



## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Our vision is to create and maintain an inclusive working and learning environment that recognises, respects and celebrates difference. Wales England Care believe that everyone has the right to participate fully, give their best and achieve their full potential, in a climate free from discrimination or harassment. We aim to maintain a safe working environment where everyone feels valued and respected which enables people to perform to the best of their ability, regardless of the many ways in which they are different. Wales England Care will pay particular attention to those with 'protected characteristics' and we believe that this vision of equality, diversity and inclusion will bring tangible benefits for our staff, our learners and for the employers that we work with.

### **What is meant by the term Protected Characteristics?**

The Equality Act 2010 introduces the term 'protected characteristics', to refer to aspects of a person's identity, explicitly protected from unlawful discrimination.

There are nine protected characteristics, as follows:

1. Race
2. Disability
3. Gender
4. Age
5. Sexual orientation
6. Religion and belief
7. Gender reassignment
8. Pregnancy / maternity
9. Marriage / civil partnership

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Wales England's Care staff, the employers we work with and the learners on our training programmes.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The Board of Directors will ensure equality and diversity is embedded within the organisation's Business Improvement plan and will be implemented by the Senior Management Team.

The Senior Management Team will;

- Treat any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out by an individual as a matter for possible disciplinary action
- Ensure that equality and diversity is built into the curriculum across all learning programmes
- Ensure that learning takes place in a safe environment free from discrimination, bullying or harassment
- Provide training in equality and diversity to learners and staff
- Help employers to improve their equality and diversity practices
- Use analysis of data to inform future planning to improve the representation, participation and success of underrepresented and underachieving groups



- Challenge stereotyping
- Implement a Code of Conduct where all parties will treat each other with mutual respect and will not discriminate against or harass others because of their race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, personal background or circumstance
- Deal efficiently with any breaches of this policy which may be regarded as misconduct.
- Suspend or even withdraw learners from their learning programme

### **Development/Skills Coaches**

Development/Skills Coaches will;

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer of any incidents reported by learners

### **Learners**

Learners will;

- Report any instances of bullying or harassment to their line manager, unless it is the line manager that is the person doing the bullying and harassing, in which case they should report it to another member of the management team
- Inform their assessor or tutor

### **Employers**

Employers will;

- Abide by the Equality Act
- Have an equality and diversity policy in place
- Create a safe working environment free from bullying and harassment
- Take prompt action when incidents are reported

### **Benefits**

By adhering to the principles within the policy Wales England Care aim to;

- Create a more diverse workforce, bringing a wider range of individual strengths, experiences and perspectives
- Increase employee satisfaction and motivation, which helps attract new staff and retain those already there
- Reduce recruitment costs and increasing productivity
- Improve understanding of the diverse groups of potential and existing customers and how their needs can be met
- Provide a better service and engage with markets that may not previously have been tapped into
- Improve the organisational brand/image to a wider audience

Wales England Care is committed to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination or harassment on these grounds. The Equality Act 2010 recognises the following types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination, including associative and perception discrimination
- Indirect discrimination



- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty in April 2011, which requires Wales England Care to give due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising the disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from a protected group where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

### **Fostering good relations**

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

The equality duty covers the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status. This means that the first aim of the duty applies to this characteristic but that the other aims (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.

### **Communication**

We will use several different ways to communicate our policy so that all our staff, learners, employers, contractors and others understand our commitment to equality and diversity as well as understand their roles and responsibilities.

Communication will be shared in the following way:

- Through Engagement for new learners, and new employers
- Staff training/staff meetings/Development Days
- Through learner and employer handbooks
- Employee induction
- Learner progress reviews
- Employer briefings and newsletters
- E-portfolio system

### **Monitoring and review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Senior Management team and will be reviewed annually.