

Loughborough College Age Equality in Employment Policy

Introduction

The College undertakes to fulfil all the legal duties put upon it by the EU Employment Framework Directive (2000/78/EC) which specifically outlaws discrimination on the basis of age; and The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

Our Commitment

The College will celebrate a culture of diversity and is committed to equality of treatment for all employees. It will practise equality in the operation and implementation of all its employment policies. The College aims to treat all employees with respect and dignity, and seeks to provide a positive working environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age.

The College recognises the valuable contributions made by staff and students of all ages and advocates adult and lifelong learning and expects to benefit from employing workers of all ages at all levels of responsibility and across all areas of work.

The College will work towards the elimination of prejudice and discrimination, whether overt or covert, and will seek to ensure that all staff have equal access to the full range of College facilities, regardless of their age.

Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

The College does not discriminate on the grounds of age in the way it recruits and selects staff.

The College will ensure that:

- Job descriptions are drafted to ensure that they are age neutral.
- Neither the person specification nor job description will identify a particular age range for the job or imply age requirements and person specifications will not be unnecessarily prescriptive about length of essential experience required.
- Recruitment advertisements will not state an age range. Jobs will be presented without age bias and the College will avoid the use of any language likely to deter applicants of any age.

- Application forms and information state explicitly the College's commitment to equality.
- All members of shortlisting and interview panels will be trained in equality principles.
- Dates of birth are only used for monitoring purposes and are on a sheet together with information on gender, ethnic origin, disability and criminal convictions which is detached and kept separately from the main application form before shortlisting.
- All of these principles apply to promotion, as well as initial appointment.

Training and Development

All employees should have equal rights to training, promotion and other aspects of career development. Age should not be used to justify a failure to promote or train any employee.

Continuing Employment

An employee who perceives that they have been the victim of age-related discrimination shall have full right of protection under the College's procedures. Any claim of age discrimination should be taken as seriously as any other discrimination claim.

An employee who requests a transfer to part-time work or lighter duties on the grounds of age, whether on a short-term or permanent basis, should have their request sympathetically considered.

Retirement

The contractual retirement age for all employees of the College (including part-time employees) is 65.

The College will notify the employee of the date on which the College intends the employee to retire and of his/her right to request to continue working beyond 65.

All employees will be sent a letter notifying them of this information. This letter will be sent out at least six months before the intended retirement date.

It is in the interest of all that retirement is planned and agreed a reasonable amount of time in advance. Employees who wish to continue working beyond 65 are encouraged to put in a request, in writing to the personnel team, at the earliest opportunity. Nonetheless, they are entitled to put in a request no later than 3 months before the intended retirement date.

On receiving a request the College has a duty to ensure that employment continues until a decision has been made and notice has been given to the employee.

As soon as possible after a request is received and certainly within one month, a meeting should be arranged between the employee and a member of the personnel team. All requests will be considered seriously.

Once a decision has been made the employee will be notified within 14 days after the date of the meeting.

If the employee's request is granted, it will be for a fixed term period of one year and it will be made clear to the employee that they will need to submit another request to continue working at least 3 months before the expiry of the extension.

If the outcome of the meeting is to refuse the request, the employee is entitled to appeal against that decision. An employee who wishes to appeal should do so by giving written notice to the College within 14 days, setting out the grounds for appeal. A meeting will normally be held within 14 days of receiving the appeal. This meeting will be with a Senior Manager and this decision will be final. Employment can continue until the appeal is heard. .

The employee will be notified of the decision on the appeal within 14 days of the date of the meeting. Notice of the appeal decision will be in writing and, where the decision is to refuse the appeal, confirm that the College wishes to retire the employee and the date on which the dismissal due to retirement will take place.

At all meetings the employee is entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague of their choice or a trade union representative. .

The College may also consider any requests for flexible working beyond 65. Where appropriate, employees should be given the opportunity to request options such as reduced hours or different duties. Any offer of reduced hours for the existing post should normally be made on the same terms and conditions on a pro-rata basis. Where a change of duties occurs, pay will be at the appropriate rate. It is recommended that advice be sought on the impact this could have on pension arrangements.

Dismissal

The College should ensure that there is no age discrimination in relation to dismissal of staff. In particular, if a redundancy situation occurs, the College should ensure that age is not a factor in the selection of those to be made redundant.

Complaints of Harassment and Discrimination

The College seeks to provide a supportive environment for staff who make claims of discrimination or harassment. All instances of age discrimination or age harassment will be logged, according to the appropriate College procedure.

Acts of age discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation or abuse should be treated as a serious disciplinary offence which, if proven, may in certain circumstances lead to the dismissal of a member of staff.

Staff who feel they are being discriminated against by other members of staff should be able to raise the matter (see Code of Practice on The Harassment of Staff). If the accusation is upheld, it will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

If, in the course of their work, staff suffer age discrimination from members of the public, the College will take appropriate action and provide appropriate support.

Any discriminatory behaviour directed against staff by students should be dealt with under the student disciplinary procedure.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring process will be used to ensure that staff of all ages are treated equally.

The College will gather and analyse information about its staff age profile. If monitoring reveals evidence of age discrimination, the College will take remedial action to redress it.

All new policies will be reviewed for their impact on staff equality, including their impact on workers of different age.

General

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice.

This policy should not be read in isolation, but cross-referenced with all relevant institution employment policies.