

Russam GMS Equality & Diversity Policy

Statement of Commitment

Russam GMS believes that following a policy of equality and diversity will benefit not only the individual but also enrich the whole organisation and thereby its work, conferring benefit on Clients, Interim Executives and all employees of the company.

Equality is one of Russam GMS' core values and the whole company is committed to ensuring that equality is integral to all its policies and practices. Equality is essential to ensuring that services are accessible to all those people who need the help of the company and that all who have skills to offer as Interim Executives are able to do so on a level playing field.

Russam GMS recognises that diversity brings positive benefits to the organisation's work and is committed to challenging all forms of discrimination and unfair disadvantage in every aspect of its work and working practices.

Russam GMS aims to provide equality of opportunity for anyone who comes into contact with the organisation and to ensure that no-one is treated less favourably because of their gender, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origins, age, disability, sexual orientation, HIV or any other medical status, employment status, religious or political beliefs, parental or carer status or any unrelated criminal offence. Harassment or bullying will be challenged and not tolerated.

We are committed to:

- Opposing all forms of discrimination - individual and institutional, direct or indirect.
- Challenging the false beliefs about different groups in society inherent in racism, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, ageism and assumptions regarding disability.
- Promoting and celebrating the diversity of all the people with whom we work, valuing their contributions and ensuring they are given the opportunity to realise their full potential within Russam GMS.

Russam GMS will work hard to ensure that:

- The different needs and expectations of employees, clients and Interim Executives are met.
- Our services are accessible, high quality and offered on a fair and equitable basis.
- We recruit and retain the best staff and Interims possible, by eliminating all forms of discrimination in recruitment and employment.
- We promote and value diversity in all that we do.

Russam GMS will assess the current composition of its workforce and establish targets to take positive steps to achieve a workforce and a group of Interims that reflect the communities from which they come. As a result of this, we will:

- Increase the number of employees and Interim managers from black and minority groups.
- Make posts more accessible to, and increase the number of, people with disabilities.
- Encourage age diversity in the workforce.

This policy applies to all aspects of employment within Russam and of the Interims registered on its database. Russam GMS will expect similar from anyone providing services to Russam GMS.

The company constantly monitors and evaluates progress in order to improve its practice. Russam GMS retains the services of a DIALOG Consultant in Equality and Diversity to advise the company and Clients of needs and developments in this field.

Russam GMS is currently embarking on a programme of undertaking impact needs and requirements assessments on all of its policies and practices to identify where these might be improved in order to enable better performance in this area. All within the company acknowledge that the Equality and Diversity agenda is moving forward with great speed and momentum in 2006 and Russam GMS is committed to developing and improving its performance.

Principles

Russam GMS will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, HIV or other medical status, employment status, religious or political beliefs, parental or carer status or any unrelated criminal offence. (Specific justifiable exclusion criteria may apply to certain employment areas. These will be legal, open and service-related).

Russam GMS will offer access to and provision of our services on a fair and equitable basis that meet the individual needs of clients, staff and Interim managers. Targets will be set, and there will be a focus reaching out to under represented-groups. Under-represented groups will be taken into account in the development of our services. Outcomes will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

Russam GMS aims to be an equal opportunity employer and ensure that all those eligible to work for us have equal opportunities to do so on the basis of ability, qualifications and fitness for their role. This is achieved by implementing good employment practices. Every employee has responsibility for the implementation of the policy.

Russam GMS is committed to developing an organisation in which all staff, clients, Interim managers and visitors, enjoy equal rights. Measures to promote these rights are designed to ensure that no group is systematically denied them. Sometimes the different rights and needs of different groups will appear to conflict. Reconciling these apparent differences is an important part of the equal opportunities policy and practice.

A variety of laws require Russam GMS not to discriminate and the organisation aims to mirror best practice in implementing the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The principles in equality and diversity will be reflected in company practice relating to:

- Service delivery
- Employment
- Governance
- Partnership

Practice

Service Delivery

Russam GMS' services will be accessible to those clients who want them, within the constraints of available resources. There will be fair access for everyone, which will sometimes mean tailoring our services for particular groups. For example, specific services may be offered for women or a particular ethnic group.

Access will be interpreted widely to include physical access to buildings and services and the ability to gain information in different forms e.g. Braille, tapes for visually impaired people and in different community languages.

Russam GMS will give active support to staff and Interims to enable real involvement in service development and decision-making.

Russam GMS will monitor and review all systems and procedures used in the provision of its services to ensure equality of opportunity, responsiveness, sensitivity and accessibility. Take-up of services will be monitored and targets will be set to ensure that services reflect their communities.

Employment

Managers are responsible for the communication, promotion, implementation and monitoring of the equality and diversity policy in their areas, including where appropriate, in the wider community of Interims with whom we work. They will communicate the policy to staff; ensure that staff understand their responsibilities; ensure that no discrimination takes place and deal appropriately with any breaches. Managers must ensure that there is no scope for discriminatory practice.

Russam GMS values its staff and will provide them with the skills and training to do their job well and the opportunities to progress in the organisation. Mandatory training and guidance to all employees will be provided to ensure that the commitment to equal opportunities is known and understood.

All employees have a responsibility to support colleagues in relation to the policy by raising concerns and fears through the appropriate channels. If any member of staff feels they have been treated unfairly they can contact their manager or the Company Chairman, all of whom are expected to take the grievances seriously, to treat information confidentially, investigate fully and ensure that no victimisation takes place.

There are a number of related policies, which also embody the principles of equality and diversity. These include: Dignity At Work, Whistle Blowing and the Professional Working Behaviour policies and Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures.

Governance

Russam GMS will develop a governance structure that reflects the communities in which it operates within and ensure that the commitment to equality and diversity is reflected in the induction and training of trustees and committee members.

All staff and Interims will actively demonstrate their understanding, belief and support of the policy through their communications and actions on behalf of the organisation.

Partnership

Russam GMS will work with partners to develop good practice on issues of access.

Companies, individual consultants or contractors entering into contracts with Russam GMS will be expected to comply with Russam GMS's equality and diversity policy.

Russam GMS's Operating manual gives specific details of how contractors or associated consultants can become approved to work with the organisation.

Implementation

The Equality and Diversity policy will be achieved through a newly designed programme, which is directly linked to the Strategic Plan.

Russam GMS has implemented a framework and an 'Access Champions' group made up of staff at all levels across the organisation who are committed to maximising both their input and the impact of the programme. The group meets every 6 months to ensure that access is embedded throughout the organisation, to monitor progress and to formulate further action points to deliver the objectives of the programme. The group focuses on key areas although further areas may be identified on an ongoing basis.

- Service delivery
- Training
- Governance
- Accountability
- Recruitment and Workforce Profiling

Monitoring and Review

Managers will monitor the overall success of the policy by assessing its impact on the organisation's efforts to improve service delivery and employment practice against agreed targets.

The policy will be reviewed and updated annually and any changes will be communicated to all employees Interims and clients as appropriate.

Prepared by the Russam GMS **Diversity Guidance Committee** in consultation with staff members.

M R Whitlam CBE
Stephen Brooker
Len Croney
Jason Atkinson

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