

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Policy Statement

ECTA is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for everyone and values the diversity of all its staff and customers.

## Statement of Principles

ECTA seeks to create a safe, supportive learning environment for all its staff and customers in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The Company welcomes individuals from local, regional and international communities. ECTA value difference and diversity and will strive to create positive working relationships so that everyone can work to the best of their abilities, free from discrimination, prejudice, harassment or victimisation. The Company recognises that everyone has a contribution to make and that services can be improved by harnessing the skills and contributions from customers, all sectors of the workforce and the community.

ECTA recognises that prejudice and discrimination can exist both directly and indirectly on an individual and company level. It will not tolerate individuals or groups being treated less favourably than others on the grounds of:

- Colour, race, nationality, caste, ethnic or national origin
- Religion and belief
- Sex, gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation or gender re-assignment
- Disability
- Size
- Age
- Social Class
- Employment Status
- HIV Status
- Religion and belief
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Trade Union membership
- Membership of a minority group

The Senior Management Board and staff recognise that groups and individuals in society are discriminated against. This can take the form of:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Victimisation
- Harassment

This affects their ability to take part on an equal basis with others:

- At work
- In education and training
- In all aspects of everyday life

Such discrimination diminishes the life chances of these groups and goes against the principles expressed in the Company's Strategic Aims.

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The policy applies to staff, customers, and visitors to the company and service providers when working on company business. In ensuring that this policy is fully effective and that all company staff are committed to it, ECTA will work in partnership with staff in its development and implementation.

**Our environment will provide customers, employees and service users with an ethos which promotes equality and diversity**

We will treat people as individuals with consideration and respect for their needs.

We will provide appropriate training and development opportunities to facilitate the effective delivery of services.

We will inform and consult service users and employees in relation to policy development.

We will encourage the recruitment of employees from all parts of the community.

We will influence other employers and agencies to be aware of their responsibilities under relevant legislation and through this help to create a culture that encourages and promotes diversity.

We will carry out, monitor and review the impact of company policies and services in order to identify changes and improvements.

We will incorporate equality actions and targets into service planning across all aspects of the company.

We will accept our responsibilities and work within the requirements set out in all relevant legislation.

**All employees and applicants will be recruited, selected and appointed in line with our equality and diversity policy**

We will make certain that job advertisements, job titles and person specifications will be written in such a way that no suitable applicant is deterred from applying.

We will ensure all internal and external applicants involved in the selection process will receive appropriate information and guidance on equal opportunities / diversity related issues.

We will ensure that selection for employment, promotion, training or other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

We will ensure a range of company employment policies will be operated in relation to equal opportunities (e.g. Job-Share, Paternity, Maternity Support, Parental Leave and Adoption Leave).

We will make certain that promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

**All customers will be referred in line with our equality and diversity policy**

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We will make certain that applications for programme places will be considered on individual merit without prejudice, subject only to Awarding Bodies, ESFA and the European Social Funding eligibility criteria.

We will ensure customers attending interview who have been identified with literacy, language, ICT and numeracy difficulties will be interviewed by staff who are either qualified or as a minimum, familiar with the Skills for Life strategy.

**Our training will focus on shaping the development of inclusive life long learning for all staff and customers**

**Customers**

We will ensure that customers receive training in equal opportunities and diversity to raise awareness of their own responsibilities in this area.

We will provide all customers with encouragement to progress personally and professionally whilst with ECTA.

We will provide our customers with the necessary support and guidance in language, literacy, ITC and numeracy to enable them to read, write and speak English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general.

**Staff**

We will provide all staff with training in equal opportunities and diversity to raise awareness of their own responsibilities in this area.

We will ensure the induction of staff provides information and integration of the national Skills for Life Strategy.

We will ensure all staff will have access to support and advice regarding the improvement of their literacy, language, ICT and numeracy skills and abilities.

We will make certain that all staff be given the opportunity to progress within their individual role and within the company.

We will ensure that personal and professional progression will be monitored in accordance with the Staff Appraisal Procedure and the Training and Development Policy.

**ECTA shall promote equality and diversity with all stakeholders**

We will ensure this policy be communicated to all stakeholders reminding them of their responsibilities towards diversity and equality of opportunity.

We will ensure ongoing monitoring of equality of opportunity which will be achieved through regular input from any party i.e. placement provider. Reviews will also identify whether customers are comfortable in their placement / training, whether they are getting the support they need and if not, any additional support arrangements that are required.

**ECTA will maintain and review statistics for employees and customers to monitor the progress of the equality and diversity policy**

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We will collect and classify information regarding race (in terms of ethnic / national origin), age, gender and disability of customers, staff and applicants.

We will examine by ethnicity / national origin, gender and disability the distribution of customers and employees and the success rate of applicants.

We will record and analyse recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, with a rationale for the decisions reached where applicable.

We will review the results of any monitoring procedures at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. If necessary, any appropriate changes will be made to afford greater equality of opportunity to all customers, staff and applicants.

**The complaints and grievance procedure provided will embrace diversity and equality of opportunity for all customers and employees**

We will address any problems or issues relating to the treatment of customers and employees in line with the company complaints/grievance procedures.

**Company Procedures**

The Company will ensure equality and diversity issues are incorporated into its policies, procedures and practices.

**Responsibilities and Duties**

Legislation, regulation and policy provide a framework within which the Company will strive to deliver equality of opportunity for all. The Senior Management Board and staff will ensure that it follows its legal responsibilities as laid down in current legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Civil Partnerships Act 2004
- GDPR 2018
- Discrimination and Burden of Proof Regulation 2001
- Gender Equality Duty 2007
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Health Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2003 (RRAA)
- Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Employments Rights Act 1996 (Amended)
- The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Race Equality Duty
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

This list is not definitive

**All staff are responsible for:**

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Acting in accordance with our policy on equal opportunities and race equality

Dealing with incidents and being able to recognise and tackle racial bias and stereotyping

Promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations, to avoid discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origin

Keeping up to date with the law on race relations and equality of opportunities

Taking up all training, development and learning opportunities.

The Company will act in all cases if any form of discrimination occurs: this may lead to formal disciplinary action. It is the responsibility of all staff to report any such acts.

**The Senior Management Board is responsible for:**

Ensuring that the company operates meets all the requirements and within the legislation.

Ensuring the Equality and Diversity Policy and its procedures are followed.

Ensuring that they receive and respond to monitoring information on customers and staff.

Ensuring that stakeholders and their employees or other agents follow the company's Equality and Diversity Policy.

The Senior Management Board designates the Director as having overall responsibility for equality issues. The Director will ensure regular reports are made to the Senior Management Board and they are cascaded to staff at all levels.

**Positive Action**

ECTA will make use of legislative opportunities to rectify disadvantages in training and employment. Such positive action allows the Company to:

Provide facilities or services to meet the specific needs of people from under-represented groups.

Target job training or applications of specific groups that are under-represented in a particular area.

Identify individual customers who may be experiencing difficulties with literacy, language, ICT and numeracy and to initiate support systems to enable them to progress with the provision.

Draw the attention of management to alleged discriminatory acts or practices.

It is the responsibility of all customers and staff to comply with ECTA's statutory obligations, actively support the Company's Equality and Diversity Policy, be aware of equality and diversity issues and promote good relations.

All managers are responsible to lead by example in creating a positive inclusive ethos. They should make sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive support and training in carrying these out. Managers should ensure that all customers and staff are made aware that alleged acts of discrimination will be investigated and may be treated as disciplinary offences

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and dealt with under the appropriate company procedures. They should ensure that sufficient records are kept for target setting, monitoring and analysis of equality issues.

Staff should undergo training on equality and diversity issues and promote equality, diversity and good working relations. They should maintain, where applicable, sufficient records to enable the effective monitoring of equality and diversity issues. Staff must challenge inappropriate, discriminatory or offensive behaviour / language and bring allegations of discrimination to the attention of the appropriate manager, in accordance with company procedures.

ECTA aims to employ a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. Reasonable adjustment arrangements will be made to ensure equality of access for customers, job applicants and employees.

## Explanation of Key Terms

Colour	Refers to the colour of an individual's skin.
Disability	The physical or mental impairment of an individual who is disabled. The impairment may be minor or severe and it may be long term or short term. N.B. This definition is different from the legal definition.
Discrimination	Unjustifiably treating an individual or a group worse than another.
Diversity	The visible or non-visible difference which will include factors such as gender, sexuality, values, age, background, race, disability, religion, personality and work style. Variety or difference pertaining particularly to the richness of people's background.
Embrace	To adopt or accept without question or judgement.
Equal Opportunities	The same opportunities for everyone. It aims to avoid unfair discrimination and to ensure that no group or individual is treated less favourably than another.
Ethnicity	A quality assigned to a specific group of people historically connected by a common national origin or language. Ethnic classification is used for identification rather than differentiation.
Gender	Behaviour characteristics associated with masculinity and femininity.
Gender re-assignment	The change in an individual's sex either from male to female, or female to male
Harassment	Unwanted touching or other physical contact, leering, coercion, isolation, non co-operation, verbal or written abuse, visual displays or any other behaviour that undermines a person's confidence or threatens a person's security.
Legislation	The Law.
Nationality	The country in which an individual was born or a person's passport status
Prejudice	A bias, partiality that prevents objective consideration.
Race, Ethnicity or National Origin	Terms used to describe a group of people historically connected by a common national origin. They refer to an individual's ancestry, which may not be the same as the individual's nationality.
Religion	An individual's faith or beliefs
Service Users	Customers and stakeholders
Sexual orientation	An individual's sexual preference i.e. heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual
Stakeholders	All subcontractors and service providers
Victimise	To make a victim of or punish unjustly.

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## Monitoring Arrangements

The policy and its associated procedures are reviewed quarterly by the Quality and Training Department.

The Quality and Training Department will:

Be proactive in promoting, recognising and celebrating diversity.

Develop practices to ensure the removal of prejudice and discrimination from all aspects of marketing, recruitment, training and learning.

Set targets, develop action plans, monitor and evaluate all company activity in relation to Equality and Diversity and the relevant legislation.

Assess the impact and currency of the policy.

Publish results annually.

Reports on the impact of this policy will be sent to the Senior Management Board and all relevant parties. The Senior Management Board will ratify the policy annually and have overall responsibility for creating an ethos and environment that reflects equality and diversity.

Copies of the latest Policies and Procedures can be found on the Company website.

## Review Date

Apr 2021

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