

Equal Opportunities Policy

1.1 Belmont Press is committed to promoting Equal Opportunities, and all existing employees and/or job applicants shall receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, or sex or sexual orientation ('Protected Characteristics').

2 About this Policy

2.1 This policy sets out our approach towards Equal Opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment within Belmont Press, including recruitment, pay and conditions, employee development, staff appraisals, promotions, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

2.2 The Managing Director is responsible for this policy and implementing any necessary training with regard to Equal Opportunities.

2.3 This Equal Opportunities Policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of your contract with Belmont Press, and we reserve the right to amend it at any time.

3 Discrimination

3.1 You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including existing and/or former employees, job applicants, clients, suppliers, or visitors. This is applicable within the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with clients, suppliers, or other work-related contacts), and on work-related trips or events including social gatherings.

3.2 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this Equal Opportunities Policy:

3.2.1 Direct Discrimination - Treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic, such as rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they are openly gay.

3.2.2 Indirect Discrimination - A provision, criterion, or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is therefore not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be classified as Indirect Discrimination unless it can be otherwise justified.

3.2.3 Harassment - This includes Sexual Harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating and/or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.

3.2.4 Victimisation - Retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint regarding Discrimination and/or Harassment.

3.2.5 Disability Discrimination - This includes Direct and Indirect Discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary to alleviate the disadvantages caused by a disability.

4 Recruitment and Selection

4.1 Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection shall be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Wherever reasonably practicable all shortlisting should be undertaken by more than one Director and/or Department Manager.

4.2 Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market, and advertisements should avoid stereotyping and/or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. They should include a short statement regarding Equal Opportunities, and that a copy of this policy will be made available upon request.

4.3 Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children in the near future.

4.4 Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability prior to a job offer being made, except in the very limited circumstances permitted by law. For example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any reasonable adjustments might be needed at interview stage due to a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional upon a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in Equal Opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection and/or decision-making purposes.

5 Disabilities

5.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary and/or what support may be appropriate.

6 Part-Time and Fixed-Term Work

6.1 Part-Time and Fixed-Term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time and/or permanent employees, and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is thus justified.

7 Breaches of this Policy

7.1 We take a strict approach to breaches of this Equal Opportunities Policy, and serious cases of deliberate discrimination will be treated as an act of gross misconduct rendering an employee liable to instant dismissal following Disciplinary Procedure PN6.

7.2 If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure and/or Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy, with all complaints being treated in confidence and investigated thoroughly.

7.3 You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and/or in bad faith will be treated as an act of gross misconduct rendering an employee liable to instant dismissal following Disciplinary Procedure PN6.

Signed.....

Owen Thomas
Managing Director