

Claret Civil Engineering Ltd Equal Opportunities Policy

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Claret Civil Engineering Ltd (Claret CE) is committed to a policy of treating all its employees and job applicants equally. No employee, part-time employee or potential employee shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration on the grounds of race, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, age, disability, marital status or sexual preference partner or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment or Company requirements.

Claret Civil Engineering Ltd recognises and values the diversity that those working with us can bring, and are committed to working with diverse sections within the broader community. Our aim is to deliver our services in a fair and equitable manner, and believe that our performance is enhanced when the composition of our workforce reflects the communities with whom we work.

Claret Civil Engineering Ltd will regularly review its recruitment, training and promotion practices to ensure that equal opportunity principles are applied and that no employee is unfairly disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be justified.

Principles

We abide by the law and codes of practice on equal opportunities, disability discrimination, racial equality and human rights.

Direct Discrimination – occurs when a person or group is treated less favourable than others.

Indirect Discrimination – occurs when a condition or requirement is imposed which, although applied equally to all individuals or groups, is such that;

- The proportion of persons of a group who can comply with it is significantly smaller than the proportion of persons not of that group.
- The employer cannot show it as being justifiable based upon the needs of the business and/or job.
- It is to the detriment of the individuals concerned because they cannot reasonably comply with it.

Responsibilities

Supervisors/Managers – ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and the reasons for the policy, ensure that grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible and to maintain proper records.

Employees – comply with the policy and arrangements, not discriminate in day to day activities or induce other to do so, not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups on the grounds stated in the policy and inform their Supervisor/Manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

Claret Civil Engineering Ltd, in carrying out our operations, is committed to leading the industry in minimising the impact of our activities upon the environment. The company recognises that effective management and the allocation of the correct resources for our environment makes excellent business sense and will be fundamental and an integral part of our business strategy.

To ensure that we achieve these standards, procedures will be implemented to include the following:

- Awareness of how our activities impact upon the environment and minimisation of the adverse effects by employing suitable techniques, not entailing excessive cost, through a policy of improvement within the workplace, control of pollution and care for the local environment
- Meet or exceed all the environmental legislation that relates to the company and possible influence on future legislation
- Conserving the use of resources, particularly those which are scarce or non-renewable, including the following:
- To avoid waste and encourage conservation, reduce, re-use and recycling, e.g. chipping, composting and waste disposal management etc.
- To preserve, restore and enhance the built and natural heritage
- To encourage the sustainable use of land based resources and certified timber and wood products
- To reduce air, land and water pollution
- Sensitivity to the environmental concerns of our neighbours and the communities through which we operate and responding to them
- Adopting environmental objectives to continually improve our environmental performance and monitor progress in their achievement
- Actively promote an environmental initiative both internally and amongst our customers and suppliers
- Communicating this policy to our staff, suppliers, customers, members of the public and seeking their support in its implementation

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or as required by changes of legislation, new work practices or procedures.



Mr A R Gibbons
Managing Director

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **Discrimination** - treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality,
- 2.2. **Protected characteristics** – These are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marital or civil partnership status, Pregnancy or maternity, Race (which includes colour and ethnic/national origin), Religion or belief, Sex and Sexual orientation
- 2.3. **Equality** – the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.
- 2.4. **Diversity** - the state of being diverse. The practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.
- 2.5. **Inclusion** – the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups.
- 2.6. **Disability** – a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities.
- 2.7. **Gender** – either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female.
- 2.8. **Sexual Harassment** – behaviour characterized by the making of unwelcome and inappropriate sexual remarks or physical advances in the workplace or other professional or social situation.
- 2.9. **Homophobia** – dislike of or prejudice against gay people.
- 2.10. **Bullying** – the behaviour of a person who hurts or frightens someone smaller or less powerful, often forcing that person to do something they do not want to do:
- 2.11. **Victimisation** – the action of singling someone out for cruel or unjust treatment.
- 2.12. **Sexual Orientation** – a person's identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are sexually attracted; the fact of being heterosexual, homosexual, etc.
- 2.13. **Religion** – a particular system of faith and worship

3. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

Claret CE is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and against customers.

This policy is intended to assist the Company to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment. Claret CE has a separate dignity at work policy, which deals with these issues.

We abide by the law and codes of practice on equal opportunities, disability discrimination, racial equality and human rights. This policy covers any and all aspects of Claret CE operations, how we treat those who work for and with us and how we recruit or engage others to join that community. This means that our policy covers, but is not limited to, the following:

- Pay and employment conditions

- Recruitment processes
- How Claret CE may appraise, reward, incentivise, promote, train, and commit to the continuing professional development of our workers
- Procedures for addressing grievances and disciplinary matters
- How Claret CE end employment contracts and exit employees, including related matters, such as how we give references
- How visitors, clients and suppliers and other key business contacts and stakeholders are treated

It also means that we will ensure, as far as possible:

- full access to everyone applying for job vacancies and job opportunities with our business, and
- that all relevant decisions are made on the basis of objective criteria.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

All relevant individuals have a responsibility under this Policy as follows:

4.1. Directors shall:

Ensure all employees are aware of the contents of and abide by this policy

4.2. Line Managers/Supervisors shall:

Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and the reasons for the policy, ensure that grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible and to maintain proper records.

4.3. Claret CE employees shall:

comply with the policy and arrangements, not discriminate in day to day activities or induce other to do so, not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups on the grounds stated in the policy and inform their Supervisor/Manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

All employees are instructed that:

- There should be no discrimination on account of race, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, age, disability, marital status or sexual preference partner.
- Claret CE will appoint, train, develop and promote on the basis of merit, skills and ability.
- All employees have personal responsibility for the practical application of the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- The Company's Grievance and Harassment Procedure is available to any employee who believes that he or she may have been unfairly discriminated against.
- Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination. Serious breaches of the policy will be treated as Gross Misconduct.

Every employee is required to assist Claret CE to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Company for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

4.4. Customers, Suppliers and Other People not Employed by Claret Civil Engineering Ltd

The Company will not discriminate unlawfully against customers using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided by Claret CE.

Employees should report any bullying or harassment by customers, suppliers, visitors or others to their manager who will take appropriate action.

5. The Law

- 5.1.** It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".
- 5.2.** Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics. It is unlawful for an employer to fail to make reasonable adjustments to its requirements, working practices or the physical features of the workplace where these put a disabled job applicant or employee at a substantial disadvantage. It is also unlawful discrimination where a disabled employee is at a substantial disadvantage due to the employer's unreasonable failure to provide an auxiliary aid or service to the disabled employee.
- 5.3.** Employees should not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services, goods or facilities. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and make reasonable adjustments to address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

6. DISCRIMINATION TYPES

- 6.1.** The sorts of actions that would fall into this category of unlawful and prohibited initiatives, include (but aren't limited to) those set out below. These actions need not be intended or directly committed by someone (indirect responsibility may be

sufficient for someone to have unlawfully discriminated) and an omission or failure to do something may be just as culpable as a positive action.

6.2. Direct discrimination

When someone with a protected characteristic is treated less favourably than somebody else has or would have been in identical circumstances. An example of this would be where an applicant for a job is rejected on grounds of their racial background. Further examples would be where a pregnant employee, or one with young children, is not promoted

6.3. Indirect discrimination

When a group of people with one of the protected characteristics is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that is applied to all staff (unless the treatment may be justified for a good business reason). Examples of this would be:

- Insisting, without good reason, that all staff must work full time, (which indirectly discriminates anyone with child-care responsibilities, women in particular)
- Requiring all staff to work onsite and refusing to consider a request to work remotely or under alternative conditions, like flexible hours to avoid commute times, which could disadvantage someone with a disability or a phobia (e.g. someone who suffers claustrophobia or panic attacks on commuting routes)
- Refusing to provide a room for reflection and prayer, which would discriminate against individuals practising certain faiths
- Dismissing or not employing a woman because she is pregnant or of child-bearing age

6.4. Harassment

Covers hostile, humiliating, degrading, intimidating or similarly offensive treatment or conditions to which an individual with one or more protected characteristics is subjected. Any such actions deprive an individual of their dignity and violate them. We draw no distinction between actions that may be labelled as 'joking' and not intended to cause offence, and those that may have been more direct and premeditated in their delivery. So, for example, in line with legal definitions, reflecting general standards of decency, we will regard any of the following as falling within the definition of harassment:

- making lewd comments and/or displaying pornographic material
- calling someone unkind, derogatory or otherwise unwelcome names or nicknames
- making insensitive jokes, whether about someone directly, or the content of which would be evidently offensive to anyone with a protected characteristic
- excluding colleagues and/or making them feel that they have no option but to exclude themselves

6.5. Victimisation

This has a particular meaning under UK employment law and it is narrower than an ordinary dictionary definition, covering the situation only where:

- a worker has complained of discrimination (or harassment),
- or has supported a fellow worker in making a complaint about these concerns,
- and has then suffered reprisals from others, including those responsible for that worker's employment prospects and working conditions.

6.6. Other discriminatory actions that are also prohibited

The UK's employment law also identifies other actions that can be unlawful under the equal opportunities legislation. Examples of these include:

- Failing to make reasonable adjustments to minimise certain disadvantages suffered by a disabled employee (or job applicant)
- Instructing another person (or applying pressure on them) to discriminate

- Knowingly assisting somebody else when they carry out a discriminatory act
- Discriminating against somebody believed to have a protected characteristic, whether or not they actually do, or because they associate with a third party who does.

7. RECRUITMENT, PROMOTIONS AND IDENTIFYING CANDIDATES FOR OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

- 7.1.** Claret CE is committed to a policy of treating all its employees and job applicants equally. No full time employee, part-time employee or potential employee shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration on the grounds of race, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, age, disability, marital status or sexual preference partner or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment or Company requirements.
- 7.2.** Claret CE will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.
- 7.3.** Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.
- 7.4.** Claret CE will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard 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 is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the Company considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. Claret CE will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The Company will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.
- 7.5.** Claret CE will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.
- 7.6.** In any selection process used within Claret CE, whether selecting interviewees for job opportunities, offering jobs, identifying individuals for promotion or considering other opportunities or necessities (like redundancy situations), we will apply a rigorous, objective selection process using non-discriminatory criteria, as far as possible. It must be stated, however, that both direct and indirect age discrimination may be justified and lawful, if the less favourable treatment, criterion or practice amounts to a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. A legitimate aim must relate to a genuine business need on Claret CE's part that is not related to age discrimination itself. For example, a legitimate aim potentially justifying age discrimination might include:
 - Economic factors such as business needs and efficiency;
 - The health, welfare and safety of the individual concerned (including the protection of young people or older workers);
 - The particular training requirements of the job.All job adverts and opportunity announcements must be:

- Discussed with and signed off by a Director, one of whose responsibilities is to ensure that any advert is compliant with this policy
 - Located and/or circulated so as to reach as wide and diverse a pool of interested candidates as possible, and
 - Worded so as to encourage, as far as possible and reasonable, applications from individuals of all characteristics to apply – or, at the very least, so as not to discourage any individuals with protected characteristics from applying.
- 7.7.** There may be circumstances where some indication of required skills (that do discriminate) is justified and where self- deselection is inevitable, for example, where the job vacancy is for a operative who will be required to work in a confined space, wearing a rescue harnesses. The job advert might specify that interested candidates must be willing and capable of being able to enter a confined space to be considered for the job.
- 7.8.** During the interview and or any other part of the recruitment process, it must never be asked of a job applicant about their health, attendance record, or whether they have a disability before making a job offer to them (except in very limited circumstances). However, it can be asked of someone if they have any particular needs or requirements with which Claret CE can assist with if they are coming to meet you for an interview. In certain limited cases, it may also be permitted to make a job offer conditional on a successful medical examination.
- 7.9.** During interviews or other interactions with candidates for a role, Claret CE representatives must not ask anything that might infer a bias against any candidate with one or more protected characteristics. So, for example, asking a candidate if they are married, intend to have children (or any more children), or whether their religion permits them to work at weekends etc.
- 7.10.** Claret CE Ltd will regularly review its recruitment, training and promotion practices to ensure that equal opportunity principals are applied and that no employee is unfairly disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be justified.

8. TRAINING

- 8.1.** Claret CE will provide training in equal opportunities to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.
- 8.2.** Claret CE will provide training to all existing and new employees and others engaged to work at the Company to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. Claret CE will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.
- 8.3.** Claret CE will make reasonable training adjustments to ensure all employees fully understand the information given, including if required verbal one-to-ones, pictograms etc.

9. GRIEVANCES

- 9.1.** We take all allegations of breach and any breaches that we discover very seriously. All allegations and/or suspicions of breach will therefore be thoroughly investigated.
- 9.2.** Claret CE will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.
- 9.3.** If you wish to complain or raise an allegation of breach (or potential breach) under the policy, you should contact a Director or HR Department as soon as possible. If you

want to take formal action, you will need to follow our grievance procedure and read our policy on harassment and bullying.

- 9.4.** Anyone raising a concern about matters covered by this policy, who does so in good faith, will have our full support and co-operation in getting to the bottom of what has happened and any appropriate action that needs to follow on from that examination. This will be the case regardless of our conclusions and including where we determine that the allegation was mistakenly made. There will never be any reprisals against those who genuinely have, or consider that they have, valid grounds to bring concerns about discrimination to our attention.

However, complaints made in bad faith, for whatever reason (including where this is an attempt to avoid or to deflect disciplinary action), will be treated as misconduct and may lead to a dismissal for gross misconduct.

- 9.5.** We will also take prompt disciplinary action against you if we discover that you have harassed or discriminated against anyone else in breach of this policy. If we conclude that your behaviour amounts to gross misconduct, we will be within our rights to dismiss you without notice and with no payment in lieu of that notice

10. DATA PROTECTION

- 10.1.** Claret CE treats personal data collected for reviewing equality of opportunity in recruitment and selection in accordance with its data protection policy.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Equality Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Data protection policy
- Dignity at work policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality policy
- Whistleblowing policy

12. DOCUMENT CONTROL

REVISION AND AMENDMENT REGISTER				
Date	Page number	Revision details	Issue number	Amendments made by
17/09/24		Full review	2.0	Lesley Skingle
29/9/25		Date change. No other amendments	2.0	Sherri Jamieson
12/10/26		Date change. No other amendments	2.0	Sherri Jamieson