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## Equality of Opportunity Factsheet

**Information provided by nextstep STW**  
(Valid October 2006)

### Equal Opportunities legislation aims

- to prevent discrimination (direct and indirect), harassments and victimisation

### It applies to (amongst other areas)

- **Employment**
  - Covers all employers, no matter how small or large
  - Covers recruitment, selection, promotion, transfer, training, pay & benefits, redundancy, dismissal and terms & condition
- **Education**
  - Covers all schools and colleges (any training provider?)
  - Covers the admission, treatment, exclusions and decisions made by the local and national educational authorities

### Types of Discrimination

- **Direct** e.g. Denying a person a work replacement, because they are From outside the UK, disabled, Jewish, etc.
- **Indirect** e.g. Designing a job description which requires people to be tall, could discriminate against women or other races, who are on average of lesser height.
- **Victimisation** e.g. You are treated less favourably because you have complained about discrimination or you have supported someone else who has.
- **Harassment** e.g. Another person subjects you to harassment, when he/she engages in unwanted/unwarranted conduct, which has the purpose or effect of
  - a) violating your dignity or
  - b) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for you.

**Discrimination – can appear legal, when the following applies**

- Occupational exemptions** e.g. A women’s shelter can legitimately advertise for female only applicants
- Positive action** e.g. An initiative to attract under-represented groups of people
- Positive discrimination** e.g. Advertise in a way which may help those with a disability into work, even though this may seem like discrimination to others

**Ethics**

What does it mean, when an organization or business says

- **“We’re independent”**  
*We are not linked to any other organization, who profits from the way we work with you.*
- **“We’re impartial”**  
*We talk to you about all your options and don’t promote just our service/product.*
- **“We work confidentially with you”**  
*Any records with your information are kept securely and are not shared with anyone else, unless you give us permission to do so.*
- **“We promote equal opportunities”**  
*We stick to all the discrimination regulations and will encourage you to be aware of your rights.*

**Useful Contacts**

<b>Legislation (chronological order)</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>Equal Pay Act 1970</b>	Equal pay and conditions for men and women doing equal work
Info & Advice: <a href="http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk">www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk</a>	
<b>The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974</b> (Currently under review)  This act enables some criminal convictions to become ‘spent’, or ignored, after a rehabilitation period.	This means that for the purpose of employment (with some exceptions), a criminal record can be treated as though it had never existed.  Exceptions: - Any custodial sentence exceeding 2.5 years - Certain occupations e.g. judicial, finance, some public services, medical, operators of national lottery, working with young or vulnerable people

<p>Info &amp; Advice:  <a href="http://www.resettlement.info">www.resettlement.info</a> offers detailed guidance on disclosure; helpline 0800 0181 259 (Mon-Fr, 9am – 5pm) or email <a href="mailto:helpline@nacro.org.uk">helpline@nacro.org.uk</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.apextrust.com">www.apextrust.com</a> promotes employment opportunities for ex-offenders (Tel: 020 7638 5931 or <a href="mailto:jobcheck@apextrust.com">jobcheck@apextrust.com</a>)</p>	
<p><b>Health &amp; Safety at Work Act 1974</b>  + its many subsequent regulations</p>	<p>This act is the basis for all current legislation and aims to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all workers in all employment.  It also aims to protect all persons on an employer's premises, not just the people who work there.</p>
<p>Info &amp; Advice:  <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a> (Health &amp; Safety Executive: short guide available)  <a href="http://www.healthandsafety.co.uk">www.healthandsafety.co.uk</a></p>	
<p><b>Sex Discrimination Act 1975</b></p>	<p>Makes it unlawful to discriminate on basis of gender, including marital status, pregnancy, including civil partnerships</p>
<p>Info &amp; Advice:  <a href="http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk">www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com">www.equalityhumanrights.com</a> (Equality &amp; Human Rights Commission)</p>	
<p><b>Race Relations Act 1976</b></p>	<p>Makes it unlawful to discriminate on basis of race, colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic or national origin, including white people;  Applies to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Actions of public bodies</li> </ul>
<p>Info &amp; Advice:  <a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com">www.equalityhumanrights.com</a> (Equality &amp; Human Rights Commission)</p>	
<p><b>Disability Discrimination Act 1995</b>   + Amendment 1 Oct. 2004</p>	<p>Makes it unlawful to discriminate on basis of disability / learning difficulty;  Disability = Any person with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p> <p>Organisations will have to consider making reasonable adjustments to their workplaces</p>
<p>Info &amp; Advice:  <a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk">www.dwp.gov.uk</a> (Dept. for work &amp; pensions: Guidelines for employers)  <a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk/DisabledPeople">www.direct.gov.uk/DisabledPeople</a> (Guidelines for individuals) Helpline: 0845 7622 633</p>	

<b>Human Rights Act 1998</b>	Assures the right to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• education</li> <li>• not to be discriminated against</li> <li>• rights for workers</li> </ul>
Info & Advice: <a href="http://www.yourrights.org.uk">www.yourrights.org.uk</a> (The Liberty guide to human rights)	
<b>Freedom of Information Act 2000</b>	Gives any person the legal right to ask for and be given any information which is held by a public authority.
Info & Advice: <a href="http://www.foi.gov.uk">www.foi.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Employment Equality Regulations 2003</b>	Makes it unlawful to discriminate on basis of religion and belief, sexual orientation
Info & Advice: <a href="http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/discrimination">www.dti.gov.uk/employment/discrimination</a> <a href="http://www.galha.org">www.galha.org</a> (Gay & Lesbian Humanist Assoc.)	
<b>Employment Equality (Age) Regulations</b> 1 Oct 2006	Unlawful to discriminate against employees, jobseekers and trainees because of their age.
Info & Advice: <a href="http://www.acas.org.uk">www.acas.org.uk</a> , <a href="http://www.niace.org.uk">www.niace.org.uk</a>	
<b>Other sources of Info &amp; Advice:</b>	
<b>ACAS</b> (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service : <a href="http://www.acas.org.uk">www.acas.org.uk</a> )	Helpline 08457 47 47 47
<b>Shropshire CAB</b> (Citizen Advice Bureau) ( <a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk">www.citizensadvice.org.uk</a> )	Bridgnorth 01746 763838 Oswestry 01691 654425 Wellington 01952 223232 Ludlow 01584 876933 Market Drayton 01630 657137 Madeley 01952 585824 Telford centre 01952 291101 Shrewsbury 01743 243163

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