

Matter.

Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Last Review: March 2024

Prepared by	Abigail Croft
Reviewed by	Nicole Kapel

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MATTER POLICY STATEMENT

Matter is committed to encouraging equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best. Matter understands and celebrates that each individual who joins our team comes with their own lived experiences, cultures, and ways of working, and we want to ensure that no matter who you are, that Matter is a working environment that enables you to thrive and work to your happiest and most productive self, knowing that you are adding value with your unique views and experience that you bring to our team.

We strive to foster a working environment in which all employees are treated as individuals in a fair and consistent way. Matter acknowledges that we must ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to not only ensure compliance with this act, but go above and beyond the statutory requirements by creating a culture of consistent learning and continuous improvement in the Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion space. We want to ensure that all employees actively engage with this policy as it is core to our cultural values that we would like to instil at Matter.

We work closely with and for many external parties such as our customers and clients, contractors, consultants as well as our suppliers and local community. We expect the same principles that we strive towards regarding our dealings with each other internally to be applied to our external contacts.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we may change it at any time, however we will be sure to keep you informed of any key changes to this policy.

SCOPE

This policy will apply to all Matter employees (regardless of status such as temporary, permanent, part-time, or full-time), as well as all affiliated contractors, suppliers, clients, and customers.

LEGISLATION

Matter adheres strictly to the Equality Act 2010, which is a compilation of many pieces of legislation regarding discrimination, introducing the following protected characteristics, in which Matter is dedicated to not discriminating on the basis of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination can be complex, and not always explicit and obvious. We want to ensure that we are committed to ensuring that all types of are combatted. Discrimination can be classed as any one of the below:

Direct discrimination

This type of discrimination can take form in three different ways, and as the name suggests, tends to be more overt in nature, and involves a person being treated less favourably because of:

- A protected characteristic they possess. This is ordinary direct discrimination.
- A protected characteristic possessed by someone they are associated with (a family member or colleague). This is direct discrimination by association.
- A protected characteristic they are thought to possess, regardless of if this assumption is true or not. This is direct discrimination by perception.

Indirect discrimination

This type of discrimination tends to be less obvious than direct discrimination, and normally the intention is not to discriminate in these instances. Typically, this type of discrimination can occur when a rule or policy is put in place that applies to everyone, which might not be discriminatory in itself, but could disadvantage someone with a protected characteristic. For example, if we were to advertise a role where English needs to be an applicant's first language, this would be indirectly discriminating against individuals who might speak excellent English but were born in a country where English is not the native language – this could be considered indirect racial discrimination.

Harassment

Harassment is any unwelcomed conduct related to a person's protected characteristic. This type of discrimination has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment for them. Bullying, nicknames, gossip, inappropriate questions fall into this category. We hope we have curated a culture at Matter where individuals speak up to this kind of behaviour and expect it to be actively challenged and addressed.

Victimisation

Victimisation is when an employee is put at a disservice because they have done (or it is suspected they have done) one of the following in good faith:

- Making an allegation of discrimination
- Support a complaint of discrimination
- Give evidence relating to a complaint about discrimination
- Raise a grievance concerning equality or discrimination
- Do anything else in connection with the Equality Act – for example bringing an employment tribunal claim in relation to discrimination.

DEFINITIONS

We understand that there are a lot of terminology in relation to Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Below outlines a various list of terminology that we believe all employees should educate themselves on to begin to understand the language and how it can impact our working lives. Learning about Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion can be a journey, and striving to foster wider understanding will help meet our goals.

Term	Definition
Equality	Equality focuses on ensuring that individuals all have the same opportunities, and no one is treated differently or discriminated against because of their personal characteristics.
Diversity	Diversity is about recognising, valuing, and taking account of people's different backgrounds, knowledge, skills, and experiences.
Inclusion	Inclusion is where the differences between people and groups are seen as a benefit, and creates a space where people feel comfortable to share their perspectives and differences, knowing that their opinions and ideas are valued.
Belonging	Belonging centres around the employee experiencing of <i>feeling</i> accepted in the workplace. Belonging to a team implies a sense of value – that an employee is needed and wanted.
Equity	Equity recognises that everyone has different circumstances and needs and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.
Implicit Bias	<p>Also known as implicit prejudice or implicit attitude, is a negative attitude of which one is not consciously aware, against a specific social group. Implicit bias is thought to be shaped by experience and based on learned associations between particular qualities and social categories, including race and/or gender. Individuals' perceptions and behaviours can be influenced by the implicit biases they hold, even if they are unaware, they hold such biases.</p> <p>We encourage all employees to explore Harvard's implicit bias test as a start to begin to explore your own bias.</p>
Intersectionality	<p>The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, and their multiple effects on the same individuals or groups. Also refers to the view that overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and inequality can be more effectively be addressed together.</p> <p>Kimberlé Crenshaw gives an excellent TedTalk about intersectionality to further your understanding.</p>
Microaggressions	<p>Everyday slights, indignities, put-downs, and insults that members of marginalized groups experience in their day-to-day interactions with individuals who are often unaware they have engaged in an offensive or demeaning way. They are often linked to Unconscious or Implicit bias where our brains make quick judgements about people and situations that are influenced by our background, environment, or experiences. Microaggressions can both be unintentional or intentional.</p> <p>Please see a table below this one that outlines some examples of different microaggressions that different groups of individuals might experience.</p>
Neurodiversity	When neurological differences are recognised and respected. These differences can include Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyscalculia, Autistic Spectrum, and Tourette Syndrome.
Privilege	An unearned, sustained advantage that comes from race, gender, sexuality, ability, socioeconomic status, age, and other differences.

We should aim to be mindful of the above, and gently flag with individuals who might communicate a microaggression – we are all learning, and we can only improve if we understand what microaggressions look like and how they could feel for the person who they are directed towards. Microaggressions are not tolerated, however whomever might communicate one will be supported in their learning journey.

Group	Examples
Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people	<p>Continually having a name pronounced incorrectly with no effort to get it right</p> <p>Being mistaken for the only other person of colour/person of a similar race in the office</p> <p>Being told ‘you are well spoken and articulate’ in a slightly surprised tone</p> <p>Being asked ‘where are you really from’ – an assumption that you are not British</p>
Women	<p>An assertive female manager being labelled as ‘Bossy’ or ‘Scary’ while her male counterpart is described as a ‘Good leader’</p> <p>Being interrupted or talked over during a meeting on several occasions and made to feel that their contributions are not valued</p> <p>Being mistaken for being in a role more junior to the role they hold</p> <p>Labelled as ‘getting emotional’ when talking passionately or challenging something in the workplace</p>
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and other sexual orientations and gender identities (LGBTQIA+)	<p>Being told ‘you don’t look Trans’</p> <p>Being told ‘you don’t act Gay’</p> <p>An assumption that they will be friends or get along with another colleague who identifies as LGBTQIA+</p> <p>Making no effort to use the correct pronouns, even when they have been asked to</p> <p>An assumption that as a Bisexual, you will not be monogamous</p>
Disabled people	<p>Being told ‘you don’t look disabled’</p> <p>Being told ‘we all get depressed sometimes, chin up’</p> <p>Being told ‘you are so inspiring for overcoming your Disability’</p> <p>Assuming someone needs assistance instead of asking (e.g. pushing someone’s wheelchair or guiding someone with a Visual Impairment without asking them if they need assistance)</p>

(Credit to University of Bristol for these examples)

MATTER’S COMMITMENT

Matter is committed to the fostering of an equal, equitable, diverse, and inclusive culture with the following big picture in mind:

- Encourage equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace in line with best practice.
- Create a working environment and culture free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contribution of all our employees are recognised and valued.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, clients, suppliers, and visitors. Such acts are to be dealt with as misconduct under Matter’s Disciplinary and/or Grievance policies and procedures and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offense.
- Making opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all employees, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and this policy to take account of any updates or new developments in the law.
- Proactively monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex, race and ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability through various methods of data capture (e.g. recruitment data, staff surveys, and individual reports). This monitoring will also include assessing how this policy and any supporting action plans are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address issues.
- Commit to benchmarking ourselves against reputable national statistics on workforce composition and transparently sharing statistics of our own demographics, continuously working towards having a workforce that better mirrors our community and society.
- To create diversity and inclusion plans that are ambitious and meaningful – being transparent about our progress towards those plans and hold ourselves accountable for their delivery.

Matter is committed to the fostering of an equal, diverse, and inclusive culture with the following key focused areas such as:

Recruitment and selection

Matter recognises that Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion does not just pertain to existing employees, Matter is committed to ensuring equality and equity within our recruitment and selection processes, helping us enable the introduction of

employees from all different races, backgrounds, and points of view.

Matter's advertisement process across all media platforms (social media, job adverts) must not indicate or imply to indicate any intention to discriminate anyone unfairly on the grounds which were previously defined in this policy. Matter commits to use inclusive language to not dissuade or unjustifiably exclude the number of applicants based on any of the protected characteristics discussed within the policy.

Matter has committed to scrutinise and expand our recruitment access points at all levels of the organisation to ensure we are reaching a fully inclusive candidate talent pool and will continue to increase and improve our training and early careers offering, making it accessible to as large a community as possible.

Ahead of all interview and selection processes, reasonable adjustments are offered to enable people from all backgrounds and neurodiversity needs can be met. This can be manifested in moving tasks online, adjusting or moderating technical challenges for interviews. Matter also strives to ensure hiring managers are trained on effective and fair recruitment processes ahead of interviewing.

Performance management and disciplinary procedures

This Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy applies to Matter's Performance Management, Disciplinary, and Capability policies. Matter is currently creating a fully transparent career development framework and associated job grading and remuneration banding that is accessible by all staff. This framework works as the foundation in which employees can progress within Matter and is consistently applied across the organisation. The Framework should be available in late 2024 for employees to use.

Matter commits to ensuring any promotion, progression, or remuneration increase cases are put to a panel for final approval to remove any subjectivity, discrimination, or favouritism to influence an individual's progression path.

Matter ensures that employees being evaluated on performance or undergoing any disciplinary procedures is based purely on factual evidence, not on pre-conceived assumptions or stereotypes about an employee. For example, when considering performance management or development, Matter would not make assumptions about a new parent's length of future service or working pattern. All the discrimination types discussed earlier in this policy are actively discouraged and challenged.

Key protected characteristic areas

Age

Matter believes having employees employed that represent all generations and ages contribute to the success of our organisation facilitated through knowledge and idea sharing. Matter will support employees of all generations by providing clear objectives, training and development opportunities, and growth opportunities within Matter. This is underpinned by the discussed

Recruitment and Selection processes and policies surrounding health such as a Menopause Policy and our benefits offered to employees.

Disability

Matter is committed to addressing any unjustified discrimination against people with disabilities, as well as promoting an inclusive culture in which disabilities should not be stigmatised. In this policy, disability is a broad definition that can include physical, cognitive, and mental health issues, along with any longer-term health issues.

Matter recognises that disabilities are not always noticeable externally and can sometimes be unseen. Matter encourages the destigmatisation of disabilities and is committed that any employee with a disability is given the adequate resources and reasonable adjustments required for them to succeed and develop within Matter. This is supported further by Matter's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy (currently in development), as well as Matter's commitment to ensuring that there are actively trained Mental Health First Aiders available to support employees within the coming year. Matter also has a range of benefits that can support employees with disabilities.

Matter also has a strategy to review our facilities and workspace, ensuring they are accessible for individuals who are disabled.

Matter also has a committed strategy to reviewing our accessibility across all our online presence (website, social media, etc) to ensure that both prospective employees as well as prospective or existing clients, customers, and suppliers are able to view and access information they need across our online channels.

Marriage and parenthood

Matter understands and celebrates that employees have family lives outside of work, and this should not hinder opportunities for progression or development due to external familial obligations.

Matter is committed to providing enhanced familial leave to support employees in enriching their lives outside of work, with the security of knowing they have a role to come back to.

Matter operates on core hours and flexible working, underpinned by our Flexible Working Policy (currently in development). Matter believes in giving flexibility in an employee's working day to ensure they can support their families (or themselves) in whatever way they need to.

Sex and gender

Matter is committed to challenge discrimination on the basis of sex or gender. We promote equality and strive to eradicate unjust discrimination based on gender, including actively challenging non-inclusive language, or stereotyping in relation to sex or gender. This can be reflected in the balance of our gender makeup in the organisation and executive leadership, which is highly balanced for our industry and organisation size.

Matter understands that people who have undergone gender reassignment or perceived gender reassignment could be exposed to additional

discrimination. Matter aims to offer any support required from individuals in these circumstances and challenges employees at all levels to treat their colleagues and external stakeholders, clients, and suppliers with respect and dignity, and enable everyone to be recognised by the pronouns they wish.

Race and ethnicity

Having a workforce that represents our community and society not only enriches how we do business and the quality of our services, but also enriches Matter as an organisation with the sharing of experiences and ideas.

We understand that today there are many seen and unseen prejudices at the micro and macro level placed on people of different ethnicities or racial backgrounds and extends further to those seeking asylum or refugee status. Matter encourages and welcomes employees from all these backgrounds and ensures that employees from these backgrounds are given the same opportunities for progression and development with Matter. Our recruitment and selection processes and performance management processes are robust to ensure this, and any complaints of unjust discrimination are taken seriously, and discriminatory behaviour is actively challenged.

Religion or belief

Matter respects the various religions or beliefs held by our employees, clients, customers, and suppliers. Matter supports this by allowing, when business needs can be met, flexibility on meetings and annual leave surrounding religious holidays or cultural events such as Eid, Diwali, Ramadan, or Chinese New Year to employees who wish to take time off to celebrate with their loved ones.

Matter also allows employees to swap up to 3 of the 8 bank holidays in a year (Good Friday, Early May Bank Holiday, and the August Bank Holiday) to be taken on a cultural or religious date of significance for them to promote inclusivity and to celebrate our diverse workforce.

Sexual orientation

Matter is committed to supporting members of the LGBTQIA+ community and strive to foster an environment where members of this community can feel they do not have to feel anxious about being themselves fully. Matter recognises that there is still unjust discrimination against LGBTQIA+ individuals and challenge homophobia or discrimination against our fellow colleagues, clients, customers, and suppliers.

Bullying and harassment

Bullying and harassment – whether on grounds of sex, race, gender reassignment, ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, or belief or for any other reason are unacceptable behaviours that Matter will not tolerate. Every employee of Matter has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Appropriate disciplinary action, which may include dismissal, will be taken against any employee, of whatever seniority, who partakes in bullying and harassment.

Bullying and harassment can be seen as an abuse of power and does not align with Matter's values and will not be tolerated. Matter's Grievance Policy can be used as a

resource for the full definitions, procedures, and consequences of bullying and harassment at Matter.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee responsibilities

It is essential that all employees are aware that the responsibility of implementing day to day practice of this policy lies with each employee of Matter, regardless of contracted hours, contract length, or length of service, or workplace location. Each employee must contribute and commit to the adherence to this policy.

Employees should be familiar with this policy, champion the equal and just treatment of their peers, clients, customers, and suppliers, as well as speaking out against behaviours that go against this policy. Any behaviour that is not seen to value our differences should be actively challenged to enable a culture of Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Matter.

Matter understands that committing to Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is a journey, and that there is consistent learning growing as part of that, and employees are expected to commit to the journey of learning, whilst also giving space for others to make mistakes and learn from them as well.

Manager responsibilities

Managers at Matter are the leaders within the organisation who are responsible for ensuring that this policy is fairly implemented and for effectively managing grievances or complaints regarding discrimination, bullying or harassment, or unequal opportunities. Management can seek support from the People Team for guidance on how to follow the policy and procedures accurately and effectively. Managers are expected to committing themselves to continuous learning and growth within the Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion space and act as a leading example on best practice and fair and equal treatment. Managers should be able to give and receive feedback regarding issues surrounding Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and demonstrate learning from feedback.

Managers are responsible for not dismissing complaints based on being perceived as 'too sensitive' and should take all complaints at equal face value and approach each issue with sensitivity a care and a consistent approach in line with the best practice laid out within this policy and other policies that underpin this one.

Managers also have the responsibility to ensure our customers, clients, and suppliers are aware of this policy and ensuring that they are adhering to this policy where applicable.

People Team responsibilities

The People Team are responsible for maintaining this policy, ensuring that the policy is aligned with current best practice and employment law. The People Team will also be responsible for acting as the point of contact and support for managers to

implement this policy, as well as being an available resource to all employees who wish to raise an issue surrounding Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

MONITORING

Matter is committed to continuously evaluating the effectiveness of this policy and ensuring the Company's efforts to maintain an Equal, Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive culture are maintained and can be demonstrated.

Matter also must continuously ensure suppliers and external contractors are reviewed and are aligned with policies that are similar, and hold similar standards of Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Matter commits to formally reviewing this policy on a minimum of once every two years and to communicate any updates to the entire organisation. A copy of this policy is also made accessible to all employees via our online systems.