



LIFTING THE PRESSURES  
OF LEARNING

# Rocksteady Training Ltd

## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

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## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

All references are to Rocksteady Training Ltd hereafter referred to as Rocksteady Training

### **1. Introduction**

Rocksteady Training operates – and will strive to operate – fair and equitable methods and procedures in order to ensure that its employees and students are treated fairly and are not subject to unfair discrimination. It is important that this policy of equal opportunities in employment and training is accepted and fully understood by all management, staff and students, in order to ensure that all employees, students and applicants for vacancies and training within Rocksteady Training are treated equally, regardless of their religious or political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, race, creed, colour, ethnic or national origin. It is equally important that awareness of this policy is promoted as a matter of course.

Rocksteady Training fully supports the need for systematic and objective appraisal of its practices to ensure that the Policy of Equal Opportunities and its associated procedures are rigorously applied, within the objective of applying equal opportunities criteria to all its services. Where necessary, positive action will be taken in order to achieve the objective.

### **2. Implementation of the Policy**

The policy will be applied and monitored in accordance with the appropriate Codes of Practice; the overview being the responsibility of the Equal Opportunities Officer/Manager (Peter Townsend), who will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the policy are observed within the functions and services under his/her management. Rocksteady Training's intention to ensure that sufficient ongoing education and training is provided for its management, staff and students in order to ensure that discrimination is avoided in compliance with legislation.

The Equal Opportunities Officer/Manager will assist and offer the appropriate advice on all relevant aspects of training where necessary for management, staff and students.

### **3. Equal Opportunities Legislation**

Equal Opportunities and Discrimination (Equality Act 2010):

The Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and replaces all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales – namely the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, The Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Employment Equality Regulations 2003 (religions and belief and sexual orientation).

The Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In valuing diversity Rocksteady Training is committed to go beyond the legal minimum regarding equality.

The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and strengthens and replaces most previous equality legislation. The following legislation is still relevant:

- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Work and Families Act 2006.
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).

## **4. Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **a) Training and Development Support**

Rocksteady Training will;

- Make all staff aware of the responsibilities for implementing the company's Policy of Equal Opportunity.
- Provide training for managers/staff/assessors/internal verifiers in Equal Opportunities issues.
- Ensure that Management Training and Development is equally available to male and female staff.
- Endeavour to ensure that provision is made to train, update skills and impart information concerning new developments and technology for staff commencing or returning to work following maternity leave and/or domestic breaks.
- Arrange, wherever possible, for staff working hours to facilitate domestic responsibilities.
- Provide access to counselling by trained counsellors for all staff via an appropriate occupational health unit if necessary.
- To endeavour to provide career guidance and development to all its employees and students.

### **b) Working/Training Environment**

Rocksteady Training will;

- Seek to create an environment, in which all employees and students feel comfortable regardless of race, gender, language, disability, age or sexual orientation.
- Endeavour to provide an environment that actively expresses the Equal Opportunity ethos, by displaying appropriate materials.
- Seek to provide access for all employees and students by providing adequate toilet facilities, lifts, ramps and other relevant equipment to enable people to participate fully, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- Seek to provide flexible working employment practices, such as Job Share Schemes, Career Break and Sabbaticals.

### **c) Managing Diversity within Rocksteady Training**

Managing equality of opportunity within Rocksteady Training will mean;

- Ensuring all employees and students are treated fairly and given equal opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- Ensuring that employment and training progression and promotion is unhindered by prejudice and stereotypical views.
- The basic concept of diversity accepts that the workforce and Training Programmes contain a diverse section of the population - Diversity consists of the visible and non-visible, whether in age, gender, ethnicity or background.

#### **d) Materials and Publicity**

Rocksteady Training will;

- Ensure that materials originating from the company are non discriminatory in content and reflect good equal opportunity practices.
- Ensure that all advertisements for vacancies and training programmes reflect Rocksteady Training's stance on Equal Opportunities and provide a statement that seeks to reflect that.

#### **e) Harassment- Including all forms of bullying and victimisation**

- Rocksteady Training deplores all forms of harassment and will seek to establish a working and training environment, where harmonious, respectful and dignified working relationship exists between all management, employees and students.
- Rocksteady Training may take disciplinary action against any member of staff/assessor/internal verifier found to be behaving in a manner that constitutes harassment or discrimination on grounds of gender, race, age, language, disability or sexual orientation in contravention of the company's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- An employee may also be liable to criminal proceedings if it is proven that they have intentionally harassed another individual under The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994, which received Royal Assent on the 3rd November 1994.

#### **f) Recruitment and Selection**

- Recruitment selection procedures and processes within Rocksteady Training are regularly reviewed to ensure that no group is put at a disadvantage either directly or indirectly. To assist in the process a monitoring system is maintained with regard to ethnic origin, sex, disability etc, of all those applying for, short listed for, and appointed to a position within Rocksteady Training, be it for employment or for access of training programmes.
- Training and vacancy requirements will be continuously reviewed in order to ensure that they do not discriminate directly or indirectly against the employment of training of any particular group.
- The policy for promoting equality of opportunity in the recruitment and selection process is to be contained in a separate Code of Practice, relating to recruitment and selection procedures.
- Rocksteady Training will ensure that those staff in interviewing and selection is provided with specific training.

- All training programme opportunities and employment vacancies shall be advertised in a way which positively encourages application from under-represented groups, and ensures that the maximum numbers of people from the widest range of backgrounds are able to respond by avoiding all jargon and utilising appropriate publicity networks.

### **g) Provisions for Domestic Responsibilities**

Rocksteady Training will;

- Provide employees who have the responsibility as the prime carer with a minimum of five working days, paid leave at the time of the birth of the child.
- At the discretion of the co-ordinator, provide employees with special leave arrangements for domestic responsibilities.

### **h) Disability Equality**

- Discrimination against people with disabilities may arise from prejudice. Rocksteady Training is totally opposed to discrimination on the grounds of disability, whether such discrimination is intentional or through ignorance.
- Rocksteady Training is committed to combating all forms of discrimination against people with disabilities. Applications for employment and training programme opportunities from disabled people are welcome and will be fully and fairly considered having positive regard to their aptitude and abilities in relation to the requirements of the position being applied for.
- People with disabilities will be given equal opportunities for training and career development – including additional training where necessary.
- Rocksteady Training will seek to retain or redeploy existing staff who become disabled.
- Rocksteady Training will take steps to avoid negative attitudes towards people with disabilities among its workforce and training programmes, and will seek to hold training courses to this end.

### **i) Equality for all Sexualities**

- Rocksteady Training is committed to work to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of all sexual or gender identities. It aims to encourage change in individual behaviour and attitudes and ensure quality of opportunity for all sexualities or gender identities.
- Rocksteady Training will endeavour to create an environment all sexualities are free from harassment and feel confident of equal treatment and support if they choose to be open about their sexuality.
- Rocksteady Training recognizes that part of the problem of discrimination experienced by lesbian/gay/bisexual (etc) is that of invisibility, and is committed to addressing this both as an employer and service provider.
- Rocksteady Training defines the word partner to include same sex partner.

## **j) Race and Ethnicity Equality**

- Rocksteady Training accepts that structures, procedures and individual behaviour can be racist in effect, even if there was no deliberate intent to be racist, and will work positively for change in these areas.
- Rocksteady Training deplores the divisive and harmful effects of racism which subjects those from ethnic minority groups to negative attitudes and to treatment as inferiors, which stirs up racial hatred, and which denies equality of opportunity.
- Rocksteady Training will create a culture where the different backgrounds of people and their different styles of interaction add value to decision making processes and organizational objectives.
- Rocksteady Training as a service provider will ensure that all members of society have equal access to all services while at same time enabling them to maintain their own culture without prejudice and disadvantage.
- Rocksteady Training will regularly monitor the workforce and students on training, to establish whether people of different races are underrepresented using the wider community as base for comparison.

## **k) Age Equality**

- Age discrimination in employment, learning and re-training occurs as a result of prejudice, misconception and stereotyping which hinders proper consideration of an individual's talents, skills, abilities, potential and experience.
- Arbitrary age discrimination can affect everyone. It consistently disadvantages older workers, young people and women returns. It consistently favours individuals in the age group twenty five to thirty five. Decisions based on age are rarely justifiable, are frequently of poor quality and lead to the ineffective use of human resources.
- Dates of birth should be used only for monitoring purposes. Written statements to this effect should be made to gain the confidence of individuals and the commitment of staff making employment decisions on the behalf of Rocksteady Training.
- Age guidelines and age related criteria should not be used to exclude particular age groups.

## **l) Equality for HIV+ People and People Living with Aids**

- Rocksteady Training will ensure that equality of opportunity in employed posts and training programmes, is afforded to those who are HIV+ or living with AIDS. Their HIV or AIDS status will not be grounds for their dismissal from any post within Rocksteady Training, and Rocksteady Training will seek to retain employees and students who are infected by HIV or AIDS.
- Will not ask a person any question relating to their HIV status and will not test as part of the selection and recruitment process. Rocksteady Training has no absolute right of access of information about an individual's HIV status but will guarantee confidentiality and take steps to safeguard the well-being of staff at work, and students on training.

- HIV and AIDS will be treated as any other illness under the usual Sickness Absence Management Scheme.

### **m) Gender Equality**

- The Sex Discrimination Equal Pay Act makes discrimination unlawful on the basis of gender.
- The concentration of women in low paid jobs and the lack of access to training provision can arise from the barriers to career progression. Rocksteady Training is totally opposed to discrimination on the basis of sex and recognizes that social attitudes deprive women of opportunities to realise their full potential. The aim of this policy is to improve the opportunities available to women and include recognition of the skills and experience of women that have traditionally been under-valued.
- Rocksteady Training confirms that its employment and recruitment to training practices must be geared to the needs of both men and women.
- Rocksteady Training recognises that non-full-time staff often does not receive the same rights in the area of career development and promotion and that it is often a women, who may, have taken time to raise children. It is therefore the intention of Rocksteady Training's policy that part-time workers shall have the same rights and entitlement as full-time-staff, that where practicable job sharing will be acceptable.

### **n) Conditions of Service**

- Ensure that National and Local Conditions of Service, which in themselves discriminate against disadvantaged groups, are applied fairly to ALL employees. If any member of a disadvantaged group requests, Rocksteady Training will seek to resolve any problems concerning service conditions with appropriate trade unions.
- The Equal Pay Act of 1970, as amended by the Equal Pay Regulations 1983, provides for equal pay between men and women in the same employment by giving a women the right to equality in the terms of her contract of employment where she is employed on:-
  - Like work of that of a male colleague.
  - Work related as equivalent to that of a male colleague.
  - Work of equal value to that of a man.

Although the act is drafted with reference to women it can equally be relied upon by a man

### **o) Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.**

- All employees and students will have the recourse to Rocksteady Training's normal disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- In matters of discipline Rocksteady training will take account of any communications or comprehensive difficulties experienced by employees or students.
- All employees and students shall be liable to normal disciplinary procedures if they discriminate against any member of staff or student.



### **p) Equal Opportunity in Employment through Contracts**

The terms and conditions of employment by contracts of their work or the composition of the arrangements for the promotion transfer or training of, or the other opportunities afforded to their workforce's other provisions to their suppliers, customers, sub-contractors and associated bodies of such contracts.

Rocksteady Training will;

- Review the position on equal opportunities through contractors.
- Distribute Information on Equal Opportunity Policies to contractors.
- Monitor, review and make any necessary adjustments to policy detail in accordance with the contracting agencies.

### **q) Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Rocksteady Training will consult fully with employee and candidate representatives and recognize representatives, where applicable, to ensure that its policies and practices reflect the true needs of groups which experience discrimination and disadvantage. It recognizes that an equal opportunities policy on its own is insufficient to ensure real equality of opportunity.
- To achieve it aims, Rocksteady Training will monitor, evaluate, train and review, in order to take positive action to make the policy fully effective.
- Rocksteady Training recognizes that proper assessment of the effectiveness of this policy will only be achieved by regular review and analysis. In consultation with the recognized representatives, training agencies, the NTO and other providers, Rocksteady Training will accordingly devise systems of monitoring that facilitate effective analysis of employment and training decisions.

### **r) Commitment to the Policy**

- This policy applies to all persons employed or contracted to Rocksteady Training, for the provision of training, particularly those who have responsibility for employment and recruitment decisions about other people.
- All service conditions will be reviewed in consultation with appropriate groups, and Trade Unions, where applicable, to ensure that they adequately provide for the needs of employees and candidates in the groups outlined in the policy.
- Rocksteady Training will take seriously and deal with all complaints of discrimination. Anyone who makes a complaint or who gives evidence, will not be victimized, treated less favourably than other employees or students or otherwise treated as if they are over sensitive about discrimination.
- Rocksteady Training will work with management, staff, employees and contractors, to seek representation from each group, to establish officer responsibility for Equal Opportunities issues.

This policy applies to each and every person employed within Rocksteady Training, and to students training, whether full-time, part-time, temporary or relief. The Equal Opportunities Officer will be happy to offer advice, information and support in dealing with any issues relating to this policy.

## **5. Document Policy Review.**

It is proposed that this policy should be reviewed on a regular basis. It will be the responsibility of the Co-ordinator, with support from the group representatives, to agree which elements of the policy will take priority and to set the recommendations for changes. It is the responsibility of the Equal Opportunities Officer to report any future changes in the Equal Opportunities Legislation to Management, Employees, Students and Contractors.

### **ROCKSTEADY TRAINING LTD**



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