

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

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Statement of Intent

Education & Learning Academy Ltd (ELA) is committed to being an Equal Opportunities Employer and Training Provider in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. ELA value diversity by providing equality of opportunity to applicants, both learners and employees, and by following working practices that are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination and encourage mutual trust and respect for individuals.

All ELA staff, both teaching and non-teaching are individually responsible for treating others with dignity and respect, eliminating unlawful discrimination, and providing equality of opportunity, promoting equity. The Managing Director has overall responsibility to ensuring all staff are engaged in ensuring this intent is met.

ELA aspires to provide total customer satisfaction and plans to achieve this by continually striving for positive outcomes through the delivery of all its programmes. Learners will receive training on E&D as part of their induction. This will also be discussed and monitored during progress reviews.

Equality and Diversity is part of the mandatory training for the business and all members of staff will complete Equality and Diversity training annually, as a minimum. This is online training completed via an external provider; however, refresher training will be provided throughout the year from the Safeguarding Team to capture legislative updates. The training will cover all fundamental areas of the Equality Act 2010 and the 9 protected characteristics to ensure staff can effectively implement this Policy.

Aim of the Policy

The policy aims to ensure that no learner or any employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender, including trans-gender and gender reassignment.
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins.
- Religion or belief or not having a belief.
- Marriage, paternity, or civil partnership.
- Sexual orientation.
- Those living in or leaving care.
- Young carers, young parents, or those caring for a family member.
- Young offenders or ex-offenders.
- Those from low socio-economic backgrounds, or those who are disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

The policy also aims to ensure that no learner or any employee is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment in the workplace. All learners and employees have the right to:

- Work in an environment free from discrimination, harassment and/or bullying.
- Have equal access to training, career development and promotion opportunities.
- Seek redress, without fear of victimisation, when they perceive that they have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in the workplace.

Our Commitment

ELA commit to deliver quality teaching, assessment and learning opportunities that promote 'best practice', meet current and emerging requirements of the teaching sector and exceed expectations of all stakeholders.

- All learners, employees and visitors enjoy a safe environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
- We are committed in building a diverse and socially inclusive workforce that is responsive and appropriate to all our service users. By embracing difference in terms of people, skills, and cultures. We can develop our creative thinking and problem solving, improve our workplace design and structure, resulting in a more eclectic, interesting and healthier workplace ethos.
- We believe that 'talent' should be positively exploited, and people deliver their best when they feel valued, their opinions are welcomed and acted upon, they are included, and their needs are recognised.
- We will accept no less than an environment that provides equality of opportunity, respects, and protects the dignity of individuals and is free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying of any kind.
- Breaches of this policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and equally.
- Ensuring that learners and employees are encouraged, supported, and able to reach their full potential.
- Implementing and supporting the aims of this policy.

Delivery staff are responsible for:

- All delivery staff have responsibility for the wellbeing of the learner whilst they are at ELA (this includes mental and physical health) They are responsible for the management of health and wellbeing risks for those, that fall under their remit.
- Implementing and promoting the principles and behaviours embedded in the ELA ethos and procedures that contribute to positive learner wellbeing.
- Ensuring that significant risks to health and wellbeing are assessed and that identified control measures, including control measures relating to emergency situations, are implemented so that risks are reduced to a tolerable level

- Ensuring that any confidential health information disclosed by learners is maintained as confidential and is only shared where there is a need to do so, in order to support the individual or to protect their health, safety, and wellbeing or that of anyone else who might be affected.
- Ensuring that risk assessments include appropriate consideration of potential significant risks to health and wellbeing.
- Ensuring that risk assessments identify appropriate control measures to reduce risks to health and wellbeing as far as reasonably practicable.

Learners are:

- Strongly encouraged to inform ELA as soon as is practicable if they have a health or wellbeing concern that affects or is likely to affect their ability to carry out their studies, so that reasonable steps can be taken to identify and implement suitable support.
- Strongly encouraged to report to ELA, any person about whom they have concerns with respect to their health or wellbeing
- Aware that H&S training will form part of the learner induction and will be discussed at all progress reviews. This will enable learners to demonstrate that they understand the requirements of the policy. This policy will also be discussed, and the policy shared, with employers to support their apprentice and raise understanding of health and safety.
- Aware that all learners, employers, and employees have a responsibility to ensure that they do not ignore, trivialise, or condone discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying by others of any kind and to ensure their own conduct conforms to the expected standards and reflects this policy document.

All individuals are responsible for:

- Implementing and supporting the aims of this policy.
- Promoting equality, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Contributing to an environment free from intimidation and celebrates diversity.

Dealing with Complaints

If a learner, employee, or visitor believes that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation, ELA takes this very seriously. All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the agreed procedures.

Anyone who makes a complaint of discrimination will not be victimised and we will make every effort to ensure victimisation does not occur and that any complaints are dealt with promptly.

Learners and employers can raise this matter through the Complaints Procedure.

Employees can raise this through the company Grievance Procedure

Breach of the Policy

We will take seriously any breaches of this policy by learners, employees, and/or contractors. Any such instances will be investigated and where appropriate will be considered under the relevant disciplinary policy for learners or employees and contractors. With regard to any breach of the policy by employers or visitors, we will take appropriate action in relation to the nature of the incident.

BFacilities and Working Practices

Whenever reasonably practicable to do so, ELA will commit to making 'reasonable adjustments' to the working environment to give learners, employees, contractors, or potential employees with disabilities equal and equitable opportunities.

Learners

- All learners will be given equal consideration and will not be discriminated against on any grounds referred to in section 2 of this policy.
- ELA welcome and support people with disabilities, including specific learning disabilities, and will make reasonable adjustments and endeavour to meet specific requirements.
- All selection processes will be thorough, carried out objectively, and will only address the learner's suitability for the programme requirements.
- All ELA employees who are in contact with learners are responsible for promoting equality and to avoid bias and discrimination in these areas.
- Learning materials should be inclusive, non-discriminatory and accessible to all. If discriminatory material is used to make a point, the discriminatory nature should be pointed out by the employee's learner using the material.

Employees

- All employees will have access to the same training regardless of their working arrangement.
- All new employees will attend a thorough induction programme that will cover their responsibilities as employees, the company's responsibilities to them in respect of all aspects of their employment, training, development, equal treatment and health and safety.
- We provide a range of training and development opportunities to help employees grow and achieve in their roles. All ELA training content and materials are free from discriminatory assumptions or language.
- ELA endeavour to create a learning environment in which all employees feel valued and respected, regardless of their protected characteristic.
- ELA facilitate regular appraisal and development reviews where all parties are encouraged to provide constructive feedback and evaluation based upon skills and behaviours assessment.
- Promotion opportunities will be advertised to all employees. ELA will assess all applications for promotion on merit and will follow a thorough recruitment and selection process.
- All appropriately qualified applicants will be given equal consideration during the recruitment process and will not be discriminated against on any grounds referred to in section 2.

Monitoring

- Statistical information is collected and passed to the Management Team in order to ensure adherence to this policy and to identify any shortfalls in equality of opportunity.
- Diversity/Equal Opportunities is an agenda item at Management/Team meetings. Reports and recommendations are discussed.
- A record of all incidents and complaints is maintained by the respective manager. Action will be taken as appropriate.
- ELA will review this policy in accordance with the results shown from the monitoring process. If changes are required, we will ensure these are implemented and shared with all stakeholders

APPENDIX A – MONITORING PERFORMANCE

Performance of the Quality System shall be monitored by the Quality Manger to ensure compliance in delivering and developing all ELA programmes and services. This is to be achieved by embedding and regulating our documentation in line with our systems and procedures, referring to written policies, procedures, and controlled documentation.

These systems and procedures ensure that all employees at ELA adhere to and work to the following:

- To ensure that each individual has access to a thorough and appropriate initial assessment to ensure that we can identify and respond to individual needs whilst ensuring that ELA have the right learner on the right programme at the right level.
- To monitor learner progress towards qualifications, collecting sufficient data to enable ELA to identify patterns and trends over defined periods of time.
- To collect learner perceptions at different stages throughout their programme and to use this information to inform the ELA quality improvement plan which emerges as an integral part of the ELA self-assessment process.
- To observe all teaching and assessment practice that is carried out across all ELA programmes, provide constructive feedback, and identify areas for further development.
- To hold regular meetings at department and management level where employees will have the opportunity to discuss and share best practice across all ELA training delivery, and to make suggestions for improvement, whilst embedding a consistent approach to delivery, assessment, and verification through standardisation activities.
- To provide access for employees' development opportunities that provide an effective response to identified needs and/or presents new challenges that will benefit employees and learners.
- To build effective relationships with examining boards that enable us to contribute to the development of standards and curriculum design so that ELA are able to effectively recognise and meet the needs of a diverse target audience, increase access, and provide equality of opportunity.
- To monitor policy development across the Learning and Skills Sector to ensure that ELA are aware and can respond to new and emerging developments that will affect our working practices.
- Employer and learner evaluations are carried out twice yearly which is intended for feedback and to measure their experiences whilst training under the apprenticeship programme.

ELA is committed to continuous improvements and development of its programmes. Our employees, learners and employers are an integral part of this review process, and it is their input and actions that should mould this document to be a true reflection of the activity, results, and performance of ELA.

This ensures that all participate in the process to reflect a whole organisational approach, along with making sure the information and data collected is fit for purpose. ELA value the views of all our partners, employers, and learners and through our evaluation opportunities we use this information to inform us further in relation to programme development.

ELA have developed an observation of teaching and learning process to ensure that our employees and stakeholders, where applicable, are delivering programmes to a high standard and that any areas of improvement are identified, and any corrective action required is dealt with immediately.

This also allows for ELA to highlight, celebrate, and share best practice throughout the organisation.

REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Chief Operating Officer (COO).

Adoption Date	Updated	Review Date	COO
08/2018	10/7/25	10/7/26	