

Policy Statement

The Apprentice and Training Partnership (“The ATP”) recognises its responsibility to promote equality of opportunity within a context of diversity and Inclusion. We value the diversity of all individuals who study or work with us, and the contribution they make to the success of the organisation. This policy sets out how the organisation will, in the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff, advance equality of opportunity regardless of:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Faith, religion and belief

The ATP will work positively to celebrate diversity and advance equality of opportunity. We ensure that any external organisations we work with are made aware of, encouraged and supported to adhere to the core Equality and Diversity commitments of the organisation.

We recognise that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the organisation and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the organisation to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on the grounds of the above protected characteristics.

This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or codes of practice issues by the Equality and Human Rights commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

Aim

- To ensure potential and current staff, learners and visitors do not experience discrimination.
- To create a positive and inclusive work and study environment for all learners and staff where all members feel valued and respected.
- To raise awareness with regards to discrimination and ensure that all learners, staff, stakeholders and service users are aware of their responsibilities under the current equality legislation.
- To support the recruitment, retention, progression and personal and professional development of all our staff and learners.
- To keep updated on equality legislation.

We will judge our success on:

- The achievement of our annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan.
- Our progress in improving participation, retention, achievement and success of learners.

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- Our progress in ensuring a positive experience and environment for all our learners measured through perception surveys.
- The thoughts and perceptions of our employees measured by the results of staff and learner perception surveys and outcomes of employee consultation and communication events and systems.
- Our progress in recruiting a diverse workforce.
- Our progress in addressing learner recruitment.

Our Commitment

The ATP is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation, where all members of our community are treated with respect and dignity. We aim to create a culture of diversity within our organisation, providing a dynamic working and learning environment, where all members are valued for their contribution and individuality.

The ATP is committed to working in an inclusive way with all of the communities in which we are geographically located and developing a workforce and learning community that reflects Greater Manchester's and the UK's rich diversity and vibrancy.

We intend to promote equality and prevent discrimination through our roles as:

- An Independent Learning Provider.
- An employer.
- A business partner.

We will follow best practice in all equality areas and work to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Eliminate bullying and harassment.
- Promote good relations between different groups.
- Celebrate what we have in common and capitalise on our diversity.
- Recognise and take account of people's differences.
- Ensure training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- Review employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

The ATP recognises that equality issues are complex and straddle more than just those equality strands that protect the aforementioned protected groups. Life circumstances and opportunities also affect the world at large and we need to take account of issues such as cultural and economic background, access to education, physical and social environment, and health.

Meeting our commitment

To ensure these commitments are met, the ATP will:

- Aim to mainstream equality across all aspects of our work, supported by the Board and Senior Management who will take an active role in promoting and embedding equality and diversity in all aspects of our work.
- Comply with the spirit and the letter of equalities legislation.
- Carry out Equality Analysis and assess new and existing strategies, policies, practices, procedures, programmes, projects, services and decisions.
- Monitor and review our work in order to be alerted to any unfairness.
- Learn from complaints.
- Encourage and support the development of innovative projects that promote equality of opportunity.
- Work with the local community to ensure that their needs are taken into account in planning services.
- Share good practice.
- Treat everyone fairly and with respect.
- Recruit, train, develop and support staff fairly.
- Foster a culture of learning and of sharing good practice.
- Welcome different perspectives, skills and backgrounds.

Our Learners

The ATP will provide an effective learning and teaching environment for our learners, whatever the background. In order to do this we will:

- Ensure learner policies are fit-for-purpose and review them regularly.
- Act robustly to challenge and eliminate prejudice, bullying or harassment.
- Support our learners' feedback as an empowering tool for change.
- Regularly review our learner monitoring figures and take action where appropriate.
- Use a variety of different methods to attract and retain learners from all backgrounds.
- Comply with all equalities related legislation.
- Make reasonable adjustments for learners with particular needs.
- Encourage open, honest discussion about issues which support learners' educational attainment and a learning culture.
- Ensuring that course materials, resources and displays celebrate cultural diversity and include positive images of different social and racial groups
- Promoting understanding, empathy and respect for all cultures
- Encouraging tolerant discussion of a range of political beliefs and religious conviction when appropriate
- Respecting all cultures and where possible or relevant allowing access to quiet areas for those with particular religious needs.
- Working with a range of external groups of all religions, beliefs and cultures, ensuring learners and other users of our services aware of behaviour which amount to discrimination, harassment or victimisation and that such behaviour may result in disciplinary action and/or amount to a criminal offence.
- Striving to challenge racism and stereotyping in all its forms as well as negative attitudes or remarks, seeking advice appropriately from organisations representing under-represented groups in the community such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Responding sensitively whenever learners raise concerns on equality and Inclusion in the workplace
- Ensuring that all learners know the procedure for making a complaint and provide advice on how to follow the correct Complaints Procedure.

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Our Workforce

The ATP will deliver an innovative, effective service. This is not possible without investment in our employees. To recruit and retain a motivated and professional workforce which reflects the local diversity and beyond, we will:

- Ensure our human resources policies are fit-for-purpose and review them regularly.
- Act robustly to challenge and eliminate prejudice, bullying or harassment.
- Support recognised trade unions and staff forums.
- Regularly review our workforce monitoring figures and take action where appropriate.
- Use a variety of different methods to attract and retain staff from all equality backgrounds.
- Comply with all equalities related employment legislation.
- Make reasonable adjustments for staff with particular needs.
- Train staff in equality and diversity issues to enable them to carry out their jobs in a way that reflects the ethos of the organisation.
- Encourage open, honest discussion about issues which support personal development and a learning culture.
- Continue to develop a workforce that is reflective of the diverse mix of the area.
- monitoring data on ethnicity, gender, age, and disability in relation to applications for jobs, appointments and the staff profile
- Identifying trends so that any unreasonable imbalances can be addressed appropriately
- monitoring the attendance of staff at professional development and training ensuring teaching staff complete a minimum of PTTLS qualification and encourage self-reflection, good practice
- Conducting annual self-assessment to establish progress in equality and diversity.
- Staff will be encouraged to consult the **EHRC website** <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com> on a regular basis and to make themselves aware of the information and guidance there as and when needed. Information in relation to equality and diversity should be discussed at staff training, and be part of the staff induction

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board:

Has overall responsibility for this policy and ultimate accountability for compliance with the organisation's equality obligations. They are responsible for:

- The policy and ensuring all its procedures are followed.
- Promoting commitment to equality.
- Adequate resources are made available for implementation of this policy and its procedures.
- The organisation's development plans foster a positive ethos with regards to diversity and the elimination of discrimination and that Strategic Plans includes a commitment to equality.
- Receive and respond to reports on recruitment, retention, achievement and success rates for learners from different backgrounds and to information regarding staff and Equality Analysis (EIAs).

The Management Team are responsible for:

- Taking the lead in creating a positive, inclusive environment in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity.
- Overall implementation of our equality commitments and for promoting equality.
- Ensuring that equality procedure is integral to the business planning processes.
- Assessing the impact of any current and future policies in relation to equality.
- Ensuring monitoring information is collected, analysed and regularly reported.

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- Ensuring that the procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff enshrine best practice in equal opportunities.
- Setting targets in the recruitment and promotion of staff based upon the analysis of monitoring information.
- Embedding equality and diversity into all Quality Assurance Mechanisms:
 - Programme/Framework reviews.
 - Feedback questionnaires.
 - Self-assessment reports.
 - Observations of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Implementing systems that deal with incidents of discrimination or harassment effectively.
- Setting targets on the recruitment, retention and achievement of learners based upon the analysis of the monitoring information.
- Monitor and report on the recruitment, retention, achievement and progress of different groups of learners.
- Gather the range of learner quantitative and qualitative information and share this information with relevant parties to ensure it is used effectively to improve equality.
- Gather local information that will help target recruitment of specific groups of learners to programmes.
- Consulting staff, learners, parents and employers on equality and diversity.
- Taking action against staff or learners who discriminate for any reason.
- Ensuring that all premises and facilities are accessible.
- Ensuring that the procedures for procurement are inclusive and open to all.

Delivery Team and Staff are responsible for:

- Consistently challenging and reporting any inappropriate language, behaviour or discrimination by learner, work placement providers, employers or other members of staff.
- Dealing with equality and diversity incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping.
- Promoting equality of opportunities, eliminating discrimination and fostering good relations.
- Becoming familiar with the organisations equality data and trends, knowing their contribution to the overarching targets and setting targets.
- Keeping up to date with our statutory duties on equality and taking up training and learning opportunities.
- Involving learners in all aspects of decision making.
- Ensuring those responsible for managing teaching and learning have schemes of work and teaching resources that demonstrate sensitivity to issues of equality.
- Promoting a positive working and learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or bullying and treat all individuals with dignity and respect.
- Introducing all learners to equality principles and opportunities during induction and initial assessment.
- Conducting EIAs.
- Reporting any incidents promptly.

Learners and employers have a proportionate responsibility for:

- Understanding and acting in accordance with this policy.
- Complying with the organisations policies and regulations in respect of Equality and Diversity.
- Support staff in challenging and reporting discriminatory behaviour and language.
- Participating in any activity that celebrates and promotes Equality and Diversity.

Monitoring and reporting

The ATP deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, a monitoring system will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements:

The system will involve the routing collection and analysis of information on employees and learners.

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Learners:

- Information relating to all protected characteristics.
- Applications and conversion rates to programmes across any groups.
- Retention, achievement, attendance and success rates across all groups.
- The progression rates of all groups.
- Learner satisfaction feedback across all groups.
- Disciplinary action relating to all groups.
- Complaints by learners.
- Assessment appeals by all groups.

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Staff:

- Information relating to all protected characteristics.
- Applications for employment, appointments, training and promotion.
- Type of contract (permanent, temporary) by group.
- Training application and take up rates of all groups.
- Promotion rates of all groups.
- Grievances by group.
- The number of staff who leave employment by group.

This information will be used to:

- Monitor whether there are any differences in the way different groups are treated or in their experience.
- If there are any gaps in recruitment, attainment and success of different groups of learners/staff.
- Analyse and investigate the underlying reasons for any differences.
- Identify areas where specific action could be taken and ensure that it is taken.
- Highlight any unfairness, disadvantage or possible discrimination and take action where appropriate.
- Compare our data to local and national statistics in order to identify success and areas for improvement.
- Ensure facilities remain accessible and inclusive.

Training

The ATP acknowledges that this policy needs to be supported by a comprehensive programme of training. This involves all stakeholders (the Board, senior management team, staff, delivery team and learners), regardless of their role or their location. Some groups of learners and/or staff will need to receive additional and more specific forms of training than others depending on their roles and on the findings from the ATP's continuous monitoring of equality objectives.

Promoting equality and diversity will be a part of the induction process for all new staff and learners, and training events for all will be publicised and monitored as part of our quality review of staff and learner's development. Training will be provided for managers on this policy and the associated arrangements. All managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process will receive specialist training.

Complaints relating to equality

Staff and learners will be made aware of the complaints procedures via induction. Copies of this policy and the complaints procedure will be made available on our website, the learner's e-portfolios and in the staff handbook.

All complaints will be taken seriously and any member of staff or learners found guilty of unlawful discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including where appropriate, gross misconduct.

The ATP will seek to provide a supportive environment for staff, learners or other parties who make claims of discrimination or harassment through the appropriate procedure. Any complaints will be dealt with promptly and fairly.

For those who wish to make a formal complaint, full details of how to do this can be found in our Complaints Procedure.

All incidents and complaints of an equal opportunities nature, however informal, should be logged, anonymously if necessary, showing the nature of the complaint and any outcome. Such a record should be kept even if the individuals concerned did not wish to make the matter formal. The ATP will monitor the equality data of complainants, whenever possible and use this information to ensure that there are no discrepancies in the level or type of complaints from different equality groups.

Appendix 1

Definitions of Terms

Sexual Harassment

- unwelcome sexual remarks, such as jokes, innuendo, teasing and verbal abuse
- the display of pin-ups, pornographic pictures or sexually suggestive subject matter
- unwelcome remarks about a person's dress, appearance or marital status
- behaviour which condemns or ridicules a person because of their sexuality
- unwelcome physical contact or demands for sexual favours
- transmission of offensive materials or statements via electronic means or through the post

Racial Harassment

- racially derogatory remarks or racist jokes
- the display of racially offensive material or graffiti
- insulting behaviour, threats or physical assault
- deliberate isolation or non co-operation at work
- transmission of offensive materials or statements via electronic means or through the post

Age Discrimination

- ridiculing or demeaning behaviour towards people because of their age

Discrimination against disabled people

- harassment, undignified treatment, ridicule or exclusion of people because of their impairments, vulnerability, actual or perceived reduced independence

Religious Discrimination

- behaviour which fails to acknowledge the rights or needs of people with particular beliefs or practices

Bullying

- the intentional intimidation or belittling of someone through the misuse of power or position, which leaves them feeling hurt, upset, vulnerable or helpless

Victimisation

- less favourable treatment of an individual because, for example, that person has brought proceedings, given evidence, or complained about the behaviour of someone who has been harassing or discriminating against them

Inclusive Learning

- An inclusive learning culture is one which widens participation and raises achievement by removing barriers to learning. Inclusive learning is defined as the best match or fit between how learners learn best (learning styles), what they need and want to learn (goals), and the learning environment (physical resources, support, teaching methods).

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