the purposes of this policy, gender reassignment means a desire to be known or to become a person of a gender different to that to which they were born.

2.4 Religion/Religious Beliefs

For the purposes of this policy, religion or religious beliefs is defined as any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. It does not include philosophical or political beliefs unless that belief is similar to a religious belief. Discrimination can occur based on a perception of a person's religion or beliefs even if that perception is wrong. It can

also include discrimination against a person by reason of the religion or religious beliefs of someone they associate with.

2.5 Harassment

For the purposes of this policy harassment is defined as any hostile unwanted, unreasonable and/or offensive behaviour, which adversely affects a person's dignity, self-confidence and well-being and creates a hostile environment and which leads to that person feeling intimidated, degraded or humiliated.

2.6 Racial harassment

For the purposes of this policy racial harassment is defined as any action, conduct, comment, gesture or behaviour that is hostile, offensive, embarrassing, insulting or intimidating. It may include derogatory remarks, quips, jokes, innuendoes, taunts or physical abuse, which are racially derogatory and potentially offensive and relates to a person's race, religion or ethnic origins.

2.7 Sexual harassment

For the purposes of this policy sexual harassment is defined as:

- a.** Any action, conduct, comment, gesture or physical contact of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and might reasonably be seen by an employee or prospective employee as placing an implicit or explicit condition on employment.
- b.** Any persistent, unwelcome action, conduct, comment, gesture or physical contact of a sexual nature that is likely to cause offence, embarrassment or humiliation to an employee or creates an offensive working environment.

2.8 Bullying

For the purposes of this policy bullying is defined as repeated treatment with the purpose of controlling individuals or making them insecure in their roles or treatment that has that effect.

2.9 Victimisation

For the purposes of this policy, victimisation is defined as treating persons less favourably because of something they have done under or in connection with asserting their rights under any employment legislation or regulations.

3. Monitoring

All employees and job applicants will be invited to complete a form providing information regarding their age, sex, race, ethnic origin and whether they suffer from any disabilities. This form will be used solely for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of the Organisation's equal opportunities policy and to ensure that the Organisation meets its obligations as an equal opportunities employer.

4. Procedure For Discriminatory Conduct

4.1 Any member of staff may use the Organisation's grievance procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. The complaint will be thoroughly investigated and considered based on the facts of the investigation. No individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance unless it is untrue and made in bad faith. If the matter relates to harassment or bullying of any kind the anti-harassment and bullying procedure set out below should be followed.

4.2 Any employee who discriminates against any other employee on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, ethnic origin, disability, religion or religious beliefs or age, will be subject to the Organisation's disciplinary procedure as set out in the grievance and disciplinary policy. In serious cases where such behaviour has been deemed to constitute gross misconduct it will result in summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances. This statement should be read in conjunction with the anti-harassment and bullying procedure set out below at clause 6.

5. Positive Action On Equal Opportunities

5.1 The Organisation will regularly monitor the composition of the workforce and of job applicants. Should inequalities become apparent positive action will be taken to redress the balance including such measures as:

- a. Advertising jobs in ethnic or female interest publications as appropriate.
- b. Encouraging under-represented groups to apply for suitable posts or undergo training.
- c. Making contact with disabled people via the local job centre.
- d. Considering whether any reasonable adjustment can be made to work premises or the working arrangements to accommodate a disabled employee or job applicant.

6. Anti-Harassment & Bullying Procedure

6.1 As well as its commitment to equal opportunities, the Organisation is committed to providing a work environment for employees, which is free from harassment or bullying on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, ethnic origin, disability, religion or religious beliefs and age. This may include embarrassment, intimidation, threats or discrimination.

6.2 Reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that no employee is subject to harassment or bullying. In recognition of these principles the Organisation will also not condone any conduct, which may be construed as sexual harassment.

6.3 Any complaints of harassment or bullying should be made to **the Managing Director**. The matter will be dealt with in a discreet and confidential manner and appropriate action will be taken. It is the duty of all employees and in particular management and supervisors, to ensure that the anti-harassment & bullying policy is implemented. Harassment or bullying will be taken to have occurred if a reasonable individual would or ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome or offensive.

6.4 Harassment and bullying are disciplinary offences that may in the most serious cases lead to dismissal. Individuals should be aware that in some circumstances they may be held personally liable for acts that are unlawful.

6.5 Incidents of sexual or racial harassment can be taken to amount to gross misconduct, which will be dealt with under the Organisation's disciplinary policy and may lead to summary dismissal. Less serious infringements may lead to an apology from the harasser, letter of reprimand, suspension or relocation of the harasser.

6.6 In dealing with reports of harassment or bullying the following principles will apply:

- a.** All reports will be taken seriously, treated in confidence and investigated by trained staff who are independent of the situation.
- b.** All complaints will be progressed and dealt with according to the Organisations' grievance and disciplinary procedure.
- c.** Where the Organisation has reason to believe that there is a risk to the personal safety of the complainant or of another person, or that a criminal offence has been committed, the Organisation may take legal advice and/or inform the police before proceeding with any internal action.
- d.** The victimisation or harassment of a complainant or the respondent, or any witnesses will be regarded as a disciplinary offence.
- e.** Malicious complaints will be regarded as a disciplinary offence.