

# Group Policy

Title: Equal Opportunities

Document Number:	GRP-HR-POL-0009
Function:	Human Resources
Classification:	Level 1
Document Owner:	Michelle Stott
Revision Number:	4
Issue Date:	November 2024

## About this document

This document explains BGEN's policy for equal opportunities.

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## 1 Status of this Policy

This policy is for guidance only and does not give contractual rights to individual employees or worker. The Company reserves the right to alter any of its terms at any time although it will notify individuals in writing of any changes.

## 2 Equal Opportunities Policy

BGEN is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment. This means that all job applicants, employees, suppliers and customers of the company will receive equal treatment regardless of any of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 i.e. age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The following types of individuals are covered by this policy; employees, trainees, apprentices, anyone working for the company under a contract to carry out work personally, contract workers supplied via an agency or service company.

## 3 Legislation

It is unlawful to discriminate against individuals either directly or indirectly in respect of a protected characteristic as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

## 4 Forms of Discrimination

BGEN will not tolerate any kind of discrimination in it's workforce. Discrimination can take a number of forms, described as follows:

- Direct discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic as defined under the Equality Act 2010.
- Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing the business and that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Associative discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination by perception or perceptive discrimination is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.
- Third party harassment. The Equality Act 2010 makes the Company potentially liable for harassment of our employees/workers by people (third parties) who are not employees of the Company, such as customers, clients and subcontractors. The Company will be liable when harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions that we were aware that it had taken place and have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.
- Harassment, is 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has a purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that individual.

- Victimisation, where someone is treated less favourably than other because he or she has taken against the Company under the Equality Act 2010, whether or not such victimisation is unlawful.

## **4.1 Disabled Employees**

The company will make adjustments to accommodate disabled employees where possible and reasonable. If an employee thinks that they may have a disability, they are encouraged to tell the business about this so that they can explore what adjustments might be appropriate.

## **5 Recruitment, Promotion, Reward and Recognition**

The company will ensure that all applications for employment are treated fairly regardless of the protected characteristics as defined in this policy. The company outlines its approaches to recruitment in its Recruitment Policy.

Promotion within BGEN is made without regard to any of the protected characteristics as defined in this policy and is based on merit.

Reward and recognition within the company will be on the basis of status and work performance without regard for any of the protected characteristics as defined in this policy.

## **6 What to do if you believe you have been discriminated against**

If you believe you may have been discriminated against, please tell us. You can speak informally with your manager or anyone in HR. If you want to make a more formal complaint, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the Grievance procedure. If you believe there has been any bullying or harassment then you should raise the matter through the Bullying and Harassment procedure.

Allegations of potential breaches of this policy will be treated seriously. Employees and contractors who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

## **7 What will happen if you act in a discriminatory way?**

Acts of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation will not be tolerated and will be taken seriously.

If, after investigation, we decide that you have acted in breach of this policy you may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. This applies to the most senior levels of management as well as to all other employees and other workers, third party contractors, customers and suppliers as defined in this policy.

## **8 Policy Monitoring, Review and Promotion**

We will promote and publicise our Equal Opportunities Policy using the Company intranet BEN, induction packs and notice boards.

The HR department will monitor this policy periodically. If changes are required, the HR Director will implement these.

## 9 Referenced Processes and Forms

Document Number	Document Title
GRP-HR-POL-0001	Bullying and Harassment
GRP-HR-POL-0011	Grievance Policy
GRP-HR-POL-0007	Disciplinary Policy
GRP-HR-POL-0026	Employee Wellbeing

For all HR forms, please visit the HR section of One Point

## 10 Revision History

Revision Number	Issue Date	Author	Checker	Approver	Change Details
4	Nov 2024	M Stott	K Gallagher	R Whitehead	Reviewed – no changes
3	January 2023	M Stott	K Gallagher	R Whitehead	Reviewed – no changes
2	July 2021	K Gallagher	L Speed	R Whitehead	Rebranded
1	August 2018	M Stott	M Brereton	I Humphries	Template switch from HRP010 – Rev 7