

Equality & Diversity Policy

We believe the success of our company is in the hands of our staff and we look to you to play your part in the successful development of JT Atkinson & Sons Ltd.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, JT Atkinson is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion, and eliminating any unlawful discrimination, amongst our workforce and in the workplace as best practice.

We look to create a working environment free from bullying, harassment, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, where individual differences and contributions of all staff are recognised and valued to create a workforce where each employee is made to feel respected and able to give their best.

We will make opportunities for recruitment, training, development, and promotion available to all on equal terms.

Ours is a company that is respected, successful and positive, and we will not condone any discriminatory act or attitude in the conduct of our business with the public or our employees

We are committed to equal opportunities for all individuals and every member of the company is expected to always adhere to this policy.

i. Implementing Equality & Diversity

We will treat everyone equally irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, race, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability or age (known as 'Protected Characteristics') and place an obligation upon all employees to respect and act in accordance with the policy. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former staff members.

ii. Discrimination

We will not discriminate unlawfully when deciding which candidate is considered for a vacancy or in any terms of employment and we will ensure that each candidate is assessed only in accordance with the candidate's merits, qualifications, and ability to perform the relevant duties required by the vacancy.

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted based on merit against objective criteria that avoid discrimination.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate in employment on the grounds of any of the Protected Characteristics as outlined above.

The types of discrimination that are prohibited are:

- **DIRECT DISCRIMINATION:** Where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more Protected Characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race or religious belief because they would 'not fit in' would be direct discrimination
- **ASSOCIATIVE DISCRIMINATION:** A form of direct discrimination where someone is discriminated against because they associate with someone who possesses a Protected Characteristic

- **PERCEPTIVE DISCRIMINATION:** Another form of direct discrimination occurring when an individual is discriminated against because others think they possess a particular Protected Characteristic
- **INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION:** Where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example: a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men, such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.
- **HARASSMENT:** Unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment related to any of the Protected Characteristics is prohibited and is dealt with further in the Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- **VICTIMISATION:** Less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint. Victimisation is also prohibited.

iii. **Disabilities**

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to inform us about your condition so that appropriate steps can be taken for you. We will make every effort to make reasonable adjustments to working conditions, arrangements or features which disadvantage a disabled person.

iv. **Complaints procedure**

If you believe that you are being subjected to discrimination by the Company, by fellow employees or by third parties in connection with their employment you should consult your Manager as soon as possible.

v. **Breaches of this policy**

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or Bullying and Harassment Policy. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate. You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.