



## Gradsouthwest Limited

### Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 Gradsouthwest Ltd. (“Gradsouthwest”) is committed to equality of opportunity both in the provision of services and for its’ staff. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff, customers, contractors and those who come into contact with Gradsouthwest are treated equally and with fairness and consistency at all times.

1.2 This policy seeks continuous improvement and compliance with legislation. It is based on the principles that:

- a) all people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect;
- b) we will not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability, nationality, religious or philosophical belief, age, sexual orientation, family status, trade union activity or any other factor;
- c) we will adopt fair and inclusive practices throughout our operations and will eliminate all prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harassment;
- d) all staff have a personal responsibility for the practical application of this policy in their day-to-day activities and must support the policy at all times; and
- e) non-compliance with this policy will be treated seriously and will not be tolerated.

1.3 Gradsouthwest ensures that it will:

- a) create a productive and safe working environment, promoting diversity and inclusion in its’ workforce;
- b) actively demonstrate Gradsouthwest’s diversity policy and practices;
- c) develop new practices to ensure inclusion for employees, contractors and customers; and
- d) demonstrate continuous improvement in diversity and equal opportunities for all.

**2. Legislation and Codes of Practice** - This policy conforms to the current legislation and relevant codes of practice in England. Gradsouthwest will continually monitor this policy to ensure we are compliant with the requirements of relevant underpinning legislation; however our aim is to exceed the requirements of legislation wherever possible.

**3. Partner Organisations** - Gradsouthwest is committed to actively working with partner organisations to ensure its policies, procedures and practices are inclusive for all.

**4. Complaints** - Any staff who feels that he or she has grounds for complaint in relation to bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation has the right to pursue the complaint through Gradsouthwest’s grievance procedure. Customers who feel they have grounds for complaint may pursue these through the customer complaints procedure. Gradsouthwest’s complaints procedure is accessible to all.

**5. Access to Information** - We will seek to ensure that information is made available to our customers and employees in alternative formats as required.



**6. Recruitment** - All recruitment will be carried out with regard to fairness, equality and consistency for all candidates at all times. Recruitment practices will be inclusive and any barriers to employment removed under the relevant legislation.

**7. Staff Training** - Guidance and training will be provided to all staff with regard to diversity awareness and equality to ensure we are both an inclusive employer and service provider.

**8. Human Rights** - Gradsouthwest supports the principles of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; and will adhere to the following principles in respect of our staff:

a) We will treat all employees fairly and honestly, regardless of where they work. All staff will have agreed terms and conditions in accordance with local law or practice and will be given appropriate job skills training.

b) We will pay a fair wage reflecting local markets and conditions. We will always meet any national minimum wage.

c) Working hours shall not be excessive. They shall comply with industry guidelines and national standards where they exist.

d) Employment must be freely chosen. We will not employ illegal child labour, forced or bonded labour, forced overtime or condone illegal child labour.

e) Employees have the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining. We respect the right of our employees to choose whether or not to join a trade union without influence or interference from management. Furthermore we support the right of our employees to exercise that right through a secret ballot.

f) We will negotiate in good faith with the properly elected representatives of our employees.

g) We will abide by the non-discrimination laws in every country where we operate.

h) We will not use or condone the use of corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion or verbal abuse. We have disciplinary procedures for any member of staff whose conduct falls below the required standard.

i) We have formal grievance procedures through which staff can raise personal and work-related issues.

j) All staff will be given reasonable access to bathroom and rest facilities.

**9. Data Protection** - We will comply with the relevant principles governing data protection - see Data Protection Policy.

Policy approved: July 2015