

Discrimination and diversity

Age discrimination - what's all the fuss about?

The age discrimination legislation came into effect on 1 October 2006 and was described as having the widest impact on business for over a decade. As an employer, any decision you make that may be directly or indirectly affected by an employee's age, will need to be justified.

This legislation affects everything from how you recruit and train your staff to how they are treated by colleagues in the workplace. It also gives all employees, old and young, an ability to challenge the decision to terminate their employment in an employment tribunal.

You should review your age discrimination policies and paperwork to ensure your business is compliant.

An effective and consistent approach to age discrimination, and more generally, "diversity", will help you to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. It can also help to attract and retain both staff and customers.

Diversity - what does it mean?

Quite simply, it means that everyone is different. In an employment context, it means equal opportunities... and a lot more besides. Diversity implies a recognition of the benefit of differences between people and an understanding that employees are individuals with their own unique contribution to make, for which they should be valued.

Diversity encourages a breadth of experiences and skills within an organisation, making it more adaptable to business needs and to the expectations of current society.

Training

An effective approach towards discrimination and diversity depends on the involvement of everyone within the organisation. Managers and staff have their own roles to play in achieving this, but they often lack the information and skills necessary. These skills are acquired through training. The very fact that you have provided training in this area will be to your advantage if a discrimination case is brought against you, as this helps establish a defence to any claim.

How we can help

We have formulated a package of products to safeguard companies against age discrimination claims and ensure wider protection against discrimination claims in general.

This includes:

1. A thorough review of all of your employment contracts, policies and other paperwork to ensure that it does not contravene the legislation, including the age discrimination legislation.
2. Practical advice and training on dealing with age discrimination and diversity issues and on promoting diversity within your organisation. Our bespoke training courses cover:
 - the concepts of equality and diversity
 - implementing these in the work environment
 - equal opportunities legislation
 - identifying and preventing discrimination

Companies that wish to select only part of the package can be accommodated.

