

# Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

## General Policy Statement

Quest Training is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) throughout its actions and activities, and this Policy sets out its aims in this regard. This Policy provides details of:

- Quest Training's overall aims in relation to EDI
- the underlying principles which guide our approach to EDI issues
- roles and responsibilities for the Policy and its implementation

Quest Training is committed to ensuring that all aspects of our delivery offer, embeds the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent updates.

Quest Training is fully committed to the view that discrimination is unacceptable on any grounds, whether covered by legislation or not, and will positively seek to ensure that it does not occur.

Quest Training will offer information, advice and guidance, for entry to its programmes, to any person irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The only criterion to be met, is that training is seen to be the appropriate and viable option, and is likely to lead to a positive outcome.

Quest Training is committed to promoting Policies whereby no employee, apprentice/learner or potential employee is unfairly discriminated against.

Quest is committed to embedding this Policy into all aspects of the apprentice/learner journey, to ensure we meet the needs of all stakeholders.

This Policy applies to all Quest Training staff and all apprentices/learners, parents, visitors, employers, community members, stakeholders, and any other individual, or organisation, working with us.

## Aims

Quest Training is committed to operating within an EDI Code of Practice, and will not discriminate on any basis.

### **Our core values are:**

- to encourage mutual respect for all
- recognise and work with every diverse group
- provide high quality, inclusive services and facilities
- ensure our employment Policies and practices are fair and challenge bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination

We proactively seek to review and restructure the cultures, Policies, and practices in our organisation, so they can be welcoming and responsive to the full diversity of people.

We positively encourage those from all areas of the community to take up opportunities, within Quest Training, whether as an apprentice/learner, member of staff, or employer offering an opportunity to an apprentice/learner.

## **Principles**

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example, in recruitment, promotion, and in continuing professional development.

In working towards the realisation of our aims, we will be guided by the following principles:

1. Welcoming and celebrating diversity - equality is not always about treating everyone the same, it is about ensuring that the outcome is the same for every person, removing barriers and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to disability/impairment, medical needs, ethnicity, colour, creed, nationality, national origin or status, culture, religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marriage, or civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity status and providing equal opportunities to everyone.
2. Fostering positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging - we intend that our Policies, procedures, and activities should promote positive attitudes, an absence of harassment, positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other.
3. Reviewing what we do to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers – we regularly review our actions to ensure we make progress in offering equality of opportunity for all. We will not simply seek to avoid discriminatory practices, we will take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by actively going about reducing and removing inequalities and barriers to equality, and taking positive actions towards promoting and enhancing equality of opportunity for all.
4. Creating Opportunity - we recognise the needs of every individual, along with our commitment to enabling them to achieve their full potential. In doing this, we recognise the need to raise aspirations for all.
5. Consulting widely - people affected by a Policy, or activity, should be consulted and involved in the design of new Policies, and in the review of existing ones.
6. Safeguarding - everyone in our organisation has responsibility for the welfare of young people, vulnerable adults, and indeed all apprentices/learners and staff. We proactively ensure that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This includes protecting people from any forms of bullying, harassment, or any other maltreatment based on equalities issues (See Safeguarding Policies).

## **Objectives & Actions**

- 1 Quality team to ensure that the tutor/assessors are delivering teaching, learning and assessment in accordance with the apprentices/learner's preferred learning and assessment styles.
- 2 To keep all aspects of learning, all our activities under review, to ensure that they reflect our aims and principles.
- 3 To gather, evaluate and use quantitative and qualitative data, relating to the implementation of this Policy, to identify actions and improvements to our service offer and act as appropriate to ensure inclusivity and positive outcomes for our stakeholders. This includes collection, analysis and use of data in relation to achievement and employment, broken down according to impairment and special educational needs, age, ethnicity and gender, as well as other equalities 'strands', where appropriate to do so.
- 4 To identify prejudice-related incidents, when anyone involved with the incident feels that it is motivated by prejudice. All such incidents are referred to the ED&I Lead, whose role it is to

assess, record and deal with all incidents in the first instance. We take seriously our commitment to report regularly to the Strategic/Management Team Meeting about the numbers, types and seriousness of any prejudice-related incidents in our organisation and how they were dealt with.

- 5 To respect the diversity of all staff, apprentices/learners, stakeholders, and parents/carers, and comply with reasonable requests relating to a full range of equalities issues.
- 6 To ensure that the content of this Policy is available to all staff, employers, apprentices/learners and stakeholders. All staff have access to a selection of resources, which explain concepts of EDI.
- 7 To ensure that all staff receive training in EDI principles, legislation and issues on an on-going basis. We will ensure that all staff and stakeholders are fully aware of their responsibilities towards the promotion of EDI and take account of the different and differing needs of individuals/groups in their activities.
- 8 To maintain records of the ethnic origin, sex and any disability of our apprentice/learners and staff as a means of monitoring and identifying possible areas of inequality.
- 9 To include EDI on agendas for all meetings across Quest Training, including Governance and Strategic levels.
- 10 To actively promote individual responsibility of every member of staff, and seek to ensure the practical application of this Policy. In addition, special responsibility falls upon the EDI Lead, and those involved in staff recruitment and training delivery, to ensure its effectiveness.

We ensure that the core principles listed above apply also to the full range of our Policies, Procedures and practices. Our key mechanism for ensuring this is via our Policy Review process.

## Rights and Responsibilities

### **Rights of staff and apprentices/learners**

- 1 Recruitment, appraisal, job allocation and promotion will be conducted on a fair and lawful basis; assessment of merit must be based on clear work-related criteria.
- 2 Access to Complaints Procedure, which incorporates EDI related issues. This will ensure that any complaints are taken seriously and investigated at senior management level.
- 3 Equality of access to training and other career development opportunities.
- 4 An environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, and victimisation.
- 5 An environment that is consistent with, and adaptable to, the needs of the individual.
- 6 To complain, without fear of victimisation, should an individual, or group, feel they have been subject to discrimination, victimisation, bullying, or harassment.

### **Responsibilities of Quest Training Staff**

- 1 Be aware of, and critically examine, their attitudes to people and groups to ensure that prejudices, stereotypes, presumptions and generalisations do not affect their judgement during selection, appraisal, career development, or the delivery of the organisation's services.
- 2 Irrespective of their position within the organisation, recognise that they are personally and individually responsible for ensuring that they act in accordance with the principles of EDI, as outlined in this Policy and its provisions. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

### **Everybody involved with Quest Training is expected to:**

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos, learning and working environment
- Deal appropriately with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping
- Support the diversity of apprentices/learners based on individual needs

### **Everybody involved with Quest Training must not:**

- Discriminate against colleagues, other employees, job applicants, or apprentices/learners
- Bully or harass colleagues, other employees, job applicants or apprentices/learners, or attempt to induce other employees to practice unlawful discrimination
- Victimise a colleague, apprentice/learner, or applicant

## EDI Committee

Quest Training has an EDI Committee which meets at least twice a year.

The committee has five overarching purposes:

- To provide advice and guidance to all staff on EDI
- To provide recommendations to the senior management on the Quest's EDI priorities
- To monitor performance and oversee the implementation of the EDI Quality Improvement Plan, and to provide assurance to senior management, that EDI objectives and activities are aligned to, and embedded within the broader range of strategic objectives for the organisation
- To improve the breadth of representation across protected characteristics in the work of the organisation, widen participation and tackle discrimination and differential attainment
- To work with the Learning Support Assessor, to ensure all apprentice/learners are given the additional support needed in order for them to achieve

## EDI in Training and Marketing Materials

We seek to ensure that marketing and training materials avoid stereotyping and discrimination of any type.

Our EDI Committee checks all stages of the Apprentice/Learner Journey to ensure materials used meet the latest legislation and avoid stereotyping and discrimination.

The EDI Committee provides oversight and direction to the EDI work of the organisation.

Our Quality and Curriculum Specialist teams ensure EDI is fully embedded into all aspects of curriculum delivery and that Schemes of Work/Training Plan, Lesson Plans, resources and training materials can be adapted to suit the needs of individuals.

## Employers and the EDI Policy

The Apprenticeship Agreement that employers sign includes complying with equal opportunities. The importance of this, in all its aspects, is stressed to new employers when they agree join Quest Training and support apprentice/learners in their work place.

## Monitoring

The Lead EDI is responsible for monitoring EDI across all areas of the business, ensuring that the business is conducted in accordance with our EDI Policy.

Overall responsibility for the monitoring, implementation and enforcement of our EDI Policy lies with the Managing Director.

We commit to ensuring that all staff and apprentices/learners for whom we are responsible, do not suffer discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.

No staff or apprentice/learner at Quest Training should have to suffer discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment. All complaints of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying etc. will be treated seriously and investigated with all possible speed, confidentiality and sensitivity. Such activities, if established against Quest Training staff and apprentices/learners, will be dealt with as misconduct.

Anyone believing that an issue/concern has not been properly acted upon, is entitled to, and should, initiate the Grievance Procedure. The Procedure explains in detail how to do this, and staff and apprentices/learners are entitled to receive a copy of the Grievance Procedure.

## Related Policies, Procedures and Processes

- Safeguarding Policy
- Prevent and British Values Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- E-Safety including Digital Code of Conduct Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Safer Staff Recruitment, Selection and Training Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Staff Training and Development Policy
- Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Delivery and Review of Teaching, Assessment and Learning Policy
- Initial Assessment of Prior Learning Policy
- Learning and Support Needs Policy
- Quality Assurance Policy

This Policy will be reviewed as part of Quest Training's yearly quality assurance cycle.

I confirm that this Policy is authorised and approved by Abbie Fulks – Managing Director.



Signature:

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Implementation Date: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Review date: June 2026