



EMPOWERED EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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EmpowerEd Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Purpose and Principles

At EmpowerEd, we are committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse environment where everyone is treated fairly and with respect. This policy outlines our approach to promoting equality and diversity within the workplace and across all our interactions with students, parents, staff, visitors, customers, and suppliers. We recognize that a diverse workforce brings valuable perspectives and skills, and we aim to harness these benefits to create a supportive and empowering work environment.

Our commitment is to:

- Eliminate discrimination in all forms.
- Promote diversity and inclusion by valuing individual differences.
- Provide equal opportunities for all employees to succeed and grow.
- Ensure that our workforce reflects the diverse communities we serve, while fostering an environment where everyone can achieve their best.

This policy supports our efforts to comply with legal obligations and provides guidelines for fostering a workplace culture that embraces equality and diversity. By adhering to this policy, we ensure that no one is subject to unlawful discrimination and that the unique contributions of all individuals are valued.

2. Definitions

- **Equality:** Ensuring that individuals or groups are not treated unfairly or less favourably due to characteristics such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, or belief. Our goal is to protect all individuals from unfair treatment and promote equality of opportunity.
- **Diversity:** Embracing and recognizing individual differences, including but not limited to personal background, experience, and skills. We believe diversity strengthens our organisation by bringing fresh perspectives and creativity.

We are committed to providing a harassment-free, dignified, and respectful working environment for all employees. This includes addressing all forms of discrimination, as well as bullying and harassment, which are covered in our separate **Dignity at Work** policy.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All EmpowerEd staff, whether full-time, part-time, or on fixed-term contracts.
- Students, parents, customers, visitors, and suppliers.
- All recruitment, training, promotion, and employment decisions.

Our policy is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current legislation and best practices in equality and diversity management.

4. Legal Obligations

We are bound by the **Equality Act 2010**, which provides a legal framework to protect individuals from discrimination based on "protected characteristics." These include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, including colour, nationality, caste, and ethnic or national origins
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

Discrimination can occur both during and after employment, and it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment, employment, or service provision based on any of these protected characteristics. Additionally, we are required to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers for disabled individuals in accessing our services and facilities.

5. Types of Unlawful Discrimination

- **Direct Discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic. For example, refusing to promote someone based on their gender.
- **Indirect Discrimination:** Applying a policy or practice that disproportionately impacts individuals with a protected characteristic, without justification.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- **Associative Discrimination:** Discriminating against someone because they are associated with an individual who has a protected characteristic (e.g., caring for a disabled relative).
- **Perceptive Discrimination:** Discriminating based on a mistaken belief that someone possesses a protected characteristic.
- **Victimisation:** Treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

6. Implementation

EmpowerEd is dedicated to avoiding discrimination in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, training, promotions, pay, and discipline.

6.1 Recruitment and Selection

- Job descriptions and person specifications are based solely on the requirements necessary for effective performance.
- Candidates are evaluated objectively, with reasonable adjustments made for candidates with disabilities.
- Recruitment processes are designed to ensure fairness, including assessing potential indirect discriminatory effects.

6.2 Training and Development

- All employees have access to training and development opportunities, and decisions are made based on objective criteria.
- Performance appraisals will consider fair and inclusive practices, ensuring that all employees are given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

6.3 Meeting Individual Needs

- We offer flexibility to help staff balance work and home responsibilities, including accommodating care for children or relatives.
- EmpowerEd provides reasonable adjustments to support disabled employees and students, and we strive to accommodate religious observances such as prayer times and holidays.

7. Responsibilities

7.1 Employer Responsibilities

- Managers and decision-makers will receive training to understand equality and diversity issues and avoid discriminatory practices.
- All staff will receive training to understand their rights and responsibilities under this policy, including how to contribute to a work environment free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

7.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Every employee must uphold the principles of equality and diversity, contributing to a workplace free from discrimination and harassment.
- Employees who feel they have been treated unfairly or unlawfully discriminated against may use EmpowerEd's grievance procedures to file a complaint.
- Unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation is considered a serious disciplinary offence and may result in dismissal.

8. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be regularly monitored to ensure its effectiveness and updated as necessary in line with legal changes or best practice.
- Information collected for monitoring purposes will be handled in accordance with the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**.

By adhering to this policy, EmpowerEd ensures that everyone within the organisation is treated with fairness, dignity, and respect, creating a positive and inclusive environment for all.

Appendix 1

It is impossible to define all of the characteristics which make people different and are hence covered by this policy. Some are protected by legislation whilst others are not.

Examples of individual differences:

Social Category	Informational	Value
Gender	Previous jobs	Personality
Race	Career length	Politics
Disability	Upbringing	Work style
Religion or Belief	Education	Learning style
Sexual Orientation	Qualifications	
Age	Outside interests	
Marital Status	Trade Union activity	
Caring responsibilities	Health	
Working pattern		
Culture		
Caste		
Ethnicity		
Nationality		
Colour		
Language		
Accent		
Weight		
Height		
Appearance		
Social class		