



Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure

Introduction

This policy will help to embed a company culture that values openness, fairness and transparency.

LETS is committed to treating its employees and learners equally. No employee, potential employee or learner shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration on the grounds of the nine Protected Characteristics or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment or requirements of the Company that cannot be reasonably be justified as necessary on operational grounds.

The Act (and this policy) identifies the nine “ Protected Characteristics” as.

- **Age:** (older people, younger people, people of an age group)
- **Disability:** (not limited to physical or sensory impairments, mental health disability, some long-term medical conditions)
- **Gender reassignment:** (transsexual people, transgender people)
- **Marriage and civil partnerships:** (a person who is married, a person who is a civil partner)
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** (pregnant women, women on maternity leave, women who have recently given birth)
- **Race:** (colour, nationality, ethnic or national backgrounds, heritage)
- **Religion or belief:** (any religion or lack of religion, any religious or philosophical belief or lack of belief)
- **Sex:** (women and men - gender)
- **Sexual orientation:** (gay and lesbian people, bisexual people, heterosexual people)

Subject to the above provision all employees are required to ensure that they appoint, train, develop and promote on the basis of merit and ability alone.

LETS will ensure that all staff are fully trained and updated through CPD with equality and diversity knowledge and understanding to ensure that the selection criteria, job descriptions, personnel specifications and media used are reviewed to ensure compliance and inclusivity.

There should be no discrimination on any grounds which extends to the treatment of employees, learners and clients. The Company’s grievance procedure is made available to any employee who believes that he or she may have been unfairly discriminated against.

LETS values and recognises the social and cultural diversity within communities and aims to provide conditions that encourage everyone to participate in learning, to actively combat harassment and ensure people are treated with dignity.

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Policies and Procedures will be reviewed annually unless changes in legislation or practices occur prior to the annual review when updates will be made.			



We will endeavour to protect all our staff and learners from all forms of unlawful, unfair and/or unjust discrimination. We are committed to creating opportunities for all and allowing all learners to reach their full potential in an environment of mutual respect.

Our Key Values

- We value diversity and equal opportunities in society and in our workforce
- We understand and promote the benefits of diversity as a means of broadening talent base, achieving high performance, and enabling all learners to feel included and reach their full potential
- We protect our staff and learners from discriminatory practices and maintain our reputation as a fair and responsible employer and training provider
- We monitor the application of the Equality and Diversity Policy and collate statistics
- We train and educate staff and learners on diversity, equal opportunities and legislation
- We take a best practice approach to diversity

Responsibilities

We are fair, open and honest and we promote equal opportunities and are committed to raising awareness of equality and diversity amongst our learners, staff and clients, ensuring that all learners and staff are treated with respect, within a safe and secure environment, free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

We do this by:

- Encouraging the full participation of learners in all aspects of their learning
- Working towards inclusive learning by ensuring a degree of flexibility to match the needs of individual learners with the delivery
- Identifying and removing any discriminatory practices, procedures and customs with systems that are fair and equal to all
- Actively promoting equality and diversity among staff, learners and employers
- Making sure that all learners and staff are protected from harassment, bullying and discrimination, including those based with employers and other sites external to the provider's
- Managing any incidents or complaints relating to equality effectively and efficiently
- Having strategies in place to safeguard learners who are based with employers from harassment, bullying and discrimination
- We embed Safeguarding, Prevent and British Values within all Apprenticeship delivery

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Recruitment and Selection

We make every effort to recruit staff and learners from all sections of society and to ensure fair treatment throughout the recruitment and selection process.

- We make the wording and images we use reflect and appeal to all sections of society.
- We make all job specifications relevant and non-discriminatory and to ensure that short-listed candidates have skills and qualifications, which most closely match the job requirements.
- We ensure fair, consistent and non-discriminatory questions at interview.

Adjustments for staff and learners with disabilities

We actively seek to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of disability.

- We make every effort to identify and provide any 'reasonable adjustments' required to learning arrangements or environment.
- We provide support to learners with a disability to make every effort to ensure they can meet their full potential
- We make reasonable adjustments to our assessment processes for training courses where required to ensure no one is disadvantaged.

Learning and Development

We deliver training and on-going advice and instruction through induction programmes and continuing professional development. We endeavour to accommodate specific needs of disabled staff and learners wherever possible.

Unlawful discrimination

We endeavour to protect our staff and learners from discrimination of any kind by raising awareness and conducting training. We will support any staff member or learner who raises concerns about discriminatory behaviour. We will deal with any complaints relating to discrimination sensitivity and effectively through our grievance procedure or disciplinary procedure, as appropriate.

Awareness of discrimination

We are aware that discrimination is not always obvious, and we seek to improve the awareness of our staff and learners of all types of discrimination.

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Direct Discrimination: when a person is treated less favourable because of their sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, material or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, part-time or fixed-term employment status.

Indirect Discrimination: when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice puts a group of people with a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared to other groups.

Victimisation: when a person is treated less favourable because they have raised a complaint of discrimination (including bringing legal proceedings) or given evidence in relation to someone else's complaint.

Harassment: when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic, which affects the recipient's dignity or creates an offensive, intimidating or hostile environment. This can include an isolated incident or a series of incidents.

We Promote Diversity

We take a proactive approach to promoting diversity in all areas of the business and we are continuously improving our approach to diversity.

Disciplinary action may be taken against an employee who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination. Discriminatory conduct and sexual or racial harassment may be treated as serious misconduct and could result in summary dismissal.

We Support our clients

We work with our clients providing support and advice on diversity issues where required. We can also assist our clients in monitoring the equality information of our learners. We want to demonstrate best practice at all times so that clients actively seek to work with us.

We Support our Learners

Every learner will receive information on Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding and Prevent as part of their induction.

We are aware that diversity promotes a better blend of skills and experience and we ensure that we are actively promoting equality and diversity throughout all of training programmes and delivery.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

The company will monitor and evaluate success in respect of equality by taking the following actions:

- Ensure that all employees who deliver training services receive training to ensure that they do not discriminate unlawfully
- Review and monitor our services to ensure that they do not discriminate against anyone, identify barriers to access and assess where improvements can be made

Ensure that any organisations or individuals providing services on behalf of LETS comply with equal opportunities legislation and the modern slavery act.

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