



Equality and Diversity Policy

Purpose

The Derbyshire Network is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce, learners and Network and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce learners and Network to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee, learner and member to feel respected and able to give their best.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our learners and members.
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

The organisation commits to:

- encourage equality and diversity in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- create 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

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination

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.

- take seriously 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
- Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice
- Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence
- make opportunities for training, development and progress 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
- decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law
- monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy
- monitor the make-up of our learner profile regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Implementation

We will ensure that everyone associated with The Derbyshire Network is made aware of this Policy and understands their responsibilities for implementing it. We will support people so they know how to implement the Policy in relation to their role, including through development opportunities.

We will develop our approach to equality and diversity by identifying good practice in employment, service delivery and how we engage with local people.

To do this we will regularly monitor statistics based on the information provided by our own direct delivery and our recruitment policies and Sub-Contractors on their own recruitment policies

particularly learner statistics to ensure there is a clear and transparent recruitment when engaging them on to funded programmes.

We will use the information to monitor and assess:

- The take-up of our services
- Satisfaction with our services
- Effectiveness of our services
- The make-up of our workforce
- Effectiveness and impact of our employment practices
- Involvement in decision-making
- The experience of learners engaging in funded programmes

Equality monitoring

Whenever we ask learners, Sub-Contractors or stakeholders for information in order to undertake equality monitoring we will take care that the monitoring is appropriate and we will comply with four main rules:

1. Only ask for the information we need
2. Provide an explanation of why we need the information and how it will be used
3. Take care to ensure that individuals cannot be identified from the information collected, especially where the results of monitoring are made public or shared
4. Comply with the law in relation to confidentiality, data protection and freedom of information.

Review and update arrangements

The Policy will be reviewed annually. The policy may also be amended from time to time to reflect and take account of changes in legislation. Any changes are to be approved by the Chief Executive.