

thomas sinden

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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1.0 OUR STATEMENT

Thomas Sinden is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity in all its activities. This includes its role as an employer, as a provider of services and in respect of the sub-contractors it uses.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for working towards equality and fairness for all, so that we do not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, pregnancy and maternity/paternity status, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or sexual orientation.

We will comply with all relevant legal duties and guidelines and will consider using the positive action provisions of the legislation where appropriate.

Our aim is to create an environment in which people are able to give their best, that is free from harassment and bullying and in which all decisions are fair.

2.0 IMPLEMENTING OUR COMMITMENTS

We will take the following steps to implement our Equality and Diversity Policy:

Recruitment and Selection

Our aim is to recruit the best people we can when we have vacancies to fill. We have therefore drawn up a procedure which is designed to ensure that no person or group of persons applying for a job or contract with the company will be treated less favourably than any other person or groups of persons because of their age, disability, sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, pregnancy and maternity/paternity status, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or sexual orientation. (See Appendix Two for more details).

We are keen to promote opportunities for local people. We will therefore work with local schools, colleges, training workshops and other agencies including local community centres to encourage local people to apply for our apprenticeships and our full and part time vacancies.

Terms and Conditions

We will provide all employees with fair terms and conditions. Opportunities for training, development and progression within the Company will also be provided fairly and monitored to ensure that there is no indirect discrimination. We recognise that every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all.

We will consider adopting 'work life' balance measures wherever practical.

We are also committed to fulfilling our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will provide reasonable adjustments for new or existing disabled staff who need them. These adjustments might include:

- altering the person's working hours
- allowing absences during working hours for medical treatment or to care for a disabled adult or child
- getting special equipment or modifying existing equipment
- making adjustments to premises

Services

We will treat members of the public for whom we provide services with respect and dignity. We will also work with our clients to provide information about our work in other languages and formats if that is required.

Communicating Our Policy

We will ensure that all our employees, management and our subcontractors are aware of our equality and diversity policy. We will do this through regular briefings and through providing guidance such as our Code of Conduct which is set out in the Staff Handbook.

We will also provide training and briefings for managers on their responsibilities in fulfilling the policy and provide guidance on their role in recruiting staff.

We will provide training and guidance for our operatives to help them understand any cultural or other related needs of the diverse population for whom we provide services.

Working in Partnership

Much of our work is for clients who have legal duties to promote equality. We will work with them to help them fulfil these duties, for example in the ways in which we recruit and train our staff, how we select our sub-contractors and how we monitor their performance when working on our contracts.

Monitoring

We will collect and monitor records of our workforce and applicants. We will regularly collect and monitor information on the age, disability, ethnic origin and sex of employees and applicants to assess and review the effectiveness of this policy. This information will be held in the strictest confidence and will only be used to promote diversity and prevent unlawful discrimination. We will also monitor take up of training, development and progression within the company.

The monitoring will be undertaken by our HR Department which will produce an annual report for the Operational Board.

Where under-representation occurs in the workforce, this will be reviewed and investigated. Where appropriate we will use lawful positive action to remedy this, for example expanding our sources of advertisements through different sources of media and reviewing the wording of our adverts.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARRYING OUT OUR EQUALITY POLICY

The **Operational Board** are responsible for creating a framework all through the company.

Managers are responsible for taking active steps to put the policy into practice.

Employees have a role in putting the policy into practice. Employees are to:

- Act in line with the policy
- Promote equal opportunities
- Treat colleagues, client and customers with respect

A copy of the policy is set out in our policy manual, which can be viewed at all times.

4.0 BREACHES OF THE POLICY

If a member of the public believes that Thomas Sinden has acted unfairly towards them because of their age, disability, sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, pregnancy and maternity/paternity status, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or sexual orientation they should use our Grievance Procedure.

If an employee breaches our equality policy, it will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

5.0 REVIEWING THE POLICY

We will review this policy every three years or more frequently if there are changes to the relevant legal duties or guidelines.

Signed by the Director responsible for Equality and Diversity within the Company:



Steve McMahon FCIOB
Operations Director
Feb 2024

Appendix One

6.0 CURRENT LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

We comply with the following legislations and guidelines:

- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Code of Practice of the Equality and Human Rights Commission

Appendix Two

7.0 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Thomas Sinden seeks to ensure that it selects the best person for the job. We have therefore drawn up the following fair employment procedures.

Job descriptions and person specifications

Thomas Sinden aims to recruit on merit and to ensure that there is no bias in our selection procedures. We do this by ensuring all job descriptions are concise and straightforward and include:

- The overall title and aim of the job
- What the new employee will do (e.g., plan, design, provide..) and what area of the company's activities he or she will work in (e.g. planning, delivery, customer requirements etc)

We make sure that all our person specifications are directly linked to the job description. Our specifications include:

- Skills and knowledge and experience which a person will need to have, or are able to acquire, in order to do the job well.
- Explicit terms – for example, instead of using “needs a good command of spoken English”, we will say “needs to give clear information to clients by phone’
- All our advertisements include the phrase “Thomas Sinden is an Equal Opportunities Employer”

Advertising

The purpose of advertising is to bring the opportunities we have to the attention of as many people as possible. We use a wide source of media to advertise our vacancies such as:

- Job Centres
- Employment Agencies
- Local Newspapers
- Local schools/colleges/universities

- Our website and the Internet

Shortlisting

Shortlisting involves matching evidence from the application against the requirements set out in our specification. To ensure good practice we:

- Have more than one person carrying out the sift, to reduce the risk of prejudice or bias
- Adopt a simple marking system to show how far each candidate has presented evidence that they can meet our requirements
- Carry out a brief review at the end of the exercise, making sure that marks have been awarded on the basis of evidence provided on the application form rather than personal or second-hand knowledge about the candidate

Interviewing

Interviews are usually carried out with more than one interviewer. We have an interview structure in place and cover similar topics in similar depth in the interview for each candidate as appropriate.

Promotion

Vacancies that occur at higher levels are open to existing staff as well as outside candidates.

We ensure that all our employees, including those who work part-time, have equal access to any promotion opportunity and that no one is excluded.

Training and Development

Training is very important for our company and everyone has the opportunity for training and development regardless of whether they are part-time or full-time.

We offer a range of training facilities to meet everyone's needs such as:

- In-house training tailored to our company requirements
- College based training
- External training

Appendix Three

8.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS -

DIRECT DISCRIMINATION: -

Consists of treating a person less favourably than another because of their race, colour, ethnic origin, pregnancy and maternity/paternity status, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, political views or marital status.

INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION: -

Occurs when provisions, criteria or practices, while not being directly discriminatory, have the effect of disadvantaging one group of people more than the other.

HARASSMENT: -

Behaviour which is unwelcome or unacceptable and which results in the creation of a stressful or intimidating environment for the victim, It could include racist or homophobic jokes, insensitive comments, leering, physical contact, unwanted sexual advances, ridicule or isolation.

VICTIMISATION: -

If a person has made or is making an accusation of discrimination in good faith, it is unlawful to discriminate against them for having done so, or because they intend to do so or it is suspected they intend to do so

DISABILITY: -

A disabled person is described (as per the Equality Act 2010) as one who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to day activities.