



# Education Support

S E R V I C E S



## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

2023-24

**Please Note:** A formal, full review of this document will take place on a 3-yearly basis. However, in the interim, the document will be updated as necessary to remain current with any statutory legislation and/or significant Government guidance updates on the subject.



## DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT TITLE: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY 2023-24  
AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS: DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING & PREVENT LEAD  
SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
TEACHING LEARNING MENTORS  
LEARNERS  
EDITOR: CEO  
CHANGE AUTHORITY: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Name:** Frances Deeley

**Signature:** 

**Date:** 13.07.2023

**Designation:** Chief Executive Officer

**Review Date:** July 2026

## CHANGE MECHANISM

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## 1. Introduction and aims

ESS Education & Support Services (ESS) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

ESS's aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and to create and maintain an inclusive organisation which is supportive of diversity; where all employees, learners and customers can learn, work, and reach their full potential, whilst feeling safe and secure to do so. The objective of this policy is to outline ESS's approach to fulfilling this commitment and to make it clear to all parties what they may expect from ESS and equally what is expected of them.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

## 2. Policy Purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all those employed by ESS Education & Support, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage and civil partnership
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation
3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
  - pay and benefits
  - terms and conditions of employment
  - dealing with grievances and discipline
  - dismissal
  - redundancy

- leave for parents
  - requests for flexible working
  - selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities
4. To promote equality, diversity and inclusion best practice, by providing relevant training and learning opportunities, in which to discuss and embed knowledge and positive behaviours in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion principles and elements and how to challenge discrimination in all its forms. This includes:
- Unconscious Bias - what it is, how it works and how to challenge/counter adverse affects
  - Direct discrimination
  - Associative Discrimination
  - Indirect Discrimination and
  - Discrimination by Perception.

### 3. Commitments

ESS Education & Support Services commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff, learners and customers are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees, learners and customers about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff, learners and customers conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment and service delivery to learners and customers and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

ESS expect all learners and customers to also follow equality, diversion and inclusion best practice. Learners and customers can also be held liable for any acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their interactions with ESS staff or other learners and customers of ESS.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

The police will be contacted and invited to attend, in the event of any incident, requiring immediate police response.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

8. Ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed, to ensure that recruitment of staff is undertaken in line with equality, diversity and inclusion best practice.

## **4. Agreement to follow this policy**

ESS's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is fully supported by the senior management team.

## **5. ESS Education & Support Services disciplinary and grievance procedures**

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in ESS Education & Support Services' Staff Conduct and Discipline (C&D) Policy; Appeals, Concerns and Complaints Policy and the Student Disciplinary Policy. The Staff C&D Policy and Complaints Policy includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Use of ESS's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

## 6. Associated Policies

- Staff Conduct and Discipline Policy
- Appeals, Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy