



## **CENTRAL POLICY**

**No. E2**

**EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

**PLEASE DESTROY ALL PREVIOUS ISSUES**

## **1. STATEMENT – VALUING DIFFERENCES IN THE COMMUNITY**

Amicus ITS believes that diversity enriches performance and service delivery, the communities where we live and work, and the lives of employees. As the workforce evolves to reflect the growing diversity of the community and the national marketplace, our efforts to understand, value, and incorporate differences become increasingly important.

Amicus ITS wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities & diversity in employment and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, marital status, age, social background, part time working, sexual orientation, disability or creed. Amicus ITS endeavours to create a supportive working environment based on mutual respect and trust to assist employees to reach their full potential, regardless of race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, disability, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or for any other reason.

This policy applies to job applicants (both internal and external) and all employees whether full time, part time, casual or temporary contract. The policy also applies equally to the treatment of the organisation's customers, clients, suppliers, contractors or consultants. Amicus ITS will aim to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against either directly or indirectly. To this end, within the framework of the law, we are committed, wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the local community in which we operate.

The Company works hard to think inclusively, value differences, and provide the necessary tools to give each employee a chance to do his or her best work. This approach has resulted in fresh ideas, creative problem solving and a productive environment as we focus on the business partners with whom we work, the processes and practices we use, the innovative services we develop, and Amicus ITS' growing workforce.

We believe it is in Amicus' best interests, and those who work within the organisation, to ensure that the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community generally are considered when employment opportunities arise.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, training, promotion and career development are based solely on objective and job related criteria.

The Management Team, Senior managers and Team-Leaders fully support this policy statement.

The Policy will be made available to all employees at their place of work.

## **2. IN PRACTICE**

All employees have the right to be treated fairly and considerately and the Company will respect and value diversity and promote equality of opportunity. Embracing diversity within our workforce contributes to a richer and more creative work environment and enables us to recruit and retain the best people.

Through this policy and the training & development of managers and employees, Amicus ITS will do all it can to promote good practice in this area in order to reduce the likelihood of discrimination or harassment occurring. In addition, the Company will comply with all relevant legislation and good practice.

The Company will do its utmost to ensure that all applicants and employees are treated fairly, and that the Company's environment is free from discrimination. The Company will challenge and aim to eliminate unlawful discrimination and will not tolerate discrimination on ANY grounds. Selection criteria and HR procedures will ensure that individuals will be selected, promoted and treated on a basis of relevant abilities and merits, and according to the requirements of the job. All employees will be given equal opportunity and, where appropriate, training to progress within the organisation.

The policy applies to the processes of:

- Recruitment & Selection
- Promotion
- Training
- Pay
- Benefits
- Terms & Conditions of work
- Termination of employment

and every other aspect of employment.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

While the overall responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with Amicus, it is expected that individual employees at all levels will also accept personal responsibility for practical application of the policy. The success of any policy depends on the degree of commitment of all employees. Everyone should be aware of this policy and of the obligations that fall upon them, both to ensure its success and to comply with the legislation relating to discrimination. Amicus ITS expects employees at all levels to value the contribution made by each individual and to show respect and consideration for all.

Directors are responsible for:

- The provision of guidance and training for Managers
- Arranging for complaints to be investigated thoroughly by an impartial party or parties and for ensuring that the findings are acted upon appropriately

Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that appropriate standards of behaviour are maintained among all employees in the workplace
- Being alert to the possibility of unfair discrimination and taking prompt action when it is alleged

Employees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they do not behave in a way that unfairly discriminates against, or contributes to, the unfair discrimination of a fellow worker
- Advising management of unfair discrimination if the matter cannot be resolved between themselves and other workers concerned, and they wish to pursue a complaint

In particular, individual employees will be required to:

- i) Co-operate with measures introduced by management to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination.
- ii) Not induce or attempt to induce other employees or management to practise unlawful discrimination.
- iii) Not to, or attempt to, victimise harass, abuse or intimidate individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information on discrimination.
- iv) Inform management if they suspect that discrimination is taking place in employment decisions.

#### **4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

Job descriptions should be reviewed before advertisement to ensure that job requirements are stated accurately in the person specification and that they are in line with Amicus' policy.

- i) Job descriptions and person specifications should accompany all request to recruit forms.
- ii) Person specifications should consist of measurable and justifiable criteria: criteria or requirements which are unnecessary for the post and which might exclude applicants of particular groups must not be included.
- iii) Recruitment should be by advertisement and open competition. Exceptions to this principle may be short fixed-term appointments, secondments, in the event of organisational change or where the existing post-holder's job is at risk of redundancy.
- iv) All managers who are involved in the recruitment process will, before commencing the recruitment process, review their selection criteria and tests to ensure that they are related to job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

- v) All applicants will be given equal consideration for appointments. Criteria used for short-listing and interviewing should be clearly established and equally applied to all candidates. Interview questions should be related to the requirements and circumstances of the job, and must be of a non-discriminatory nature.
- vi) Selection decisions must not be influenced by race, religion, age, sex, marital status, religion or belief, nationality, disability, social background, sexual preferences, ethnic or national origins or creed, or by the traditional profile of the post-holder. Selection decisions must not be influenced by perceived prejudices of other staff. Each individual should be assessed according to his/her personal capability to carry out a specific job.

## **5. MONITORING**

Records of applicants will be maintained in order to monitor the progress of equality of opportunity within accurate and meaningful equal opportunities analyses.

## **6. IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF DISCRIMINATION / DISCIPLINE & GRIEVANCE**

If you feel you are discriminated against in any way – tell someone! This may be your Manager or a member of HR. Please do not suffer in silence – speak out! The Company cannot alleviate the problem if we do not know about it.

If you have been subjected to discrimination, you may seek confidential assistance from HR who will be able to advise and assist you in order to seek ways of preventing a re-occurrence of the unwanted behaviour.

In the event that the matter cannot be resolved informally, the Company will ask you to put the complaint(s) in writing so that the matter may be handled in accordance with the Grievance Procedure and, if necessary, the Disciplinary Procedure. Alternatively, if you feel that you are being bullied or harassed in any other way refer to the Amicus ITS' Bullying & Harassment Policy.

All complaints about another employee will be treated confidentially and investigated immediately, thoroughly and objectively.

Possible victims of unlawful discrimination also have the right to complain to a Tribunal in line with relevant legislation.

## **7. PROCEDURE**

Discrimination is illegal. It will, therefore, be taken very seriously. Any breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be regarded very seriously and is likely to constitute gross misconduct. Such a breach is likely to lead to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

If a complaint has been made against an alleged discriminator full investigation will take place and may involve the suspension of all parties pending completion of the investigation.

Suspension should not be seen as a sign of guilt but will be used for the protection of all parties.

Once the investigation is complete the grievance and/or disciplinary procedure will be followed, as appropriate.

Amicus ITS wishes to ensure that employees feel comfortable about raising such complaints. No individual will be penalised for raising such a complaint unless the substance of the complaint is untrue or the complaint is made in bad faith, for example out of malice.

Where an employee is falsely accused of discriminatory conduct, then he or she may implement the Grievance Procedure. In this instance, the person who made the false accusation will be subjected to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances.

## **8. SPECIAL NEEDS**

Where employees have particular cultural, religious, physical or any other special needs which may conflict with existing work requirements, Amicus ITS will consider whether it is reasonably practicable to vary or adapt these requirements to enable such needs to be met.

Where employees request either the accumulation of annual leave, special leave or unpaid leave in order to meet their special needs, sympathetic consideration should be given.

## **9. MONITORING**

This policy will be monitored on a regular basis by the Head of Human Resources. Where there are issues with the way the policy is working, these will be looked at closely with a view to identifying measures to improve the effectiveness of the policy.