IMS 007 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

MJ Church are committed to fostering a workplace that reflects the diverse communities we operate within. Our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy underpins our dedication to creating a work environment where every employee, regardless of their background or identity, feels valued and respected.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for all employees and job applicants.
- Foster a diverse and inclusive workplace where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Prevent and address any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimization.

To support this inclusive culture, this policy:

- outlines our commitment throughout the employment lifecycle to equality, diversity and inclusion and sets out how we put this commitment into practice.
- explains the behaviours we expect of our people in support of this commitment; and
- sets out the key steps we take to make our culture as inclusive as possible, including our diversity and inclusion framework and how we ensure equality of opportunity throughout the employment lifecycle.

This policy does not form part of the contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, job applicants, contractors, consultants, and volunteers associated with MJ Church. It encompasses all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotion, training, and termination.

4.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All aspects of our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion comply with relevant UK equality legislation, including but not limited to:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Public Sector Equality Duty

We are committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust and respect, and one that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

We ensure that our recruitment, promotion and retention procedures do not treat people less favourably because of their:

- disability;
- gender, gender identity or gender reassignment status;
- marital status;
- race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, or nationality;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- age;
- civil partnership status;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- paternity;

5.0 POLICY SPECIFICS

5.1 Our Commitments

- **Equality of Opportunity:** We ensure that no employee or job applicant is discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** We celebrate and encourage diversity within our workforce and strive to create an inclusive environment where all perspectives are valued and considered.
- **Fair Treatment:** We provide equal access to opportunities for career development and advancement, ensuring that all employees have the chance to fulfil their potential.
- **Respectful Workplace:** We are committed to creating a work environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Harassment, bullying, and discrimination will not be tolerated.

5.2 Responsibilities

- **Management:** Senior management is responsible for leading by example and ensuring that EDI principles are integrated into all aspects of the business. They must support and promote this policy and ensure that all employees understand and comply with its provisions.
- **Employees:** All employees are expected to contribute to a positive and inclusive work environment. They should treat colleagues with respect and report any concerns or breaches of this policy to their manager or HR department.
- **Human Resources (HR):** HR is responsible for implementing this policy, providing training on EDI issues, and addressing any complaints or concerns related to discrimination or harassment.

5.3 Our Expectation

Employees are expected to take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting and applying this policy. Our culture is made in the day-to-day working interactions between us so creating the right environment is a responsibility that we all share.

We expect employees to treat colleagues and third parties (including customers, suppliers, contractors, agency staff and consultants) fairly and with dignity, trust and

respect. Sometimes, this may mean allowing for different views and viewpoints and making space for others to contribute.

By embedding such values and constructively challenging inappropriate comments or ways of working, employees can help us achieve and maintain a truly inclusive workplace culture.

Any dealings with colleagues or third parties must be free from any form of harassment, victimisation or bullying.

Those believed to have committed, authorised or condoned an act of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying, will be subject to appropriate investigation and potential action under the Disciplinary Policy.

Employees should be aware that they can be personally liable for discrimination and harassment.

5.4 Discrimination

Discrimination can be intentional or unintentional and may occur directly, indirectly, by association, or by perception.

There are also two specific types of discrimination that apply only to disability: "discrimination arising from disability" and "failing to make reasonable adjustments".

Discrimination is not always obvious and can be subtle and unconscious. This stems from a person's general assumptions about the abilities, interests and characteristics of a particular group that influences how they treat those people (known as "unconscious bias").

Different types of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010

- **Direct discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic compared with someone who does not have that characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination:** Where a policy, procedure or way of working that applies to everyone puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage, compared with people who do not have that characteristic, unless there is a good reason to justify it.
- **Associative discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, for example because their partner is transgender.
- **Discrimination by perception:** Treating someone less favourably because you perceive them to have a protected characteristic even if they do not.
- **Discrimination arising from disability:** Treating someone less favourably because of something connected with that person's disability and where such treatment is not justified. Examples include:
    - dismissing or failing to pay a bonus to someone because of their disability-related absence; or
    - disciplining someone for losing their temper where such loss of temper was out of character and was due to severe pain caused by them having cancer.

- **Failing to make reasonable adjustments:** Employers are legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that aspects of employment, or the employer's premises, do not put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage. Failing to comply with this duty is unlawful. Examples of reasonable adjustments might include:

    - allocating some of the disabled person's duties to a colleague;
    - changing their working hours or place of work;
    - adjusting procedures for assessing job candidates; and
    - modifying disciplinary and grievance procedures.

5.5 Harassment and sexual harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of:

• violating someone else's dignity; or

• creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone else.

Sexual harassment is:

• conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; and

• less favourable treatment related to sex or gender reassignment that occurs because of a rejection of, or submission to, sexual conduct.

A single incident may be considered harassment if sufficiently serious, however harassment likely applies where unwanted conduct continues after the individual has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to them.

5.6 Victimisation

Victimisation is treating another person detrimentally either because that person has made a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or because they have supported someone else who has made such a complaint, for example by giving a witness statement that supports the allegations.

5.7 Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, we regard it as conduct that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting, or an abuse or misuse of power, and usually persistent, that has the effect of undermining, humiliating, isolating or injuring the recipient.

Bullying can be physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. It is not necessarily face to face and can be done by email, phone calls, online or on social media. Bullying may occur at work or outside work.

If the bullying relates to a person's protected characteristic, it may also constitute harassment and, therefore, will be unlawful.

5.8 Equality of opportunity

5.81 Recruitment

We take reasonable and appropriate steps to encourage job applications from as diverse a range of people as possible.

Every decision-maker should challenge themselves, and other members of the recruitment selection panel, to make sure that any stereotypes, unconscious bias or prejudice do not play any part in recruitment decisions.

5.82 Career development

Decisions relating to a person's promotion or career development must be free from discrimination.

We ensure that selection criteria and processes for recruitment and promotion are reviewed on a regular basis so that there is no discriminatory impact on a certain group.

5.83 Disability inclusion

Recruiting people with a disability

Advertising, application processes, assessments, arrangements for interviews, job descriptions and person specifications, and selection criteria are appropriate and as inclusive as possible.

Applicants will be asked if they require any reasonable adjustments to be made to the recruitment process.

Managers must not ask job applicants about their health or disability except with prior approval from the HR department. Such approval is given only in exceptional circumstances and where there are specific legal grounds for doing so.

Talking about disability

We understand that some people find it hard to discuss their disabilities and that disability can be invisible.

Psychological safety, where people feel able to speak up about their experiences without fear of negative consequences, is paramount to ensuring disability inclusion.

MJ Church do not tolerate ableist language in our organisation. Ableist language is language that is negative, inappropriate or offensive towards people with a disability.

Reasonable adjustments

Applicants/Employees are not required to inform the company of any disability; however, we would encourage them to notify us so that we can support them appropriately.

Employees who are experiencing difficulties at work because of a disability, are encouraged to contact their line manager or the HR department to discuss potential reasonable adjustments that may alleviate or minimise such difficulties. We may need to discuss these needs with the employee, their doctor or Occupational Health to help us get the right support in place.

6.0 Training

Employees will have access to training to enhance knowledge and raise awareness of matters of EDI.

7.0 Monitoring and Review

We will regularly monitor and review our EDI practices to ensure they remain effective and relevant.

8.0 Complaints and Grievances

Wherever possible, the company will strive for informal resolution, however this is not always appropriate.

Employees who believe they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, or any other breach of this policy should raise their concerns through the company's grievance procedure. We are committed to investigating all complaints thoroughly and fairly.

REVISION HISTORY

Issue	Description of Change	Date
1	Minor formatting changes	03 November 2025

Date of Next Planned Revision:	

	Revised	Responsible	Authorised
Department	HR	HR	ELT
Name	Sarah Taccuso	Sarah Taccuso	Ben Staff
Signature			