

1 Policy Statement: Equality and Diversity

We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all staff and to promoting a culture where differences are respected, diversity is valued and everyone is supported to succeed, irrespective of personal circumstances or background. We are committed to a working environment in which all individuals are free from discrimination, harassment or victimization and in which all decisions are based on merit. We believe that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable and will tackle such matters to ensure that conditions that place people at a disadvantage are removed.

2 Employer Responsibilities

We shall:

- Not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against staff, visitors or customers on the basis of age*, gender, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation (their protected characteristics), or on the grounds of socio-economic status;
- Operate recruitment practices which positively promote equality and diversity by monitoring applicant profiles, training those recruiting in equality and diversity, ensuring that job descriptions are explicit about equality and diversity responsibilities and that recruitment materials are not stereotypical;
- Operate staff management arrangements fairly and equitably, giving due regard to the requirements of a diverse workforce and customer base (eg making reasonable adjustments for those with a disability);
- Consider the requirements of a diverse workforce and customer base when making key organisational policy decisions and procedural arrangements;
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities under the Equality Act and our own policies;
- Prevent harassment and victimisation on the grounds of protected characteristics and treat breaches of this policy as a disciplinary matter.

3 Employee Responsibilities

Employees shall:

- Not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against staff or customers on the basis of age*, gender, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation (their protected characteristics), or on the grounds of socio-economic status;
- Not tolerate any incidences of discrimination and immediately challenge and report such behaviours;
- Actively consider others and treat colleagues, visitors and customers with dignity and respect;
- Participate in staff training with regard to equality and diversity and implement that training in the workplace
- Give consideration to the potential needs of customers when publishing corporate information;

- Give consideration to the potential needs of visitors when arranging and chairing meetings;
- Not harass or victimize any colleague or customer on the basis of their protected characteristics;
- Raise any equality or diversity concerns immediately with a manager;
- Understand and implement the arrangements in this policy.

* benefits are allowed to be restricted to those up to 20 years of age, under the terms of the ESFA's charitable instruments and as permitted by the Exemptions in the Equality Act 2010

4 References and tools support the Policy

Definitions:

- Direct discrimination: where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more protected characteristic(s).
- Indirect discrimination: where someone is disadvantaged by a decision which puts others with the same protected characteristic at that same disadvantage.
- Harassment: where someone is the victim of unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of intimidation, hostility, degradation, humiliation or offence.
- Victimisation: where someone is treated less favorably having complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or has supported someone else's complaint.

The staff handbook

The Equality and Human Rights Commission – www.equalityhumanrights.com

5 Policy Review Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or in the event of any allegation or case of discrimination, victimization or harassment.

For office use only

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