

Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

Fairness, inclusion and non-discrimination

Policy owner	Eleanor McInerney, Compliance and Candidate Lead
Policy date	1 May 2026
Next review date	1 September 2026
Version	2026.1

1. Our commitment

Certus Education wants a working environment in which people are treated fairly, respected and given genuine opportunity. We will promote diversity across our workforce, candidate community and recruitment activity and will not unlawfully discriminate in the services we provide or the decisions we make.

- Recruitment and selection decisions will be based on relevant skills, experience, qualifications, suitability and ability to perform the role.
- Job advertising and sourcing methods will be reviewed to avoid unnecessary barriers or exclusion.
- Staff are expected to understand and follow this policy and to challenge inappropriate behaviour.
- Training and awareness will be promoted so that equal opportunity is embedded in day-to-day practice.

2. Protected characteristics and discrimination

Certus Education will not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of the protected characteristics recognised by the Equality Act 2010: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. We will also not unlawfully discriminate because of trade union membership or non-membership.

2.1 Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic, including where the characteristic is assumed or arises through association with another person.

2.2 Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can arise where a provision, criterion or practice applies to everyone but puts people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, unless the approach can be objectively justified.

- Certus Education will not knowingly accept discriminatory client instructions.
- Where an occupational requirement or other lawful exception is relied upon, appropriate evidence and written justification may be requested before a vacancy is progressed.
- Recruitment decisions will be made consistently and on the basis of relevant evidence.

3. Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Sexual harassment is included.

- Derogatory comments, jokes, slurs or written communications.
- Unwanted sexual attention, advances or conduct.
- Offensive images, gestures, cartoons or other visual material.
- Unwanted physical contact or other inappropriate behaviour.
- Threats, pressure or retaliation connected with sexual conduct or complaints.
- Any retaliatory treatment because a person has raised or supported a concern.

4. Victimisation

Certus Education will not tolerate unfavourable treatment because someone has made, intends to make, or has supported a complaint or other protected act relating to discrimination.

5. Disability and reasonable adjustments

We will consider reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, workers and employees where required. Recruitment tests, assessments and processes should be relevant to the role and should not create avoidable barriers.

6. Age, part-time work and family status

Age-related decisions must be objectively justified where the law permits them. Part-time and other non-standard workers will be treated fairly and will not be disadvantaged unlawfully because of their working pattern.

7. Gender reassignment

Certus Education will treat people undergoing, proposing to undergo or having undergone gender reassignment with dignity and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

8. Recruitment of ex-offenders

Where criminal record information is relevant to a role, Certus Education will consider it lawfully, proportionately and in line with applicable safeguarding and recruitment requirements. A conviction will not automatically be treated as proof that a person is unsuitable.

9. Raising concerns, complaints and monitoring

Anyone who believes this policy has been breached should raise the concern promptly through their usual Certus Education contact or the appropriate internal complaint or grievance route. Complaints will be investigated fairly and confidentially where possible. Certus Education will monitor recruitment and workplace practices to identify and address patterns of unfair treatment.

Document control

Item	Detail
Policy date	1 May 2026
Review date	1 September 2026