



KCE Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

Kent Community Energy Limited (KCE) is committed to promoting diversity and equal opportunity in the workplace in the belief that this is not only right, in terms of social justice and in law, but because it brings benefits in terms of good management practice and an effective organisation. This policy applies to employees, directors, volunteers, and applicants for paid and unpaid roles within KCE.

Employees, volunteers, and job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics).

KCE will promote a culture where all employees are treated fairly and with respect in an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

Responsibility for the development, monitoring and compliance of this policy lies with the Managing Director and Board of Directors. This policy will be regularly reviewed.

The success of the policy will come from the commitment and participation of all employees of KCE.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and KCE may amend it at any time.

Diversity

KCE recognises that individuals are different from one another and that this difference adds value and depth (both socially and economically) to the organisation.

Definitions

KCE will promote equal opportunities in all aspects of work. Racist, sexist or any other form of discrimination towards colleagues or clients is unacceptable. Such discrimination is prohibited under this policy and is unlawful.

Discrimination can be either direct or indirect:

Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.

Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time which may adversely affect someone with caring commitments. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

Harassment: including sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment may result in dismissal.

Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

Disability discrimination: including direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and/or failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Statement of Policy

KCE recognises that certain groups and individuals in society are discriminated against on grounds including race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, religion, age, or sexual orientation. KCE recognises that discrimination may be embedded in our patterns of education, housing, employment, social interaction and political participation.

Adopted 21 Feb 2025; doc owner CB



It is policy that no employee or prospective employee will receive less favourable treatment than any other nor will be disadvantaged by any circumstances, conditions or requirements which cannot be justified fairly and objectively.

Individual staff members are responsible for demonstrating the standards of a workplace that is free from discrimination. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously regardless of the seniority of those involved.

Breaches of this policy will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action. If any staff member is found to have knowingly discriminated against an individual, they may also be liable under law for their actions.

What staff can expect of KCE

Recruitment and promotion – KCE recognises that equal opportunities underpin every stage of the recruitment and selection process.

All vacancies will be advertised internally and externally as appropriate.

Application forms and other supporting material will be free of questions or requests for information from which inferences could be drawn as to the status of an individual that are irrelevant to the job description. Information on age, marital status, ethnicity etc. will only be collected for monitoring purposes.

All job descriptions and person specifications will be clear and objective, identifying only skills, qualifications, experience, abilities and any other factors that are needed to perform the job.

No applicant will be disadvantaged by an interview's location, facilities or unreasonable timing. Selection will be based on ability to fulfil the role using information provided on the application form, at interview and any test/assessment results.

KCE is 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 employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

Whilst in employment - All employees will be valued as individuals and will be treated with dignity and respect. KCE is committed to ensuring that terms and conditions of employment are not discriminatory.

Wherever possible staff facilities and services will be available to all employees and when appropriate reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure this. For example, if an existing member of staff's circumstances change and, as a result, they need special equipment to continue to do their job, the organisation will identify reasonable adjustments through consultation with the individual and implement them where feasible. KCE will do its best to use plain English in all communications.

Training and development - All employees will be provided with the opportunity for appropriate training regardless of their circumstances or status.

It is the responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure that all staff are aware of the training and development opportunities that are available to them. Staff will be actively encouraged to use them.

Where an event is specifically directed towards an individual, such as training, KCE will always try to ensure that it can be arranged and delivered in a manner compatible to an individual's circumstances and needs.

Redundancy - Decisions on redundancy will be made fairly on an objective basis.

Grievances – KCE views any form of discrimination or unfair treatment as unacceptable and this may lead to disciplinary action. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

Complaints of discrimination or unfair treatment should be reported to the Managing Director or, if necessary, escalated to the Board. Investigations will be conducted in line with KCE's grievance procedure