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**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

**If you would like a copy of this policy in large print or another format please contact Everyday Lessons.**

**Policy Statement**

Everyday Lessons is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices and activities and aims to establish an inclusive culture free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity, courtesy and respect.

Everyday Lessons will support and develop staff and learners, and is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality and to fostering good relations between different groups.

This policy builds upon the foundation of equality legislation and anti-discrimination guidance and strives to use these to ensure that Everyday Lessons exemplifies best practice.

Everyday Lessons values diversity and recognises that we are greatly enhanced by the disparate range of backgrounds, experiences, views, beliefs and cultures represented within its staff and learner populations. Everyday Lessons aims to embrace diversity in all of its activities and proudly acknowledges that variety and difference are intrinsic to the wellbeing and future development of our business.

This Equality and Diversity policy underpins our business and is integral to the success of the Everyday Lessons both as a Training Provider and as an employer.

The policy applies to all staff employed on a full time or part-time basis, to all staff on permanent or temporary contracts, to agency staff, to visitors undertaking duties in the name of the Everyday Lessons and to sub-contractors undertaking work on behalf of Everyday Lessons. Equally, it applies to all learners and all applicants for either employment or training with Everyday Lessons.

**Legislative Background**

Under Equality legislation it is unlawful to:

* Discriminate directly against anyone and treat him/her less favourably than others on the grounds of the protected characteristics of: age (unless this can be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This also includes discrimination based on perception of the person e.g. a belief that someone is gay or a belief that someone is disabled even if this is not actually true.
* Discriminate against someone for reasons relating to their association with a person on the grounds of the protected characteristics of race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, disability, gender reassignment, sex and e.g. discriminating against an employee/learner because they have a disabled dependant.
* Discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people with a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation) unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
* Subject someone to harassment for reasons relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This includes behaviour that an individual finds offensive on these grounds even if the behaviour is not directed at the individual. It also includes failure of an employer to take reasonable steps to protect an employee from persistent (3 occasions or more) third party harassment.
* Victimise someone because s/he has made, or intends to make, a complaint or allegation or has given or intends to give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination in line with the Equality Act.

**Objectives**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that in carrying out its activities Everyday Lessons will have due regard to:

* Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
* Advancing equality of opportunity, across all the activities within Everyday Lessons between different groups.
* Fostering good relations between people of a diverse background.

In the implementation of this policy the Everyday Lessons will aim:

* To develop and promote a culture of equality and diversity throughout Everyday Lessons.
* To develop and promote a culture of dignity, courtesy and respect.
* To support all staff and learners, including provision of relevant support relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.
* To work to prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination.
* To deal with all forms of discrimination consistently and effectively.
* To ensure that the Equality and Diversity policy influences and informs the culture of Everyday Lessons.

**Definitions**

* **Equal opportunities** refers to the elimination of unlawful and unfair direct and indirect discrimination of particular groups and promoting equal access, treatment and outcomes that take into account specific needs of individuals.
* **Diversity** - Diversity encompasses visible and non-visible individual differences that includes, but is not limited to, differences protected by anti-discrimination legislation. Appreciating diversity is about valuing differences and recognising

that everyone through their unique mixture of skills and experience has their own valuable contribution to make.

It is the aim of Everyday Lessons that individuals and groups within the organisation are not only treated on the basis of equality, but that their diverse contributions to the educational, social and cultural life of Everyday Lessons are recognised and developed.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

It is incumbent upon all members of Everyday Lessons to behave at all times with dignity, courtesy and respect and to act in a manner that does not unlawfully discriminate.

**Role of Managing Director**

* To encourage, foster and promote a culture of equality and diversity in Everyday Lessons.
* To provide leadership in the operation and implementation of the Equality and Diversity policy.
* To ensure that equality and diversity issues are considered as part of the business planning processes.
* To control the financial and budgetary resources required to implement this policy.
* To integrate equality and diversity considerations into corporate planning.
* To hold ultimate accountability for the Equality and Diversity policy.

**Role of Quality Development Manager**

* To advise on legal compliance and best practice in all matters relating to equality and diversity.
* To ensure consistency of this policy with other policies and initiatives, making recommendations and providing advice on implementation of the policy.
* To devise and recommend policies, procedures and action plans to ensure that all legislative requirements are met and best practice adopted.
* To support implementation of the policy.
* To collect and review data relevant to diversity and equality matters relating to learners or employees on a regular basis and recommend changes to policies and procedures as appropriate.
* To advise on the provision of appropriate training and awareness-raising in relation to all equal opportunities and diversity matters.
* To ensure that recruitment advertising, selection and appointment procedures, performance management processes and disciplinary grievance processes are fair and transparent and are consistently applied.
* To monitor employment equality data and to publish the findings of monitoring activity, as appropriate.
* To ensure that all members of staff receive the appropriate equality and diversity training.
* To investigate all matters of alleged discrimination, harassment and inappropriate behaviour promptly and thoroughly.
* To ensure that performance management processes, staff development opportunities and disciplinary and grievance processes are fairly and consistently applied to all staff.
* To treat all applications for flexible practices on a fair and equitable basis and to provide reasonable and objective reasons when such requests must be refused.
* To ensure that selection and admissions procedures, assessment processes, career development opportunities and disciplinary and complaints procedures are fairly and consistently applied to all learners.

**Role of all Staff**

* To actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy.
* To support the aims of Everyday Lessons Equality and Diversity policy.
* To undertake appropriate equality and diversity training.
* To provide appropriate equality and diversity awareness and training for all staff.

**Role of Learners**

* Actively to encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy.
* To support the aims of Everyday Lessons Equality and Diversity policy.
* To be aware of equality and diversity issues.

**Application of the Policy - Staff**

**Recruitment and Selection**

* Recruitment advertising will encourage applications from all sectors of the community reflecting Everyday Lessons commitment to equality and diversity.
* Recruitment advertising will appear in publications appropriate to the audience capable of producing the best candidates (subject to budget considerations).
* Job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements will be written on the basis of the essential and justifiable requirements of the position.
* Short listing, appointment and rejection decisions will be transparent and justifiable and will be supported by written comments.

**Grading and Promotion**

* All grading and promotions criteria and procedures will be free from prejudice and will be applied equitably and consistently.

**Staff Development**

* All staff will have equal access to induction, personal and career development opportunities and facilities.

**Performance Management**

* Probation and appraisal procedures will be clear and transparent and will be applied fairly across all staff.

**Discipline and Grievance**

* Disciplinary and grievance procedures will be applied fairly and transparently for all staff.
* Allegations of discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedures for staff.

**Applications of the Policy - Learners**

**Recruitment, Selection and Admission**

* All information contained in prospectuses, websites and other material used in the recruitment of learners will promote equality of opportunity and make reference to this policy.
* All staff involved in the recruitment, selection and admission of learners will have an awareness of equality and diversity.

**Assessment**

* There will be clear, consistent and transparent criteria for learner assessments and all assessments will take place on an equal opportunities basis.

**Career Planning and Participation**

* All learners will have access to career planning support and will be encouraged to participate fully in the educational, cultural and social life of Everyday Lessons.

**Discipline and Learner Complaints**

* Discipline and learner complaints procedures will be applied fairly and transparently for all learners;
* Allegations of harassment or discrimination will be dealt with swiftly.

**Training**

* Equality and diversity awareness raising and training will be mandatory for all staff. Information will be provided to all learners in order to raise awareness of equality and diversity and the contents of this policy.

**Monitoring**

* Statistics will be gathered to monitor equality across all aspects of Everyday Lessons processes and will be used to inform future practice.

**Confidentiality**

* Any information disclosed to Everyday Lesson in relation equality and diversity issues will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with legislative requirements.

**Breach of Policy**

* Contravention of the Equality and Diversity policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter and offenders will be dealt with under the Everyday Lessons Disciplinary policy for staff or the Learner Disciplinary Code.

**Revision**

* This policy will be revised when further provisions of the Equality Act 2010 are implemented.

**Sources of Additional Information**

* Equality Act 2010
* Human Rights Act 1998
* Equality & Human Rights Commission:
* <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>
* ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service):
* http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1461