

## **Equality & Diversity Policy Statement**

### **Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner**

---

#### **Purpose**

The OISC was created to achieve three main purposes:

- to promote good practice
- to establish a regulatory scheme
- to establish as far as practicable that those that provide immigration advice or services are fit and competent to do so.

To achieve these purposes we must be vigilant and enforce our powers where necessary. We also believe that the OISC is dependent on getting the best from everyone we work with, both internally and externally. Our aim is to create an environment that welcomes diversity and values the differences that individuals bring.

At the heart of our commitment is the desire to treat everyone fairly. Staff and customers must be confident that everyone will have a full and equal opportunity to develop and prosper either as part of the regulatory scheme or in administering it.

We undertake not to unfairly discriminate on the grounds of:

- ♦ Age
- ♦ Disability
- ♦ Gender
- ♦ Marital status
- ♦ Nationality
- ♦ Sexual orientation
- ♦ Race
- ♦ Religion

We will deal with unfairness where evidence is found, consistent with the law, our policies and our values.

#### **Corporate Responsibility**

The OISC is an independent non-departmental body but on issues of equality and diversity we seek to reflect or exceed the standards set by the Cabinet Office and the Civil Service Management Codes. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, for example, does not extend to the OISC as we exercise quasi-judicial functions, however we have agreed to shadow the Act. This is not simply a cosmetic exercise, but part of a genuine commitment. The OISC undertakes to ensure that principles of equality and diversity are adhered to in the following areas:

- fairness in recruitment, selection, promotion and work allocation
- equal access to training and development opportunities
- fairness in pay, progression and performance review
- flexible working patterns and supporting the work/life balance
- interactions with those within the OISC's regulatory scheme
- all dealings with members of the general public.

The OISC management will provide information and training to enable our managers, staff and associates to fulfil the commitments to equality and diversity set out in this policy.

We actively disseminate this policy statement to all our staff, associates and potential clients.

## **Line Manager Responsibility**

Managers throughout the organisation have responsibility to ensure that the equality and diversity policies are upheld in their area. Line managers are responsible for ensuring fairness and impartiality in selecting, managing and developing their staff and maintaining a flexible working environment, which is fair to all, promotes inclusiveness and is conducive to harnessing and valuing “difference”.

## **Individual Responsibility**

All staff at all levels must recognise and accept individual responsibility for the equality and diversity policies within the OISC. We must all ensure that we are not behaving in a way that could, whether intentionally or not, discriminate against or cause feelings of harassment in others. We view discrimination as a serious matter and the consequences of such behaviour will lead to disciplinary action and individual liability.

## **Monitoring**

The OISC will use statistics and other methods in order to monitor and track the effectiveness of the equal opportunities and diversity policies.

## **Customer Service**

The OISC undertakes to ensure that all customers are treated fairly, inclusively and with equal access to services and information. Care will be taken, within available resources, to ensure that publications and other materials are accessible and take account of the needs of different people.