



# Diversity and equality policy

Policy 803\_11 (previously EAQ/68 00/3/07)

Issued 09/09/2011

**What's this document about?**

Our approach to diversity and equality, it explains:

- Our commitment and approach
- Our expectations for all employees
- How to raise concerns and complaints



Document details

**Who does this apply to?**

All employees and everyone we come into contact with during our work.

**Policy statement**

We believe that diversity is as important to the workplace as it is in the natural environment. Diversity in this context means differences visible and non-visible, differences of background, socio-economic group, personality, and work-style, as much as the more overt differences of the nine protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010:

age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation, marriage & civil partnership, and pregnancy & maternity.

To fulfil our vision of a better environment for present and future generations, we will develop an organisation where all employees are actively supported in giving their best contribution to the Environment Agency aims and objectives. This means attracting developing and retaining people from all parts of the community, valuing the differing skills and abilities of all our employees, and responding flexibly to the needs of individuals in achieving organisational goals.



Related documents



Feedback

**Policy objectives**

People are treated as individuals with fairness and respect.

Decisions that affect people's employment, development and progression, are made on the basis of merit, ability and potential.

We are committed to promoting diversity and equality in all our policies, procedures, processes and actions and to valuing the diversity of our workforce and the customers, partners and communities we interact and work with.

We are committed to creating and maintaining an organisation free from discrimination or harassment and where everyone is treated with fairness, dignity and respect and where inclusion is the norm.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying or any other form of inappropriate behaviour against colleagues, customers or any individual in the course of our work will not be tolerated and will be managed under the disciplinary policy.

**Contact for queries**

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Diversity,  
HR Business  
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Trade Union  
Reps.  
HRSC.

This document is out of date and has been withdrawn (03/08/2016).

This policy supersedes issue dated September 2009, reference EAQ/68 00/3/07 to include the recognition of the Equality Act 2010 and updated links to associated information (see the related documents section below).

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## 1.0 Diversity and Equality Principles

**Principles agreed by the National Negotiating Group date :11 July 2011**

1. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we comply with the law. We will comply with the general and specific public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will publish our approach and objectives. We will also publish our progress against these objectives.
2. We recognise the benefits of having a diverse workforce and we will strive for fairness and equality of opportunity in all areas of employment, identifying and removing barriers that prevent all employees from progressing and developing their potential. We will support and encourage employee networks to provide peer group support for employees.
3. We will ensure that the service we provide to our customers, communities and partners is free from discrimination. We endeavour to ensure our services are accessible to all and that the diverse needs of our customers are understood and met wherever reasonably possible. We will work to reach out to vulnerable groups to ensure that there is a mutual understanding of our respective needs and requirements.
4. Diversity and equality will be taken into account and reflected in our procurement of goods, facilities and services. Contractors, partners and suppliers who deliver services on our behalf will share our aspirations for diversity and will be expected to comply with our Diversity and Equality Policy.
5. We will encourage all employees to self disclose their diversity details on our confidential database. We will use this aggregated information to understand the adjustments we need to make in the workplace and to our policies. The information will be used to update our Board and Executives on our progress towards achieving our Public Sector Equality Duty objectives and the diversity of our workforce.
6. Monitoring is an integral part of our Diversity and Equality Policy. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure we comply with the law regarding equality analyses. Data on the composition of the workforce will form the baseline data to be reviewed on a regular basis and reported to the Board every 6 months. We will develop appropriate measures to enable us to evaluate progress and stimulate policy development in existing and new areas.

### 1.2 Who is responsible

We all have a responsibility for diversity and for treating everyone with whom we interact, with respect, dignity and in a fair and inclusive way. To help us all do this the leaders and managers in our organisation have specific responsibilities.

Our:

Chief Executive provides leadership and ensures we comply with the relevant legislation.

Directors and senior executives are responsible for providing visible leadership and for the implementation and delivery of diversity across our organisation.

The Head of Human Resources is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the Policy.

Managers and Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and that all of our people understand the relevance of diversity to them and the behaviour we expect from everyone.

Who will tell them?

Line manager, colleague, trade union representative, HR Business Partner or diversity representative.

### 1.3 How will we manage our Diversity & Equality Policy

The Diversity & Equality Policy will be reviewed annually by the Strategic Resources Manager taking account of performance in the previous year and feedback from customers, partners, the public and employees. Changes to the Policy will be jointly agreed through National Negotiating Group.

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## 2.0 Guidance for the management of diversity

### Procedural guidance – management controlled

#### 2.1 How I raise a concern or complaint

If you are unhappy with the way you have been treated, you should firstly approach the individual or relevant manager and explain your concerns to them. If you remain unhappy you should:

As an employee raise your concerns using either:

- the [Grievance Procedure](#) or
- Bullying and Harassment Procedure

As a customer, member of the public or partner highlight your concern using:

- the [Complaints and Commendations Procedure](#).

Behaviour by our employees that contravenes this Policy will be dealt with under the

- [Disciplinary Procedure](#)
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### 3.0 Related documents and further information

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#### Links

- [Diversity on the easinet](#)
- [Diversity e-learning](#)
- [Self Disclosure](#)
- [Grievance Procedure](#)
- [Acceptable Use of EA Electronic Equipment and Communications Systems Policy](#)
- [Disciplinary Procedure](#)
- [Bullying & Harassment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints and Commendations Procedure](#)
- [Employee assistance programme \(Care First\)](#)
- [Equality & Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Government Equalities Office](#)
- [ACAS](#)
- [Code of conduct](#)

**Note:** Consultees include National Negotiating Group, National Diversity team, Employee Relations, Human Resources, Employee networks.

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