

Policy Statement

Carmichael^{UK} is committed to supporting the principle of equal opportunities and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of any Protected Characteristic (PC) including sex, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, age, disability, marital status and civil partnership, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, and pregnancy and maternity.

This policy covers vacancy advertising, recruitment and selection, training, promotion and conditions of service and is compliant with present relevant legislation. This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure continued compliance, although is not intended as a complete statement of the law. This policy also covers equality and diversity in the case of disability and will be used in conjunction with the relevant statutes in force at the time.

The aim of Carmichael^{UK} is to create an environment that encourages and values diversity within its workforce and builds on the differences individuals bring, enabling the continued success of Carmichael^{UK}. We aim to draw upon the widest possible range of views and experiences in order to meet the changing needs of our staff, clients, partners, contractors and temporary workers.

We seek to promote diversity and to respond to the needs of all individuals in a fair and equitable manner, whilst observing our commitment and responsibility to current legislation.

To achieve the aims of this policy Carmichael^{UK} will:

- Fulfil its social responsibility towards its employees, contractors, temporary workers and the communities in which it operates.
- Recognise all of its legal obligations.
- Make all opportunities (including advertising, interview and selection processes, promotion and training) as accessible as possible to under-represented groups.
- Conduct monitoring and analysis (with groups of employees within Carmichael^{UK}, jobseekers in the local community and the demographic of the broader labour market) to ensure processes are fair, equitable and accessible and to identify any significant under-representation.
- Endeavour to attain a workforce that is representative of the communities from which it is drawn to secure the widest pool of diverse talent.
- Recruit, train and promote the best person for the job to make full use of the talents and resources of all our employees.
- Create a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect.
- Periodically review its selection criteria and procedures to ensure that they remain compliant and maintain a system that ensures fairness.
- Distribute and continuously publicise this policy throughout Carmichael^{UK} to employees, contractors, temporary workers, clients, partners, visitors to Carmichael^{UK}, in advertising, and elsewhere as appropriate.
- Provide the facilities and opportunity for any employee who believes that they have been treated inequitably within the scope of this policy to raise the matter through the appropriate grievance or complaints procedure.
- Log all reported instances of harassment and take action to mitigate and minimise harassment and victimisation wherever possible.
- Ensure that employees understand that breaches of this policy will not be tolerated and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, training, career development, promotion, grievance and disciplinary procedures and all other aspects of employment. All employees are required to comply with this policy when dealing with other employees, consultants, temporary workers, job applicants, clients, suppliers, customers and contacts of Carmichael^{UK}, and anyone else with whom they come into contact during the course of their employment. To support best practice, contractors and temporary workers who are not employees of Carmichael^{UK} are also expected to abide by this policy while they are working on assignment through Carmichael^{UK}. Where practicably possible, Carmichael^{UK} will protect contractors and temporary workers from discrimination and harassment whilst on assignment with clients of Carmichael^{UK}.

Procedures

Responsibilities

It is the direct responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure the implementation of this policy on a day-to-day basis; however, all employees have a responsibility to accept their personal involvement in applying it and must:

- Be familiar with the policy and ensure that it is followed by both themselves and employees for whom they have a responsibility.
- Be aware of their obligations under current equality and diversity legislation.
- Be aware of the benefits of diversity and equality.
- Act in ways that respect and value the diversity of others.
- Set a positive example at all times.
- Listen to and respect others and discourage discriminatory speculations.
- Challenge any behaviour that could be interpreted as discriminatory.
- Notify their line manager of any apparent instances of discrimination, harassment or victimisation, and log these accordingly.

Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee who acts in breach of this policy. Disciplinary action may include summary dismissal in the case of a serious breach of this policy or repeated breaches. In other cases, it may include a warning, oral or written. Disciplinary action (which may include summary dismissal) may also be taken against any employee who makes malicious or vexatious allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Such action will be taken in accordance with the Carmichael^{UK} disciplinary procedure.

Breaches of this policy may also result in the employee responsible being held personally liable for compensation if the person who has been discriminated against / harassed / victimised takes legal action.

All other individuals who work at or visit Carmichael^{UK} are also required to comply with the terms of the policy.

Discrimination

Carmichael^{UK} will regard the following as discrimination:

- The less favourable treatment of a candidate or employee because of a PC. This applies even if the individual concerned does not actually possess that PC but is discriminated against through association with someone who has the PC.
- The imposition of an unjustified requirement or condition which is such that fewer individuals with any PC can comply, and which is to their detriment.

- The less favourable treatment of a person who has threatened proceedings, given evidence or information, taken any action or made any allegation of discrimination.
- The use of threatening, abusive or insulting language or behaviour with intent to cause another employee, prospective employee or visitor harassment, alarm or distress.
- The display of any writing, sign or other visible representation which is threatening, abusive or insulting to another employee, prospective employee or visitor, so that that person feels harassment, alarm or distress.

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate unlawfully when advertising, recruiting, training, promoting or selecting candidates for submission to a vacancy or assignment or in any terms and conditions for contractors and temporary workers.

In line with legislation, Carmichael^{UK} recognises the following forms:

Direct Discrimination - where a person is treated less favourably than another because they have a PC or they are perceived to have a PC or are associated with someone who has a PC. This type of discrimination applies to all PCs.

We will not discriminate against a person because of any PC, either:

- By refusing or omitting to provide any of our services.

Or

- In the way we provide any of our services.

Carmichael^{UK} will not accept or act upon an instruction from a client stating that certain persons are unacceptable because of any PC unless that PC prevents them from carrying out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned.

Associative Discrimination - applies to race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination and occurs where someone is treated less favourably because they are associated with another person who possesses one of the above PCs.

Perceived discrimination - applies to age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination and happens where someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a particular one of the aforementioned PCs. It still applies even if that person does not have the PC.

Indirect discrimination - applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, disability and gender reassignment. Indirect discrimination happens where there is a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies equally to everyone, but has the effect of being disadvantageous to a particular group who share a PC and the requirement cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Carmichael^{UK} will not accept or act upon an indirectly discriminatory instruction from a client.

Harassment - unwanted conduct related to a relevant PC which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. This applies to all the PCs.

Employees can complain of behaviour they find offensive, humiliating, etc., even if:

- It is not directed at them.
- The behaviour is perpetrated by a third party who is not an employee of Carmichael^{UK}.
- The behaviour is based on perception or association.

In the event that an employee finds such behaviour offensive or believes it to be inappropriate, they should report it immediately to their line manager, who will log the incident and seek to prevent recurrence.

Victimisation - when an employee is treated less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under The Equality Act 2010, or they are expected to do so. This form of discrimination applies to all PCs.

Occupational Requirement

If possessing a particular PC is a requirement of a job (not of an employer), Carmichael^{UK} will not employ or assign a candidate who does not possess that PC where the client can show that applying the requirement is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The requirement must be crucial (or intrinsic) to the job and not merely one of several important factors.

Age

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate against any person because of their age.

We will not include age criteria in job specifications, advertisements or interview / assessment processes. We are committed to recruiting and retaining employees whose skills, experience, and attitude are suitable for the requirements of the various positions regardless of age.

We will also inform clients of their obligations to shortlist on the basis of competence and skills and not age where they are responsible for decisions during the recruitment / selection process.

Carmichael^{UK} may request date of birth (date and month initially) as part of its recruitment process but such information will not be used as selection, training or promotion criteria or in any detrimental way and is only for compilation of personal data, which Carmichael^{UK} holds on all employees and workers and as part of its equal opportunities monitoring process.

Gender Reassignment

Carmichael^{UK} recognises that any employee may wish to change their gender during the course of their employment with Carmichael^{UK}.

We will make every effort to protect an employee who has undergone, is undergoing or intends to undergo gender reassignment from discrimination or harassment within the workplace.

Any employee suffering discrimination or harassment in the workplace because of gender reassignment should report the incident using the Carmichael^{UK} complaints procedure and where appropriate invoke the Carmichael^{UK} grievance procedure.

Religion or Belief

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate because of religious or other philosophical beliefs or because of non-belief. We are committed to recruiting and retaining employees whose skills, experience, and attitude are suitable for the requirements of the various positions regardless of religion/belief.

Sexual orientation

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any person on the grounds of their sexual orientation. We will encourage clients not to include any sexual orientation criteria in job

specifications and every attempt will be made to ensure clients recruit on the basis of competence and skills and not sexual orientation.

Carmichael^{UK} respects the rights of everyone irrespective of whether or not they are open about their sexual orientation.

Gender

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any person on the grounds of their gender. We will encourage clients not to include any gender criteria in job specifications and every attempt will be made to ensure clients recruit on the basis of competence and skills and not gender.

We are committed to recruiting and retaining employees whose skills, experience, and attitude are suitable for the requirements of the various positions regardless of gender.

Disability

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any person on the grounds of their disability.

We are committed to recruiting and retaining employees whose skills, experience, and attitude are suitable for the requirements of the various positions.

Carmichael^{UK} may request information regarding disability as part of its recruitment process but such information will not be used as selection, training or promotion criteria or in any detrimental way and is only for compilation of personal data, which Carmichael^{UK} holds on all employees and workers as part of its equal opportunities monitoring process. Any data shared will be anonymised. Information regarding disability will only be required when it is intrinsic to the role.

We will ensure where required that our company and our clients fulfil their duties to make reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process and in employment so that those with a disability can fully participate.

Race

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any person on the grounds of their race. We will encourage clients not to include any race criteria in job specifications and every attempt will be made to persuade clients to recruit on the basis of competence and skills and not race.

Carmichael^{UK} is committed to recruiting and retaining employees whose skills, experience, and attitude are suitable for the requirements of the various positions regardless of race.

No race requirements will be stated in any job advertisements on behalf of Carmichael^{UK}.

Pregnancy and maternity

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate directly or indirectly harass or victimise any person on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity. People should be treated fairly in the workplace throughout their maternity period and supported appropriately through pregnancy. We will encourage clients to recruit on the basis of competence and skills and not discriminate due to pregnancy.

Marriages and civil partnerships

Carmichael^{UK} will not discriminate directly or indirectly harass or victimise any person on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership. People should be treated fairly in the workplace irrespective of their marital/civil partnership or family status.

Part-Time Workers

This policy also covers the treatment of those employees who work on a part-time basis. Carmichael^{UK} recognises that it is an essential part of this policy that part time employees are treated on the same terms, with no detriment, as full time employees (albeit on a pro rata basis) in matters such as rates of pay, holiday entitlement, maternity leave, parental and domestic incident leave and access to pension facilities. Carmichael^{UK} also recognises that part time employees must be treated the same as full time employees in relation to training and redundancy situations.

Harassment & Dignity at Work

Carmichael^{UK} is committed to providing a work environment free from unlawful harassment. Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct. Examples (non-exhaustive list) of prohibited harassment are:

- Verbal or written conduct containing derogatory jokes or comments eg sexist, racist, homophobic, disablist.
- Slurs or unwanted sexual advances;
- Visual conduct such as derogatory or sexually orientated posters;
- Photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures which some may find offensive;
- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or any interference because of any qualifying PC;
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favours;
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

This policy prohibits unlawful harassment.

Employees will be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive (including third party harassment) even if it is not directed at them.

Any person that believes they have been unlawfully harassed or who has witnessed harassment or offensive behaviour should make an immediate report to their line manager followed by a written complaint as soon as possible after the incident in line with the complaints process outlined below.

The complaint should include:

- Details of the incident
- The name or names of the individual or individuals involved
- The names or names of any witness or witnesses

Carmichael^{UK} will undertake a thorough investigation of the allegations. If it is concluded that unlawful harassment has occurred, Carmichael^{UK} will take such steps as are reasonably practicable to mitigate and prevent continued harassment. Any employee who Carmichael^{UK} finds to be responsible for unlawful harassment will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

Monitoring & Positive Action in the Recruitment Process

Positive action will take place where:

- People who share a PC suffer a disadvantage connected to the characteristic or have needs that are different from those who do not share the characteristic; or
- Participation in an activity by persons who share a PC is disproportionately low.

In these circumstances, proportionate steps will be taken to meet their needs or to enable and encourage them to overcome/minimise the disadvantage or participate in the relevant activity.

Monitoring

- Carmichael^{UK} will monitor demographic and organisational data to ensure that there is not significant under-representation in participation in an activity by persons who share a particular PC and in the event that such under-representation is identified, will take appropriate remedial action.

Job Descriptions and Working Patterns

- Job descriptions and/or person specifications will include only those requirements, qualifications and characteristics that are essential or desirable for the effective performance of the role. It will be made clear which items are essential and which are only desirable.
- Whilst it is permissible to indicate the standard hours of a job and/or that it is full time, if an employee or applicant wishes to propose some other pattern of work, this will be carefully considered and only rejected if it is justified.

Advertising, Recruitment and Promotion

- Carmichael^{UK} will undertake all reasonably practicable steps to circulate information about vacant posts as widely as reasonably practicable in the circumstances.
- No recruitment literature or advertisements will imply a preference for any one group of applicants, unless there is an occupational requirement which limits the post to a particular group, in which case this will be clearly stated. However if there is an imbalance in the workforce, Carmichael^{UK} will actively welcome applications from candidates from under-represented protected characteristic groups.
- All selection interviews and short listing will be conducted on an objective basis and deal only with the individual's suitability for the job, taking into account their skills and experience.
- Questions will only be asked during interview about a candidate's personal circumstances or plans if they relate directly to the job requirements, and will then be asked of all candidates applying for the post.
- Recruitment, employment and promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit and evaluated against fair and objective criteria.

Training

- Employees will be provided with appropriate training (depending on the needs of the business) to enable them to improve their performance and to achieve the performance standards and targets set for them by Carmichael^{UK}.
- Special responsibility for the practical application of the Carmichael^{UK} equal opportunities policy falls upon managers and supervisors involved in the recruitment, selection, promotion and training of employees, and/or conducting Carmichael^{UK} grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that disabled employees are given the opportunity to participate fully in the workplace, in training and career development opportunities.

Positive Action – Training, Promotion and Conditions of Service

- Under represented groups will be encouraged to apply for training and employment opportunities with Carmichael^{UK}. Wherever possible, specific training will be provided for such groups to prepare them to compete on genuinely equal terms for jobs and promotion. However, actual recruitment to all jobs will be strictly on merit.
- Wherever necessary, use will be made of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the specific needs of particular groups.
- Wherever possible, efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary/unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged and/or under represented groups.

Personnel Records

- In order to ensure the effective operation of the equal opportunity policy (and for no other purpose) a record will be kept of all employees' and job applicants' gender, racial origin, disability, age group, sexual orientation and religious beliefs (should they choose to disclose these on the diversity monitoring questionnaire).
- Where necessary, employees will be able to check/correct their own record of these details. Otherwise, access to this information will be strictly restricted.
- Such records will be analysed on a regular basis, and appropriate follow-up action taken.

Complaints

Carmichael^{UK} recognises that any employee who feels that they need to bring a complaint of discrimination or harassment may feel vulnerable. Those employees will receive support and reassurance and are assured that their complaint will be treated in the strictest confidence and need not fear that they will be victimised for bringing a complaint.

Any person who is found to have victimised or retaliated against another for complaining about or giving evidence about discrimination or harassment, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in accordance with Carmichael^{UK} disciplinary procedures.

Similarly, Carmichael^{UK} recognises that those who are accused of discrimination or harassment need to have their views heard and the allegations made against them investigated thoroughly. Carmichael^{UK} recognises that, whilst all acts of discrimination or harassment are serious, any action taken will depend upon the gravity of the allegation.

A complaint should be made as follows:

- The employee who believes that they are the victim of discrimination or harassment should report the incident(s) to their line manager. If they would find this difficult or the complaint is against such a person, then they should make the complaint to the Managing Director; providing details of the complaint in writing.
- The people to whom a complaint is made are under a duty to log the complaint and immediately investigate the complaint themselves, or if they feel unable to do so, should refer the complaint to the Managing Director.
- All complaints will be handled in a confidential and impartial manner. The individual investigating the complaint should firstly discuss the situation with the employee affected. He or she should then make arrangements to interview the individual against whom a complaint has been made. These two procedures should be completed within a week of the complaint being made, depending on the availability of the parties, and should be fully documented.

- Employees against whom a complaint has been made are assured a fair and impartial hearing and the chance to put forward their side of the story. Full details will be given of the complaint in writing before the investigatory interview and the employee concerned will be offered the opportunity to be interviewed.
- It may also be necessary to place any person accused of harassment on investigatory suspension depending on the circumstances of the particular allegation(s).
- If it is necessary to interview others who may have witnessed acts of harassment, these individuals can be assured of the same degree of confidentiality.
- After hearing both sides of the complaint, the individual investigating the complaint will make a decision. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, the individual investigating the complaint will take prompt action to stop the discrimination or harassment and to prevent its reoccurrence. Carmichael^{UK} disciplinary procedures will be used as appropriate and a disciplinary hearing will be convened before any disciplinary action is taken. Carmichael^{UK} will inform both parties in writing of the outcome and the action to be taken as soon as that decision is made.
- If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation or the disciplinary action taken, they should refer to the disciplinary or grievance procedures as appropriate.

Where a complaint is upheld, Carmichael^{UK} will monitor the situation to prevent reoccurrence.

In the event that a contractor or temporary worker experiences or witnesses harassment or offensive behaviour, they should report this to their line manager at the client's workplace and also to their main point of contact at Carmichael^{UK}. In such instances, Carmichael^{UK} will work with the client and do everything that is practicably possible to prevent recurrence.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and may be altered from time to time in light of legislative changes or other prevailing circumstances.