

AKITA GROUP LTD

DIVERSITY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Akita recognises that discrimination is not only unacceptable, it is also unlawful.

Akita's aim is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against, directly or indirectly, on any unlawful grounds.

By including this policy in the Handbook, all employees are made aware that the Company will act in accordance with all statutory requirements and take into account any relevant codes of practice.

All job applicants will be considered solely on their ability to do the job. Interview questions will not be of a discriminatory nature.

All promotions will be made on merit in line with the principles of the policy.

Employees who have a disability will receive the necessary help, within reason, to enable them to carry out their normal duties effectively.

This policy will be assessed to ensure that equality of opportunity is afforded to all employees.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Akita will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying.

The purpose of this policy is to inform employees of the type of behavior that is totally unacceptable and to explain what solutions there are to employees who may suffer harassment or bullying.

Akita intends to provide a neutral working environment in which no one feels threatened or intimidated.

Harassment is a discriminatory act and is also a criminal offence. It is very difficult to define as it can take many forms, but in the main it takes the form of unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another, for example:

- Patronising or belittling behaviour
- Comments about appearance/body/clothes
- Leering or staring at a person's body
- Unwelcome sexual invitations or pressure

- Promises or threats, concerning employment or conditions, in exchange for sexual favours.
- Displaying offensive or sexually explicit material
- Touching, caressing, hugging or indecent assault.

Please remember the test is that the behaviour is UNWELCOME, UNINVITED and UNRECIPROCATED.

Bullying is also difficult to define. Obvious examples are:

- Threats of or actual physical violence
- Unpleasant or over repeated jokes about a person
- Unfair or impractical work loading.

Procedure

If you encounter a problem of this nature, it is vital that you make the person responsible aware that his/her remarks or conduct are offensive to you. This should be done in a simple and straightforward way.

It is recognised that complaints of harassment or bullying are often of a sensitive or worrying nature and that it may be difficult to speak directly to the other employee involved. If this is the case, you should put your request in writing and hand it to the harasser or bully.

When or if the informal approach fails or if you believe that the harassment or bullying is of a very serious nature you must bring the matter to the attention of a member of Management. If possible, you should keep notes of the harassment or bullying so that a formal complaint can be investigated, including the date, time and whereabouts of the act.

If the report concludes that the allegation is well founded, the harasser or bully will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with our disciplinary procedures.

If you bring a complaint of harassment or bullying you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. If however after a full and fair investigation, the Company has grounds to believe that the complaint was brought with malicious intent, you will be subject to disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedures.

The Company's appeal procedure applies to appeals against decisions made under the equal opportunities and discrimination policy.