

Axol Bioscience Ltd

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Axol Bioscience Ltd is committed to encouraging a dynamic and inclusive working environment, where we benefit from a variety of perspectives to make smarter decisions and better support our customers.

We have a humanitarian, ethical and legal responsibility to celebrate and champion equality and diversity. We will actively work to ensure that our organisation is inclusive and accessible to all.

Purpose and Scope of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our commitment to equality of opportunity and valuing diversity is reflected in all employment processes. The policy covers all Axol Bioscience employees, including those on fixed-term contracts.

The term 'discrimination' is used throughout this policy to mean unfair and unlawful discrimination.

Principles

Equality and diversity is central to our daily working life at Axol Bioscience. We aim to prevent and remove unfair discrimination, harassment and victimisation wherever we encounter it in our work, to promote equality of opportunity in all that we do, and to value and respect differences. Relevant training and development is provided to employees to achieve this.

All employees have a responsibility to challenge, report and/or directly dealing with discriminatory behaviour, unfair treatment, harassment or bullying at Axol Bioscience. Our Dignity at Work Policy outlines the process through which people can raise concerns.

We recognise that people have preferences in relation to the world around them. However every employee has a responsibility to ensure that decisions made at work are not affected by bias or prejudice. The Equality Act (2010), states that there are nine protected characteristics and that it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of those characteristics.

Discrimination, harassment and victimisation are disciplinary offences which may lead to dismissal.

Our policy will comply with and, where appropriate, exceed statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010, as appropriate and in accordance with current good practice.

Under the Equality Act, Axol Bioscience is subject to the Equality Duty in respect of its employment functions. In these areas Axol Bioscience will have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not

Axol Bioscience is committed to becoming an organisation which understands the effects of disability, and will provide effective support so that disabled employees are able to perform to the best of their ability. This means ensuring that they have the opportunity to discuss and request reasonable adjustments, and that managers will ensure that any agreed adjustments are put in place promptly. When considering reasonable adjustments, Axol Bioscience will consider how best to prevent substantial disadvantage.

Outcomes

The outcomes of this policy are that:

- Axol Bioscience acts in compliance with relevant statutory requirements, specifically the Equality Act
- Axol Bioscience's workforce better reflects the community we serve, and the working populations around our sites, at all levels
- Axol Bioscience's employees understand and respond effectively to the diverse needs of our workforce and treats all employees with respect and fairness.

Axol Bioscience's Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Axol Bioscience will be an exemplar organisation, demonstrating excellence in equality and diversity issues across all areas of policy and practice, and influencing others through the high standards that we set. In all aspects of our work we will be:

- accessible
- inclusive
- responsive
- fair

Axol Bioscience's core values will further embed a culture of equality and diversity.

Axol Bioscience's Diversity Value and Equality and Diversity Rights and Responsibilities

Equality and inclusivity are one of the six organisational values, Axol Bioscience places great emphasis on E&D particularly as our values shape our behaviours. Our equality and inclusivity value states: create an environment where everyone feels welcome, valued and part of the team. Where all employees are empowered to be listened to and heard.

It is important that people understand their rights, and their responsibilities to achieve our vision for E&D and to put our values into action.

Glossary of Terms Stated in the Equality Act (2010)

Age

The Act protects people of all ages. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if the employee can justify it, ie if the person can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

Disability

Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender.

Marriage and civil partnership

The Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.

Pregnancy and maternity

A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.

Race

For the purposes of the Act 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Religion or belief

In the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion, in other words those not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.

Sex

Both men and women are protected under the Act.

Sexual orientation

The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination

below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association below).

Discrimination by association

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception discrimination

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic but are perceived as doing so.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if the employee can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, ie that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

Harassment

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, 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". Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association

Third party harassment

The Equality Act makes you potentially liable for harassment of your employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of your company, such as customers or clients. You will only be liable when harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions, you are aware that it has taken place, and have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it from happening

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.

Discrimination arising from a disability

The Act says that treatment of a disabled person amounts to discrimination where:

- an employer treats the disabled person unfavourably;
- this treatment is because of something arising in consequence of the disabled person's disability; and
- the employer cannot show that this treatment is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, unless the employer does not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know, that the person has the disability

Discrimination through failure to provide reasonable adjustments

Discrimination against a disabled person occurs where an employer fails to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments imposed on them in relation to that disabled person, the employer must:

- avoid the substantial disadvantage where a practice applied by or on behalf of the employer puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled.
- remove or alter a physical feature or provide a reasonable means of avoiding such a feature where it puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled.
- provide an auxiliary aid where a disabled person would, but for the provision of that auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled.

Status of this procedure

This procedure does not give contractual rights to individual employees. Axol Bioscience Ltd reserves the right to review, revise, amend or replace the content of this policy and/or introduce new policies from time to time, subject to good practice principles of consultation where applicable, with employees to reflect the changing needs of the organisation and to take account of changes in legislation.