

# 8POINT8 TRAINING

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## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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# 1. Introduction

The Equality & Diversity Policy aims to ensure all current and future employees, learners/apprentices, employers are treated equally, regardless of age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, sexual orientation, trade union activity or unrelated criminal convictions.

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear central guidance regarding equality and to establish key principles, structures, and monitoring arrangements promoting a culture of inclusion within work practices, which will benefit learners/apprentices, staff, and stakeholders.

Staff and learners/apprentices are asked to ensure that they read and understand the contents of this policy and that they remain aware of its contents and act accordingly. A copy of this policy can be accessed by learner/apprentices via their e-portfolio system, staff have access to this policy via SharePoint.

## 1.1 Related Files / Documents

Reference	Document Title
POL-704	Complaints Policy
POL-705	GDPR Data Protection Policy
POL-706	Prevent Policy
POL-707	Safeguarding Policy

## 2. Scope

Equality, diversity, and inclusion is a requirement by law, our statutory duty is outlined within the Equality Act (2010). This is an overarching policy on equality and diversity that applies across all areas of our organisation. This policy covers all aspects of 8point8 Training and applies to staff, associates, Board of Governance, learners/apprentices, and their respective employers. It relates to activities taking place on our premises and at other sites where staff, associates and learners/apprentices may be working and learning.

The policy is applicable to covering the 9 protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

The 2010 Act also extends some of these protections to characteristics that previously were not covered by equality legislation. There are several different types of discrimination under this legislation. These are:

- **Direct discrimination** - where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.
- **Associative discrimination** - this is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by perception** - this is direct discrimination against someone because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just be perceived to.
- **Indirect discrimination** - this can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic.
- **Harassment** - this is behaviour that is deemed offensive by the recipient. Employees can now complain of the behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.
- **Victimisation** - this occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under this legislation.

8point8 Training is committed to a policy of equality and diversity which respects the identity rights and values of each individual and opposes all direct and indirect discrimination within the organisation. We believe everyone is entitled to a working and learning environment which promotes dignity and respect, where individuals are free from discrimination and harassment.

### 3. Equal Opportunities

All staff and learners/apprentices have a right to be treated with respect and dignity with the right to:

- Study, learn and work
- Physical, emotional, and verbal respect, free from violence, bullying, and abusive language.
- Respect their gender, race, and age

- Freedom from sexual comments or harassment and inappropriate use of humour

8point8 Training will endeavour to promote best practice in equality and diversity in all our activities of training through working in partnership and sharing best practice with others. We will promote equality and diversity to our partners and stakeholders and ensure that our marketing and advertising actively reflects this. Stakeholder surveys and internal audits are conducted regularly, and we use the results to help us to review and renew our policies and procedures. In line with this policy, we will:

- Promote an ethos that positively reflects the organisation's commitment to equal opportunities
- Ensure that all learners/apprentices, staff, and associates are aware of and comply with the policy
- Staff and associates are required to undergo annual training
- Provide a complaints process so that learners/apprentices, staff, and associates can report any incidents
- Provide an accessible, physical learning environment
- Provide a supportive learning environment
- Provide support to learners/apprentices by putting a personalised support plan in place to address any disability or special educational needs
- Ensure that staff, associates, learners/apprentices are familiar with 8point8 Training's Safeguarding and Prevent procedures
- Monitoring this policy and its practices

## **Our Mission**

8point8 Training is committed to delivering quality training, helping people realise their full potential by putting them at the centre of learning.

## **Our Vision**

Our vision is to be a Centre of Excellence and the training provider of choice for learners and employer in the telecoms sector. "Nothing is beyond your reach"

## **Our Values**

Honesty

Encourage

Integrity

Growth

Hard Working

Trust

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

Whilst it is expected that all staff of 8point8 Training will accept responsibility for the practical application of this Policy, lead responsibility for its implementation will rest with the Executive Team and alongside the Senior Management Team oversee the management and implementation.

### **4.1 Executive Team and Senior Management Team will:**

- Ensure their own behaviour and the behaviour of 8point8 Training employees complies in full of this policy
- Deal with all allegations of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation sensitively and investigate fairly and thoroughly
- Treat any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out by an individual as a matter for possible disciplinary action
- Embed the concept of British Values is embedded within the curriculum and ensure equality and diversity is built into aspects of the apprenticeship programme
- Provide training in equality and diversity to staff, to give them the opportunity to develop their skills and confidence and to deal with equality and diversity issues in a professional manner
- Ensure staff and learners are made aware of the equality, diversity and policy as part of their induction programme

### **4.2 Trainers, Assessors and Mentors will:**

- Address discrimination and related issues through their teaching
- Find ways to engage their learners in meaningful dialogue about equality and discrimination ensuring that all learners/apprentices are aware of where to go / what to do if they are being discriminated against or see someone who is being discriminated against
- Promote British Values
- Follow up all incidents of discrimination involving the learners/apprentices they have responsibility for
- Actively encourage collaboration amongst learners/apprentices
- Support those learners/apprentices identified as needing additional help to understand their own behaviour and its consequences

#### **4.3 All Staff will:**

- Comply with the requirements of the policy and undertake appropriate diversity and equality training
- Actively demonstrate that they are committed to stopping discrimination by ensuring that their own interactions are clear and firm without being confrontational
- Strive to develop an atmosphere of trust and respect where learners/apprentices feel their concerns are taken seriously
- Listen seriously to all complaints and concerns about discriminatory behaviour
- Challenge all discrimination and report it

#### **4.4 Learners/apprentices will:**

- Avoid saying or doing anything which will hurt others
- Report all incidents of discrimination and if necessary, refer to the Safeguarding and Prevent procedure

### **5. Recruitment and Selection**

The recruitment process is conducted in such a way as to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in terms of relevant experience, abilities, and qualifications. 8point8 Training is committed to applying its equality and diversity policy statement at all stages of recruitment and selection. Advertisements will aim to positively encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people. When advertising job vacancies, to attract applications from all sections of the community, we will, as far as reasonably practicable:

- Ensure advertisements are not confined to those areas or publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants with a particular protected characteristic
- Avoid setting any unnecessary provisions or criteria which would exclude a higher proportion of applicants with a particular protected characteristic
- Where vacancies may be filled by promotion or transfer, they will be published in such a way that they do not restrict applications from employees with a particular protected characteristic. However, where, having regard to the nature and context of the work, having a particular protected characteristic is an occupational requirement and that occupational requirement is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, 8point8 Training will apply that

requirement to the job role and this may therefore be specified in the advertisement.

- The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. All applications will be processed in the same way. The staff responsible for short-listing, interviewing, and selecting candidates will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and of the need for their consistent application.

Person specifications and job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Wherever possible, all applicants will be interviewed, and all questions asked of the applicants will relate to the requirements of the job. The selection of new staff will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do, or to train for, the job in question.

8point8 Training has regard to its duty to make reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria, and practices or to physical features of work premises or to provide auxiliary aids or services to ensure that person with a disability is not placed at a substantial disadvantage. If it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect the performance of the job (for example, if the job involves unsociable hours or extensive travel), this will be discussed objectively, without detailed questions based on assumptions about any of the protected characteristics.

## **6. Induction and Training**

8point8 Training has a duty to promote equality and diversity issues and measures to our staff and ensure that they:

- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse
- Follow employee guidelines
- Undertake annual training on equality and diversity to raise awareness of current issues and legislation

### **6.1 Staff**

- 8point8 Training will provide initial and ongoing training and information to proactively promote equality and diversity awareness and support all their employees to understand their individual responsibilities
- New members of staff will be trained in equality and diversity and agree commitment to this policy before successful completion of the probationary period is agreed
- Existing staff refresh Equality and Diversity annually and expected to provide evidence of their annual CPD (Continuous Professional Development) and will



also receive regular updates via email, meetings, or bulletins to keep their skills and knowledge up to date

- Staff with teaching and learning responsibilities are trained in embedding equality and diversity into their practice and the content of their delivery with learners and apprentices, and in their engagement with employers
- Access to all relevant policies and procedures via the 8point8 Training SharePoint
- 8point8 Training take reasonable steps to ensure resources are made available and are used to support equality and diversity

## **6.2 Learners/Apprentices**

- Learners/apprentices are briefed on this policy and how to raise a related issue, and are trained in equality and diversity during induction and IAG sessions
- Equality and diversity is discussed and monitored as part of apprentice skills coaching sessions and learner tutorials
- Delivery and assessment methods are adapted to suit needs
- Ambition and progression is encouraged and supported
- Learners/apprentices are prepared for continued employment, or further progression, with the aim of producing well-rounded individuals who can fit in with and contribute to society

## **6.3 Engagement with Employers**

Equality and diversity is discussed with an apprentice's employer at induction to promote engagement and ensure that appropriate workplace policies and procedures are in place to protect apprentices. We engage with employer groups to identify their needs, benchmark best practice against this policy and practice and ensure continuous improvement.

# **7. Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

The training and assessment of learners/apprentices will support the equality and diversity policy. To ensure that this happens 8point8 Training will:

- Ensure that all learners/apprentices, regardless of their background can achieve their full potential
- All learners/apprentices will be given access to training and development opportunities without being influenced by any protected characteristic
- Encourage all learners/apprentices to develop an insight into the lives and experiences of people with different backgrounds of their own

- Ensure the training and assessment of learners/apprentices will be undertaken without discrimination either directly or indirectly
- Make a wide range of training and assessment methods available to learners/apprentices
- Wherever possible, learners/apprentices with particular needs will be identified and we will provide the necessary reasonable adjustments to facilitate training and assessment

## **8. Promoting the Policy in Apprenticeship Delivery**

Equality and diversity are embedded throughout all stages of our apprenticeship training programmes and is implemented through the following actions:

- Apprenticeship recruitment will be carried out in line with our safer recruitment and selection processes, using practices that support equality and diversity
- The promotion and marketing of apprenticeship programmes will avoid the use of discriminatory language and approaches to recruitment
- Enrolment processes will capture information relating to SEND so that a personalised support plan can be put in place where required and in agreement with the apprentice. This will incorporate any reasonable adjustments and special considerations to enable fair access to teaching, learning and assessment
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake a risk assessment for any apprentice with SEND requirements to ensure they can access a safe place to learn.
- Apprentices will be given access to this policy and their induction will include input on equality and diversity. They will be briefed on action to take if they have an equality and diversity concern
- Equality and diversity and this policy will be discussed with apprentice employers to ensure there are processes in place to protect apprentices and raise related issues
- Monitoring of progress, achievements and destination will include the analysis of data relating to SEND learners with actions planned and implemented to address any impact identified
- Equality and diversity will be discussed with apprentices at monthly progress reviews and support given in addressing any issues that arise
- Equality and diversity will be embedded into teaching and learning activities as appropriate
- The learning environment will be planned to ensure that it is accessible to all apprentices

- Any reasonable adjustments and special considerations needed for on-programme assessment will be discussed with apprentices so that appropriate action can be taken
- Any reasonable adjustments or special considerations needed for end point assessment will be discussed with the end point assessment organisation

## **9. Monitoring and Participation of Achievement**

8point8 Training is committed to using the views and opinions of our learners/apprentices and other stakeholders to improve our services and welcomes feedback/suggestions on better ways to promote equality and diversity on our training programmes. Data is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Senior Management and Human Resources regularly monitors and assesses the effectiveness of this policy by collecting and analysing information on staff, applicants, and learners/apprentices by for example:

- Age, gender, marital status, disability, and ethnic origin
- Recruitment, selection, and equal pay to assess the equality of opportunity afforded to staff, and the diversity balance achieved in our workforce
- Learner/apprentice recruitment, retention, and achievement by demographic breakdown to consider the parity of starts, outcomes and retention between different groups
- Staff, learners/apprentices, and employers are consulted through surveys to gain their input and feedback in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Partner policies in relation to equality and diversity are verified annually as part of annual contract reviews

## **10. Safeguarding and Prevent**

Safeguarding and Prevent policies and procedures are in place to protect individuals from harm, abuse, maltreatment, neglect, radicalisation, or exploitation. Staff, associates, learners/apprentices may become aware of a situation involving harassment and bullying because of a Safeguarding/Prevent issue. Where this is the case, the Safeguarding and Prevent Duty policies must be implemented alongside this policy.

## 11. Complaints

Complaints by staff can be raised formally following the employee grievance procedure. Formal complaints can be made through 8point8 Training's Complaints Policy. We will endeavour to respond to all complaints promptly treating all complaints with the utmost respect and dignity. Investigations of all complaints will be thorough and objective. We aim to resolve all complaints within 10 working days from notification. We will provide clear information to staff, learners and other stakeholders on our Complaints and Appeals procedure. We will welcome feedback from all complainants on the quality of service that they receive in relation to complaints and use this feedback to improve our service. Learners/apprentices or employers who wish to provide feedback or make a complaint can discuss the matter with:

Training Manager - Jenny Atkinson



Tel: 01302 896501 Email: [jenny.atkinson@8point8training.com](mailto:jenny.atkinson@8point8training.com)

## 12. Changes to this Policy

8point8 Training will review this policy at regular intervals and we reserve the right to update or amend it at any time and from time to time. We will circulate any modified policies.

## 13. Review of this Document

This document will be reviewed by Jenny Atkinson (Training Manager) 12 months from the date of implementation and then every 12 months thereafter, unless minor adjustments are required in the interim.

Version	Release Date	Release Notes	Author	Signed
1.0	01/09/2020	Initial Release	Jenny Atkinson	
1.1	14/04/2021	Amended to show 9 protected characteristics	Jenny Atkinson	

2.0	06/09/2021	Reviewed and replaced into new template	Jenny Atkinson	<i>J. Atkinson</i>
2.1	06/05/2022	Addition of GDPR policy in the related document section. Insertion of Executive Team	Jenny Atkinson	<i>J. Atkinson</i>