

How do you prove 'Age Discrimination'?

We are being conditioned to tolerate the fact that we shall have to work until we are 70, or over! Oh devastation ... I can't get a job now! I seem to have to anticipate many years of rejection and rebuffs in the hope that someday, somebody, somewhere, may realise that I am a useful person.

I am well qualified – I am literate: I am healthy – albeit overweight: I can operate a computer ... and I speak English without accent – not Scottish, Irish, Welsh or regional – so am I being discriminated against ... and how would I ever know if I am?

I downloaded an NHS job application form and on the first page I was overjoyed to observe that they didn't ask for my date of birth. All the same, page two asked for the dates I attended secondary school. There we go again, anyone with a bit of maths, can work out the average age of a secondary school student!

I stopped work to join my husband on his numerous overseas contracts – and to become an 'at home' mother to raise our son. My vocation as a mother was improved by voluntary work in any discipline you care to mention, allowing me to keep on a par with information technology developments.

I own and operate a computer. I know the magic of the internet – its layers

from Application through Presentation down to Physical. I understand routers and brouters, bridges and switches. I know about TCPs and SPXs. I understand HTML ... and I have an ECDL. I can design whatever you want in Publisher, PowerPoint or Page Plus 8 ... and I can design and manage websites. I can do public speaking – and I can type at 70 wpm. Oh, and I have a copy editing and proofreading qualification to Distinction level!

But I have never been paid for anything by anyone – perhaps the odd blossom or snack. I would like to enjoy the interaction with people outside my home. I would love the excitement of working towards a potential raise, and the money to buy gifts for my husband without using his money.

So – the Government wants me to work at least until I am 70! They upset my husband's pension plans ensuring that this is a necessity – yet they haven't worked out how the average woman like myself can get a job. How do we fill in these simple-minded application forms that land on the desks of predisposed HR.

Was my interest in furthering myself a waste of time? What is to become of me?

Perhaps I should go overseas again! They needed me there!