

Ahead



MANAGEMENT GROUP

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Building fair and effective standards into our business



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AheadMG Ltd 4th Floor, Silverstream House, 45 Fitzroy Street, Fitzrovia, London, W1T 6EB

Management@aheadmg.co.uk

Document Control

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Signatories

Name	Role	Sign off Date
Andy Ewell	AheadMG Delivery Director	20/09/2021
Neil Hickman	AheadMG Finance Director	20/09/2021

Document Storage

All versions of the policy will be stored on our website <https://www.aheadmg.com/new-starters/>

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

AheadMG is a niche employment and specialist Test & Management Consultancy which operations in the UK. The individuals who form the team may be culturally different or from different parts of the world, this diversity is championed and encouraged in AheadMG.

Diversity and Inclusion

Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is key to building strong and effective teams.

Definition

Diversity is the collective mixture of differences and similarities that includes individual and organisational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences, and behaviours. AheadMG is committed to and value diversity because it strengthens the company and fosters innovation and creativity, which improves performance. A diverse work environment enhances inclusivity and the feeling of belonging of our staff.

Inclusion is the achievement of a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to AheadMG's success. Without inclusive practices, a diverse environment cannot be achieved.

Diversity allows for the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It means understanding one another by surpassing simple tolerance to ensure people truly value their differences. This allows us both to embrace and also to celebrate the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual and place positive value on diversity in the community and in the workforce.

Statement

The staff of AheadMG represent a talented and diverse workforce. Achieving the full potential of this diversity is a business priority that is fundamental to our competitive success. A key element in our workforce diversity and inclusion programs is AheadMG's long-standing commitment to equal opportunity.

At AheadMG we want people to be their true self and feel that they belong and where any one can thrive. This can only be achieved if we help bring people together to support and learn from each other. This will only increase AheadMG's chances for success.

Legislation

Equality, diversity and inclusion are part of a human rights framework. Many countries, including the UK subscribe to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, or regional versions of it. This Convention refers, in Article 14, specifically to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds such as gender, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights 1952 into UK domestic law. The core law which informs our Diversity and Inclusion policy is Great Britain's Equality Act 2010. This Act harmonised and brought together many previous pieces of equality legislation. It has widened the scope of UK discrimination law beyond the area of employment into the provision of education and training, in the broadest sense, and the wider supply of goods and/or services.

Strategies

Monitoring, evaluation and legal compliance

- AheadMG will monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the supplier code of conduct policy.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the supplier code of conduct policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

- Every manager in AheadMG is expected to abide by our policies, and all applicable laws on this subject, and to uphold AheadMG's commitment to workforce diversity and inclusion.

Promoting Diversity throughout AheadMG

AheadMG and its activities it will not discriminate on the following grounds. The policy applies to all Staff and perspective staff or associates.

Activities such as recruitment, staff management, working practices and supplier engagements will be free from discrimination and AheadMG will actively encourage under-represented groups to consider careers/engagements with AheadMG.

Age

- AheadMG support and encourage a multigenerational team.
- AheadMG will not judge job applicants solely on their length of experience, as this will be indirectly age discriminatory against younger people.
- Age requirements will never be used by AheadMG in recruitment process.
- Chronological age should not be used as a criterion, either directly or implicitly, where this is not justified.

Disability

- AheadMG recognises disability is a broad concept that includes physical, sensory, learning and mental health issues and long-standing and fluctuating health conditions e.g. HIV/AIDS and cancer.
- AheadMG strive for disability inclusion, recognising the skills and expertise many disabled people hold and the richness of experience this brings to our work and to cultural relations.
- AheadMG will support individuals with disabilities make their working environment positive and effective. E.g. funding adaptive technology or specialist requirements.
- AheadMG will ensure that our clients also have policies in place in addition to having accessible working premises to support AheadMG individuals with disabilities while onsite.

Gender

- AheadMG is committed to tackling gender discrimination. Our focus is on promoting equality and eradicating unjustified discrimination in relation to women who frequently experience social and economic disadvantage, negative attitudes, alienation, abuse and violence worldwide.
- AheadMG recognise and seek to eradicate unjustified discrimination that people are subjected to based on their gender reassignment, or perceived gender reassignment, or because they are intersex, or hold a non-binary gender identity which may include being gender fluid. AheadMG make relevant guidance available to attune people to the challenges faced by transgender and intersex people and offer appropriate support and interventions within the workplace and in our activities. AheadMG aim to enable everyone to be recognised and referred to as they wish and to meaningfully and effectively respond to any concerns and issues raised.
- AheadMG is committed to supporting individuals who are 'transitioning' and will utilise the following framework;
 - Initial confidential meeting to understand situation and establish a 'memorandum of understanding'
 - Assign manager or point of contact to individual
 - Reaffirm Diversity policy to all staff, including available training
 - Disclosure to colleagues is down to the individual to manage on their terms
 - Flexibility for all time off for medical appointments
 - Execute any record changes (pensions, staff records, identify)
 - AheadMG will actively work with end clients to ensure adequate and acceptable facilities are in place
 - Staff found to be bullying will be subject to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Race / Ethnicity and Culture

- Racial discrimination includes less favourable treatment based on nationality, ethnic and national origins, skin colour and other physical markers. It interacts with religion and culture and includes caste and tribe.

- AheadMG believe that our work is enriched by the different racial / ethnic, cultural groups and travelling communities we engage with and that cultural relations has an important role to play in mutual understanding and exchange between different racial / ethnic and cultural groups.
- AheadMG require all staff and suppliers to ensure no unjustified discrimination on grounds of race / ethnicity and to promote positive and equitable relations between different races / ethnicities and cultures.

Religion and Belief

- AheadMG value and respect the different religions / beliefs held by staff and the external contacts and communities in which we operate, including those who hold no religion or belief.
- AheadMG will accommodate or be flexible towards specific religious practices, customs or holidays.

Sexual Orientation

- AheadMG are committed to supporting people of diverse sexual identities including lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, asexual, heterosexual and others to feel included and valued and to tackling discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation.
- AheadMG believe all staff have the right to be themselves at work without having to be concerned about sharing aspects of who they are.

Socio-economic background

- Employment, education, the quality and nature of health care, housing, access to international opportunities and our services, for example, are all significantly determined by socio-economic background. Socio-economic equality leads to discrimination, marginalisation and reduced opportunities.
- AheadMG is committed to having a diverse workforce regardless of Socio-economic status.

Equality and Pay

- AheadMG have a commitment to a pay system that is transparent and based on objective criteria. This includes a commitment to transparency and fairness in the allocation of bonuses, allowances and any other aspects of reward and remuneration. Equal pay, free from gender or other unjustified bias, for the same or broadly similar work (that is, for work that rates as equivalent and for work of equal value), operates within AheadMG.

Responsibility

Responsible Board Member – Andy Ewell

AheadMG has a responsibility to ensure that its staff and associates are trained and informed appropriately.

This policy is effectively discharged throughout AheadMG and then reviewed annually and in line with the latest legislation.

AheadMG must adhere to relevant legislation and behavioural standards and recognise that, as a general principle of law, employers may be liable for acts of unjustified discrimination committed by their staff in the course of their engagement. Putting this policy into practice is the responsibility of every individual member of staff.

All staff, including those working from home, whether on full-time, part-time, fixed or temporary contracts, regardless of length of service, are responsible for playing their full part in adhering to the policy. This means becoming familiar with it, and its requirements, and carrying them out, as well as critically examining attitudes to ensure that unjustified discrimination is not allowed to affect judgement.

The law and the existence of an Equality Policy cannot by themselves prevent unjustified discrimination. It is therefore crucial that everyone takes personal responsibility to help ensure that the work environment, consistent with cultural relations, respects the dignity of everyone and in broad terms, values the differences that exist between diverse people and cultures.

All AheadMG policies are accessed and stored on our website <https://www.aheadmg.com/new-starters/>

Grievances & Concerns

All staff who have a concern may wish to contact their Manager or a trusted colleague for support. All concerns must be handled in confidence.

Any member of staff who feels that the treatment they have received is not in keeping with our Diversity and Inclusion Policy has a right to raise this under the **AheadMG Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**.

Employees and/or Associates must not be intimidated, discriminated against or treated differently for raising a concern, complaining or assisting in an investigation. If this happens it could amount to victimisation which maybe unlawful within the terms of the relevant legislation and goes against this and other related policies and their application.

Bullying

Workplace bullying is the repeated mistreatment of someone in the workplace; it can be verbal, nonverbal, physical or psychological. Workplace bullying may be perpetrated by a single person or a group, and it may occur one-on-one or in front of others, such as clients, teammates or customers.

Common signs that bullying is occurring;

- Intimidating, undermining, or hostile comments or gestures
- Persistent teasing or humiliation
- Passive-aggressive comments or insults
- Constant unfair criticism or blame
- Taking credit for another member of staff's work
- Isolation or exclusion of another member of staff
- Making impossible demands or deadlines
- Aggressive verbal or nonverbal communication (including digital communication)

All staff 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 engagement, against fellow staff members, customers, suppliers and the public.

AheadMG take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow staff members, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

AheadMG use the following methods to ensure bullying is not occurring within the organisation;

- Provide annual training as well as via the onboarding process
- Regular communication with teams, including via team meetings, exit interviews and 1-2-1s
- Engaging with poor performing individuals to under if there are hidden issues around bully or discrimination
- Acting promptly when an issue is reported (and documenting an audit trail)
- Treat all matters seriously
- Maintain confidentiality and sensitivity
- Be neutral to ensure fairness
- Revisit the Code of Conduct and Diversity and Inclusion Policy on an annual basis.