



- **equal opportunities** N-PLURAL

**Equal opportunities** refers to the policy of giving everyone the same opportunities for employment, pay and promotion, without discriminating against particular groups.

*The profession's leaders must take action now to tackle racist behaviour and to promote equal opportunities for all. It recently appointed an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Officer who examines all job applications.*

#### Common Collocations

an equal opportunities policy  
 an equal opportunities employer  
 equal opportunities legislation

- **discriminate** (discriminates, discriminating, discriminated) VERB  
**discrimination** N-UNCOUNT

To **discriminate** against a group of people or in favour of a group of people means to unfairly treat them worse or better than other groups. **Discrimination** is the practice of treating one person or group of people less fairly or less well than other people or groups.

*They believe the law discriminates against women.*

*...legislation which would discriminate in favour of racial minorities.*

*The Commission for Racial Equality teaches organisations not to discriminate.*

*She is exempt from sex discrimination laws.*

*India swiftly denounced the proposal as deplorable and patent discrimination against minorities.*

- **age discrimination** N-UNCOUNT  
**sexual discrimination** N-UNCOUNT  
**racial discrimination** N-UNCOUNT

**Age discrimination** is the practice of treating older people less fairly or less well than other people. **Sexual discrimination** is the practice of treating the members of one sex, usually women, less fairly or less well than those of the other sex. **Racial discrimination** is the practice of treating people of some races less fairly or less well than those of another race.

*The government finally published its code of conduct to combat age discrimination.*

*Women's groups denounced sexual discrimination.*

*...the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunity.*

- **positive action** N-UNCOUNT  
**positive discrimination** N-UNCOUNT

**Positive action** or **positive discrimination** means making sure that people such as women, members of smaller racial groups, and disabled people get a fair share of the opportunities available. [BRIT]

*Labour has promised to change the law to allow political parties to use positive action to boost the number of women candidates.*

*...a referendum on whether positive discrimination in favour of women and blacks should be abolished.*

- **disability** (disabilities) N-COUNT

A **disability** is a permanent injury, illness, or physical or mental condition that tends to restrict the way that someone can live their life.

*Facilities for people with disabilities are still insufficient.*

*...athletes who have overcome a physical disability to reach the top of their sport.*

- **recruitment policy** (recruitment policies) N-COUNT

A company's **recruitment policy** is the set of attitudes and actions it uses for the selection of new staff.

*Editors of newspapers will never admit to a racist recruitment policy.*

- **under-represented** ADJ

If a group of people is **under-represented** in a particular activity, there are fewer of them involved in the activity than you think there should be.

*Women are still under-represented in top-level civil service jobs.*

*...under-represented groups such as women and ethnic minorities.*

- **interview** (interviews, interviewing, interviewed)

① VERB

If you are **interviewed** for a particular job, someone asks you questions to find out if you are suitable for it.

*When Wardell was interviewed, he was impressive, and on that basis, he was hired.*

② N-COUNT

If you go for an **interview**, someone asks you questions to find out whether you are suitable for a job.

*...an interview for a job as a TV researcher.*

PRACTISE YOUR VOCABULARY

1 Use the terms in the box to complete the paragraph.

discriminated against under-represented disability equal opportunities  
positive action equal opportunities monitoring

When a company interviews a candidate for a job they are not allowed to discriminate against him or her on the grounds of race, sex, age or \_\_\_\_\_. In other words every candidate should have \_\_\_\_\_, or the same chance to get the job. EU laws help to promote this, as do other laws in other parts of the world. Figures suggest that candidates often are discriminated against on the grounds of race. Many people believe that \_\_\_\_\_ by employers is an important part of a good equal opportunities policy. This should help to increase the number of workers belonging to a particular racial group, if they are \_\_\_\_\_ in the firm. Firms need to be aware of the make-up of their labour force, and many companies carry out \_\_\_\_\_ during the selection procedure. As well as discrimination in the selection process, employees can also be discriminated against in the area of pay. In manufacturing, for example, women earn 72% of men's pay. Additionally, occupations that employ mainly women, such as hairdressing for example, tend to involve low pay. If an employee thinks that they have been \_\_\_\_\_ they can take their case to an industrial tribunal.

2 Look at the two tables showing employment trends in one country and answer the questions.

A. Percentage of the workforce by gender and occupation

| Area of employment | Men    |        | Women  |        |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                    | Year 1 | Year 5 | Year 1 | Year 5 |
| Managers           | 16     | 19     | 8      | 12     |
| Professional       | 11     | 13     | 8      | 9      |
| Clerical           | 8      | 8      | 31     | 25     |
| Manufacturing      | 25     | 17     | 4      | 3      |

B. Unemployment by ethnic groups

| Ethnic Group    | % Unemployment |
|-----------------|----------------|
| White           | 5              |
| Black           | 21             |
| Asian           | 9              |
| Others          | 14             |
| Country average | 7              |

a According to the information in the tables:

- i Has discrimination against women in management increased or decreased?
- ii Do men and women have equal opportunities to gain employment in the manufacturing sector?
- iii Is there any sexual discrimination in the clerical sector?
- iv Which ethnic group suffers the worst racial discrimination in employment?
- v Which ethnic group has the highest level of employment?

b If far-reaching programmes of compulsory positive discrimination were introduced, what trends might be seen in the tables above:

- i in the manufacturing sector?      ii among black workers?      iii among managers?

3 Read the text and answer the questions.

A company that produces chocolate is keen on offering equal opportunities and thrives on the diverse cultural background of its staff that reflects the global reach of its many brands.

- a What is the company's position on equal opportunities?
- b Why is cultural diversity important to this company?