

Policy 1.3 – Equality and Diversity Policy



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Introduction

This policy outlines the commitment of Bridge Training Ltd Management, Staff and Advisory Board to provide the Equality of Opportunity for all students, teaching staff, support staff, parents/carers, visitors, and students on work experience opportunities. Bridge Training is committed to ensuring that diversity and inclusion are embedded into everything we do. Bridge Training offers a work environment that's inclusive and diverse and where everyone can be themselves.

Bridge Training seeks to comply with its duty under the Equality Act, the Equality Duty applies to the following 'protected characteristics' otherwise known as the 'protected groups'. We have "due regard" to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups;
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

Disability Statement

Bridge Training Ltd encourages the development of an environment in which diversity is valued. An important part of putting this into practice is a commitment to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of disability in all employment and training matters to increase opportunities for those who have a disability and to ensure that its recruitment and selection process for staff and students are fully accessible.

All staff, students, visitors, and contractors are expected to treat people with disabilities with respect. If, however, an individual feels they have been discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of disability, they are encouraged to report the incident. Managers, as part of their managerial responsibilities, must ensure there is no discrimination based on disability. Discrimination in recruitment, selection or employment is treated seriously and could provide grounds for disciplinary action. Furthermore, individuals who discriminate on the grounds of disability may be liable under the Equality Act 2010.

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Aim

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of Bridge Training and are the responsibility of every member of staff and student. All staff members should be aware that every individual has a right to be considered of equal value and be given equal opportunity therefore, equality of opportunity means that everyone has the right to equal chances, and everyone is respected for who they are.

We aim to create an ethos and atmosphere which demonstrates mutual respect between all members of Bridge Training and aim to welcome visitors and students with friendliness and respect.

Bridge Training seek to develop the intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual, and cultural potential of each student and member of staff. We aim to bring to everyone a realisation of their role and value as well as their responsibilities.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff, students, contractors, and volunteers to accept their own personal involvement in the practical application of this policy. However, ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy's objectives, and for ensuring compliance with the relevant Acts of Parliament as well as the various Codes of Practice, lies with the management of Bridge Training.

We aim to create a learning environment which supports equal opportunities in the following ways:

- We seek to establish consistently high expectations of all students and staff
- All students are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents/carers are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.
- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students.
- Curriculum planning incorporates the principles of racial equality and promotes positive attitudes towards diversity.
- To prepare all students for life in a multiracial society.
- Encourage the use of positive action to overcome disadvantage and discrimination.
- Encourage communication and discussion about Race Equality issues.
- Staff and visitors are to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- Bridge Training places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability and aim to meet all students' learning needs.
- Bridge Training provides an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- All students are actively involved in their own learning. A range of teaching methods is used throughout Bridge Training to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students.
- We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help all students to achieve their potential.

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- The provision of good quality resources and materials is a high priority. These resources should reflect positive images of all social groups and avoid discriminatory images or views.
- We recognise the importance of language and everyone at Bridge Training should use appropriate language which avoids offence to others.

Behaviour or actions against the spirit on which this policy is based will be considered a serious disciplinary matter, and may, in some cases, lead to dismissal from Bridge Training and/or the training programme.

At Bridge Training everyone has the right:

- Not to be discriminated against in the arrangements made for educational, training, promotional and employment opportunities
- Not to be subjected to unwanted acts of sexual or racial harassment or bullying
- Not to be victimised because you have at any time complained of unlawful discrimination or given evidence on an alleged case of unlawful discrimination at tribunal against Bridge Training.

Bridge Training will:

- Recognise its legal obligations under the relevant Acts of Parliament
- Review periodically its selection criteria and procedures to maintain a fair system where students are selected, promoted and treated solely on the basis of their merits and abilities
- Seek to give all students equal opportunity and encourage students to progress into further educational programmes, training and employment opportunities.
- Distribute and publicise this policy statement throughout Bridge Training and elsewhere as is from time to time appropriate.
- Provide facilities for any student, who believes that inequitable treatment has been applied to him or her within the scope of this policy, to raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.
- Provide all students with training which may improve their prospects and which will enhance their understanding of the need for an equal opportunities programme.

Discrimination

Discrimination can take place in a range of ways as follows.

- Direct Discrimination - this occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because they have, or are thought to have, a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination by Association - this is discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- Perception Discrimination - direct discrimination against an individual because others think that they possess a protected characteristic, even though they do not.

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- Indirect Discrimination - this occurs if there is a condition, rule, policy or practice in Bridge Training which applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people with a particular protected characteristic. Under some circumstances this may be reasonable and lawful.
- 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 or humiliating environment for that individual”.

All staff at Bridge Training are encouraged to report behaviour that they find offensive, even if it is not directed at them and even if they do not possess the particular protected characteristic themselves.

Bridge Training will also protect students and staff from harassment by people from outside of the Bridge Training environment. If this is reported, Bridge Training will take reasonable steps to prevent it happening again.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a student or employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act.

Equality of Opportunity

Bridge Training will take positive action to advance equality of opportunity. Advancing equality of opportunity involves;

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular protected characteristic they have
- taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic
- encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities.

We are bound by the legal requirements of the recent legislation, including the Equality Act. It is the duty of Bridge Training to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour:

- unwanted attentions (verbal or physical)
- unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person’s appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender, age marital status, religion

No student, employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment because of their Protected Characteristics, (perceived or otherwise), in particular but not only, in relation to;

- Recruitment and selection
- Promotion, transfer & training opportunities
- Benefits, terms and conditions of employment/enrolment
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment including redundancies
- All other aspects of employment.

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Equality

Bridge Training will eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under section 149 of the Equality Act, this also includes;

- advance equality of opportunity who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations with staff and students who share a relevant protected characteristic and with staff and students who do not share it.

For persons who share a relevant protected characteristic staff and students who do not share it Bridge Training will;

- remove or minimise disadvantages that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of staff and students who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- encourage staff and students who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Bridge Training recognise the steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Bridge Training fosters good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share, in particular, to the need to:

- tackle prejudice, and
- promote understanding.

Compliance at Bridge Training may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited.

Training

Training will play an important role in assisting employees and students to implement this policy, and in developing skills and potential. The purpose of training is to;

- Inform employees and students of the purpose of the Equality and Diversity
- Provide employees, especially managers, with the skills and knowledge necessary to implement the policy
- Develop the full potential of employees, particularly those previously disadvantaged by discrimination
- Encourage and enhance the skills of employees, particularly those from groups who have traditionally been under-represented in the work force.

Complaints Process

It is important that the Equality and Diversity Policy works in practice and is fully implemented. Where the policy is found not to be working and results in unfair treatment of employees, students or the public, then a complaint of unfair

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discrimination should be made to the Managing Director, following the procedure set out in the Complaints Policy. All complaints of unfair discrimination, including harassment, will be investigated fully.