

2023

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION/BRITISH VALUES



## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION/BRITISH VALUES POLICY

### Introduction

1. Alliance Learning is committed to equality of opportunity, the pursuit of diversity amongst its staff and learner population, the promotion of British Values, and a supportive environment for all members of our community. It expects that all staff and learners alike will contribute to and actively support Alliance Learning in working towards the elimination of discrimination and harassment and the promotion of equality of opportunity and British Values in terms of access to our services, employment opportunities and support for learners in their welfare and education.
2. This policy has been reviewed in response to and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

### Policy Statement

3. This policy is intended to assist Alliance Learning to put this commitment into practice and to comply with all current and future legislation which relates to equality and diversity, as well as British Values. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees, learners, visitors and contractors do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.
4. We will promote a culture of respect for people and welcome diversity of origin, background and experience amongst our staff and learner community as enriching the experience of all those who participate in the life and work of Alliance Learning.
5. Striving to ensure that the work, teaching and learning environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities. Alliance Learning has separate policies, which deal with these issues.
6. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, learners, visitors or contractors are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation by a member of staff may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice, in the event that a member of staff is found guilty at a disciplinary hearing.

### The Law

7. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in staff recruitment or employment, learner recruitment, retention, assessment, progression or support because of:
  - **age**, for example: older people, younger people.
  - **disability**, for example: people with physical or sensory impairments, mental health difficulties, long term medical conditions, learning difficulties, neuro diverse conditions such as dyslexia, autism, tourettes, or ADHD.

- **gender:** men, women.
- **gender reassignment,** for example: transsexual people, transgender people, men and women with transsexual history.
- **pregnancy & maternity,** for example: pregnant women, people on maternity leave, women who have recently given birth.
- **race,** for example: nationality, ethnic background, origin or heritage.
- **sexual orientation,** for example: gay and lesbian people, bisexual people, heterosexual / straight people.
- **religion and belief,** for example: people from different faith groups, people with a philosophical belief, people with no religion or belief.
- **marriage and civil partnerships,** for example: married people, people in a civil partnership, single people.

These are known as "protected characteristics".

8. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination as listed:

### **Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association below).

### **Discrimination by association**

Applies to race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

### **Perception discrimination**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

### **Indirect discrimination**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, disability and gender reassignment.

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, ie that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. A legitimate aim might be any lawful decision you make in running your business or organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful.

Being proportionate means being fair and reasonable, including showing that you've looked at 'less discriminatory' alternatives to any decision you make.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. Employees will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves.

Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

### Third party harassment

Applies to sex, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act makes you potentially liable for harassment of your employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of your company, such as customers or clients. You will only be liable when harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions, you are aware that it has taken place, and have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

### Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

There is no longer a need to compare treatment of a complainant with that of a person who has not made or supported a complaint under the Act.

All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

<b>Key</b>	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Marriage & Civil Partnership	Pregnancy & Maternity
Covered in existing legislation									
Not covered in existing legislation									
Direct discrimination									
Discrimination by association									
Discrimination by perception									
Indirect Discrimination									

Harassment									
Harassment by a third party									
Victimisation									

### **Elimination of Discrimination**

9. Alliance Learning is committed to the elimination of unfair discrimination on any grounds, whether this is direct in nature or arises out on the imposition of conditions or requirements which have a disproportionately adverse effect on particular groups which cannot be shown to be justifiable on any other grounds.
10. With respect to staff, selection criteria and procedures will be reviewed as appropriate to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and that no issues which are irrelevant to the needs of the post are considered as part of the selection or promotion process.
11. Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Applicants with disabilities who meet essential selection criteria in the opinion of the full selection panel will not be subject to assessment in competition with other candidates at the shortlisting stage and will automatically be invited for interview.
12. We are committed to an inclusive and supportive approach to learning, from pre-enrolment to achievement. We will continuously review both our programmes and facilities to ensure not only that there are no barriers to learners with disabilities and those with additional support requirements but also that we anticipate and take positive action to meet their needs.
13. Recruitment and selection procedures for learners will ensure that individuals have fair access to programmes or study and all course elements. The achievement of learners will be not be influenced by matters which are irrelevant to their merits and abilities. Where appropriate Alliance Learning will seek advice from those groups and communities whose needs it seeks to meet.
14. Alliance Learning will endeavour to ensure that all of its statements are made in non-discriminatory language.

### **Elimination of Harassment**

15. All employees, learners, visitors and contractors will be expected to conduct themselves with proper respect for others and for their lawful choices.
16. Procedures are in place to deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment; this includes third party harassment that is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) by third parties such as learners, visitors or contractors.
17. Alliance Learning has a separate policy that explains what harassment and bullying is and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

18. If employees feel that they may have been discriminated against, experience or observe harassment and bullying, they can access Alliance Learning's Grievance procedure to make a complaint.
19. If a learner, visitor or contractor feels that they have been discriminated against, experience or observe harassment and bullying they can access Alliance Learning's Harassment and Bullying procedure. In some cases learner related incidents may be directed through the Safeguarding procedure.
20. Alliance Learning will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance, incident or complaint of discrimination or harassment and bullying that it upholds. Individuals will not be penalised for raising a grievance or complaint, even if their grievance or complaint is not upheld, unless the complaint is both untrue, made in bad faith and / or is deemed to be vexatious.
21. Employees should report any bullying or harassment including incidents by visitors, contractors or suppliers to their Manager / Executive who will take appropriate action.
22. Learners should report any incidents to their Tutor, Learning and Development Officer or any member of staff who will provide advice on the appropriate course of action in liaison with the safeguarding team.
23. Alliance Learning will not discriminate unlawfully against visitors using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided by Alliance Learning or contractors providing goods, facilities or services on Alliance Learning's behalf.

### **Promotion of Equality and Diversity**

24. Alliance Learning will positively encourage members of under-represented groups to approach Alliance Learning whether it is for employment or education services. It will also investigate any reasons why such groups would not find Alliance Learning a receptive and supportive environment and, where appropriate, will allocate resources and take remedial action.
25. All employees will be given equal access to career development opportunities and, where appropriate and permissible under legislation, employees of under-represented groups will be given training and encouragement to achieve equality and diversity within Alliance Learning.
26. In relation to learners, Alliance Learning will seek guidance from the professional and other bodies with expertise in areas in which it particularly seeks to promote equality and diversity and will liaise constructively with learner representatives with specific responsibility for equality and diversity issues.

### **British Values**

The government set out their definition of British Values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy. In 2014, the Department of Education published guidance on promoting British Values in schools to ensure young people leave school and college prepared for life in Modern Britain.

The five British values are as follows:

- Democracy
- The rule of Law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

These new regulations sit alongside the requirements of the Equality Act, which also applies to all educational institutions.

### **Promotion of British Values:**

At Alliance Learning, we are dedicated to promoting values which ensure that our learners and staff develop a strong sense of social and moral responsibility. We prepare our learners for life in Modern Britain by developing an understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

It is our aim that all Alliance Learning students are able to contribute effectively to the wider community, using the skills and knowledge they have acquired during their time at Alliance Learning. As well as being fully engaged in their learning experience, we want our learners to become responsible and well-rounded individuals.

Our staff will endeavour to promote British Values at every opportunity, including during lessons, progress reviews and by other means, in order to ensure our learners, have every opportunity to understand, be protected by, and live by these values.

### **The FREDIE Principles**

Alliance Learning is committed to advancing equality through the FREDIE principles (National Centre for Diversity, 2023) and being leaders in diversity. Alliance Learning strives to develop an inclusive community culture in which everyone can feel valued and in which everyone receives fair and equal treatment regardless of background. FREDIE stands for.

- Fairness
- Respect
- Equality
- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Engagement

### **Responsibility**

27. All members of our community have a responsibility to adhere to the legal, policy and moral requirements embodied in this document and actively to promote the principles of equality and diversity, and British Values.
28. The Chief Executive is responsible to the Board of Trustees for the implementation of the policy on an Alliance Learning wide basis and for allocation of resources in connection with the policy.
29. Executives and managers are responsible for adherence to this policy in all matters relating to the curriculum and programmes of study, including criteria for the admission of learners and for the local implementation of this policy.
30. The Senior Management Team & Personnel are responsible for the overall promotion and monitoring of this policy in all matters relating to employment.

31. Executives are responsible for ensuring that corporate objectives relating to equality and diversity are set and met. They are responsible to the Chief Executive for the creation of policies and for pursuing and monitoring of these policies.
32. Employees and learners can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, Alliance Learning for any act of unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation. Employees and learners who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

### **Monitoring and review**

33. Equality and Diversity / British Values / Safeguarding Meetings will take place on a regular basis.
34. This policy will be monitored periodically by Alliance Learning to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular, Alliance Learning will monitor the ethnic and gender composition of employees, learners, learner applicants, and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will review its equality and diversity/British Values policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, Alliance Learning will implement them.
35. Alliance Learning will maintain staff and learner records for the purpose of monitoring the success of its equality and diversity/British Values policy and the achievement of the targets which Alliance Learning sets in these areas. Thus referencing demographic profiles of under-represented or disadvantaged groups within the workforce and within the learner body (and its main areas of study).
36. Priorities, responsibilities and timescales associated with the commitment to promote equality and diversity, and British Values will be specified in annual action plans to be drawn up by the Executives.

### **Other Related Policies**

Disciplinary Procedure	Security & Confidentiality / Whistle blowing (Fraud/Anti Bribery)
Grievance Procedure	Employment Relations
	Sickness Absence & Attendance
Health and Safety Statement	Communications
Health and Safety Policy	Lone Worker
Safeguarding Policy	Volunteering
Display Screen Equipment	Rehabilitation of Offenders
	Gifts and Hospitality
Equality and Diversity	Smoke free
Anti-Bullying	Environmental
Dignity and Respect	Data Protection
Alcohol and Drugs	
Quality	Assessment Malpractice
Quality Statement	
Teaching & Learning	Credit Card
Training and Development	
Widening Participation	Breaches of Policy/Procedure



## Dissemination of and Access to the Policy

37. This policy will be published on Alliance Learning’s website to be available to all staff, learners and visitors. All contractors will be directed to this policy document through Alliance Learning’s procurement process.
38. Alliance Learning will provide training in equality and diversity to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equality and diversity issues are likely to arise.
39. Alliance Learning will provide mandatory training to all existing and new employees and others engaged to work at Alliance Learning to make them disability aware and help them understand their rights and responsibilities under this and related policies. Staff training will include what they can do to contribute to a teaching and learning environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation. Alliance Learning will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints associated with alleged acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
40. Alliance Learning will provide training opportunities for learners to help them understand their responsibilities under this and related policies and what they can do to help contribute to a teaching and learning environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Manager Responsible:	Elaine Shaw – Work Based Learning Manager
Reviewed and Updated:	10 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
Issue Date:	
Next Review Date:	25 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
Approved By:	Gill Waugh Chief Executive
Signed:	