Equality and Diversity Policy

1. INTRODUCTION
   1. We are an equal opportunities provider. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or learner receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.
   2. We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All learners are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of enrolment, induction, on programme learning and exiting. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary, to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.
   3. Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Company as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with higher and middle managers, assessors and learners, such individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every learner to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Company.
2. OUR COMMITMENT AS A TRAINING PROVIDER
   1. To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our learners are recognised and valued.
   2. Every learner is entitled to an environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
   3. Training, development and progression is monitored for all learners.
   4. Equality in the learning environment is good management practice and makes sound learning sense.
   5. We will review all our practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
3. OUR COMMITMENT AS A SERVICE PROVIDER
   1. We aim to provide services to which all clients are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities or social class.
   2. We will make sure that our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients.
   3. This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with external representatives
   4. This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.
   5. We have clear procedures that enable our clients and candidates to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
4. POLICY STATEMENTS

**AGE**

We will:

* ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity.
* ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities; and
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

**DISABILITY**

We will:

* provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services.
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people; and
* seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation.

**RACE**

We will:

* challenge racism wherever it occurs.
* respond swiftly and sensitively to racists incidents; and
* actively promote race equality in the Company.

**GENDER**

We will:

* challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men.
* take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against women and men.
* provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

We will:

* ensure that we take account of the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals; and
* promote positive images of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals.

**RELIGION OR BELIEF**

We will:

* ensure that employees’ religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible; and
* respect people’s beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

**PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY**

We will:

* Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity.
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our learners; and
* ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our learners’ pregnancy or maternity.

**MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP**

We will:

* Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership.
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our learners; and
* ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account the needs of our learners’ marriage or civil partnership.