



# ***Equality & Diversity Policy***



Sunter Ltd  
Unit 14  
Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate  
Hetton-le-Hole  
Tyne & Wear  
DH5 0RH

Policy Date: October 2021

***This document can be made available in large print, braille, or in your first language other than English.***

***This document is posted on the Notice Board at Headquarters for all to see.  
Copies can be made on request.***

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This Handbook is made available to all staff that will be expected to use it as guidance and implement the contents when appropriate.

Employees are required to sign a bullet-point copy of the policy and to implement all requirements.

### Policy Information

**Policy Date:** October 2021

Policy Written by:

Name: John Walker

Signature: 

Position: Health, Safety & Environment Manager

**Planned Revision Date:** October 2022

Policy Reviewed & Authorised by:

Name: Kevin Stubbs

Signature: 

Position: Company Director



## ***'Introduction'***

Sunter Ltd has a moral obligation to the wide social diversity in contemporary society and to reflect this in our own organisational culture. We must ensure that our policies and practices achieve this.



In addition to fulfilling our statutory responsibility to promote equality opportunity, in all our activities. We are committed to developing a culture which values people from all sections of the community and the contribution each individual can make to our work.

The aim of this policy is to support all current legislation by providing a framework for continuous improvement. It covers the procedures and systems in place, to measure and monitor our performance, both in eliminating discrimination and in implementing good practice.

Its objective is to ensure that all staff are able to participate fully and contribute their best to the work of the company and to make sure that no one feels excluded from being able to do so.

## ***'Diversity & Inclusion Statement'***

Individuals with different cultures, perspectives and experiences are at the heart of the way Sunter Limited works. We aim to recruit, develop and retain the most talented people, regardless of their background and make best use of their talents.

At Sunter Limited we are guided by our values in everything we do and recognise that being a diverse and inclusive employer helps us fulfil our responsibility to make a difference for all.

We seek to develop a work environment where we treat all employees as individuals, fairly and in a consistent way. We work within the spirit and the practice of the **Equality Act 2010** by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenging discrimination, should it ever arise.

We will remove unnecessary barriers for our employees seeking opportunities through training and development, promotion and career planning.

We will continue to support our leaders, managers and employees to demonstrate the principles of diversity and inclusion in their everyday activities, roles and functions.

## ***'Purpose'***

This policy sets out Sunter's approach to equality and diversity. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

Sunter Limited aims to be an inclusive organisation, committed to providing equal opportunities throughout employment including in the recruitment, training and development of employees, and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating discrimination.



## ***'Equality and Diversity at Sunter Limited'***

At Sunter's, we consider that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups both in employment, and to goods and services.

We consider diversity to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for also for Sunter Limited.

It is recognised that our ability to meet diverse needs is improved by having a diverse workforce, which generally reflects the skills and understanding to achieve our objectives. We are committed to valuing diversity in our workforce.

Our company has a commitment to be an organisation that:

- Develops systems to achieve equality and diversity in all our its activities.
- Has a workforce generally reflecting the population.
- Understands how valuing diversity can improve our ability to deliver better services.
- Understands how valuing diversity can improve our workforce.
- Actively consults our customers to ensure the delivery of our goals.
- Supports current legislation in the achievement of equality and diversity.
- Provides a supporting and open environment where all employees have the opportunity to reach their full potential.
- Believe that both customers and employees have important roles to play in achieving this.

We will apply this policy in carrying out our statutory and company responsibilities.

### ***'Equality and Diversity Strategies'***

Our overall strategy for equality and diversity is to ensure that our policy is applied fully, fairly and consistently throughout our organisation. It forms an integral part of our staffing, work processes and procedures.

It recognises that all people are different and aims to ensure that we treat each individual with dignity and respect.

The strategies reflect the existing and forthcoming EC and UK legal framework and definitions for equality. They therefore refer to equality (for particular groups) and diversity (recognising the needs of individuals)

#### **Employment**

We are committed to ensuring that all people are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination. As an employer, we aim to ensure that all employees treat each other with dignity and respect.

We aim to develop a working environment where harassment of any nature deems unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Where individuals can feel confident enough to bring complaints without fearing repercussions or prejudice. We will deal with harassment by having strong procedures to prevent it.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Provide full and fair consideration to all job applications.
- Maintain records in recruitment, training and employment as a means of identifying any weaknesses.
- Regularly review all our recruitment, selection, training and promotion procedures to ensure that they are fair and reflect current best practice.
- Provide sufficient training and support to meet all our employees' needs in recognising and discharging their work responsibilities.
- Assist all employees to realise their full potential by ensuring that they receive fair consideration in training and career development needs and promotion opportunities.
- Wherever possible, modify employment practices and procedures to reduce barriers experienced by workers requiring special needs.
- Develop vigorous harassment, bullying and dignity at work processes which can operate within a safe environment.

#### **Carers**

We wish to create an environment where employees, both men and women are free to share their concerns and are not disadvantaged in the workplace by doing so.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Identify the needs of all carers and develop appropriate arrangements to meet their needs.
- Make the best possible use of flexible working practices to support carers in the workforce.
- Promote awareness of what flexibilities there are in our working practices.
- Not discriminate against any gender where promotion opportunities arise.

## Race

The company promotes its responsibility under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 by:

- Tackling unlawful racial discrimination.
- Promoting equality of opportunity.
- Promoting good relations between people from different backgrounds.
- Striving to create an environment, which is free from racial harassment and racist behaviour.
- Encouraging people from minority groups to take up employment, training & promotional opportunities.

## Religion

Our strategy is to tackle unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of religion and belief and to promote good relations between people of different religions and beliefs.

To achieve this we will:

- Strive to create an environment which recognises and respects religion and belief.
- Improve the understanding of religion and belief among our staff so that they can sensitively address the needs of individuals of different faiths.
- Follow guidance on the relevant UK legislation.



## Gender & Gender Realignment

We as a Company recognise our duties under the Equality Act and codes of practice and undertake to strive for gender equality in employment. This includes trans-gender equality also covered by the Act.

To achieve this we will:

- Strive to create an environment which is free from harassment and sexist language and behaviour.
- Encourage women to take up employment, training and promotional opportunities within our workforce.
- Create a flexible working environment where work and home balance requirements are recognised and supported.
- Develop a process that meets the needs of trans-gender people employed within the company.

## Sexuality

The company recognises the very real discrimination that people face in their lives, due to their sexuality and life choices we strive to remove this unfair treatment.

We shall create an environment where people from the LGBT Community are free from unfair treatment and harassment and feel safe to be open about their sexuality if they choose to do so.

To achieve this we will:

- Develop procedures to end unfair treatment and harassment of the above.
- Work towards the equal application of all terms and conditions irrespective of their sexuality.
- Strive to be open minded about people's life choices and sexuality

## Disability

The company is committed to achieving disability equality and awareness by eliminating unlawful discrimination on the grounds of disability.

To achieve this we will:

- Recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act and other legislation.
- Strive to provide services which are relevant to the needs of people with disabilities.
- Make sure that our workplace and work processes/procedures are accessible to people with a disability.
- Wherever possible, modify our procedures or equipment to make full use of an individual's ability and adapt our facilities to accommodate people with a disability.



- Regularly review our premises, processes and procedures to make sure that they still conform to DDA requirements.
- Train staff in awareness and confidence to support people with a disability where needed.
- Continue employing, whenever practicable, employees who become disabled during their employment and assist in their re-training.
- Guarantee people with a disability an interview for any employment vacancy for which they meet the minimum essential criteria.
- Provide systems which seek to maximise access to employment by people with a disability.

## **Age**

We are committed to opposing unjustified age discrimination. We recognise that age discrimination can affect all age groups and both genders and that employment decisions should not be based on age alone. We will value people regardless of age. We will ensure that our employment policies are relevant and fair to all age groups.

We will work to create an environment where people are judged on their talents, skills and experience and not on prejudices regarding age.

To achieve this we will:

- Follow the Governments Voluntary Code of Practice for Age Diversity in Employment.
- Remove age related criteria in our employment practices (subject to present retirement ages).
- Provide recruitment, promotion and training on the basis of merits regardless of age.
- Work to ensure that older workers are enabled to leave the company with dignity and flexibility in timing and working arrangements.

**Actions and outcomes under each of these subjects will be reviewed at least annually unless any changes in legislation**

## ***‘Policy Implementation’***

The Company Directors shall ensure that this policy meets all the criteria to which it is set out. They shall develop the organisational culture in which this policy can operate effectively and for ensuring that it is implemented.

Will review relevant information both nationally and in-house monitoring statistics.

## ***‘Policy Communication’***

This policy shall be reiterated to all members of staff via means of training and/or publications. It shall be monitored to ensure that equality and diversity issues are properly addressed.

## ***‘Policy Development and Review’***

This policy shall be developed and reviewed in accordance with relevant legislation. We expect to update it in the light of applying it in practice and as a result of any changes in current legislation or our own in-house policies. Such revisions will be discussed with staff and notified to all through our usual channels.



## ***'Staff / Employee Responsibilities'***

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is put into practice. We expect a commitment from all staff in making it effective and in setting standards for others to follow.

Additional and specific responsibilities apply to management staff and those who are involved in recruitment, training, promotion and development.

All members of staff have a contractual responsibility to apply the values of equality and diversity within our establishment.

We shall all strive to:

- Familiarise ourselves with this policy, follow it and ensure that any staff for whom they are responsible do so as well.
- Draw to the attention of their senior staff any instances of apparent discrimination or any perceived problem in relation to employment or the provision of services.

Responsibilities as defined are listed to identify the key roles within the Policy:

- **The Managing Director**
  - Has overall responsibility for equal opportunities within the Company and will ensure that the policy is properly implemented, monitored and periodically reviewed, in accordance with relevant statutory provisions. To facilitate this, regular meetings will be held regarding all issues relating to Equality & Diversity.
- **Project and Site Managers**
  - Will be charged with the daily implementation of the Policy including:
  - Ensure that no employee is subject to victimisation, discrimination and harassment and making it clear that these are disciplinary offences.
  - Endeavouring to ensure the workplace is accessible and managed to suit the needs of all staff, employees and sub-contractors, as far as is reasonably practicable.
  - Ensuring that all employees know and understand the policy, this will be achieved upon Site Induction.
- **Employees**
  - All employees will be required to understand and implement the policy at all times when carrying out any undertakings for the organisation and report any breach to the Site Manager and/or H&S Manager.

## ***'Ensuring Co-operation'***

Any employee regardless of role, responsibility and/or trade who is seen to intentionally disregard this policy will be liable to disciplinary action as set out in the Company Code of Conduct

All Equality & Diversity related issues will be discussed by the Organisation as a whole and acted on to ensure no repeat to any shortfalls in the Policy or in its implementation.

## ***'Staff Training & Provision of Information'***

Employees will be given a Bullet Point overview of this Policy and will be required to sign and return the signed form of acceptance. This will then place a duty on the employee to uphold all requirements of the Equality & Diversity Policy. Employees will be required to sign for any amendments made to the policy



## ***'The statutory framework for Equality and Diversity'***

As a company we will operate this policy and all other policies and practices relating to it in line with statutory requirements. The present framework within which we apply this policy primarily includes the legislation as set out below:

- The Equality Act 2010

Other relevant Regulations that are required to be enforced to ensure fairness in all Sunter Limited undertakings include (but are not exhaustive of):

- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and associated Codes of Practice issued by the Commission for Racial Equality.
- The Employment Rights Act 1996.
- The Employment Relations Act 1999.
- The Employment Act 2002.
- The Flexible Working (Procedural Requirements) Regs 2014
- The Part time Workers (Prevention of less favourable treatment) Regs 2000 and the subsequent Amendment Regs 2002.
- The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of less favourable treatment) Regs 2002.
- The Maternity and Parental Leave etc Regs 1999 and The Maternity and Parental Leave (Amendment) Regs 2001 and 2002.
- The Paternity and Adoption Leave (Amended) Regs 2014
- Any other regulations in force at the time.

## ***'Employment: Our own Policies'***

Sunter Limited has in place its own procedures and Policies to help facilitate the requirements of the Equality & Diversity Policy. These include:

- Integrated Management Systems Manual  
(Inclusive of BS ISO9001:2015 / ISO14001:2015 / ISO45001:2018)
- PO-005: Safeguarding Policy
- PO-007: Anti-Bullying / Harassment & Security Policy
- PO-011: Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy
- PO-016: Anti-Slavery Policy
- PO-017: Anti-Discrimination in Recruitment Policy
- Toolbox Talks & Other Presentations

