



Equality & Diversity Policy

SB Skills Solutions Ltd is committed to the promotion of equality and valuing diversity. We are committed to ensuring within the framework of the law that our workplaces are free from unlawful or unfair discrimination because of Protected Characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. We have adopted this policy as a means of helping to achieve these aims.

Equal Opportunities:

The term used to describe 'policies and practices that tackle inequalities, aiming to ensure that all staff are treated fairly, and that service users do not experience discrimination.

Diversity:

Defined as 'the differences in the values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, sexuality, skills, knowledge and life experiences of each individual group of people.' This term refers to the differences between people and is used to highlight individual need. It is appropriate to use 'diversity' as an alternative to 'equal opportunities'.

Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy

Discrimination:

Direct discrimination – when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a Protected Characteristic.

Associative discrimination or discrimination by association – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic.

Discrimination by perception – direct discrimination against someone because it is thought that they possess a particular Protected Characteristic even if they do not actually possess it.

Indirect discrimination - occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision criterion or practice which e.g. one sex or race or nationality or age group finds more difficult to meet, although on the face of it the provision, criterion or practice is 'neutral'.

Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Individuals may complain of such offensive behaviour even if it is not directed towards them personally.

Harassment by a third party – harassment of an individual by third parties such as customers, clients or other service users.

Victimisation – when an individual is treated less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010 or are suspected of doing so.

Key Responsibilities/Duties

Trainees, service users and visitors

The Company requires any person who comes into contact with the organisation, whether as a trainee, service user or visitor, to abide by this policy. The Company will not tolerate any discrimination towards its staff or other trainees, service users or visitors and will follow appropriate actions.

Employees

Every employee has a part to play in ensuring that the Company provides an environment which everyone is treated fairly and with respect. Employees are expected to abide by any policy set by the Company and any legal duties as set out in the Employee Handbook.

Managers

Every Manager has the responsibility of ensuring that they understand the Policy and implement it within their areas of responsibility. This will require:-

- Understanding the legislation involved and the implications of not carrying out this policy
- Demonstrating commitment to diversity and inclusion by positively promoting the Company's Equality & Diversity Policy and leading by example at all times
- Ensuring that all their employees are clear about their responsibilities under this policy
- Applying all organisational policies and procedures in a fair and consistent manner

- Committing to the elimination of discrimination and bias in recruitment, promotion, training opportunities or any other employment matter
- Attending relevant training events to ensure that individuals possess the necessary skills and knowledge to implement good equal opportunities practice
- Ensuring that employees are aware of their rights and obligations

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors have responsibility to:-

- Set strategic direction in line with statutory responsibilities
- Gain assurance that this policy is being implemented and applied throughout the organisation
- Hold leads accountable for the delivery of agreed equality action plans
- Provide leadership and role modelling of equality and diversity

Equality Impact Risk Assessments

To ensure that positive steps are taken to ensure prevention of indirect discrimination in the development and application of the Company's policies, procedures and service developments the Company will use our Equality Impact Risk Assessment process. Equality Impact Risk Assessment provides the means for the Company to consider how processes/policies might create adverse or negative effects for any of our services users and staff.

Complaints – Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying on grounds of protected status

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the Company's Dignity at Work Policy. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Trainees, service users or visitors who have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are encouraged to raise the complaint via the Company's Appeals procedure.

Manager with responsibility for this document – Stephen Maddocks (Compliance Manager)

Approved on – December 12th, 2020

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