

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

1. Introduction

Assist Knowledge Development is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee and associate to feel engaged, respected and able to carry out their work well.

The company - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed to oppose and avoid unlawful discrimination of customers, suppliers or the public.

The company has a Safeguarding and Prevent Policy that can be viewed on the internal SharePoint site. The policy outlines our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our apprentices, customers and staff by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, bullying and radicalisation.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our apprentices, customers and staff so that they can learn and work in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

2. Guidelines

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- not unlawfully discriminate in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 any 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 and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, when dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, and requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

The company commits to:

- Promote and encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace as this is good practice and makes business sense. For example, through arranging employee training sessions, including clear statements on email signatures and SharePoint, highlighting during employee induction and referring to the policy regularly or when updates are made. The values held by the company are discussed when an employee joins the organisation and are reiterated regularly during meetings.
- 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 are recognised and valued.
 - This commitment includes ensuring managers and all other staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
 - Staff responsibilities include conducting themselves to help ensure the organisation provides equal opportunities in employment, and in order to prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.
 - All staff must 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.
- 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 company's work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the company's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

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.
- Create opportunities for the training, development, and progression of all staff to develop their full potential, utilise their capabilities to maximise the efficiency of the company.
- Staff decisions being based on merit (unless for reasons included in the Equality Act 2010).
- Review and amend employment policies and procedures, when necessary to reflect changes in the law and to ensure fairness.

- Monitor the workforce regarding age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability to encourage equality, diversity and inclusion, and meeting the requirements of the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
- Monitoring also includes 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.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management, and it has been communicated to staff.

Employees should draw the attention of their manager to suspected discriminatory acts or practices.

Use of the company's grievance and/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.

The company's Grievance and Disciplinary policies can be found on the internal SharePoint site.

3. Aims of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The company seeks to develop an organisational ethos whereby all customers, employees, associates and suppliers are valued equally; to create an environment free of discrimination; and, through the development of systems and procedures, to integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of the company's business.

4. Processes

Acceptance of customers onto courses

The company accepts customers for places on courses irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

The company's courses are delivered, and supporting materials are written, in English. However, where language difficulties arise from some course participants, the company will, where practicable, endeavour to offer extra support so that additional time is available for comprehension and absorption of the course concepts and techniques.

Accessibility of training materials

Training materials are reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with the Equality Act. The company endeavours to meet the special needs of individuals where this is reasonably practical.

Changes to course materials identified to make them acceptable and accessible to specific groups within society are incorporated during regular and routine course revisions.

Access to buildings

The company endeavours to use premises for the presentation of courses that comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Advertising, selection and recruitment

See Recruitment Policy

Promotion, transfer and training

The company takes measures to promote our values concerning equality, diversity and inclusion to employees. These include the following:

- Reference to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy when inducting a new member of staff and requiring them to confirm that they have read the policy and are committed to its aims.
- Reissue of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy every 12 months with a requirement for all staff to confirm that they have read the policy and are committed to its aims.
- Reference to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and the company values regarding these principles when conducting meetings with trainers and mentors.
- Advising all employees when the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is updated and requiring staff to confirm that they have read the policy and are committed to its aims.
- Ensure all managers and staff are aware of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, are familiar with the guidance and instruction contained within the policy and are able to identify any discriminatory acts and promote equal opportunity for all staff.

The staff responsible for selecting new employees, employees for training, or for transfer to other jobs, are instructed not to discriminate on gender, race, disability or sexual orientation.

The managers and directors responsible for promoting employees are instructed to ensure there is no unlawful, indirect discrimination during the promotion process.

5. Terms of Employment

All terms of employment, pay, benefits, etc are reviewed from time to time, in order to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation. Equal Opportunities principles are applied to processes in relation to discipline, performance, compensation, complaints, and grievances. In order to monitor compliance with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, and for no other purpose, a record is kept of employees', associates' and job applicants' gender, racial origin and disability.

6. Policy Provisions

Unless otherwise stated in an employee's contract of employment as contractually binding upon the employee, the provisions of this policy and procedure are not contractually binding upon the company.

7. Right to Terminate or Amend Policy

The company reserves the right to modify, suspend, change, or terminate this policy at any time, by providing such notice as may be required by applicable law.

8. Related Documentation

Code of Conduct policy

Grievance policy

Safeguarding and Prevent policy

Recruitment Policy

9. Review of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

This policy is reviewed in the following circumstances:

- As part of the regular review of AssistKD policies.
- If an event occurs that requires action to review the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- If there is a change in the UK regulations relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Review completion date	Reviewers
24 th September 2020	Debbie Paul, Karen Robinson
31 st August 2021	Debbie Paul, Karen Robinson
26 th August 2022	Debbie Paul, Karen Robinson

Next review date for this policy: 31st August 2024

Name: Debra Paul

Position: Managing Director

Date: 26th August 2022