

EO01 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Commitment Statement

Access Training is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, inclusion and to eliminating unlawful discrimination amongst our workforce, learners and partner organisations. Our aim is that our workforce and learners will be truly representative of all sections of society and that each employee and learner feel respected, able to give their best and achieve their full potential. Additionally, the organisation, in providing its services and facilities is also committed against unlawful discrimination of both customers and the public.

The Board of Directors, Management Team, Tutors, Trainer Assessors and all other staff are fully supportive of the policy and are responsible for working in the right way to achieve the objectives of the policy and creating an environment that discourages and protects against discrimination and harassment.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for employees, learners and clients and not to discriminate on the grounds of protected characteristics such as:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage & civil partnership
- pregnancy & maternity (inc staff, their partners and adoptive parents)
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

Access Training opposes all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

All learners and employees, (whether full-time, part-time, temporary or agency), will be treated fairly and with respect.

Selection of staff for employment, promotion, training or any other benefits will be on the basis of merit, performance, aptitude and ability. Where permitted by law, appropriate training may be given to staff to aid under-represented groups to progress within the company.

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All employees and learners will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents of staff will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation. (Certain government funded training programmes lawfully restrict the eligibility conditions for learners on some programmes e.g. age restrictions, previous qualifications, citizenship requirements.)

Access Training is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment that is free from:

- direct discrimination
- combined discrimination: dual characteristics (characteristics as listed above)
- discrimination arising from disability
- gender reassignment discrimination
- perception discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- harassment / third part harassment
- victimisation
- bullying

Promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

Access Training will ensure that equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion is maintained in the following areas:

- recruitment and selection;
- promotion, appraisal, transfer and training;
- terms of employment, benefits, facilities and services;
- grievance and disciplinary procedures; and
- dismissals, resignations and redundancies.
- pay and benefits
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working

We wish to embrace staff and learners from a wide range of backgrounds; so whatever an individual's personal beliefs are about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, it is essential that everyone complies with this policy.

Access Training aims to create an inclusive culture and workplace in which people are accepted as individuals, regardless of their differences and where they feel their contribution is valued. This will be achieved through clear communication through multiple communication methods, providing a detailed staff induction, staff survey and performance management system to gather feedback from staff and to set clear targets against organisational objectives.

Implementing the Policy

All staff and learners are made aware of this policy and given the opportunity to discuss it during their induction and are either given a copy of this policy or access via the intranet. Access Training encourages all staff, employers and other partners to appreciate and act upon standards of good practice and current legislation and to value the business and social benefits of employing a workforce and training learners drawn from different cultures, ages and backgrounds.

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Access Training will train managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

Creating a Working Environment Free of Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation

Access Training are committed to creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public

Employment practices and procedures will be reviewed when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Raising Learner Awareness

Learners on all learning programmes have access to information to raise their level of knowledge and understanding of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as part of the wider curriculum at Access Training.

Access Training is a “Disability Confident Committed” organisation.

The company is positive about recruiting and employing staff with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments in the work and learning environment where appropriate to accommodate and develop them.

All marketing and publicity material for the recruitment of staff, learners, partners and placement opportunities will reflect the company’s commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We will ensure that we meet requirements regarding access to our premises. Appropriate resources and support will be available to staff and learners with sight and /or hearing impairments, restricted movement, learning difficulties etc.

We will always seek to place learners in employment or work in placements that are supportive to any needs that they may have.

Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or at any time that there is a change of legislation which impacts on the policy.

Policies, procedures, practices and forms are equality impact assessed at both the point of implementation for new policies (etc) and at any point of update for existing policies (etc).

To ensure that our policy is operating effectively, (and for no other purpose); Access Training maintains records of both staff and learner ethnicity, age, gender and disability. Analysis of these records are produced on a 6 monthly basis and provides a basis for appropriate action to ensure that direct or indirect discrimination does not take place and to promote equality of opportunity.

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Measures for improvement and continued good practice will be listed in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which is linked to the Strategic Plan.

Monitoring the Makeup of the Workforce

Learner statistics are produced quarterly. These include information on age, sex, ethnicity and disability and are considered and discussed at management and board level.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and the actions relating to the policy are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Recruitment, Selection and Staff Training

Access Training is committed to making decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

Employment practices and procedures are reviewed when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Opportunities for training, development and progress are available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Taking Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Seriously

Access Training is committed to taking seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

To safeguard individual rights under the policy, any staff member, job applicant or learner who believes that Access Training has applied unfair or discriminatory treatment to them within the scope of the policy, may raise the matter using the appropriate grievance or complaints procedure. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Breaches of the policy by staff will be considered as misconduct and dealt with through Access Training's staff disciplinary procedure and for learners through the learner disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches could, following an investigation, lead to dismissal from work or from the learning programme for learners.

The legislation to combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities and diversity is the Equality Act 2010.

Access Training will pay particular attention to the duties imposed by the above legislation and may seek guidance on legislation from the relevant Commission and ACAS. Guidance on the legislation can be obtained from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) www.equalityhumanrights.com and the Government Equalities Office (GEO) [here](#).

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Training, Assessment and Examinations

Access Training is committed to ensuring a fair and equal learning experience across all our provision. Learners are asked key questions on their application form which help identify any learning needs or disabilities that could possibly impact on their training with us and as such allows us to put in place extra support during training and examinations.

If a learning need or Disability is identified, a discussion will take place between the learner and Learner support manager and reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate these needs. Access Arrangement may also be put in place to assist with training and exams, these are subject to the correct evidence being made available by the learner and stipulations set by the awarding bodies and JCQ.

For further information on Access Arrangements please go to the JCQ website:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

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