



# Equality and Diversity Policy

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## 1 Statement of Purpose

LITE (Stockport) Ltd )is fully committed to promoting equal opportunities and diversity in an inclusive manner across all aspects of our organisation and the learning programmes which we deliver. Our approach is deigned and manged to ensure that of all our employer and learner agreements, our employment practices and our learning programmes, from recruitment to progression are compliant with equality and diversity legislation. These include bit not exclusively:

Equalities Definitions and Legislation

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act prohibits discrimination by learning providers as employers and as a provider of services to learners. At the core of the legislation is the provision making it illegal to discriminate against people who have a 'protected characteristic'. The Act lists these characteristics as being:

Religion or Belief

Sexual Orientation

Gender Reassignment

Pregnancy and Maternity

Disability

Age

Sex

Race

Marriage and Civil Partnership

General Guidance on the Application of the Policy

Discrimination arising from disability

Under the definition of disability, it is now easier for an individual to show that they are disabled and protected as the definition of disability has become broader.

Disabled individuals no longer need to show that their impairment affects a particular capacity such as hearing, eyesight, mobility or speech. A disabled person only now needs to demonstrate that their physical or mental impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities, such as using a telephone.

Discrimination arising from disability is where a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something arising “in consequence” of their disability.

For instance, an individual suffering from dyslexia may have a tendency to make spelling mistakes. There would be discrimination on the part of the employer where he knows or ought to have known that the employee had such a disability and is treating the employee unfairly as a result. In this example, the spelling mistakes by the employee are “connected” to the disability.

#### Discrimination by perception

The Equality Act also develops the concept of discrimination by “perception”. This would involve a person being treated unfairly because they are wrongly perceived to have a protected characteristic. It might apply, for example, if a person is discriminated against because they are thought to be gay when they are not. Another example is where a prospective white employee submits a job application, but the employer rejects the application as wrongly assuming the job seeker to be Asian as he has an Asian sounding name.

#### Discrimination by association

The same principle and protection also extends to people who are treated unfairly because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic. This is called “associative discrimination”. For example, an employee is refused flexible working arrangements even though it has been offered to others because that employee has caring responsibilities for a child or spouse who has a disability.

#### Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination includes disability and gender reassignment. Indirect discrimination occurs where an employer introduces a rule or policy that applies to everybody in the workforce but where such rule in turn creates a disadvantage for employees with a particular protected characteristic.

#### Harassment and victimisation

The Equality Act introduces the concept of “harassment by a third party”. This means that employers are potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people they don’t employ, such as customers and clients, if they do not take proper steps to address the same when they became aware of it. Employees also have extended protection

where someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance or complaint under the Act.

### Equal pay

Employers can no longer enforce secrecy clauses in contracts of employment banning employees from revealing their pay rates to colleagues where they are related to protected characteristics such as race or sex. If an employer disciplines someone because they have become aware of such discussions, this could amount to victimisation under the Act.

### Positive action

Positive action can involve treating members of a group who share one of the protected characteristics more favourably than other groups. This will be lawful if one or more of the following conditions are met:

- Disadvantages of a particular group are recognised.
- Particular needs of the group are met.
- Participation of the group is increased.

### Other Legislation

As a provider of education and learning, we recognise our its duty to improve the participation and attainment of all people across all learning routes and to actively promote inclusivity and diversity.

We recognise our duties and responsibilities under the Children's Act 2004, the Special Education Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 and the Government's Every Child Matters policy agenda. In addition we are at all time vigilant actively ensuring the safety and care of our learners underpinned by our Safeguarding and Prevent Policies and processes including the promotion of Fundamental British Values in learning activity. We ensure that all learners including apprentices , whatever their background or their circumstances, has the support they need to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

In addition we extend our support in aiding employers to actively promote and embed our Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, Prevent and Health & safety policies

## Freedom of Speech

We encourage a culture of free speech and open discussion recognising that this can only be achieved in practice through our staff and learners being tolerant and respectful of each other recognising their individual roles and responsibility to adhere to our values and anti-discriminatory practices.

Facilities will not be made available to speakers who advocate or incite unlawful racial hatred or discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, sex, class, sexual orientation, age or disability or who advocate or incite violence or harassment of any individual or group. In this way the college seeks to protect potentially vulnerable individuals or groups.

It is recognised that freedom of speech is limited by statute laws that protect individuals and groups of individuals from racial hatred or discrimination:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010.
- Public Order Act 1986
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Terrorism Act 2006
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008.
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 imposes a duty on the provider when exercising its functions, to have due regard for the need to prevent vulnerable individuals from being drawn into terrorism. This includes violent extremism as well as non-violent extremism intended to create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism. LITE (Stockport) Ltd expects external bodies wishing to interact with us to be open and honest regarding their identity. External speakers will be subject to risk assessment in line with the Prevent risk assessment.

## 2 Key Principles

As part of our approach to Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding and the promotion of Fundamental British Values we will:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- not unlawfully discriminate and uphold 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
- 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 this is good practice and makes 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
- Ensure that employers that we work with to deliver apprenticeships, and apprentices are committed to the promotion of Equality and Diversity.

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 and apprentices should understand that 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 that their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation
- Decisions concerning staff are 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 and apprentices 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 with due consideration take action to address any issues

The equality policy is fully supported by senior management and staff

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the Staff, Apprentice and Employer handbooks. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually the Company manager.

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.

### **3 Responsibilities**

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the manager Jackie Shopland-Reed. [jsreed@liteltd.co.uk](mailto:jsreed@liteltd.co.uk) Tel 07836248604

**Staff:** All staff have a responsibility to abide by this policy and to promote equality, fairness, and respect for all. Mandatory Training will equip staff with the ability to promote equality and diversity and to recognise inappropriate behaviour. All staff are to commit to this policy and will receive annual update training in implementing this Policy, which is included in the staff handbook. New staff need to familiarise themselves with the expectations of their roles and responsibilities. Staff will receive training during their induction. Implementation and updates to the policy will be discussed in staff meetings.

**Apprentices / Employers:** Apprentices will be required to commit to the policy as a part of the induction process. Commitment will be a requirement of our apprenticeship agreement with employers. This policy will be included in the apprentice and employer handbooks as well as available through our intranet / website. Training will be provided at induction and through discussion at apprentice reviews. Relevant updates and news will be shared in our news 'Bulletin', with staff, apprentices and employers.

We are committed to an ongoing programme of appraisal of the effectiveness of this policy and employees, employers and apprentices are encouraged to bring to the attention of Jackie Shopland-Reed areas where existing practices may fall short of the aims of this policy.

#### **4 Promotion Commitment and Training**

All staff and governors will undertake training relevant to their role. Relevant updates and news will be shared in our news 'Bulletin', with staff, apprentices and employers.

**Staff :** Mandatory Equality and Diversity training will equip staff with the ability to promote Equality, Fairness and Respect and recognise and act on inappropriate behaviour.

All staff commit to this policy and receive annual update training in to implementing this Policy, which is included in the staff handbook. New staff need to familiarise themselves with the expectations of their roles and responsibilities. Staff will receive training during their induction. Implementation and updates to the policy are discussed in staff meetings. We review our internal staff balance and set targets where necessary. For example we have successfully recruited 2 male veterinary nursing tutors to address the gender imbalance in a very female dominated occupation.

**Apprentices:** Apprentices will be required to commit to the policy as a part of the induction process. Commitment will be a requirement of our apprenticeship agreement with employers. This policy will be included in the apprentice and employer handbooks as well as promoted through our intranet / website. Training will be provided at induction, integrated throughout the off the job training and through discussion at apprentice reviews. We display posters promoting Equality and Diversity in an animal care / veterinary context in the training centres.

**Employers:** We require all new employers to demonstrate their commitment to the promotion of Equality and Diversity, this is checked at the approval visit and through checks of required documentation. We work with employers to ensure they are promoting Equality and Diversity within their organisations; this is checked at each review visit. We promote the business benefits of improved workforce diversity to employers and have designed and circulated posters to promote diversity in an animal care / veterinary context. Equality and Diversity topics and updates are discussed at twice yearly training events for clinical coaches who support apprentices in the workplace.

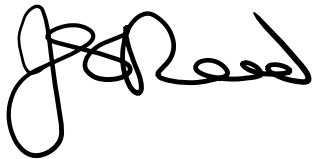
**Marketing and Recruitment:** We have checks in place to ensure that all our marketing materials and our website comply with legislation and promote Equality and Diversity. We refer to our Equality and Diversity commitment in all our recruitment materials for apprentices and staff.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually in accordance with our quality assurance procedures, however the policy may be updated to reflect changing requirements or circumstances by the Manager / DSL in consultation with the staff.

Date of next review:

Signed on behalf of LITE (Stockport) Ltd



Jackie Shopland-Reed  
Manager

Date:





