

## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

Shires Learning and Development is a progressive training organisation providing mandatory training to a range of organisations. We provide a range of First Aid qualifications through Qualifications Network.

At Shires Learning and Development we are committed to providing high quality training and qualifications, and to ensuring that equality of opportunity underpins all aspects of our work.

This policy relates to our commitment to equality and diversity in all aspects of our work.

It is important that all appeals/complaints are raised directly with Shires Dental Development.

Our equality and diversity policy statement is set out below.

### **Policy statement**

Shires Learning and Development recognises its responsibility to eliminate unlawful discrimination, challenge anti discriminatory practice, promote equality of opportunity and diversity in all aspects of its activities: as an employer and a provider of training and consultancy.

Shires Learning and Development is committed to promoting equal opportunity and to adopting proactive measures to address unlawful discrimination in the execution of its services.

Shires Learning and Development will ensure that equality of opportunity is prominent throughout our work; in making policy, managing the business, service delivery i.e. training, consultancy and assessment, in complying with current UK regulations, and in our employment practice.

Shires Learning and Development will provide a working environment that is free from any form of harassment, intimidation, victimisation or discrimination on the grounds of; nationality, race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, identity, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital status, gender reassignment, pregnancy, status or home responsibility, HIV or AIDS status, age, work status (part-time or fixed term), religious or political belief and socio-economic background. All individuals will be treated with dignity and respect and valued for who they are and for their contribution.

All Shires Learning and Development directors and staff are responsible for ensuring that the Equality and Diversity Policy is put into practice and that they have due regards to the need to:

- i) challenge all forms of discrimination.
- ii) eliminate unlawful discrimination.

iii) promote equality of opportunity.

Shires Learning and Development will review its Equality and Diversity Policy annually. The following opportunities are taken to invite feedback from staff, clients and students:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Initial Assessment
- Induction
- Assessment and Planning
- Learner Reviews
- Internal Verification
- External Verification
- Examinations
- Exit Interviews

This feedback will be included in the annual review of our policies.

### **Scope of Policy**

Shires Learning and Development will adhere to all relevant Statutory Legislation and the Code of Practice as per Appendix .1

In accordance with its commitment to equal opportunities, Shires Learning and Development will ensure that positive steps are taken to identify and combat all forms of discrimination so that no potential or existing members of staff, clients or students are discriminated against from any of the four main types of discrimination - Direct discrimination, Indirect discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation.

Direct discrimination is treating one person less favourably than others because of, for example their race, gender, sexuality or disability (a fuller list has been provided above).

Indirect discrimination is creating a condition, term of employment or requirement of service delivery which cannot be justified and which, in practice, prevents people from certain groups from receiving a service.

Shires Learning and Development will not tolerate any form of harassment when offensive or intimidating behaviour, or encouraging or allowing other people to do so, aims to humiliate, undermine or injure its target, causing any physical or mental harm.

Shires Learning and Development will not tolerate any form of Victimisation, which means treating somebody less favourably than others because they tried to make a discrimination complaint. Shires Learning and Development will ensure that we comply with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, to ensure that all relevant protection is afforded to all relevant parties. This legislation is

“An Act to protect individuals who make certain disclosures of information in the public interest; to allow such individuals to bring action in respect of victimisation; and for connected purposes”

Shires Learning and Development recognises that the implementation of the Equal Opportunity Policy is vital to its development and continuing success, and the Directors will take full and frank responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of the policy and code of practice.

We will ensure that all individuals and organisations which provide services for or on behalf of Shires Dental Development, are aware of and fully complying with our commitment to equality of opportunity.

Shires Learning and Development will investigate any alleged breach of this policy by Directors, staff, clients or students. If the allegation is upheld, action will be taken which could result in disciplinary proceedings against the Directors, staff, clients or students, as detailed in our Maladministration and Malpractice Policy.

### **Aims of the Policy**

- To comply with the general and specific duties of all UK Equal Opportunities Legislation.
- To fulfil our statutory obligation to raise awareness of the policy to all staff, clients and students.
- To ensure that all potential, new and existing staff, clients and students are informed of the policy and its implication. All students will be issued with a copy of the policy on registration, all job applicants will receive the policy when applying to work with us.
- To ensure that all students have access to a fair and well managed examination and assessment process, in accordance with both Shires Learning and Development and Qualifications Network guidelines for Maladministration and Malpractice.

### **Publishing Arrangements**

Shires Learning and Development will ensure the policy statement is displayed and distributed throughout our business, in a variety of media, including but not limited to, paper copies issued at registration, the policy will be published online on the company's website.

### **Organisation, Consultation and Participation**

As the employers, Shires Learning and Development Directors have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with Equal Opportunity Legislation.

The Directors shall carry out an annual review of the policies that are in use, ensuring the policies are up to date, reflect current good practice and legislation. We will consult as widely as possible with all stakeholders i.e. staff, training centres, students and any other relevant parties.

### **Equal Opportunities: Functional Responsibilities**

The Directors are responsible for:

- i. personnel related policies and strategies.
- ii. developing and delivering a programme of (or arranging delivery of) staff development in all aspects of diversity and equality of opportunity matters.
- iii. advising and supporting staff to identify and disseminate good equal opportunity practice, particularly in relation to equal treatment in all aspects of the staff and client and student experience.
- iv. ensuring that all HR policies and procedures meet legal and ethical standards in relation to equal opportunity.
- v. advising staff on procedures in relation to the Shires Learning and Development Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **Making an Equal Opportunities Complaint**

An employee or service user who feels they have not been fairly treated within the scope of this policy should raise the matter through Shires Dental Development's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Dealing with discrimination and harassment as an Training Provider**

As a Training Provider Shires Learning and Development complies with anti-discrimination and human rights legislation and promotes the wellbeing of candidates. Shires Learning and Development actively seek to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harassment – whether towards candidates or staff. We will use the following model for challenging discrimination:

- Recognising individualism and value difference.
- Breaking down stereotypes.
- Challenging discrimination.
- Role modelling appropriate behaviour.

In general, this is dealt with through our own disciplinary policy, but in all circumstances the safety, well-being and support needs of the victim is our first priority.

Shires Learning and Development will comply with its legal responsibility to make a written record of any racist incident which takes place on our premises or any satellite office.

Certain racist incidents may also be criminal offences in England and Wales under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. These include:

- i) Racially aggravated assaults, including common assault, actual bodily harm, grievous bodily harm and wounding.
- ii) Racially aggravated criminal damage, including racist graffiti, damage to property and arson (lighting fires).
- iii) Racially aggravated public order/harassment, including engaging in behaviour which causes (or is likely to cause) harassment, distress or fear of violence.

The police not Shires Learning and Development are responsible for investigating and

dealing with any racist incidents where criminal offences may have been committed. All racist incidents of this kind will be reported to the police as soon as possible.

Shires Learning and Development will also report the incident to the police if asked to do so by the victim or their parent.

In addition to the general principles for dealing with discrimination or harassment, Shires Learning and Development will adhere to the specific rules which exist for dealing with sexual harassment and discrimination. If the perpetrator is an employee of Shires Learning and Development or other professional in a position of authority, then this will normally be either a criminal matter (in which case it should be referred to the police) or a disciplinary offence under Shires Dental Development's Disciplinary Procedure.

## **APPENDIX 1**

The relevant Acts of Parliament relating to equal opportunities policy are:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- The Public Order Act 1986.
- Employment Act 1989.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- Part Time Worker Regulations 2000.
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004.
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006.
- Equality Act 2010

In addition, Shires Learning and Development will comply with the following codes of practice relating to equal opportunities; including guidance available from:

- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Disability Rights Commission.
- ACAS : Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service.
- Equality Act Codes of Practise

The Equality Act Codes of Practise can be found at: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

The full details of the Equality Act 2010 can be found at: [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

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