

Equality and Diversity

Policy and Statement



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Responsibility for Review:	Sonya Daley with Designated Safeguarding Leads
Any Associated Documentation, for Reference:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment Policy• Safeguarding Policy• Equality, Diversity & Special Considerations Policy• Equality Development Plan.• Health & Safety• Vision and Values
	 Sonya Daley

1. General

1.1 Skills Construction Centre embraces diversity and will seek to promote the benefits of diversity in all of our business activities including Apprenticeship recruitment and training delivery in partnership with employers. We will seek to continually develop a business culture that reflects this belief and will widen the media in which we recruit to ensure as diverse an employee and candidate base as possible. We will support our partners and stakeholders to meet their own diversity targets.

1.2 We are committed to diversity and will promote diversity for all employees, learners and apprentices and adhere to this policy at all times. We will review on an on-going basis all aspects of recruitment to avoid unlawful or undesirable discrimination and will treat everyone equally, irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, age, disability, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, political beliefs or membership or non-membership of a Trade Union or spent convictions and places an obligation upon all staff to respect and act in accordance with the policy. We are committed to providing mandatory equal opportunities training for all paid and unpaid staff.

1.3 We will not discriminate unlawfully when deciding which applicant is submitted for a vacancy or Apprenticeship training programme or in any terms of employment or terms of engagement for temporary workers. We will ensure that each learner or applicant is assessed purely in accordance with their qualifications and abilities to perform the relevant duties required by the particular vacancy or training course.

1.4 we will not accept instructions from partners, employers or stakeholders that indicate an intention to discriminate unlawfully.

2. Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination occurs in the following circumstances:

2.1. Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where one individual treats or would treat another individual less favourably on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership, age, disability, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, political beliefs (“the protected categories”).

It is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of a protected category:

- in provision of services;
- by refusing to provide any of its services;
- in the way it provides any of its services.

Direct discrimination would also occur if the organisation accepted and acted upon an opportunity from an employer which states that certain persons are unacceptable due to a protected category, unless one of the exceptions applies, for instance, the job demands a genuine occupational requirement or in the case of age, the discrimination can be lawfully justified.

2.2. Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs where an agency or employer applies a provision, criterion or practice, which disadvantages a minority group in the community on the basis of a protected category.

Indirect discrimination would also occur if the organisation accepted and acted upon an indirectly discriminatory instruction from an employer.

If the vacancy requires characteristics which amount to a genuine occupational requirement or the instruction is lawfully discriminatory due to a statutory exception or objective justification, Skills Construction Centre will not deal further with the vacancy unless the client provides written confirmation of such genuine occupational requirement, exception or justification.

2.3 Disabled Persons

2.3.1 Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination against a person occurs for instance on the ground of a disabled person's disability, he treats the disabled person less favourably than he treats or would treat a person not having that particular disability, whose relevant circumstances, including his abilities, are the same as, or not materially different from, those of the disabled person. This type of direct discrimination can never be justified.

2.3.2 Duty to make reasonable adjustments and to provide auxiliary aids and services

This is a similar protection to indirect discrimination in the other protected categories.

Where a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of an employer, or any physical feature of the employer's premises, places a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled, it will be the duty of an employer to take such steps as are reasonable, in all the circumstances of the case, to remove the provision, criterion, practice or physical feature.

Organisations must take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids or services if this would make it easier for the disabled person to use their services. For instance, the use of audiotape, digital equipment or provision of a sign language interpreter.

Skills Construction Centre will not discriminate against a disabled person on the grounds of disability

- in the arrangements (application form, interview, venue or arrangements for selection)
- in the terms through which Apprenticeship, Training Programme, employment or engagement of temporary workers is offered
- by refusing to offer, or deliberately not offering the disabled person an opportunity for reasons connected with their disability
- by subjecting him or her to any other detriment

Skills Construction Centre will make career and learning opportunities accessible to all, and every practical effort will be made to provide for the needs of staff, learners and applicants. Wherever it is possible, we will make reasonable adjustments to training spaces in order to provide and improve means of access for disabled employees and learners. We will liaise with employers to provide equality of access on site where this is practicable and reasonable.

3. Age Discrimination

Skills Construction Centre will not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any person on the grounds of their age. We will encourage partners not to include any age criteria in job specifications unless this is governed by funding or legislation. We are committed to recruiting and retaining staff whose skills, experience, and attitude are suitable for the requirements of the various positions regardless of age. We will request age as part of our recruitment process, but this information is purely for compilation of personal data, which the company holds as part of its equal opportunities duties and monitoring process.

4. Part-time Workers

This Diversity Policy also covers the treatment of those employees and workers who work on a part-time basis, Skills Construction Centre recognises that part time employees are treated on the same terms, with no detriment, as full-time employee (pro-rata) in matters such as rates of pay, holiday entitlement, parental leave, access to pension scheme and training and redundancy situations.

5 Harassment Policy

5.1 Skills Construction Centre is committed to providing a work environment free from unlawful harassment on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, age, disability, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, political beliefs or any other basis protected by legislation is unlawful and will not be tolerated by Skills Construction Centre

5.2 This policy prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee or worker of Skills Construction Centre as defined in legislation.

5.6 Any employee(s) who Skills Construction Centre finds to be responsible for unlawful harassment will be subject to the disciplinary procedure and any sanction may include termination.

6. Gender Reassignment Policy

6.1 Skills Construction Centre recognises that any employee or worker may wish to change their gender during the course of their employment with the Company.

6.2 Skills Construction Centre will support any employee or worker through the reassignment provided that full medical counselling has been undertaken and support agreed.

6.3 Skills Construction Centre will make every effort to try to protect an employee or worker who has undergone, is undergoing or intends to undergo gender reassignment, from discrimination or harassment within the workplace.

6.4 Where an employee is engaged in work where the gender change imposes genuine problems Skills Construction Centre will make every effort to reassign the employee or worker to an alternative role in the Company, if so desired by the employee.

6.5 Any employee or worker suffering discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment should make recourse to the Company's grievance procedure.

7. Complaints and Monitoring Procedures

7.1 Skills Construction Centre has procedures in place for monitoring compliance with this policy and for dealing with complaints of discrimination.

7.2 Any discrimination complaint will be investigated fully, and all parties informed fully of the result within agreed timeframes and formats.

Policy Statement

1. Purpose and Scope

This Policy Statement sits alongside our full Equality and Diversity Policy and describes how this will be incorporated into the operational activities of Skills Construction Centre. This includes the engagement, recruitment, training, placement, and progression of all learners including Apprentices.

This policy also applies to all who work and learn through Skills Construction Centre, whether on-site or in the Centre, including employees, employers, trainees, apprentices, school pupils, partners, and wider stakeholders.

Skills Construction Centre is committed to developing, maintaining, and supporting a culture of equality and diversity in employment, and teaching and learning throughout the organisation. Our ethos is to create an environment where all staff and learners are treated equitably, with respect and dignity in a culture that respects, values, and reflects the social and cultural diversity of staff, learners, and our community. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all “protected characteristics” and any other criteria that may be discriminated against including political beliefs, Trade Union membership and spent convictions.

2. Protected Characteristics

- Age
- Gender
- Disability/ learning Difficulty
- Gender Identity / reassignment
- Marriage/ Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy/ Maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Socio-economic background

We will ensure that all our policies, procedures and operational practices comply with current and changing legislation and enhance workplace and learning experiences and will improve Learner and Apprentice experiences through implementing appropriate procedures which promote continued good practice, and through ongoing equality & diversity monitoring and action planning.

3. Aims

- To promote and advance equality of opportunity in work and learning in line with UK legislation and Centre ethos
- To create a positive environment and culture that does not disadvantage applicants, employees and /or learners whether unintentionally or intentionally.
- To promote and support diversity including actively promoting positive attitudes and behaviours, raising understanding and awareness, and supporting good relationships between all groups.
- To promote inclusion and wider participation from those groups on underrepresented in the Construction sector including on Apprenticeship programmes
- To actively discourage discrimination, bullying or harassment for all by challenging discrimination and celebrating diversity
- To investigate any allegations of discrimination fully, sensitively, and appropriately.
- To review and continually monitor recruitment, teaching and learning, resources, and delivery methods to ensure they are free from discrimination and reflect diverse and different needs and learning styles
- To ensure resources, materials and learning environments are accessible where possible and to promote inclusivity amongst Trainees. Apprentices and permanent employees

4. Roles & Responsibilities

1. Skills Construction Centre Directors have overall responsibility for this policy and for ensuring that the company complies with its legal duty under equality legislation as an employer and as a Training Provider.
2. Directors and Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring that the policies, procedures, and development plans of the organisation reflect our commitment to equality & diversity and that they are reviewed on an annual basis in line with our Equality Development Plan and annual monitoring processes.
3. All staff are responsible for promoting equality & diversity in their activities on behalf of the Centre in addition to personally contributing to a diverse and inclusive working and learning environment.
4. All staff are responsible for challenging attitudes and behaviours which do not reflect the core values of the organisation whether in-Centre or out on-site.

5. Promotion and Engagement

We will further promote this policy with staff, employers, learners, and Apprentices by including Equality & Diversity as part of our contracting, recruitment, and induction, with mandatory annual training and ongoing CPD for all staff which updates the guidelines, policies, and procedures and outlines the procedures for dealing with any concerns or breaches.

We request details on personal characteristics at recruitment stage to make any reasonable adjustments for staff and learners and monitor the Equal Opportunity data collected. We set KPI's for inclusion and pro-actively source funds for focused inclusive and widening participation projects leading to progression pathways to Apprenticeships and full employment.

Equality and Diversity is embedded into every planning process within the company, including staff, learner and apprentice recruitment, all promotional and marketing activity, programme design, IAG and teaching resources, learner support procedures and outreach activities.

All Learners and apprentices are provided with access to, and information on, our equality & diversity related policies, expectations of behavior within Centre and on-site and how appropriate support and guidance can be accessed. This is included in our induction procedures and throughout the learning journey.

Specifically, related policies/ documents are as follows:

- Recruitment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Special Considerations Policy
- Equality Development Plan.