



Equality and Diversity Policy

In Dunelm we do not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment; we respect all our colleagues and value their differences. We believe that our colleagues make the difference and that we all benefit from working with the widest range of individuals.

We are therefore committed to treating every colleague, job applicant, customer, supplier or visitor fairly and with respect at all times. By doing this we can ensure that everyone is treated according to their individual abilities and talents alone, rather than anything else such as gender, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, religious belief, disability or age.

The importance of achieving a diverse workplace cannot be underestimated. It also reflects our business philosophy and underpins our value of 'Respect People'. It also ensures our colleagues are truly representative of the community they serve.

We are committed to maintaining an environment which engenders diversity and equality whilst outlawing discrimination.

Dunelm does not discriminate on the grounds of:

- Age
- Race
- Colour
- Nationality
- Ethnic or national origin
- Disability
- Religion
- Sex
- Pregnancy and/or maternity
- Marital status
- Civil partnership status
- Sexual orientation

We will ensure that:

- Everyone is treated with consideration, fairness, dignity and respect.
- Our workplace environment is one where individuals feel safe and can work effectively competently and confidently.
- We attract, recruit and retain the most talented people, who will exceed our customer's expectations and ensure that everyone is valued and respected within the business.
- We constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to success.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all aspects of employment including:

- All colleagues working on any Dunelm premises
- Recruitment and selection processes
- Opportunities for training, development and promotion
- Terms and Conditions of employment

It extends to include non-permanent workers such as secondees, contractors, agency workers, temporary staff, consultants and any other workers.

The policy covers the conduct of colleagues:

- At work
- Travelling to/from work in a capacity that represents Dunelm (e.g. wearing Dunelm uniform/name badge)
- At a work related functions
- In other circumstances where the Company can exercise some responsibility, authority or influence over their conduct (e.g. use of Social Networking sites)

This policy is designed to ensure equality and diversity for all present and potential colleagues of Dunelm (Soft Furnishings) Ltd.

Equality

Equality is about recognising that everyone is a unique person. Even though people have things in common with each other they are also different in all sorts of ways. Differences include visible and non-visible factors; e.g. personal characteristics such as background, culture, personality, size and accent.

We must ensure that we value everyone as an individual, valuing people as colleagues, customers and clients.

As a Company, Dunelm is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in employment and eliminating all forms of discrimination.

Diversity

Diversity is about recognising, respecting, valuing and drawing on the positive of differences. Diversity fosters an environment that recognises the contribution every individual makes or can make to the organisation and its goals. It promotes dignity and respect.

Principles of Equality and Diversity

- Dunelm will not tolerate any form of discrimination, victimisation or harassment. The fact that you may have meant no offence does not prevent your behaviour from breaching the Company's Equality and Diversity policy.
- The Company will provide and sustain a safe working environment in which everyone is treated fairly and with respect. Those working or dealing with Dunelm must not encounter harassment, intimidation or victimisation on the basis of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, trade union membership, disability or any other personal characteristic.

- Everyone carries a personal responsibility for their own behaviour and for ensuring that their conduct is in accordance with the principles set out in this policy.
- Everyone has a responsibility to report any instance of bullying or harassment which they witness or which comes to their attention.
- Everyone have a responsibility to act as role models, pro-actively addressing instances of bullying and harassment.

Colleague Responsibilities

We all have a responsibility to embrace and support Equality and Diversity in the Company and must challenge behaviour and attitudes that prevent us from achieving this.

Using fair, objective and innovative employment practices, our aim is to ensure that:

- All colleagues and potential colleagues are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment.
- All colleagues have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour, whether based on sex, trans-gender status, marital status, civil partnership status, pregnancy, race, disability, age, political or religious belief or sexuality.
- All colleagues have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination.

Definitions of Discrimination

Within the Equality Act 2010 there are a number of different types of discrimination. Discrimination could be Direct, Indirect, Associative or Perceptive and are all covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Direct discrimination

This is treating a person less favorably on the grounds of Age, Race, Colour, Nationality, Ethnic or national origin, Disability, Religion, Sex, Pregnancy and/or Maternity, Marital status, Civil partnership status or Sexual orientation.

E.g. refusing to employ an individual because they are Sikh.

Indirect discrimination

This is a provision, criterion or practice is applied which puts a group with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage when compared with another group, or an individual is put at a disadvantage.

E.g. requesting all colleagues are clean shaven (effectively putting members of some religious groups at a disadvantage).

Associative discrimination

This is treating someone less favorably because they associate with an individual who has a protected characteristic.

E.g. someone is treated unfairly because they socialise with a disabled person.

Perceptive discrimination

This is treating someone less favourably because it is perceived that they have a protected characteristic, whether or not they do.

E.g. not recruiting someone because you believe they are gay.

Impact of Discrimination

- Discrimination can cause stress, anxiety and illness and have a serious impact on the physical and mental well-being of the individual
- Is unlawful and can lead to poor morale, loss of respect for managers and supervisors, absenteeism, lack of commitment, poor job performance and resignation
- Can damage the company's reputation

All of these have a direct impact on organisational effectiveness and productivity.

Behaviour or actions by either colleagues or managers which go against this policy constitute gross misconduct, which may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Victimisation

Victimisation is when someone is treated less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance about discrimination, bullying intimidation or harassment.

Victimisation of, or retaliation against an colleague who has made a complaint of bullying, or harassment against an colleague that has given evidence or acted as a witness for someone who has made such a complaint, will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures and may result in formal disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Bullying and Harassment

This is where on the grounds of Age, Race, Colour, Nationality, Ethnic or national origin, Disability, Religion, Sex, Pregnancy and/or maternity, Marital status, Civil partnership status or Sexual orientation a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of:

- Violating that persons dignity
Or
- Creating an intimidating, hostile degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Harassment

Harassment includes behaviour that is offensive, frightening or in any way distressing, it may be intentional bullying or unintentional teasing, name calling or other behaviour which may be not intended to be malicious but nevertheless is upsetting.

Harassment may be an isolated occurrence or repetitive; it may occur against one or more individuals. Harassment may be, but is not limited to:

- Physical contact:
 - Unwanted touching/body contact (including at work social functions)
 - Threat of, or actual assault/violence
 - Potentially offensive gestures
 - Sexual advances
 - Stalking
- Verbal:
 - Unwelcome or discriminatory, comments, jokes or propositions, malicious gossip, offensive banter, suggestive remarks
 - Swearing and abusive language
 - Insults or ridicule
 - Threats

- Coercion, for example, in attempting to obtain sexual favours
- Non-verbal
 - Creation and/or circulation of offensive, discriminatory or suggestive literature or pictures, graffiti, computer imagery, calendars and screensavers
 - Discriminatory or offensive emails, letters, cards or notes
 - Sending unwanted messages via e-mail, text or social networking sites
 - Isolation and/or exclusion from work related social activities
 - De-facing Company literature/property with derogatory comments

Bullying

Bullying is unlikely to be a single or isolated instance. It is usually repeated and persistent behaviour which is offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting.

Bullying can take many forms and can include:

- Threats, abuse, violence and serious assault
- Practical jokes
- Humiliation and ridicule
- Repeated, unjustified criticism
- Undermining an individual
- Non co-operation
- False/malicious allegations
- Exclusion from normal work place conversation and social events
- Unfair allocation of work and responsibilities
- Changes in duties or responsibilities of the colleague to their detriment without reasonable justification
- “cyber bullying” i.e. bullying via facebook/twitter/e-mail

Racial and sexual harassment connected with a person’s sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or religious or similar philosophical belief is unlawful.

Sectarian harassment is unwanted conduct of a sectarian nature or other conduct based on religious belief or political opinion that affects the dignity of people at work and constitutes unlawful discrimination under the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Legislation.

Individuals are personally liable for any unlawful acts they commit whilst at work, travelling to and from work, at a work or non-work related social function and may face serious criminal sanctions if there is evidence that they intended to cause the person alarm or distress.

Recruitment and Selection

In order for Dunelm to continually improve as a business it is crucial that we select and recruit the best people in the industry. This involves calling on the widest possible pool of candidates and selecting those candidates based on their ability to do the job regardless of their sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, colour, nationality, ethnic origin age or gender reassignment.

It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate in the following ways, when recruiting colleagues:

- In the arrangements made for deciding who should be offered a job, e.g. advertising a job in a place where only one sex would have the opportunity of seeing the advert

- In relation to any terms offered (e.g. pay or holidays)
- By refusing or deliberately omitting to offer a person employment (e.g. by rejecting an application or deliberately refusing consideration of an application)

Training and Development

Training and development in Dunelm is aimed at all colleagues in order for them to provide the best service to our Customers.

The development of colleagues must be based on a fair assessment of their abilities, so that colleague's differences are recognised, accepted and valued and their talents are developed.

- Effective training and development leads to decreased labour turnover, lower absenteeism, improved safety, better Customer Service and an environment where colleagues seek to develop their own skills
- Everyone has the right to be trained. Training should always be appropriate to the job role
- Everyone has the right to be considered for development and promotion on their own merit, and potential ability to take on more responsibility, regardless of their sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, colour, nationality, ethnic origin age or gender reassignment

Liability

Dunelm can be held liable in law for acts of discrimination committed by colleagues.

Individual colleagues can be held personally liable for acts of discrimination which they commit, authorise, contribute to or condone.

Dealing with Discrimination

Colleagues who:

- Believe that they, a fellow colleague or a third party have, or are, being discriminated against they must report the incident(s) to their line manager immediately.
- Are not sure which course of action to take, or who have, or are, being discriminated against by their own line manager, should contact their Regional HR Advisor, the HR Shared Services on 0116 2644479/91 or Confidential Helpline on 0116 2644450.

Acting on allegations of discrimination:

- We reserve the right to act on discriminatory behaviour brought to our attention, on the grounds of employer responsibility and liability, even if the victim decides to take no action
- All allegations made will be treated seriously, dealt with fairly, sensitively and will respect the confidentiality of both parties

The procedure:

- Any colleague who wishes to make a complaint of harassment or bullying is encouraged to first discuss matters informally with their line manager or with Human Resources, provided that they feel able to do so. Should the issues not be resolved at this stage, or the colleague feels unable to raise the issue informally, then a formal resolution should be sought through the companies Grievance procedure.

- When a complaint of Discrimination, Victimisation, Harassment or Bullying is brought to the attention of a manager at any level, whether informally or formally, prompt action must be taken to investigate the matter. Corrective action must be taken where appropriate and this may require an investigation under the Company's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- If it is considered that one of the parties concerned in a harassment or bullying case should be moved from their current workplace, the final decision on who should be moved should reflect the particular circumstances of the case and advice taken from Human Resources. It should be noted and explained to those concerned that the moving of either party is not an implication of guilt or culpability and no detriment to either party will be construed as a consequence.
- All matters relating to the investigation of complaints of harassment or bullying will be treated in strict confidence. Any breach of confidentiality in this regard may render those responsible liable to disciplinary action.
- No colleague will be victimised or suffer detriment for making a complaint of harassment or bullying and no manager shall threaten either explicitly or implicitly that a colleague's complaint will be used as the basis for decisions affecting that colleague. Such conduct will be treated as a very serious disciplinary offence. Similarly, managers are required to act on any complaint of harassment or bullying. Failure to do so will be regarded as misconduct which if proven, will result in disciplinary action.
- All complaints of harassment or bullying whether raised formally or informally must be notified by the recipient of the complaint to the Human Resources Department for recording in accordance with the requirements of the Equality and Human Rights legislation. This legislation requires such records to be maintained and the incidence of bullying and harassment to be monitored.

All colleagues should be aware that the Company will not hesitate in taking disciplinary action including and up to dismissal, if they engage in an action or conduct determined to be discriminatory whether intentional or unintentional.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically giving due consideration to legislative changes.