

Global Renewables Lancashire Operations Ltd

Business Operating Management System (BOMS)

Standard Operating Procedure

EQUALITY

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LEVEL 3



GLOBAL RENEWABLES™

CONTENTS

1. Revision Status 3

2. Introduction..... 3

3. Purpose & Scope 3

4. Procedure 3

1. REVISION STATUS

Issue No	Date	Revision Description	Prepared By	Approved
1		Initial Revision	T Robinson	
2	18/11/2013	Transfer of data to new SOP format	Jill Bryce	T. WHITTAKER
3	14/12/2016	Amendment	T. Whittaker	

2. INTRODUCTION

This document (Standard Operating Procedure) details the process to be undertaken to perform the tasks required to complete.

3. PURPOSE & SCOPE

GRLOL value and respect the differences and diversity of our people, who work together in an inclusive environment that enables us to harness the collective and complementary skills, knowledge, background and networks of a rich mix of people.

Discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation of colleagues, clients or suppliers is not tolerated and could result in disciplinary proceedings. Serious offences, such as deliberate harassment, may be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal.

Our Equal Opportunities and Anti-Harassment Policy applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment and selection, appraisal, training and promotion, pay and conditions, grievances, disciplinary and dismissal issues.

The policy applies to all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, home workers, part-time and fixed term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers and equally to the treatment of visitors, clients, customers and suppliers.

4. PROCEDURE

Discrimination - grounds of which are race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender-reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion, or belief, age, disability, pregnancy, trade union membership, part-time/fixed term status. Discrimination also includes victimisation and harassment. Discrimination can be either direct or indirect.

Direct Discrimination - occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to one or more of the protected characteristics.

Indirect Discrimination - occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example their sex or race.

Harassment/Bullying - Unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation - less favourable treatment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague.

Associative - this is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses one of the protected characteristics.

Protected Characteristics – are defined by the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex, maternity and pregnancy.

Perceptive Discrimination – This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess one of the protected characteristics listed in the paragraph above.

EQUALITY

GRLOL is committed to ensuring all employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

The policy is based upon GRLOL's active opposition to any form of less favourable treatment accorded to staff or job applicants on the grounds of all types of unlawful discrimination.

GRLOL will ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and otherwise treated on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities. GRLOL will work to create a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment where all staff are confident of equitable and fair access to opportunities, development and training, and terms and conditions.

GRLOL appreciates that while much can be achieved by the development of legal measures, real progress can only be made by practical day-to-day commitment to promote equal opportunity at all levels in the workplace. This can effectively be achieved by taking action to foster a fully integrated community at work. It is the duty of all staff to accept their personal responsibility for the practical application of the policy.

Acts of discrimination, victimisation or harassment will not be permitted, condoned or tolerated. All complaints will warrant investigation, and if necessary, disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal.

Special responsibility for the practical application of principles to ensure fairness at work shall fall upon managers and supervisors. The grievance procedure is available to any employee who believes that he or she may have been unfairly treated. Employees shall not be victimised for making such a complaint in good faith. Complaints of this nature shall be dealt with seriously, in confidence and as soon as reasonably practical.

Allegations of discrimination that are not made in good faith shall also be considered as a disciplinary matter. Confidential records of ongoing matters dealt with in accordance with this policy shall be kept.

Recruitment and Selection

The following principles will apply whenever recruitment or selection for positions takes place:

- Individuals will be assessed according to their personal capabilities to carry out a given role.
- Assumptions that only certain types of person will be able to perform certain types of work will not be made.
- Any qualifications or requirements applied to a job which have or may have the effect of inhibiting applications from certain types of person will only be retained if they can be justified in terms of the job to be done.
- Any age limits applied to a job will only be retained if they can be justified in terms of the job to be done.
- Recruitment solely or primarily by word of mouth should be avoided if its effect is, or may be to prevent certain types of person from applying.
- Selection tests will be specifically related to job requirements and will measure the person's actual or inherent ability to do or train for the work.
- Applications from different types of person will be processed in the same way.
- Written records of interviews and reasons for appointment and non-appointment will wherever possible be made and kept within appropriate timescales.
- Where the Company's arrangement for recruitment and selection put disabled people at a substantial disadvantage due to a reason connected with their disability, reasonable adjustments to the arrangements will be made to eliminate, or if not reasonably practical reduce the disadvantage unless objectively justified.
- No decisions regarding recruitment or selection will be made by a person who has not read and understood this policy.

Promotion, Transfer and Training

The following principles will apply to appointments for promotion, transfer and training:-

- Assessment criteria and appraisal schemes will be carefully examined to ensure that they are not unlawfully discriminatory.
- Promotion and career development patterns will be monitored to ensure that access to promotion and career development opportunities in particular groups of workers are not unjustifiably being excluded.
- Traditional qualifications and requirements for promotion, transfer and training such as length of service and age, which may discriminate against certain groups of workers will be reviewed and will only continue to be applied if genuinely justified.
- Policies and Practices regarding selection for training, day release and personal development should not result in an imbalance in training between groups of workers unless this is objectively justified.
- Where the Company's arrangements in relation to promotion, transfer or training put disabled workers at a substantial disadvantage for a reason connected with their disability, reasonable adjustments to the arrangements should be made to eliminate or, reduce the disadvantage unless objectively justified.

Terms of Employment, Benefits, Facilities and Services

The following principles shall apply to the terms of employment, benefits, facilities and services:-

- The terms of employment, benefits, facilities and services available to workers will be free from unlawful discrimination.
- Part time workers will receive pay, benefits, facilities and services on a pro rata basis to their full time comparator unless otherwise objectively justified.
- Where the Company's arrangements relating to terms or employment, benefits, facilities and services put disabled workers at a substantial disadvantage due to the reason connected with their disability, reasonable adjustments will be made to eliminate or where that is not reasonably practical, reduce the disadvantage unless otherwise objectively justified.
- Pay and bonus criteria policies and arrangements should be carefully examined and monitored, and if it appears that any group of workers are disadvantaged by them they will be checked to make sure that it is not due to any hidden or indirect discrimination.

Grievances, Disciplinary Procedures, Dismissals and Redundancies

Workers who, in good faith, bring a grievance (or assist another to do so) either under this policy or otherwise in relation to an Equal Opportunities matter will not be disciplined, dismissed or otherwise victimised for having done so.

Redundancy criteria and procedure will be carefully examined to ensure that they do not operate in an unlawfully discriminatory manner. The provision of voluntary redundancy benefits will be equally available to all workers concerned unless there is genuine and unlawful justification for doing otherwise.

Harassment

All employees have the right to work in an environment which is free from any form of harassment.

It is Company policy that the harassment of any of its employees is unacceptable behaviour. Anyone found to be in breach of this policy will be liable to disciplinary action which could result in their dismissal.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment takes many forms, occurs on a variety of different groups and can be directed at one person or many people. An essential characteristic is that it is unwanted by the recipient and that the recipient finds the conduct offensive or unacceptable. Conduct becomes harassment if it is persistent once it has been made clear it is regarded by the recipient as offensive, although a single incident may amount to harassment if sufficiently serious. It is the unwanted nature of the conduct which distinguishes harassment from friendly behaviour which is welcome and mutual.

The Company will deal with any incidents of potential harassment or conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment that it becomes aware of whether or not the behaviour is persistent or unwanted. The Company will not tolerate harassment.

Harassment can be based on:

- Race, ethnic origin, nationality or skin colour
- Gender or sexual orientation
- Power or hierarchy
- Willingness to challenge harassment (leading to victimisation)
- Membership, or non- membership of a trade union
- Disabilities, sensory impairments or learning difficulties
- Age
- Possible links to AIDS/HIV
- Status as an ex-offender
- Health
- Physical Characteristics
- Religion or beliefs

Whilst not an exhaustive list, forms of harassment include:

- Physical Contact
- Jokes, offensive language, gossip, slander, offensive or sectarian songs and letters
- Posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, emblems, flags
- Offensive email, screen savers etc.
- Isolation, or non-co-operation and exclusion
- Coercion for sexual favours
- Pressure to participate in political/religious groups
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking

Harassment is unlawful in many cases and individuals may be personally and legally held liable for their actions.

Harassment Procedure

All allegations of harassment will be dealt with seriously, promptly and in confidence. Employees who feel that they have been subjected to harassment must not hesitate in using this procedure nor fear victimisation. Retaliation against an employee who brings a complaint of harassment is a serious disciplinary offence which may constitute gross misconduct.

Informal Procedure

If an incident happens which an employee thinks may be harassment and they do not wish it to happen again, they may prefer initially to attempt to resolve the problem informally. In some cases it may be possible and sufficient to explain clearly to the person engaging in the unwanted conduct that the behaviour in question is not welcome, that it offends the employee or makes them uncomfortable and that it interferes with their work. Employees should make it clear that they want the behaviour to stop.

In circumstances where this is too difficult or embarrassing for an employee to do this on their own, they should seek support from a colleague or their line manager.

If an employee is in any doubt whether an incident or series of incidents which have occurred constitute harassment, in the first instance they should approach their line manager or a member of the senior management team on an informal basis.

If the conduct continues or it is not appropriate to resolve the problem informally, it should be raised through the following formal process.

Formal Procedure

Where the informal methods fail, or serious harassment occurs, employees are advised to complain formally to their line manager.

Consideration will be given to the immediate separation of the complainant and the alleged harasser. In serious cases the alleged harasser may be suspended whilst the Company investigates the allegation.

Complainants will be interviewed by a manager who will investigate the complaint to establish full facts of the issues raised.

The investigator will then carry out a thorough, impartial investigation as quickly as possible. Those carrying out the investigation will not be connected with the allegation in any way. An investigation will be carried out quickly, sensitively and with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the alleged harasser.

The complainant and the alleged harasser will have the right to be accompanied and/or represented by a colleague or union representative at any interviews. Complainants will not be asked to provide details of the allegations repeatedly unless that it is essential for the investigation.

Strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation into the allegation. Where it is necessary to interview witnesses, the importance of confidentiality will be emphasised to them.

When the investigation has been completed the complainant will be informed of the outcome and actions to be taken.

If the allegation is well founded, disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure may be taken against a person alleged to have committed the behaviour complained about and, depending on the circumstances and the seriousness of the complaint, may result in the dismissal of that person.

If the allegation is not well founded, consideration will be given as to whether it is necessary to transfer or reschedule the work of both or either party, in cases where it would not be appropriate for the complainant to continue work in close proximity to the alleged harasser.

The Company takes these matters very seriously. However, malicious complaints of harassment can have a serious and detrimental effect upon a colleague and the working environment. Any unwarranted allegation of harassment, made in bad faith, will be deemed potential gross misconduct. The Company would take such action to ensure the integrity of the policy and this should not act as a deterrent to employees with genuine complaints.

Disabilities

It is Company policy that disabled people, including job applicants and employees should be able to participate in all of the Company's activities fully on an equal basis with people who are not disabled.

Definition of Disability

For the purpose of this policy , disabilities are either physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long term affect upon a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities as per the definition in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Some disabilities are immediately obvious, for example use of a wheelchair, while other disabilities may not be so apparent at all, for example HIV infection. Certain conditions are not considered to be disabilities, for example poor eyesight which is corrected simply by wearing prescription spectacles, or an addiction to alcohol or other substances.

Principles

The general principles set out in this policy will, unless objectively justified, apply in relation to disabled people.

The Company will take all reasonably practical steps to ensure that disabled people are able to participate in its business and activities on an equal basis with people who are not disabled.

The Company will not, for a reason relating to a person's disability, treat disabled people less favourably than it treats, or would treat, others to whom the same reason does not or would not apply, unless genuinely justified.

If any arrangements made by or on behalf of the Company, or any physical feature of the premises occupied by the Company, put disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who are not disabled, the Company will take such reasonably practical steps as it can to prevent this disadvantage.

Managers and supervisors must take all reasonably practical steps to ensure that disabled people are not less favourably treated or disadvantaged by comparison to people who are not disabled, in relation to their work, working environment or by arrangements made by the Company.