

1 Equality and Diversity Policy

All companies within the Idox group are Equal Opportunities Employers and the group has a policy for this purpose. This policy covers all aspects of employment from vacancy advertising; selection recruitment; promotion; training and pay to conditions of service and reasons for termination of employment.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant, employee or visitor receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, disability, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, marital status, sexuality, responsibility for dependants, religion, trade union activity or age. Selection criteria and procedures will be kept under review to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. All employees will be given equality of opportunity within the company's service and will be encouraged to progress within the organisation. To ensure that direct or indirect discrimination is not occurring, recruitment and other employment decisions will be regularly monitored in conjunction with ethnic records of job applicants and existing employees. The company is committed to a programme of action to make this policy fully effective.

David Meaden – Chief Executive Officer

Dated: April 2020

1.1 Employment

The Group is committed to providing equal opportunities in all aspects of employment particularly recruitment, promotions and training.

The Group will provide equal opportunities to any employee or job applicant and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, race, colour, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion or marital status. Disabilities will be accommodated wherever practicable. The Group also affirms its commitment to treat part-time staff and contract workers as equitably as full-time staff, having regard to statutory obligations.

To meet these objectives the Group will ensure that:

- Selection criteria relating to job requirements are not discriminatory by asking for inappropriate qualifications or experience.
- Job descriptions and personnel specifications are not discriminatory.
- Job advertisements are not, without proper reason, confined only to certain publications, or worded in such a way as to exclude applicants either individually or of a particular group. Advertisements will carry a statement that the Group is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Every job is open equally to all applicants who meet the job requirements.

Applications will be dealt with in accordance with appropriate procedure (See Code of Practice).

Transfer, promotion and training are all open equally to all eligible employees and selection criteria do not exclude applicants from any group.

Recruitment, selection and employment policies will be periodically reviewed and a detailed Code of Practice will be available to implement the Equal Opportunities Policy.

1.2 Recruitment

Wherever possible, all vacancies will be advertised simultaneously internally and externally.

Wherever possible, steps will be taken to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches underrepresented groups internally and externally.

Wherever possible, vacancies will be notified to job centres, careers offices, schools, colleges, polytechnics, etc, with significant minority group rolls, as well as to minority press/media and organisations.

All vacancy advertisements will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunity.

Where Idox uses recruitment agencies to employ staff, the following additional steps will be taken to ensure that the company's policy is clearly understood:

- A copy of the Group's Equal Opportunities Policy will be sent to all employment agencies working on behalf of the company
- They will be asked to use the wording "Idox is an Equal Opportunities Employer" in all job advertisements
- They will be asked to supply a copy of the Equal Opportunities Policy to all job applicants.

1.3 Selection

The suitability of each applicant will be measured only against the requirements of the job advertised.

Where selection tests are used they will relate directly to the job requirements and measure an individual's ability to do that particular work.

The Group will monitor and keep a record of the ethnic origin of candidates. If a bias is detected in the selection process then it will be positively addressed by encouraging applicants from that particular group.

Selection criteria (job description and employee specification) will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.

Wherever possible, more than one person will be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process, and all will have received training in equal opportunities.

Wherever possible, underrepresented groups will be involved in the short listing and interviewing processes.

Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies must be recorded.

1.4 Promotion

Employees shall be promoted on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. To achieve this:

- The promotion criteria will relate specifically to the individual's ability and aptitude to do the job.
- The Group will periodically review the promotion procedure.

The Group will monitor and keep a record of the ethnic origin of employees selected for promotion.

1.5 Training

All persons responsible for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer of staff shall receive ongoing training in equal opportunities to ensure that the Group's and their own obligations under the Race Relations Act are met and to develop the necessary skills to translate this equal opportunities in employment policy into practice.

All employees will have equal access to training and development opportunities.

Training is considered a necessary part of each employee's role and training opportunities will be discussed at each employee review. Employees are encouraged to request training in areas that they consider appropriate.

The Group will monitor and keep a record of the ethnic origin of all employees selected for training and development opportunities.

1.6 Dismissal

In any cases of dismissal or redundancy the management will ensure that there is no discrimination on race, gender or other grounds.

1.7 Code of Practice

The above policy statement refers to a 'detailed code of practice', which consists of the remainder of this section and the anti-harassment section following.

The Group will not tolerate discrimination on any of the following grounds:

- by treating an individual on grounds of gender, colour, marital status, sexuality, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin, or membership or non-membership of a trade union, less favourably than others;
- by expecting an individual on the above grounds to comply with requirements for any reason whatsoever related to their employment, which are different to the requirements for others;
- by victimisation of an employee;
- by harassment of an employee;
- by imposing work that is more onerous on one employee than on others; or
- by any other act, or omission of an act, which has as its effect the disadvantaging of an employee or applicant against another, or others, purely on the above grounds.

It is the policy of the Group to ensure that entry into the company is determined solely by the application of objective criteria and individual merit. Equality will be accorded to applicants and employees without regard to disability, race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, colour, national or ethnic origin.

The objective of the Group is to employ individuals who are suitably qualified or who have the ability to develop the skills necessary to undertake the obligations imposed by the position they occupy.

1.8 Reporting and Consultation

It shall be a function of the Employee Council, formed as the vehicle for all communication and consultation with the workforce, to discuss this policy, its implementation and any amendments to practice.

1.9 Anti- harassment Policy

The Group is committed to creating a working environment that is free from harassment and intimidation and will not permit any form of harassment or discrimination based on disability, race, religion, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or colour.

It is recognised that differences may arise where people of different sex, interest and cultures work together. If, however, any member of staff feels humiliated or threatened by the behaviour of others then the individual responsible for causing this reaction will be liable to disciplinary action.

Managers have a responsibility to communicate this policy to staff members and to investigate all complaints of harassment against any member of staff.

Any breach of this policy will result in disciplinary action and possibly instant dismissal.

1.10 Sexual Harassment

Conduct, which is based on a person's sex in a verbal, physical or non-verbal manner that is unwanted and offensive to the recipient, is sexual harassment. This form of conduct is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and is totally unacceptable. The individual responsible will be held personally liable and may be subject to criminal proceedings.

Following is a non-exhaustive list of examples that will be regarded as sexual harassment:

- physical conduct of a sexual nature – this includes unwanted physical conduct ranging from unnecessary touching, patting or pinching or brushing against another employee's body to assault;
- verbal conduct of a sexual nature – includes unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or pressure for physical activity; continual suggestions for social activity outside the workplace when it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome; offensive flirtations; suggestive remarks, innuendoes or lewd comments;
- non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature – includes the display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects or written materials; leering, whistling or making sexually suggestive gestures; and

- sex-based conduct – this refers to conduct that ridicules or is intimidating or is physically abusive of an employee because of his/her sex, such as derogatory or degrading abuse or insults which are gender- related or offensive comments about appearance or dress.

1.11 Responsibilities of All Employees

All managers and employees are responsible for ensuring a harassment-free working environment. In particular if you are responsible for other employees you must ensure that:

- you are aware of, and understand the Group's policy in relation to Anti-Harassment and Equal Opportunities;
- you advise and inform your team to increase awareness and understanding of the Group's policies; your work environment is free of visual harassment;
- you deal with physical and verbal harassment immediately even if it is not brought to your attention; you are supportive of any individual who states that they have been harassed and treat the matter with the appropriate sensitivity;
- you maintain confidentiality in relation to all cases of harassment that you have dealt with or been involved in;
- you ensure that the harassment does not continue after the case has been reported; and
- you ensure that your conduct does not cause offence.

1.12 Complaints Procedure

If you are being harassed you should, if possible, attempt to resolve the problem informally in the first instance. It may be sufficient to explain to the person engaging in the unwanted conduct that the behaviour in question is not welcome and that it offends you and makes you feel uncomfortable. The person may not realise that his/her behaviour is causing offence.

If it is too difficult or impossible to confront the individual you should request help from your immediate supervisor/Personnel manager or any other staff member who would be in a position to offer advice.

If the behaviour continues, you should report it to Human Resources with details of dates, times etc to enable him/her to investigate the allegations and decide upon appropriate action.

The appropriate manager will examine the details of the incident and it may be necessary to get further details before a decision is made. All information will be treated as confidential and everyone will be treated with respect during the investigation. The details of the case will only be available to those persons who are involved in the investigation. If the Group decides to proceed with disciplinary action then the appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed.

If it is decided not to take any action then you may appeal the decision using the grievance procedure.

It is a disciplinary offence to victimize or retaliate against an employee for bringing a complaint of sexual harassment.

1.13 Racial Equality

Because the Group's target market place is the public sector, and to facilitate working in this sector, the Group has voluntarily adopted the relevant sections of the general duty to promote race equality required of public authorities as a result of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This requires that the Group shall in carrying out its functions, have due regard to the need:

- to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

The Group shall abide by the guiding principles contained in the statutory code of practice on the duty to promote race equality as laid out in the consultation draft and subsequent versions.

1.14 Monitoring

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively (and for no other purpose) Idox maintains records of employees' and applicants' racial origins, gender and disability. Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of such records provide the basis for appropriate action to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

Where necessary, employees will be able to check/correct their own record of these details. Otherwise, access to this information will be strictly restricted.

1.15 Management Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility to ensure this policy is consistently applied and each manager has responsibility for the implementation of the policy in his or her area.

The Group has implemented the following measures to ensure that no discrimination or harassment occurs:-

Those with responsibility for staff are reminded that they may be held individually accountable for ensuring that no form of discrimination occurs in the recruitment, selection, promotion, training and discipline of these staff.

Enquiries will be made into suspected cases of direct discrimination or acts of omission which lead to indirect discrimination. Any such practices will be stopped and disciplinary action may be taken against the individuals concerned.

The Executive Management Team has the responsibility for ensuring that these policies on race, disability, gender, age, religion or belief, and sexual orientation are set out in:

- In instructions to those concerned with recruitment, training, promotion, employee management in relation to disciplinary actions or employee grievances;

- In documents available to employees, recognised trade unions or other representative groups of employees;
- In recruitment advertisements or other literature;
- As information provided for employees and customers in accessible formats for disabled people;
- In relation to instructions or procedures for employees in relation to service delivery, customer care and procurement of services and goods;
- In relation to sub-contractors used or employed.

2 Human Rights Policy

2.1 Background

The Human Rights Act 1998 ("The Act") received Royal Assent on 9 November 1998 and came into force in October 2000.

The Act is the adoption in UK legislation of The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which was adopted by the Council of Europe in 1950, and came into force in 1953, for the purpose of protecting individuals' rights against infringement by states. It is a creature of its age and reflects the political concerns of the cold war. The rights it contains, such as freedom from torture, prohibition of slavery, right to liberty and security, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, are influenced by the then desire to promote anti-Soviet propaganda.

The Act has three main roles:

Interpreting Legislation in accordance with the Convention

Under section 3 of the HRA 1998, courts must interpret statutes and statutory instruments in a way that is compatible with Convention rights (so far as is possible). However, if domestic legislation is unambiguous, and simply cannot be interpreted in accordance with the Convention, the domestic statute takes precedence over Convention rights. A statutory instrument will be struck down if inconsistent with Convention rights unless the primary legislation prevents the removal of the incompatibility.

Statements of Compatibility

Under section 19 of the Act, all legislation introduced by the government must be coupled with a Statement of Compatibility with the Convention. This Statement (which must be in writing) must be provided by the Minister in charge of the passage of the Bill prior to its second reading. If the Minister is unable to make a Statement of Compatibility, he must state (in writing) that he is unable to do so but the government nevertheless wishes to proceed with the Bill. Accordingly, the real effect of this section is to require ministers to flag up to Parliament when a Bill is unlikely to comply with Convention rights. There is no analogous requirement in respect of Private Members' Bills.

Public Authorities must act in compliance with the Con

This is perhaps the most important provision of the HRA 1998. Under sections 6-8 (set out below), all public authorities must act in compliance with the Convention. It is a defence, however, to show that the public authority was prevented from acting in accordance with the Convention as the result of U.K. legislation (which takes precedence). This is important to the exercise of any discretionary powers by a public authority. Sections 6-8 of the HRA 1998 provide:

HRA 1998, ss6-8

- 6. (1)** It is unlawful for a public authority to act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention right.
- 6. (2)** Subsection (1) does not apply to an act if –
 - a)** as the result of one or more provisions of primary legislation, the authority could not have acted differently; or,
 - b)** in the case of one or more provisions of, or made under, primary legislation which cannot be read or given effect in a way which is compatible with the Convention rights, the authority was acting so as to give effect to or enforce these provisions.
- 6. (3)** In this section 'public authority' includes –
 - a)** a court or tribunal, and
 - b)** any person certain of whose functions are functions of a public nature but does not include either House of Parliament or a person exercising functions in connection with proceedings in Parliament
- 6. (5)** In relation to a particular act, a person is not a public authority by virtue only of subsection 3(b) if the nature of the act is private.
- 6. (6)** An 'act' includes a failure to act but does not include a failure to –
 - a)** introduce in, or lay before, Parliament a proposal for legislation; or,
 - b)** make any primary legislation or remedial order.
- 7. (1)** A person who claims that a public authority has acted (or proposes to act) in a way which is made unlawful by section 6(1) may –
 - a)** bring proceedings against the authority under this Act in the appropriate court or tribunal, or
 - b)** rely on the Convention right or rights concerned in any legal proceedings, but only if he is (or would be) a victim of the unlawful act.
- 8. (1)** In relation to any act (or proposed act) of a public authority which the court finds is (or would be) unlawful, it may grant such relief or remedy, or make such order, within its powers as it considers just and appropriate.

8. (2) But damages may be awarded only by a court which has power to award damages, or to order the payment of compensation, in civil proceedings.

Reasons for Adopting this Policy

The Act is not directly enforceable against private employers, only public authorities.

However, it is recognised that there are a number of ways in which The Act will affect private employers. Some of these ways have already been covered in UK legislation, such as the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

In addition, because the target market place for Idox services and systems is the local authority sector, which is itself bound by The Act, then compliance with The Act may be required by a local authority of its contractors.

Areas of Employment Affected by the Act

The Convention rights which are most likely to feature in employment cases are as follows:

- Article 3 - freedom from degrading treatment
- Article 4 - prohibition of forced labour
- Article 5 - right to liberty and security
- Article 6 - right to a fair trial
- Article 8 - right to privacy and respect for family life
- Article 9 - freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Article 10 - freedom of expression
- Article 11 - freedom of assembly and association
- Article 14 - prohibition on discrimination.

Idox does not believe that the first three articles in this list have any effect on its employment practices. Consequently, it has drawn up policy statements in relation to Articles 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 14

2.2 The Relevant Articles

2.2.1 Article 6

“In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgement shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.”

2.2.2 Article 8

“Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the laws and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

2.2.3 Article 9

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching or practice and observance. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedom of others."

2.2.4 Article 10

"Everyone has a right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.

The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health and morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary."

2.2.5 Article 11

"Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health and morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State."

2.2.6 Article 14

"The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status."

2.3 Policy Statements

2.3.1 Article 8 - right to privacy and respect for family life

Employment implications here include the opening of mail and the monitoring of emails, telephone calls or Internet usage.

This area is also the subject of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Consequently, Idox has sought the consent of all employees to intercept, record or monitor emails, internet use and telephone calls where it considers necessary, even for those areas where the Act does not require consent, such as:

- To establish facts
- To ascertain compliance with regulations and policies
- Quality control
- To prevent or detect crime
- To investigate / detect unauthorised use of telecom system
- Interception – viruses, direct emails to correct recipient
- To check absentees voicemail and email
- To oversee free welfare help lines.

When any such interception will take place, Idox will always inform users in advance.

This agreement is written into and explained in the Company Handbook under the heading "Cyber Liability".

Regarding the opening of mail, it is standard procedure that all incoming mail is opened and scanned, as a part of the "less-paper office" philosophy practised by the company. However, if mail is marked "private and confidential" it is not opened but passed directly to the addressee.

2.3.2 Article 9 - freedom of thought, conscience and religion

It is stated in the Company Handbook (Recruitment Policy) that the company will not:

"discriminate unfairly against potential applicants on grounds of race, sex, age, religion or belief, or disability".

The company's Equal Opportunities Policy further states that "The Company will provide equal opportunities to any employee or job applicant and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, race, colour, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status."

If an employee requires time off work for the observance of religious holidays, other than bank holidays, then these may be booked as holiday in the normal manner. If there is a conflict over several interdependent people being given a day off then priority will be accorded to those who have a genuine requirement based on their religious belief.

The company's policy on dress code is set out in the company handbook. The dress code is non-sexist and requires only that employees dress appropriately, that is smart casual for the office and more formal when meeting with customers. Employees who feel that this dress code is restrictive may discuss the matter with the HR department, but are reminded that the acceptance of the Company Handbook, company policies and procedures is a part of the offer of employment, into which each employee voluntarily enters.

2.3.3 Article 10 - freedom of expression

This article is the prevention of a suppression of opinions, information and ideas and does not conflict with any of the company's policies and procedures. It should not be seen as permitting rude or offensive behaviour. Similarly, it does not conflict with the company's confidentiality requirements of all employees.

2.3.4 Article 11 - freedom of assembly and association

Idox recognises its obligations under the Employment Relations Act 1999 and agrees to any employee being or becoming a member of a trade union.

2.3.5 Article 14 - prohibition on discrimination

Idox policies already prohibit discrimination on grounds of race, sex, age, religion or belief, or disability.

All staff will be fully advised on the Equal Opportunities Policy and their responsibilities within it. The policy is part of the Group's Contract of Employment.