



## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out the Advonet Group's approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

### 2. Scope

This policy is for the use of employees, sessional workers, and volunteers.

### 3. Policy Statement

The Advonet Group is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. We aim for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our client groups, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

In providing our services we are also against unlawful discrimination of our clients, community groups or the public. We believe that inclusion is a human right.

### 4. What do we mean by Inclusion?

Inclusion is about giving equal access and opportunities and removing discrimination and intolerance.

**4.1** The Advonet Group have developed a Model of Inclusion to support our employees to live our values. This is located in The Advonet Group's Expectations Policy in section 7.

#### 4.2 Inclusive design

The Advonet Group is committed to designing and delivering inclusive services and projects. Providing inclusive services and projects enables everyone to participate equally, confidently, and independently.

**4.3** We will identify and create new services and projects using the principles of co-production.

**4.4** We will continue to develop accessibility within the workplace for both staff and clients, including Reasonable Adjustments and creating accessible resources so information is easy to access and understand.

### 5. How do we create and encourage inclusion?

The Advonet Group will:

- Provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, or full-time

- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms, and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other development opportunities

## **6. Our Commitment to Each Other**

We will:

- Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- This commitment includes training all of our employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include employees conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination.
- There may be situations where harassment at work could be a crime. For example, if an employee tells you they've been: physically attacked, sexually assaulted, the victim of a hate crime, for example racist or homophobic abuse, threatened with violence. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- All employees should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, clients and the public

## **7. Personal Development and Progression**

We will make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all employees, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Decisions concerning employees will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

We will review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

More information on how we support development can be found in the organisations Training and Development Policy.

## **8. Monitoring**

To be able confidently say that we have a diverse workforce we will monitor the make-up of our workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability.

We will collect this information during our induction process and record this information in BreatheHR. If anyone does not want to provide this information they can select the prefer not to say option.

**8.1** Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plans, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues. This will include creating an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Improvement Plan when required.

## **9. Raising Concerns**

We will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, clients, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

The organisations Disciplinary Policy can be found in our organisations policy folder.

**9.1** If you experience discrimination in any form from anyone connected to the organisation tell your line manager or someone who you feel comfortable talking to. They will follow the organisations Anti-discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy located in our policies folder.

**9.2** You can also follow the organisations Grievance Policy which is in the policies folder.

Use of the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect your right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.