



Guidelines for Writing an Inclusive Equal Opportunities Policy

An Equal Opportunity policy is a commitment by an employer to treating applicants and employees fairly, and in a way that delivers mutual benefit, and should cover a number of areas listed below. The size of your organization and the country in which you operate will determine the detail of the policy based on the local laws. See the links below to the **Equal Opportunities Commission, Hong Kong** and the **Tripartite Agency for Fair Employment Practices, Singapore** will take you to their websites which provide clear and useful information to employers on equal opportunities and fair employment practices and formulating policies.

An Equal Opportunities policy will generally commit to the following:

- Employment procedures and practices which do not unfairly or unlawfully discriminate against any employee regardless of gender (including gender reassignment), marital status, having or not having dependents, religious belief or political opinion, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, age.
- Selection decisions for roles (internally or externally), training or any other benefit will be made objectively, without unlawful discrimination, and based on aptitude and ability given provision of reasonable adjustments.
- Harassment and vilification on the grounds of discrimination at work will not be permitted. Employees have a right to complain should these occur.
- Equal opportunities for people with disabilities requires us to learn to treat people differently, in order to treat them fairly.

To demonstrate a commitment to the equal opportunities policy, it is recommended that the responsibility for the policy should be held by a member of senior management.

Local Useful Information and Guidelines:

HONG KONG Equal Opportunities Commission:

- A sample Equal Opportunities policy for small and medium-sized organisations:
<http://www.eoc.org.hk/EOC/UPLOAD/SMEKIT/policy.pdf>
- Code of Practice on Employment - under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance
[http://www.eoc.org.hk/EOC/GraphicsFolder/showcontent.aspx?content=CoPs%20on%20Employment\(DDO\)&fld=content](http://www.eoc.org.hk/EOC/GraphicsFolder/showcontent.aspx?content=CoPs%20on%20Employment(DDO)&fld=content)

SINGAPORE Tripartite Agency for Fair Employment Practices (TAFEP)

5 Principles of Fair Employment Practices including case studies of companies fair employment practices. IBM Singapore is featured for introducing a central 'Reasonable Accommodation or Adjustment Budget' Policy that ensures individuals with disability are enabled to perform to their fullest capability and deliver valuable outcomes for the business.

<http://www.fairemployment.sg/fairemployment.asp>

Remember that it is only best practice which transforms legal obligation in any jurisdiction to business benefit.