



EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

1 Policy Statement

Interactive Business Ltd seeks to achieve an environment in which all are treated equally and in which discrimination is not tolerated. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity regardless of disability, race, religion or belief, gender; sexual orientation, age or any other criteria which is irrelevant to a persons learning or employment with us. Through its policies and procedures we will promote inclusion, challenge discrimination and value and celebrate the diversity of its staff, learners and visitors.

We will treat all current and potential employees, learners, trainees, contractors and visitors with respect and dignity and establish a culture where diversity is valued. We aim to establish a constructive and positive working and learning environment, free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation. We will celebrate and value diversity in human experience and circumstances.

Age

People of all ages should benefit from education and we are committed to the provision of a variety of strategies and practices that cater for all ages and take into account individual circumstances and needs.

We are committed to challenging stereotyping and marginalisation based on age. We recognise that people of all ages can make a positive contribution based on their own experiences and skills. We will provide work, education and training opportunities for people regardless of age, ensuring that our literature reflects positive images of people of all ages and our course programmes provide the opportunity for every learner to reach their full potential.

Convictions

We comply with The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 in respect of employment and learner admissions and seek to ensure that, where appropriate, unrelated criminal convictions do not interfere with individual's life in education. However certain courses of study are exempt from the Act and learners will be provided with the appropriate guidance accordingly.

When employing staff we will endeavour not to discriminate. However some convictions will be relevant when making appointments.

Disability

We are committed to promoting access to people with disabilities. A further commitment is to work towards supporting and enabling learners and staff with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, specific learning difficulties, special psychological needs and medical conditions which may have an impact on day-to-day activities, to take part in all aspects of our academic, working and social programmes.

Gender

We are committed to ensuring that both female and male staff and learners are given equal access to all areas; appropriate non-sexist language is used and stereotypical views are challenged. We will not enquire about a person's marital status.

Gender Reassignment

We are committed to upholding equal rights of transgendered people and will support a member of Interactive who intends to, is undergoing or has undergone gender re-assignment.

Race

We value cultural diversity and aim to recognise and counter racism and cultural stereotyping in all its forms. We recognise that institutional racism can affect the quality of the lives of learners, staff, contractors and visitors. We undertake to examine its structures to ensure that they are offering equality of opportunity to all staff and learners whatever their ethnic origin or heritage. We will encourage an ethos of understanding and respect for all cultures.

Religion and Belief

We respect the right of individuals to hold their own religious and philosophical beliefs. Individuals are expected to respect the views and beliefs of others. The expression of intolerant beliefs and opinions that infringe the rights of others is not acceptable.

Sexual Orientation

We are committed to welcoming individuals of all sexual orientations, both employees and learners. We will respond sensitively and supportively whenever individuals raise the issue of their sexuality. We will be pro-active in promoting a safe and positive environment where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered individuals feel able to choose whether or not to be open about their sexuality and know that their choice will be respected.

Trade Unions

We will not discriminate against learners or staff who belong or do not belong to a trade union and we will adhere to the concept of anti discriminatory and anti oppressive freedom of speech.

2 Context

This procedure has been written to ensure members of staff, learners, contractors, visitors and customers are aware of the duties placed upon us by Equality legislation and regulations. It is a comprehensive policy to explain the background, law and our intentions together with our commitment to equality and diversity.

This policy will apply to all current and potential employees, learners, trainees, contractors and visitors. Contractors are required to indicate that they subscribe to this policy or have to produce an equivalent policy of their own.

3 The Procedure

3.1 This procedure is implemented in the context of the following legislation:

Equal Pay Act 1970
Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Sex Discrimination Act 1975
Civil Partnerships Act 2005
Race Relations Act 1976
Disability Discrimination Act 1995/2005
Employment Rights Act 1996
Protection for Harassment Act 1997
Human Rights Act 1998
Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
Employment Act 2002
Sexual Orientation (employment regulations) 2003
Sexual Orientation (goods and Services) 2007
Religion and Belief (employment regulations) 2003
Religion and Belief (goods and services) 2007
Gender Recognition Act 2004
Gender Reassignment Regulation 1999
The Children's Act 1989/2004
Age Discrimination (employment regulations) 2006
Gender Equality Duty 2007

3.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

We will ensure that:

Directors, staff and learners are aware of the Equality and Diversity and related policies and how these will be implemented. We will also provide training and support to enable staff and learners to apply the policies and act within the law.

Staff and learners are aware of the value placed upon equal opportunities and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the policies.

Directors and staff have access to comprehensive information, which assists them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities.

All policies and procedures are non-discriminatory and anti oppressive and that monitoring and positive action processes are regularly reviewed.

3.3 MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

We will monitor and review on an annual basis the progress that has been made towards achieving its targets using the equality and diversity action plan. Results from monitoring shall be published and made available to staff and learners.

3.4 POSITIVE ACTION

In certain circumstances the law allows Positive Action as a way of overcoming inequality.

Positive Action allows us to:

Provide facilities and services, in training education and welfare to meet the special needs of people from particular equality groups.

Target education and training at particular equality target groups that are under represented in a particular area of work or study.

Encourage applications from particular equality target groups that are under represented in particular work areas or education areas.

Positive action strategies are intended to be temporary measures only. They must be kept under regular review and cannot be used once the under representation no longer exists. We will ensure that when using positive action as a strategy it falls within the law.

3.5 BREACHES OF THE POLICY AND COMPLAINTS

Acts of discrimination, harassment, abuse or victimisation will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Disciplinary action could include dismissal in the case of staff and expulsion in the case of learners.

Staff and learners who feel they are being discriminated against should seek resolution through relevant procedures.

Staff or learners who feel that they have experienced discrimination will receive support from us and we will take appropriate action.

Prospective learners who consider that they have been unfairly treated with respect to their application or are dissatisfied with some aspect of the recruitment and selection procedure should write giving details to Steven Mort, Director. All complaints will be investigated and the prospective learner informed of any action taken.

Applicants for employment who feel that they have been unfairly treated with regard to their application or are dissatisfied with some aspect of the recruitment and selection procedure should write giving details Lee Murphy, Director.

All complaints will be investigated and the applicant informed of any action taken.

3.6 PUBLICISING OUR POLICY

3.6.1 To learners, prospective learners and other members of the public

Our commitment to equality will be highlighted in our course programmes and on the website

A summary of the results of monitoring information will be included in the annual report where this does not contravene confidentiality.

A summary of the policy shall be included in learner information, which are given to all learners at induction.

Summaries of the policy are available from Interactive offices.

The induction programme for learners will include our commitment to equality and diversity, outlining any action to be taken by learners who experience discrimination and the actions taken against the perpetrators of discrimination.

Tutors will reinforce this information during tutorials and/or placement visits.

3.6.2 To staff

A copy of the policy will be given to staff upon commencement of work with us.

The staff induction will include an overview of our commitment to equality. It will also outline procedures with regard to reporting cases of discrimination and the actions taken against perpetrators.

3.6.3 To work placement providers

All work placement providers will receive a summary of the policy and will signify their understanding and agreement to these responsibilities. Staff visiting learners on placement will ensure that this takes place.

3.7 REVIEW AND CONSULTATION

The Directors will review this policy on an annual basis. As part of the review we will seek to take into account the views of stakeholders including learners and staff and the local community.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Directors are responsible for:

Having ultimate responsibility to ensure that we comply with Equality legislation and the codes of practice supporting it.

Ensuring that the Equality and Diversity policy is followed and this will be achieved through the consideration of a report.

Ensuring that our strategic plan includes a commitment to equality.

Ensuring that equality training is part of our strategic plan.

Being aware of our statutory duties in relation to equality legislation as an employer and service provider.

Receiving and responding to the monitoring information on equality target Groups.

Overseeing the continuing application and development of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Preparing, monitoring and reviewing the Equality Action Plan.

Reporting regularly on Equality issues.

Advising on the formulation of policies, procedures and resources.

Giving a consistent high profile lead on equality issues and promoting equality both internally and externally.

Ensuring that the Equality and Diversity Policy are implemented effectively.
Ensuring that appropriate action is taken against individuals on office and learning premises and working on behalf of the company who do not act in accordance with the policy.

4.4 Senior Tutors are responsible for ensuring that:

They take the lead in creating a positive, inclusive ethos that challenges inappropriate language and behaviour.

They are aware of our statutory duties in relation to equality legislation.

All aspects of our policy, procedures and activities are sensitive to matters of equality.

Equality and Diversity monitoring data from equality target groups is collected and analysed.

Targets on recruitment retention and achievement of learners are set based on the analysis of monitoring data.

Teaching observation reports include criteria on equality and diversity issues.

Internal verification procedures include scrutiny of equality and diversity issues.

They assess performance in relation to equality issues and action taken if appropriate.

The procedures for recruitment and promotion of staff model best practice in equality.

Learner induction programmes and tutorials reflect our commitment to promote equality.

Appropriate training and development is provided for both staff and learners to support the appreciation and understanding of diversity.

4.5 All staff are responsible for ensuring that:

They are aware of our statutory duties in relation to equality legislation.

Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity.

They challenge discrimination and inappropriate language and behaviour by staff, learners, placement providers other members of staff and users of our services.

4.6 All learners are responsible for ensuring that:

They create and maintain an environment where harassment and discrimination are considered unacceptable.

They support and comply with the aims of the Equality and Diversity Policy and procedures.

They understand that the consequence of contravening equality legislation and our policy.

4.7 Partners, Contractors and Service Providers

All partners, contractors and service providers will be responsible for adhering to any equality guidelines in agreements or contracts.

We are committed to ensuring that those organisations with which it works and employs will demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity and have policies and procedures in place to achieve this

5 Location and Access to the policy

This document will be held on our computer systems and also filed securely. The document will be made available on request to external parties as required and may be converted to other formats if appropriate (Braille, Large Print, Other Languages etc).