



Women in the Fire Service UK

Equality & Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Women in the Fire Service UK (WFS) acknowledges and embraces its responsibility both as an employer and provider of a service and is committed to equality of provision, access and benefit in the delivery of these services.

1.2 WFS has a positive equal opportunities policy so that all persons associated with the organisation or employed by it, can focus their attention on equality and diversity, improve awareness and understand what is required of them by law, by the WFS, and by society at large.

1.3 The policy aims to ensure that all existing and potential members and employees receive equal, fair and just treatment within all aspects of recruitment, employment, training and promotion. Furthermore, it aims to ensure that no one is knowingly disadvantaged by any condition or requirement which cannot be shown to be valid or justifiable.

1.4 The policy further seeks to ensure that all members and employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect whilst representing WFS, when attending WFS events and for employees, whilst they are at work.

2. Policy

2.1 This policy is applicable to all members, employees, Fire Cadets and all persons and/or companies contracted by WFS to provide training courses.

2.2 No existing or potential member or employee will receive less favourable treatment than another on grounds of gender, gender reassignment, marital status, parental responsibility, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

2.3 WFS is committed to a programme of action including training on all equality and diversity issues, to give encouragement and support to individuals to enhance their career potential and by the formation of good working practices and procedures.

2.4. WFS will provide training for all newly appointed employees in good employment practice and implications of the equality and diversity policy within a year of appointment.

2.5 Any member or employee who has a responsibility for sourcing and agreeing training provisions will receive appropriate training to ensure that the letting of contracts is undertaken correctly. See Procurement Policy for information.

2.6 WFS will strive to ensure that material such as reports, forms, advertisements and presentation aids are written in a gender neutral format and are non-discriminatory.

3. Organising

3.1 The WFS Chair will make arrangements to:

- secure equality of employment and service provision.
- provide training and guidance on equality issues and their implications to members and employees.
- provide clear guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour or conduct, to ensure that every member or employee enjoys a work environment which is free from victimisation, intimidation or discrimination.

4. Planning and Implementing

4.1 The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all members and employees of the Service guided by WFS Honorary Officers, under the direct control and supervision of the WFS Chair.

4.2 A copy of the Equality and Diversity Policy statement will be available via the WFS website.

4.3 Every member and employee has the responsibility to both comply with and implement the policy as follows:

- To co-operate fully with all measures introduced by WFS in the pursuance of fairness at work;
- To advance opportunity and foster good relations;
- Not to discriminate, or attempt to discriminate against other Members, employees or members of the community or induce others to do so;
- Not to harass, victimise abuse or intimidate individuals or incite others to do so and

- To draw to the attention of WFS Honorary Officers, Regional Representatives or the WFS nominated Health and Safety officer any suspected discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, or discriminatory acts or practices

4.4 Every member or employee must take action following any incident which they know or suspect to be contrary to this policy or the law. To take no action will render the member or employee liable for the discriminatory act or incident complained of unless there are mitigating circumstances.

4.5 If an employee feels that they suffered discrimination on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, marital status, parental responsibility, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability it is expected that WFS is permitted to resolve the matter internally in the first instance.

However, employees have the right to seek legal redress to an Employment Tribunal, usually within three months of the discriminatory act. Assistance may also be sought from the Equality & Human Rights Commission.

5. Auditing

5.1 The HR Director, in consultation with the WFS Chair will monitor all job applications and the composition of the workforce with regard to race, gender, age and disability and act on information, as necessary, to ensure adherence to the policy and the law.

The Treasurer, in conjunction with the Company Secretary will monitor tenders and contracts to ensure adherence to the policy and the law.