

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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### Statement of Policy

proAV is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to supporting and promoting an inclusive culture for all employees and job applicants. We want everyone to feel comfortable being themselves and to feel safe in speaking out in a workplace where we understand and respect each other's differences.

Operations Director Francesca Hazell and part owner of the business has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken.

### Our Commitment

At proAV we commit to ensuring that all employees are protected from discrimination, mistreatment and abuse which prevents them from fulfilling their role, impairs personal development or affects their emotional and/or physical wellbeing.

We know our employees have different backgrounds and cultures; and are of all ages, abilities and genders and we strive to have an authentic, inclusive culture where employees feel safe, respected and valued for who they are.

### Equality

Unlawful discrimination and bias are not tolerated within proAV. Our equal opportunities approach supports the fair treatment of all employees and job applicants.

To ensure we act fairly we have a number of policies and procedures in place to provide equality and avoid unlawful discrimination. This includes recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay, benefits, disciplinary and redundancy selection.

We strive to ensure all employees are treated with dignity and respect at work and any employee found to be in breach of our policies will face disciplinary action which may result in their dismissal from the company.

We do not discriminate against our employees and will take steps to eliminate unconscious bias from our decision-making and promote equality at each point in our employee's career journey.

### Recruitment and Selection

We aim to ensure that each job applicant or prospective candidate does not suffer discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. We welcome applications from individuals across society and we avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying for our roles.

- > Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions whereby applicants will be asked about their health or disability prior to interview or a job offer being made. For example:
  - > Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
  - > Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
  - > Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
  - > Equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective staff, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

## **Learning and Development**

Employee performance is objectively assessed every six months against job requirements and goals; training and development opportunities are offered to employees in line with their abilities, behaviours and talents.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion training is included as part of our new employee onboarding process and employees complete annual refresher training thereafter.

## **Reward and Recognition**

Performance is fairly reviewed and rewarded for an employee's contribution to the business, taking into account internal and external comparison and affordability.

proAV's flexible working and family friendly policies are designed to support different working practices including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work can be done. Requests to vary these terms will be carefully considered on an individual, case by case basis.

## **Discipline, Grievance, Absence and Performance Management**

We will investigate any allegations of discrimination or harassment and we will take action to stop subtle and explicit forms of racism where we find it.

In the event of disciplinary or grievance procedures being invoked, we will treat individuals fairly in line with our policies.

## **Termination of Employment**

We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

## **Disabilities**

If an employee is disabled or becomes disabled, we encourage them to tell us about their condition so that we can support them as appropriate.

If an employee experiences difficulties at work because of a disability, they may wish to contact their line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The line manager may wish to consult with them and their medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate an employee's needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

## **Diversity**

We respect and appreciate what makes our colleagues different and we expect all our employees to treat their colleagues in the same way. Our employees all have different levels of education socio-economic status, experience and length of service. Many have caring responsibilities, deeply held beliefs and values, health conditions or disabilities and different ways of interpreting information. Everyone is different, everyone is welcome and we do not discriminate against our employees on the basis of their diversity defined by the law.

## **Inclusion**

Our diverse workforce and mixture of ideas is what makes proAV unique and everyone brings fresh perspectives, solutions and new ideas as our different backgrounds allow, to collectively see things from all angles and deliver the best for our clients and colleagues.

Our ambition is to have an open and inclusive culture for all employees and if they feel they are not being treated in this way, or see behaviour that is not inclusive, we want to know so we can do something about it.

## **The Law**

proAV's policy is guided by the following and the company shall meet all statutory obligations under relevant legislation. Please note that any subsequent updates to the following or additional statutory obligations including European equivalents shall be adhered to in the absence of a policy update.

- > Equality Act 2010
- > Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- > Human Rights Act (1998)
- > EU Equal Treatment Framework Directive (2007/8)
- > Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006

## Unlawful Discrimination

Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

- > **Direct discrimination:** occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above.
- > **Indirect discrimination:** occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.
- > **Associative discrimination:** occurs when someone is treated unfairly based on their association with another person belonging to a protected group.
- > **Perceptive discrimination:** occurs when someone is treated less favourably based on an assumption that they may have to a protected characteristic.

## Other Types of Unfair Treatment

- > **Harassment:** related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- > **Victimisation:** is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint.
- > **Bullying:** offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, belittle or injure the recipient.
- > **Failure to make reasonable adjustments:** a 'reasonable adjustment' is a change to remove or reduce the effect of an employee's disability so they can do their job or a job applicants disability when applying for a job.

We will not tolerate discrimination by people working with us. We expect everyone to demonstrate inclusive behaviour and contribute to a psychologically safe environment where ideas can be shared and where we can challenge one another in a respectful way to collaborate as a team.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any forms of discriminatory behaviour and any employees found, following a reasonable internal investigation, to have behaved in such a way or to have breached this policy will be invited to a disciplinary hearing which may result in dismissal from the company.

## Raising Concerns

If an employee believes that they may have been discriminated against, they are encouraged to raise the matter through our grievance procedure. If an employee believes that they may have been subject to harassment, they are encouraged to raise the matter through our anti-harassment and bullying policy.

Advice on how to proceed can be sort by speaking to a line manager, an appropriate manager or to the HR Department.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

Any employee who is found to have committed any breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

*This policy has been written in conjunction with Herringtons & Carmichael LLP, is reviewed on an annual basis and updated accordingly.*