Equality and diversity policy

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Nobody should be filtered out of a job by the wording of an advert. This policy sets out what that means in practice on a job board: what we refuse to publish, the narrow exceptions the law allows, what we do about adjustments, how we behave ourselves, and what happens when somebody tells us we have got it wrong.

It applies to everything published on www.hiringuk.co.uk, to every advertiser using it, and to HIRINGUK LTD itself as an employer and as an employment agency.

1. The law we work to

The Equality Act 2010 protects nine characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

It matters where the law puts the duty. Section 39 makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate in the arrangements for deciding who to offer work to, which includes the advert. Section 55 puts the same duty on an employment agency. Section 111 makes it unlawful to instruct, cause or induce somebody else to discriminate, and section 112 covers knowingly helping them do it. In plain terms: an advertiser who writes a discriminatory advert is liable, and so is anybody who publishes it for them knowing what it says. That is why we take this seriously rather than treating adverts as somebody else's words.

Four kinds of unlawful behaviour are covered: direct discrimination (treating somebody worse because of a characteristic), indirect discrimination (a rule that applies to everybody but puts one group at a disadvantage and cannot be justified), harassment, and victimisation (treating somebody badly because they complained or supported a complaint).

2. Wording we refuse to publish

These come up constantly and are usually carelessness rather than malice, which is why we ask for a rewrite before we remove anything.

Instead of | Write | Why

"Young and dynamic", "recent graduate", "mature person", "5 to 10 years experience" | Describe the work and the skill: "comfortable running a site single handed" | Age. A fixed years-of-experience band is indirect age discrimination unless you can justify it

"Salesman", "handyman", "he will be responsible for" | "Salesperson", "maintenance operative", "you will be responsible for" | Sex. Gendered titles and pronouns tell half your applicants not to bother

"English as a first language", "British only", "no foreign nationals" | "Right to work in the UK" and, if it is genuinely needed, "clear written English for reports" | Race and nationality. Say the real requirement, which is almost always right to work or a standard of English

"Must be fit and healthy", "no health problems" | The actual task: "regular lifting up to 25kg, with mechanical aids available" | Disability. Describe the job, not the person, so a disabled applicant can judge it and ask for an adjustment

"Full clean driving licence" on a role with no driving | Leave it out | Disability. An unnecessary requirement that excludes people is indirect discrimination

"No family commitments", "must be fully flexible", "no career breaks" | The real pattern: "one weekend in four, rota published a month ahead" | Sex, pregnancy and maternity. Vague flexibility demands fall hardest on carers

"Native speaker", "must be a practising Christian", "girls wanted for the bar" | The skill, or nothing | Race, religion or belief, sex. All unlawful unless a genuine occupational requirement applies

A photograph, date of birth, marital status or nationality demanded with the application | Ask for none of it | You do not need it to decide who to interview, and asking invites a claim

We also refuse adverts that ask health questions before an offer. Section 60 of the Act prohibits pre-offer health enquiries except in narrow cases such as finding out whether adjustments are needed for the interview itself.

3. The exceptions the law does allow

They are real, and they are narrow. An advert relying on one must say so plainly and the advertiser must be able to justify it if asked:

- Occupational requirement (Schedule 9): the characteristic is a genuine, crucial requirement of the role and applying it is proportionate. A women's refuge recruiting a female support worker is the standard example, not a shop wanting "a young team".
- Positive action (sections 158 and 159): you may encourage applications from an under represented group, and at the point of appointment you may prefer an equally qualified candidate from that group. You may not appoint a less qualified person because of a characteristic. "We particularly welcome applications from..." is lawful. "Women only need apply" for an ordinary job is not.
- Disability works one way: treating a disabled person more favourably is lawful, and a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria is welcome here.
- Genuine legal requirements: a minimum age set by law for the work (alcohol, certain machinery, some driving categories), or a DBS check the role legally requires.

4. Reasonable adjustments

For candidates using this site. If any part of it stops you applying, email hello@hiringuk.co.uk and we will take your application by email and pass it to the employer ourselves, free, and confirm to you that we have. That is a standing offer. The accessibility statement sets out what we test and what is still not right.

At interview. Employers have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments. You never have to explain a diagnosis to have an adjustment considered. Tell the employer in your covering note, or tell us and we will pass the request to that employer for that application only, and to nobody else.

We ask employers to name a contact for adjustments in the advert, to describe the work honestly (the lifting, the nights, the stairs) so people can judge it for themselves, and to consider a guaranteed interview scheme.

Asking for an adjustment is not special category data being handed over. We do not record it, index it or keep it beyond that application. See section 5 of the candidate data policy.

5. If a client asks us for a diverse shortlist

This gets asked, and it is asked in good faith by people who mean well. It is also the request most likely to put both of us in front of a tribunal, so it is worth setting out the answer before anybody needs it.

What we will not do is promise a shortlist that must contain somebody of a particular sex, race, age or any other characteristic. Two reasons, and the second one surprises people.

- Leaving a stronger candidate off a shortlist, or putting a candidate on it, because of a protected characteristic is direct discrimination against whoever was displaced. It does not stop being direct discrimination because the motive was a good one.
- Section 159 does not cover shortlisting. It permits preferring a candidate from an under-represented group at the point of appointment, and only where the candidates are as qualified as each other. It also has a condition that gets overlooked: section 159(4)(c) says it does not apply where the employer has a policy of treating people who share the characteristic more favourably. A standing promise of diverse shortlists, offered to every client as standard, is exactly such a policy, and it would take the protection of section 159 away from the very appointments it was meant to protect.

What we will do instead, all of which is lawful, and most of which works better anyway:

- Widen the advert rather than narrow the list. Rewrite the requirements so they describe the job rather than the last person who did it, put the pay in, say where and when the work is, and advertise it where different people will see it. A short list is usually a symptom of a narrow advert.

- Name the essential requirements and cut the rest. Most specifications carry years of experience and qualifications nobody checks again after the first week. Every one of them narrows the field, and some of them narrow it by age or by background without anybody intending it.
- Blind screening on request. We will send the shortlist with names, ages, addresses, schools and dates removed, so what reaches the hiring manager is the experience. That is lawful for everybody and it costs us nothing.
- A guaranteed interview scheme for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria. Treating a disabled person more favourably is lawful in a way that no other characteristic is, and we will set one up for any client who wants one.
- Encourage, in the advert itself. "We particularly welcome applications from" is lawful under sections 158 and 159 and we will publish it without a word.

And if a client insists on a quota, we say no in writing. Not to be difficult: instructing, causing or inducing discrimination is unlawful for them under section 111, and knowingly helping it is unlawful for us under section 112. "The client asked for it" is the thing section 111 exists to catch. We would rather lose the assignment than be the agency that did it, and we would rather say so now than argue about it on the day.

6. Data, monitoring and what we deliberately do not do

- We do not collect equality monitoring data on this site: no ethnicity box, no disability box, no diversity questionnaire. We are not going to gather special category data we do not need in order to publish a statistic about ourselves.
- We actively discourage candidates from putting such data in a CV, and we never extract, index or search on it. The wording is identical in the privacy notice and the candidate data policy.
- No algorithm ranks, scores or rejects an applicant here. There is no automated shortlisting, no artificial intelligence sifting CVs, and no machine deciding who an employer sees. A person at the employer reads what was sent.
- Search results are not personalised. Two people searching the same words in the same town see the same adverts, in the same order. Nothing about who they appear to be changes what they are shown.
- What we do count is complaints and removals under this policy, so section 8 can report something real rather than an intention.

7. How this is enforced on adverts

- Adverts are checked against these rules when published, and again whenever anybody reports one. Every advert page carries a report link that needs no account.
- Where the wording looks careless we ask for a rewrite, usually the same day, and we will suggest the words. Most advertisers fix it immediately.
- If it is not corrected, the advert comes down. No refund, under the terms of business.
- Deliberate or repeated breaches end the account, and serious cases are reported to the Fair Work Agency, which took over the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate in April 2026, or to the police where the content is criminal.
- Where a candidate was affected, we tell them what we did.

8. Our own conduct, as an employer and an agency

HIRINGUK LTD is also an employment agency and an employment business, so the same rules bind us when we place people. We will not accept an instruction from a client to exclude candidates on any protected ground, and we will say so in writing and end the arrangement rather than quietly comply. Under section 111 taking that instruction would be unlawful in itself.

In our own hiring: we advertise on our own board, we state the pay, we shortlist against the requirements of the job written down before we look at anybody, and we make adjustments on request without asking for a diagnosis.

Everybody who works for or with us reads this policy and signs the training record before they are given access to anything.

9. If you think we have got it wrong

Tell us. Use the complaints procedure, which issues a reference immediately and acknowledges within one working day, or report the advert if it is quicker. Complaining costs nothing and we do not treat people worse for complaining: victimisation is itself unlawful and would end an account here.

You can also go outside us at any time. The Equality Advisory and Support Service advises on the Equality Act free of charge. Acas advises on employment rights on 0300 123 1100. An employment tribunal claim about discrimination in recruitment normally has to be started within three months less one day of the act complained of, so do not wait for us to finish if that deadline is close.

10. Review

Owned by Grigore Octavian Pupazan, director of HIRINGUK LTD. Reviewed at least every twelve months and whenever the law changes. Next review due: August 2027. Earlier versions are listed below.