

Training Now

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2022-23

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2022-23

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All apprenticeships are provided by Agincare Group Ltd's training division, Training Now.

1. Who is this policy for?

This policy is for all apprentices, learners, Training Now staff including Board members, visitors and external speakers.

2. What is this policy for?

This policy outlines our responsibilities for promoting Equality and Diversity across Training Now. It is important that our apprentices, learners and staff can make good progress in an environment which is welcoming, supportive and safe from discrimination or judgement.

The policy explains how we try to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. We are committed to do more than is required by equality legislation requires.

Key pieces of legislation that are relevant to us include:

The Equality Act 2010. This law protects people from discrimination based on age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. The Act also made provision for the Public Sector Equality Duty which is a law that requires public sector organisations (like a Local Authority or Council) to try to stop discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and to encourage good relations between different groups of people.

The Human Rights Act 1998. This law provides the right to respect for privacy and family life, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, expression and freedom of assembly.

3. What we mean by 'Equality', 'Diversity', 'Inclusion' and 'Discrimination'

Equality is about not about treating people the same. It is about making sure that everyone has equality of opportunity. One example of this is a blind learner may be given learning materials in Braille. This is not the same treatment as a sighted person gets, but it makes sure that they have the same opportunity to learn.

Diversity is about what makes us all different. This can include things like age, gender, background, nationality and health.

Inclusion means 'being included within a group or society as a whole'. It is important to understand someone's differences (diversity) so that you can include them and treat them equally and fairly (equality).

Discrimination happens when people are excluded or treated unequally because of their differences. Discrimination happens when someone has a negative attitude towards others. It can be caused by labelling people, stereotyping them or by any other form of prejudice.

4. Policy Statement

Training Now celebrates and values the diversity of our learners and communities. Promoting Equality and Diversity are at the heart of our mission, values and strategic objectives. We are committed to providing the education and support our learners and apprentices from all sections of the community need to achieve to their full potential. Equality of opportunity means that we view diversity positively,

recognising that everyone is different, and we value the differences and the unique contribution that an individual's experience, knowledge and skills can make.

We work to be an outstanding employer with a diverse workforce that has the skills and knowledge needed to achieve these ambitions. We aim to ensure that all our employees, apprentices and learners can work and learn in an environment that is inclusive, characterised by dignity and mutual respect and free from discrimination. We do not tolerate any discrimination based on age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, nationality, family circumstances, economic and social background, union activity or employment status.

Inclusion is about taking positive action to include and engage all groups to promote the closing of gaps in knowledge, understanding and support to those who need it most.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on the requirements of the Public Sector Equality duty are essentially what any well-run organisation would want to do – to meet the needs of those who work for it and use its services.

5. What this Policy covers

This Policy covers the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 i.e. age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage & civil partnership; pregnancy & maternity; race; religion & belief; sex; sexual orientation and also includes nationality, family circumstances, economic and social background, union activity, and employment status.

This Policy covers all the learners, apprentices, staff and courses that are delivered via funding received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). It also covers our learners to be receiving internal professional development via Agincare Group Ltd or any Agincare organisation as well as those who are paying privately for training. When you are at work, rather than in learning, you must adhere to Agincare's (or your own organisation's) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy which you can find on SharePoint or our training portal. However, the principles of both Policies are the same and demonstrate our commitment to promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

We will show how we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity by making sure that we examine how well different groups of people are accessing our courses and how well they are achieving (sex, race, disability, age) as part of our reporting to the Training Now Board.

6. Responsibilities

Everyone who works or studies with Training Now is responsible for making sure that Equality and Diversity are valued and promoted.

The Managing Director has ultimate responsibility for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. It is also their responsibility to implement, monitor and evaluate the Policy in terms of the Company's compliance to employment practice and service delivery.

The Managing Director is also under a duty to ensure that the Senior Management Team (SMT) are regularly kept informed of progress with policy implementation and receive regular updates. Also, for assessing the implications of SMT decisions in relation to equality and diversity issues.

All our employees are informed that an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is in operation and that they must follow the policy requirements. Everyone that works at Training Now is responsible for this Policy and promoting equality.

All our employers, learners, apprentices and any stakeholders are responsible to work with Training Now to make sure this policy works in practice and we prevent discrimination, bullying and harassment. If any of our employees have been found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination then this will be dealt with under Agincare's disciplinary procedure. If it is a serious breach, then this could be gross misconduct and an employee could be dismissed.

We expect that our employees and Board members who represent the organisation always try to ensure that they follow the equality and diversity principles and practices and demonstrate and promote these values in all that we do.

Our managers will:

- Create a welcoming, inclusive environment (online or in person) for everyone which shows respect, values diversity and promotes equality
- Make sure that staff, learners and apprentices understand what their responsibilities are. This will include support and training to help them with their duties
- Use quality assurance processes to monitor equality and diversity
- Check that all policies, plans, procedures and actions are in line with national equality and diversity laws and this Policy document.

Our staff will:

- Create a welcoming, inclusive environment for everyone (online or in person) which shows respect, values diversity and promotes equality
- Make sure they do not discriminate against, victimise, bully or harass any individual or group. This includes in person, on paper or when using email or social media or any digital communication
- Challenge people who behave in a way which is inappropriate or that discriminates against anyone
- Report all incidents of discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment
- Participate in equality and diversity training
- Include equality and diversity in lesson planning, learning, teaching and assessment. This will include producing inclusive lesson content and resources.

Our learners and apprentices will:

- Create a welcoming, inclusive environment for everyone which shows respect, values diversity and promotes equality, online or in person
- Make sure they do not discriminate against, victimise, bully or harass any individual or group. This includes in person, on paper or when using social media or any digital communication
- Report any incidents of discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment to their TALC/Trainer or any other member of staff.

When we work with Employers, they will:

- Create a welcoming, inclusive environment for learning and work which shows respect, values diversity and promotes equality

- Make sure they do not discriminate against, victimise, bully or harass any individual or group. This includes in person, on paper or when using social media or any digital communication
- Behave in a way that is not against the law or this, or their Equality and Diversity Policy.

Anyone who works with Training Now (for example, parents/carers, contractors, work-experience employers, hirers of our premises, external speakers and trainers) will:

- Show respect for everyone, value diversity and promote equality
- Make sure they do not discriminate against, victimise, bully or harass any individual or group. This includes in person, on paper or when using social media or any digital communication
- Behave in a way that is not against the law or this Equality and Diversity Policy.

7. Training Now and The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 is the most important piece of legislation about equality and diversity. There are also other laws which have been created since 2010 which are also part of the Equality Act (these are called secondary legislation).

Training Now has to comply with this Act and all of the secondary legislation that comes with it. The legislation sets out what we have to do in a series of 'duties' and rules. These are described in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.

What Training Now does to comply with the Equality Act 2010

We have a number of policy objectives to help us comply with the Equality Act. These are:

- Make sure that Equality and Diversity is central to everything that we do
- Get rid of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and anything else that the Equality Act bans
- Make sure there is equality of opportunity between anyone who has a 'protected characteristic' and anyone who does not
- Create good relations between anyone who has a 'protected characteristic' and anyone who does not
- Act to reduce any gaps in achievement for different groups of learners
- Improve how Equality and Diversity is promoted in Teaching and Learning
- Make sure that all our staff complete relevant Equality and Diversity training and always promote equality and celebrate diversity in everything we do.

What is a 'protected characteristic'?

To prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation, the Equality Act lists the characteristics which it protects. It says it is illegal to discriminate against anyone based on:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage & civil partnership
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Race
- Religion & belief

- Sex
- Sexual orientation

To make sure that we are promoting equality and diversity effectively, at Training Now we also make sure people are not discriminated against based on their nationality, family circumstances, economic and social background, union activity and employment status.

How we advance equality

Training Now think carefully about how our planning, policies and decisions affect equality and diversity. We collect information on the 'protected characteristics' listed above to help us check whether we are doing this well, and to decide how to improve. Information we collect comes from the data we have on whether learners stay on course, if they attend and if they achieve. We also analyse our learner and staff feedback, at forums or training events, to make sure we are actively promoting equality and celebrating diversity.

For example, we advance equality of opportunity by looking at information about any differences in achievement levels. We then think about how we can reduce or get rid of those differences and decide what actions we can take to do this. This helps us to remove or minimise any disadvantages that people may have due to their protected characteristics.

What Training Now does to ensure Equality and Diversity

Training Now looks closely at the results of our equality and diversity processes to make sure they are working well. We report our findings in our Self-Assessment Report (SAR) every year and include any plans for improvement in our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). We examine our progress against the actions we have set in our QIP every month at our SMT meeting. We will also look at key equality data at our Board meetings which happen once every quarter.

In our Senior meetings, we examine the progress we have made towards our objectives and how each of our different groups of learners are doing. We also have our progress monitored by external people, for example by our Board members or peers. We look at information about learner enrolment, retention, achievement, pass and attendance rates. We also come to lessons and speak to our learners to get their feedback as well as carrying out surveys. We do lesson observations where we formally judge how well we are promoting equality and celebrating diversity in the lessons we observe. We train our staff in Equality and Diversity and update this training to make sure they are up to date and our staff consistently demonstrate best practice.

All this information is used by our managers in their day to day decisions to make sure that no one from any group are being inadvertently disadvantaged and our learners and potential learners have equal opportunities to access learning and training.

We also use the information to inform our strategic and business planning processes. We identify 'Areas for Improvement' within curriculum areas and for the whole organisation. We then identify what actions we need to take, and these are planned out in our Quality Improvement Plans.

Every year Training Now completes a Self-Assessment Report on quality and performance. This contains information from:

- Performance data (information about enrolments, attendance, retention and achievement)
- Learner feedback from surveys, meetings and events and course reviews
- Stakeholder feedback from meetings
- Lesson observations
- Local and national statistics to help us compare how we are doing with other training providers.

We use the results of this report to update our objectives and decide what our new priorities and objectives are and what actions we need to take to achieve them.

How we monitor and review this policy

The Head of Quality and Learning monitors how effective this policy is by carrying out various activities. Some of these activities include: carrying out data analysis on how well we are performing overall and how different groups of learners are performing compared to each other (for example if women are performing better than men); being responsible for staff training and ensuring all staff are appropriately trained and can get more training if they need it; planning learner engagement, ensuring that all these are open to all our learners, promote equality that there is a welcoming and inclusive environment, supporting learners to learn more about each other and how they can become more active in their communities and keep mentally and physically well.

The Head of Quality and Learning is also responsible for carrying out the objectives in this Policy and reporting the progress we have made back to other staff, key stakeholders and external bodies.

This policy is reviewed and updated every year. If there are any changes in the law, the policy will be updated more frequently.

8. Learners, Stakeholders and Representatives

Training Now seeks to ensure that we are accessible.

- We will make public our commitment to combating discriminatory attitudes where these are encountered.
- Training Now will attempt to ensure that none of its policies discriminate directly or indirectly against any group or individual.
- We will attempt to find ways of making our service accessible to everyone, including people for whom English is not a first language, people with visual or hearing impairments, and people who live in remote rural areas and/or cannot easily travel.
- We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all our activities are carried out in premises which are accessible to people with mobility difficulties. In the event that the premises operated by the organisation are not accessible for particular individuals, we will arrange alternative meeting places. This will include committee meetings.
- We will welcome the diversity of people who use our services and will always try to ensure that our employees respect the views, rights and behaviour of people from minority groups in all of their contacts with them. We will be particularly alert to, and try to meet, the diverse needs of people in relation to diet, religious practice, respect for their immediate environment, translations and social activities. We welcome the rituals, festivals and celebrations of people we support as bringing interest and variety to daily life in our society, and we will do everything possible to facilitate a persons' capacity to practice their religion or culture in the ways they individually wish to do. Evidence of discriminatory practice, remarks or attitudes among employees will be treated as misconduct.

9. Allegations of Discrimination

- Any person who feels that they have been the subject of discrimination by an employee should complain as soon as possible via our Training Now's Complaints policy.

- The matter will be investigated promptly and in line with our Complaints policy, and arrangements will be made for alternative staff to provide the service in the interim, if the allegation is found to be justified appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- Training Now's Safeguarding and other related policies also cover aspects of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in relation to dealing with allegations or suspicions.

10. Discrimination by Learners and Stakeholders

- We will challenge discriminatory behaviour by people who use services sensitively whether this is directed against staff or other learners.
- If discriminatory behaviour, remarks or attitudes are repeated we reserve the right in extreme circumstances to terminate learning and service level agreements.
- We are also committed to supporting our staff and informing them of their rights as employees and individuals.

11. Employees

We will constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed. Managers will have responsibility to follow guidelines to empower a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion. The environment we create will be free of harassment, bullying and discrimination of all kinds.

All Training Now staff share in the responsibility to embrace and support this vision and must continue to challenge behaviour and attitudes that can prevent us from achieving this. Using fair and objective employment practices, our aim is to ensure that:

- All employees and potential employees are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment.
- All employees will work in a non-discriminatory or anti-discriminatory manner which respects the views, rights and behaviour of people from minority groups and which celebrates their diversity.
- All employees are able to work free from harassment and bullying of any description, and from any other form of unwanted behaviour, whether based on sex, trans-gender status, marital status, civil partnership status, pregnancy, race, disability, age, political or religious belief or sexuality.
- All employees have an equal chance to contribute and engage to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.
- All employees will be expected to show commitment to contributing to a culture of continuous improvement and learning based on the competency and diversity of all.

Fair and objective employment practices include:

- Challenging stereotypes
- Protect all from intolerance and persecution
- Supporting employees in balancing their life at work and at home

- Support employees who become pregnant and take active steps to facilitate their return to work after maternity leave
- Understanding, respecting and valuing differences including racial and cultural backgrounds and perspectives
- Focus on what people can do rather than on what they cannot
- Making appropriate reasonable adjustments in the workplace to help people for example those with a disability to achieve their full career potential
- Emphasising benefits of a diverse workforce
- Complaints from people using our services will be through Training Now's Complaints Policy
- Training Now's grievance and disciplinary procedures will be used to deal with any complaints about discrimination, harassment or bullying involving staff.

12. Communication/ Publications

Training Now will seek to ensure that publicity and promotional material will demonstrate positive images of the diversity of the workforce and our learners and apprentices.

13. Monitoring and Evaluating

Training Now will regularly evaluate its services and the effectiveness of its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, by a variety of means.

Monitoring may be carried out by the organisation to provide the data for this regular evaluation. For instance, we may ask learners using our services, applicants, volunteers and Board Members for information about their ethnic origin, disability, marital status, age or other personal information. We will only do this for a specific defined purpose such as collecting statistical data for funders, for research or for our own monitoring to evaluate this policy's impact.

Training Now will be sensitive to groups and individuals and will have due regard for the principles of data protection when seeking information.

14. Breaches of Equality Policy

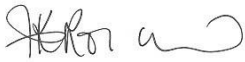
Training Now regards discrimination, harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, learners or of others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct. Condoning such behaviour could also be treated as a disciplinary offence. As well as disciplining the perpetrator(s), we will give appropriate support to people who complain of harassment of themselves or others.

15. Training

The management team of Training Now believe that, in order to provide a quality service, Training Now requires high quality employees who are suitably trained, supervised and supported.

Training Now policies and procedures are referenced in the induction programme and are available for staff in their work place. Staff will be informed of how to access all policies, procedures and related documentation and of how to seek further advice regarding Training Now's agreed ways of working. Staff should be provided with regular updates to encourage continuous improvement and include latest good practice.

Training Now is committed to providing an ongoing programme of support for all staff. This includes supervisions, appraisals and training which will be in line with company policy, contractual obligations and current best practice.

Policy Review Statement:	This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary in line with legislation or business changes. All of Training Now's policies are reviewed at least once a year to ensure relevance and currency.
Responsibility:	Managing Director
Authorised by:	Managing Director
Version:	1
Authorised Signature	

Appendix A: Forms of Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 describes different types of discrimination.

This policy covers all of these. They are:

Direct Discrimination

This happens when a person is treated worse than someone else because of a 'protected characteristic' or because they are a part-time worker or fixed-term employee. We tackle this by ensuring all staff are well trained in E&D, understand different forms of discrimination and promoting best practice in E&D in class. All learners are made aware of the importance of E&D at the start of and throughout their course. We have a zero-tolerance policy for any forms of bullying, victimisation and harassment.

Associative Discrimination

This happens where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed because they associate with someone else who has a 'protected characteristic'. We tackle this by training our staff ensuring they know about different forms of discrimination, promoting equality, celebrating diversity in class and promoting a strong and inclusive provision. All apprentices and learners are made aware of the importance of E&D at the start of and throughout their course.

Perceptive Discrimination

This is where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular 'protected characteristic' (even if they do not). We tackle this by training our staff to know what the different forms of discrimination are. All learners are made aware of the importance of E&D at the start of and throughout their course.

Indirect Discrimination

This is where the impact of a rule or way of doing things disadvantages someone with a 'protected characteristic'. It is only discrimination if the rule or way of doing things cannot be justified. We tackle this by making sure all our policies and practices are not indirectly discriminating against anyone in the equality strands. If necessary we will do an Equality Impact Assessment on a policy or procedure.

Victimisation

This happens when someone is treated worse than others because they have made (or supported) a complaint about unlawful discrimination, or because they are suspected of doing so. We tackle this by having a clear Whistleblowing Policy. We have well trained staff who know how to keep all our learners safe. We have a zero-tolerance policy for any forms of bullying, victimisation and harassment.

Harassment

Harassment is about how people behave. It means behaving in a way that violates dignity, or is hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive to someone with a protected characteristic (whether or not this effect is intentional). Harassment also includes any behaviour that is sexual in nature. We tackle this by making sure all our learners are aware of what harassment is and that it is not behaviour that is acceptable in any of our learning environments. We ask our learners if they feel safe and make it clear who to go to if they do not. We have a zero-tolerance policy for any forms of bullying, victimisation and harassment.

Disability Discrimination

There are special provisions which protect disabled people, employees and job applicants against discrimination, both in and out of the workplace. Policies need to make sure that organisations make

reasonable adjustments so that disabled people are not substantially disadvantaged. We tackle this by making sure that people with disabilities can access our courses and the different learning environments. We can make reasonable adjustments to support access to learning. We monitor and analyse data to make sure that people with disabilities can achieve the same as those without.