

RENFREWSHIRE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



EQUALITY & DIVERISTY AT WORK HR5

Title	Equality & Diversity at Work
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Approved By	Management Team
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Reviewer	Shona Carlton PAO
Review Date	As Required

Review History

Review No.	Details	Release Date

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board is committed to ensuring that the ethos and principles of equality of opportunity and valuing diversity are embedded in all aspects of service delivery and are a guiding principle for all its activities.
- 1.2 The Board strives to embrace a positive attitude towards the promotion of equality and diversity and to create a working environment which is inclusive of everyone regardless of ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, carer responsibility, race nationality, social or economic status, trade union membership or activity.
- 1.3 This policy is consistent and in accordance with the current legislative requirements and the Equality Act 2010 and it is the responsibility of all employees to comply with this policy and be familiar with its contents and principles.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Board's vision and commitment to equality and diversity in the workplace. It aims to promote equality and diversity in all aspects of the Board's work and encourages a working environment which is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, where all employees can fulfil their full potential.
- 2.2 The Board is committed to ensuring that equality and diversity is embedded in all aspects of service delivery, and strives to ensure that all employees, customers and partners are treated fairly and with respect at all times.
- 2.2 The Board is positively and actively committed to ensuring that:
- Employees are educated on equality and diversity;
 - Policies, procedures and practices support the Board's equality and diversity responsibilities;
 - The services provided by the Board are relevant to the needs of the diverse community;
 - The Board's workforce represents the community;
 - A safe and inclusive environment is provided which is free from any form of bullying, harassment discrimination or victimisation;
 - Unacceptable behaviour will be challenged;
 - Equality and diversity practices in the Board are measured regularly and are compliant.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all employees of the Board and Elected members. External agencies, partners and contractors who work in partnership with the Board also have a responsibility to comply with this policy.

4. What do we mean by equality and diversity?

4.1 Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. It is about giving people an equality of opportunity to access all services available and to fulfil their potential.

4.2 Diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing differences. It is not about treating everyone exactly the same, but treating people as individuals and creating a working culture and practices that harness and appreciate differences.

5. Legal Framework

5.1 The Board is committed to meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which simplifies, streamlines and strengthens existing equality legislation. The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. The protected characteristics are:

age

disability

gender reassignment

marriage and civil partnership

pregnancy and maternity

race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)

religion and belief

sex

sexual orientation

6. Other Relevant Board Policies/Procedures

6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant Board policies, procedures and training materials as appropriate, including:

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Respect at Work Policy

Learning and Development Policy Statement

Grievance Procedures

Disciplinary Procedures

7. Respect at Work

7.1 All employees should be aware that the Board has a Respect at Work policy aligned with this policy. The Respect at Work policy promotes a workplace free from all forms of unfair treatment, discrimination and harassment, incorporating the principles outlined in this policy.

8. Responsibilities

8.1 The Board, elected members, managers, employees, Renfrewshire Council's HR and Organisational Development, employee representatives and partners/external agencies have specific equality and diversity responsibilities which are outlined below:

8.1.1 Board's Responsibilities:

The Board is committed to the implementation of this policy and in particular has a responsibility to:

Foster a culture which embraces and values equality and diversity and encourages equal opportunities best practice;

Establish systems for monitoring the application of the policy and take action to rectify any inequalities or deficiencies;

Provide training and guidance to managers and other employees as appropriate on the content of this policy and also raise awareness of equality and diversity issues;.

Ensure that all policies/procedures of the Board reflect the guiding principles of equality and diversity;

Take necessary steps to eliminate such behaviours and ensure an inclusive working environment.

8.1.3 Line manager responsibilities:

To be aware of this policy and implement it in their own work areas;

To make their employees aware of their equalities responsibilities;

To maintain an environment which actively promotes equality and diversity and is free from discrimination;

To apply this policy fairly, consistently and without discrimination;

To address instances of suspected discrimination, immediately, sensitively and confidentially and take appropriate action where necessary;

To ensure employees take part in equality and diversity training.

8.1.4 Employees responsibilities:

To read this policy and understand their own equality responsibilities;

To participate and co-operate in any measure introduced by the Board to implement this policy, promote equal opportunity and prevent discrimination;

To ensure their own behaviour towards colleagues, partners, customers and members of the public is appropriate in terms of this policy;

To challenge and report any suspected discriminatory practice to an appropriate manager;

To treat other employees with respect;

To take part in equality and diversity training as appropriate.

8.1.5 Renfrewshire Council's HR and Organisational Development Services responsibilities on behalf of Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board.

Promoting equality and diversity awareness;

To ensure that all employment policies/procedures are reviewed and developed in line with relevant legislation and equality and diversity best practice;

Regularly analyse equality and diversity and workforce statistical information;

To ensure that equality and diversity is streamlined in all training courses and employment policies and procedures;

To support managers and employees on the implementation of this policy;

To support managers and employees in all equality and diversity related issues.

8.1.6 Employee Representatives responsibilities:

To be aware of the Board's policy and its content;

To promote the Board's policy and participate in any joint activities to raise the profile of equality and diversity;

To support and provide representation to employees who have raised issues about inequality, discrimination and unfair treatment.

8.1.7 Partners/External Agencies, Contractors, Agency Workers

To be aware of the Board's policy and its content;

To comply with this policy and other associated policies/procedures while working with the Board.

9. Employee rights

9.1 All employees of the Board have the right:

Not to be discriminated against;

To receive equality of opportunity;

To challenge any unfair treatment or discrimination;

To make a complaint when they feel they have been unfairly treated.

10. Disciplinary Action

10.1 All employees have a right to expect fair treatment at work and the Board acknowledges that the consequences of unfair treatment can be very serious.

10.2 Concerns or complaints from employees, partners/external agencies, contractors and agency workers will be investigated and any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

10.3 If an employee of a partner/external agency or contractor is found to be in breach of this policy, this will be reported to the relevant employer for the matter to be progressed through their own disciplinary procedures. Any breach in this respect could result in no further involvement with the Board.

11. Equality Impact Assessment

11.1 This policy has been equality impact assessed in line with the Board's obligation to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 This policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly as it is applied, and in line with any legislative changes relating to equality and diversity in the workplace