

PLACE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. PLACE affirms its commitment to equality of opportunity in employment and will conform in all its actions with both the letter and the spirit of the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 as amended, the Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970 as amended, the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Acts 1976 and 1989, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997.
2. It is PLACE's intention to ensure equal opportunity for all job applicants and employees and to eradicate direct or indirect discrimination so that no person receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, disability, racial group, sexual orientation, age, whether or not a person has dependents or Trade Union membership, or shall be disadvantaged by any conditions or requirements which are neither justified nor required for the job. All recruitment, promotion and training opportunities will be based on merit as measured by qualifications, experience, ability, personal attributes and job performance. PLACE will also apply equal opportunity principles to all personnel matters such as pay, staff reporting, redundancy, disciplinary and grievance procedures.
3. PLACE will seek to promote a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere which will include maintaining a neutral working environment free from the display of flags, emblems and posters or any other display likely to give offence. Any behaviour or the display of any material which may give offence, harass, humiliate, threaten, intimidate or cause apprehension to any employee or group of employees because of their gender, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, disability, racial group, sexual orientation, age or whether or not a person has dependents is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This paragraph is to be read in conjunction with the duty of PLACE as sponsor of the arts to protect artistic freedom.
4. Any employee who believes that they have suffered discrimination, harassment or victimisation is entitled to raise the matter through PLACE's grievance procedure as set out in the Staff Handbook or complaints procedure as set out in PLACE's separate policy on Harassment in the Workplace. **This does not replace or detract from the rights of employees to pursue a complaint to the Fair Employment Tribunal or to an Industrial Tribunal under the fair employment or sex discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland.**
5. Any employee who makes a complaint alleging harassment or discrimination will be protected against any subsequent victimisation. Victimisation arises where any person is treated less favourably because they have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or provided information about such discrimination.
6. The Director of PLACE has overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equal Opportunity Policy. It is the responsibility of every member of staff however to promote and ensure equality of opportunity, to avoid direct or indirect discrimination and to avoid any form of harassment or victimisation. Any breach of this policy will be treated seriously and will be regarded as a disciplinary offence which may result in dismissal.
7. PLACE has clearly defined employment procedures which are designed to ensure that all recruitments, promotions and transfers are conducted systematically and objectively with Equal Opportunity principles in mind. These procedures will be monitored to ensure that they are up-to-date and will be reviewed periodically as specified in Section 31 of the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1989.
8. PLACE will review this policy of equality of opportunity and the effectiveness of its implementation from time to time and no less than every third year.