# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY

# &

# INCLUSION POLICY

| Published Date: | 03/12/2018 | Author: | Shabir Siddiq – Operations Manager |
|---|---|---|---|

| Version | Change Detail | Latest Review Date | Date of Next Review | Updated By: |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | Annual Review | 03/12/2019 | 03/12/2020 | Shabir Siddiq |
| 1.0 | Annual Review | 03/12/2020 | 03/12/2021 | Shabir Siddiq |
| 2.0 | Annual Review & Policy amended | 07/12/2021 | 07/12/2022 | Shabir Siddiq |
| 2.3 | Annual Review & Policy amended | 07/12/2022 | 07/12/2023 | Shabir Siddiq |
| 2.3 | Annual Review Changed to Academic Year Start | 01/08/2023 | 31/07/2024 | Shabir Siddiq |
| 2.4 | Annual Review and name change | 01/08/2024 | 31/07/2025 | Shabir Siddiq |
| 2.5 | Annual Review & header logos change | 01/08/2025 | 31/07/2026 | Shabir Siddiq |
| 2.6 | Annual Review & header logos change | 01/08/2026 | 31/07/2027 | Shabir Siddiq |

Alphabet Training is an equal opportunities organisation. It is our aim that there shall be equal opportunities within this Company and in all the services we provide and within our approved centres and via the services we provide.

In particular, it is our intention that there should be no discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, colour, race, disability, age, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation or political opinion. Alphabet Training will also ensure that no discrimination occurs in relation to all of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

This policy celebrates difference whilst also framing our commitment to create an inclusive culture, where people can come to work being themselves and feeling a strong sense of belonging. We believe that when we ensure a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture, we will amplify our effectiveness in forging strong partnerships and delivering positive impact for our learners and businesses.

All staff employed and learners enrolled at Alphabet Training including, visitors, carers and volunteers will be covered by this policy.

This policy has regard for the following policies, guidance and advice (DfE documents and legislation accessible from the Government website and Alphabet Training policies from SharePoint):

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021
- DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Academy Admission Policy
- Academy Care, Support Guidance and Behaviour Policy
- Academy Uniform Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

## DEFINITION:

### Equality

The term ‘equality’ means that everyone should be treated fairly. It recognises that everyone has individual needs and that they have the right to have their needs respected.

### Diversity

The term ‘diversity’ has many definitions, but they all tend to embrace the notion that our background, knowledge, skills, aptitudes and experiences are all different and that our differences should be valued and appreciated.

### Inclusion

The term ‘inclusion’ is the overarching culture in which the mix of people can come to work, feel comfortable and confident to be themselves, and delivers the needs of Alphabet Training. Inclusion ensures that everyone feels valued and importantly, adds value.

### Unconscious Bias

The term ‘unconscious bias’ describes how we are all shaped by our prior experiences and the social and cultural values that we absorb throughout our life. We all hold deeply ingrained assumptions and beliefs and create our own internal stereotypes.

Most people feel more comfortable around people like themselves (similar age, background or culture) and unconscious bias is a natural result of this, but it can cause unintentional prejudice. Unconscious bias can affect our behaviour in many ways, but if the bias is against a protected characteristic it could lead to illegal discrimination. It can affect recruitment, progression, recognition and much more. Types of unconscious bias are:

**Affinity bias** – Leads us to prefer people we feel a connection with.

**Halo bias** – Leads us to rate a person more highly overall because they have one single characteristic or achievement.

**Horns bias** – Leads us to not consider a person because of one quality that we don’t like about them (opposite of halo bias).

## AIM

Alphabet Training will strive to create a work culture that actively learns from diversity in order to strengthen the impact we seek to achieve. We recognise that people from different backgrounds and experiences bring valuable insights, diverse thoughts and a wealth of abilities.

An inclusive workplace culture is where you can come to work being the authentic version of yourself and feeling respected and valued. It is a culture supported by equal access to opportunities, a culture characterised by acceptance and a sense of someone “having your back” and where the diversity of our team amplifies our ability to drive impact.

We also strive to create a work culture that builds on our passion for learning, our values and our ways of working.

A work culture that builds on a sense of belonging is where you can come to work feeling you are part of something bigger than yourself, and where the role of each of us serve to enable our goal, which is what connects us. Our passion for learning is what unites us, and our heritage is what shapes us.

At Alphabet Training, we celebrate differences and strive to create a strong sense of belonging, while retaining our core purpose that is firmly grounded in our vision and values.

## EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 came into effect in October 2010. It consolidated and streamlined existing legislation and strengthened the law to support progress on equality.

The Equality Act 2010 details a list of 'protected characteristics' which are grounds upon which it is unlawful to discriminate against people. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief (or lack thereof)
- Pregnancy and maternity

Alphabet Training will seek to identify and act upon any unfair or unlawful discrimination which denies someone opportunities due to a protected characteristic.

Alphabet Training will provide reasonable adjustments, wherever possible, to remove any barriers due to disability, including providing alternative formats where needed.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Alphabet Training is committed to equality of opportunity within a diverse learning and working environment. Alphabet Training will introduce policies and practices that support a working and learning environment free from bias, unfair or unlawful discrimination, for all its staff, learners, associates and contractors. This is communicated at induction and then promoted regularly throughout the year during training sessions.

Alphabet Training is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity within a diverse environment for all its staff, learners, and visitors and will ensure that its policies and procedures are equally applied and communicated to all.

Alphabet Training believes that individuals should be enabled to achieve their full potential in their role and career progression. This means by the provision of appropriate development opportunities and

the removal of barriers to enable the achievement of optimum performance. Alphabet Training values the following:

- Mutual respect and sensitivity.
- Equality of access to the organisation, with equality of esteem and equality of opportunity within the organisation.
- Continuous improvement of individuals stemming from a culture of ongoing review, development, and enhancement.
- Satisfaction of individual needs via supportive and flexible working/learning environments.
- Encouragement of diversity of views, perspectives, values, and issues, but opposition to and eradication of prejudice, unfair barriers, and discrimination.
- Transparency, equity, responsiveness and accuracy of procedure and process.

## PROMOTING EQUALITY

Alphabet Training aims throughout each year to work closely with external agencies such as Councils, employers and employer organisations as well as voluntary and community organisations to promote social inclusion and race equality. Collectively working in partnership will encourage and promote equality for all stakeholders of Alphabet Training.

All Alphabet Training employees, associates and approved centre's (including centre staff, assessors, verifiers and administration staff) have a responsibility to comply with the intentions of this policy and will undergo training to support the implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

## HOW YOU CAN BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- **Direct discrimination** - is where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (perceptive discrimination), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (associative discrimination).
- **Indirect discrimination** - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone but put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.
- **Associative discrimination** - refers to discrimination based on an individual's association with another person belonging to a relevant protected group.
- **Harassment** - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.
- **Harassment by a third party -** where the employer's action or inaction is related to a relevant protected characteristic.
- **Victimisation** - treating someone unfairly because they have complained about discrimination or harassment.

- **Discrimination by perception -** Perceptive discrimination occurs when a person directly discriminates against another person because the person thinks they possess a particular protected characteristic. This applies even if the person being discriminated against does not have the protected characteristic.

If, following an investigation, it is found that an employee has maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint, they will not be protected under the Equality Act.

To implement the policy, we shall:

- Incorporate appropriate responsibilities and duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff.
- Provide equality training and guidance to our staff as appropriate, including training on induction as well as further on-going courses as identified via our internal management and review arrangements.
- Communicate, as appropriate, this policy to employees and all those associated with the services provided by Alphabet Training at outreach Centre's or other locations.
- Ensure that all members of staff and / or consultants involved in any aspect of our qualification development and delivery arrangements comply with this policy. In particular, that they ensure there are no barriers to entry to units and qualifications it develops and delivers and / or offers for disabled people, for women or men, or people from different racial groups, other than those directly related to the integrity of units or qualifications. The nature of any barriers deemed acceptable to the qualification or unit will be stated and the inclusion of the requirements that create the barrier justified only and explicitly in terms of the integrity of unit or the qualification. Any details of how the effect of any barriers will be mitigated, including using access arrangements, including reasonable adjustments, will be recorded.
- Make every practical effort to ensure that materials, services, and facilities are not only free from bias, but will also support employees, associates approved centres and learners in maximising employment and personal development opportunities.

Alphabet Training will comply with legislation relating to equality and diversity and/or the requirements of the awarding body/qualification relating to equality and diversity and raising achievement.

There should be no barriers to achieving a qualification based on:

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

- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation.

Alphabet Training considers how its programs including apprenticeships are promoted, marketed, engaged and assessed to ensure that no barriers exist on any of the grounds listed above.

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that learners who are disabled are not disadvantaged in any way. Learners must declare their needs prior to the assessment period and all necessary reasonable adjustment arrangements must have been implemented before the time of their assessment. Special considerations are made to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged by any exceptional circumstances that may arise.

## EQUAL ACCESS AND DISCRIMINATION

While staff or learners are employed or enrolled with Alphabet Training, we are determined to ensure that everyone has equal access to choices and opportunities for study or personal and or professional development. We aim to ensure that no one is discriminated against as a result of any action, intentional or otherwise on the grounds of colour, racial, ethnic or national origins, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion or belief or disablement.

Alphabet Training will take positive action to promote choice, opportunity and progression for its staff and learners and to modify and extend its arrangements generally to accommodate the needs of individuals and/or groups.

Alphabet Training will actively promote British Values with all staff and learners. All programmes have a British Values element that must be completed.

**Action Planning:** If incidents occur the following strategy will be followed:

- Identification of issue.
- Action to be taken.
- Deadline.
- Responsibility for achieving action.
- Resources.
- Performance measures.
- Review mechanisms.

## MONITORING

Every staff member or volunteer will undertake Equality Training Level 2 (online) provided by Alphabet Training on a yearly basis. Additional training will be conducted in house; teaching will embed equality and will be aimed at, understanding shared values and opportunities, protective

characteristics, delivery of inclusion and the policy statements to all its employees including developing and adopting links with partnership organisations. Data capture will commence from the start of the learner journey and regularly analysed to ensure we meet our obligation.

Alphabet Training will comply with all current and relevant legislation which at the time of writing includes, but is not limited to, the Equality Act 2010. This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

As part of the monitoring of candidates registering for a qualification with Alphabet Training, we will collect information on diversity, requests for special considerations, access arrangements and feedback from learners, centres and other stakeholders. The centre's information and recording systems will enable candidate's achievements to be monitored and reviewed in relation to this policy.

All relevant issues identified that suggest our provision or services may have unnecessarily impacted on learners will be reported back to the Managing Director who will be responsible for leading on introducing amendments to provision and/or services where necessary and in accordance with our internal procedures for developing and reviewing units and qualifications.

Signed by the Managing Director

01/08/2026