

Purpose

This policy sets out Initial Systems approach to equality and diversity. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work and operate on a daily basis. We aim to be an inclusive company, committed to providing equal opportunities throughout employment including in the recruitment, training and development of all employees, and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating discrimination within the workplace.

Equality and diversity at Initial Systems Ltd

Initial Systems consider that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups both in employment, and to goods and services. We consider diversity to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for Initial Systems too. We acknowledge that equality and diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed.

Scope

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all employees, whether part time or full time on a substantive or fixed-term contract, and also to associated persons such as secondees, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service. You have personal responsibility for the application of this policy. As part of your employee induction, you are expected to read and familiarise yourself with this policy, ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully complied with and to complete the declaration below (Page 2).

This policy is also of particular relevance to directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions which affect others.

Initial Systems Commitment

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. Initial Systems will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of a protected characteristic:

• sex • gender reassignment • marriage and civil partnership • pregnancy and maternity • race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin) • disability • sexual orientation • religion and or belief; and • age

Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working) which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated. All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities in Initial Systems. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If you believe that you may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, you should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with your line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. You may decide in the alternative to raise the matter through Initial Systems Harassment Policy or Grievance Policy. For types of discrimination see the Annex to this policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. Initial Systems will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably by Initial Systems 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 Initial Systems Discipline Policy.

A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under Initial Systems Discipline Policy. Employees may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

When does this policy apply?

This policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g. at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues) or which may impact on Initial Systems reputation (e.g. the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to Initial Systems).

We set out below some specific areas of application:

1. Recruitment

Selection for employment at Initial Systems will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. Further detail is set out in Initial Systems Recruitment and Selection Policy. Where possible, Initial Systems will capture applicants' diversity demographics as part of its recruitment processes to promote the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

2. Training

You may also be required to participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of this policy.

3. Promotion

All promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit, and will not be influenced by any of the protected characteristics listed above. Promotion opportunities will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers to promotion.

4. During employment

The benefits, terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to Initial Systems employees will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means and to provide appropriate conditions to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

5. Initial Systems Legal Duties

As a public body, Initial Systems is additionally subject to public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010. This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by Initial Systems to assess its effectiveness and may be amended from time to time. This policy is for guidance only and does not form part of your contract of employment.

This policy has been in operation since December 2008 and is reviewed on an annual basis.