



BLUE LION

TRAINING ACADEMY

**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

DOCUMENT HISTORY

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This Policy and Procedure document has been approved by the CEO / Director and is signed on release to the BLQMS on monday.com as per the version control status in the above table:



CONTENTS

Document History	2
Contents.....	3
Scope.....	4
Introduction	4
Blue Lion Training Academy is committed to:	5
Equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring	6
Equal opportunity policy statements	6
Definitions.....	8
What to do if you encounter discrimination	8
Non-compliance with equal opportunities rules	9
Accessibility.....	9



EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Blue Lion Training Academy Limited (the 'Organisation') aims to provide defect-free products and services to its customers on time and within budget, we aim to audit our policies and procedures to drive continuous improvement.

SCOPE

We are committed to providing an inclusive learning and working environment for all apprentices and staff that are not only free from discrimination and unfair treatment, but that actively values and celebrates difference. Diversity and Inclusion go to the heart of the Blue Lion Training Academy mission to create a diverse group of future leaders and as such we are committed to creating an environment in which every individual can thrive, celebrating different thinkers.

Whilst this policy covers the learner experience at Blue Lion Training Academy, we encourage our learners to also refer to the Equality and Diversity policy at their place of work.

INTRODUCTION

We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service to and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no learner, staff member or applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

All staff and learners are covered by this policy, and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, and career development. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct, or indirect exists.

The Inclusion and Diversity is led by our company directors and has responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and Diversity policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Company as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. Whilst we may be a small but agile organisation we have aspiration to grow and build on specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity, which will and does lie with our managers and supervisors, staff at all levels. All apprentices/learners have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect.



The personal commitment of every staff member and apprentice to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout our Training Academy.

To create an operating environment in which all stakeholders share common values and who are committed to our long-term success. To provide quality training and learning that is wholly inclusive and will engage and support all who wish to learn, offering enrichment and promoting opportunities for lifelong learning.

Please note: This procedure does not constitute contractual terms and conditions. Blue Lion Training Academy reserves the right to amend any provision of this procedure.

BLUE LION TRAINING ACADEMY IS COMMITTED TO:

Equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of recruitment and employment. We will seek to achieve this in the following ways:

- Develop and implement recruitment and selection processes that are open and fair and that enable the selection of the best talent.
- Aim to build a workforce that reflects the communities it serves.
- Providing services to which all apprentices are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities, or socio-economic background.
- Provide training support and encouragement to employees and workers so that they can develop their careers and enhance their contribution to the organisation.
- Make all employees and workers aware of their responsibility for promoting equality diversity and inclusion in their work; and involve employees and workers and their representatives in the development implementation monitoring and review of human resources policies, procedures, and flexible working arrangements.
- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued.
- Entitling every employee, worker or self-employed contractor to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Providing training, development and progression opportunities to all staff and encourage the development of a high-performance culture.
- Understanding equality in the workplace is good management practice
- Training all staff on the topic of Inclusion & Diversity so that all staff understand their responsibility for behaving in an inclusive manner and contributing to an inclusive environment and culture.
- Making sure our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our apprentices.
- Monitoring and reviewing this policy annually or when deemed necessary.
- Having clear procedures that enable our apprentices to access support and/or to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
- Treating breaches of our equality and diversity policy by our staff as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MONITORING

Blue Lion recognises that people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they can perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. As a inclusive workplace we have policies and practices in place that enable a diverse range of people to work together effectively.

We believe in giving all employees and learners a voice, a voice that will be heard and listened to, a voice that will allow individuals to voice their opinions and thoughts without fear of repercussions.

We will collect and closely monitor data from our online learning platform 'bud' on both the diversity of our apprentices in addition to staff and apprentice experience. Through this monitoring we aim to continually improve our diversity and inclusion practices, through our policies, and our Inclusion & Diversity practice.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENTS

Age

We will:

- Ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

We will:

- Provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people and seek partner organisations to support the access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation.

Race

We will:

- Challenge racism wherever it occurs.
- Respond swiftly and sensitively to racists incidents and
- Actively promote race equality in Blue Lion Training Academy.



Gender

We will:

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against women and men
- Offer equal access for women and men to representation, services, employment, training and pay
- Provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment

Sexual orientation

We will:

- Ensure that we take account of the needs of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning and other sexualities not listed) staff and apprentices.

Religion or belief

We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity.
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees pregnancy or maternity.

Marriage or civil partnership

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account the needs of our employees' marriage or civil partnership.



DEFINITIONS

Direct Discrimination

This is when you're treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic; for example, if your local gym refuses to give you a membership because of your age.

Indirect discrimination

This is when a good or service has criteria which have the effect of being discriminatory against a person because of a protected characteristic like their age. For example, if you can pay for an item in instalments but only if you are working, this would disadvantage retired people.

Harassment

This is when you experience behaviour that makes you feel intimidated, humiliated, or degraded, or that creates a hostile environment. For example, if a nurse repeatedly makes offensive jokes about your age. This also applies to comments or jokes made about someone you associate with, such as a partner.

Victimisation

This is when you are treated unfairly as a result of making a complaint about discrimination or giving evidence when someone else makes a complaint.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ENCOUNTER DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that you have been the victim of discrimination, you should follow our Complaints policy and procedures.

Every member of Staff has a responsibility to combat discrimination if they encounter it. Staff who observe or are aware of acts that they believe amount to discrimination directed at others are encouraged to report these to the DSL.

Any grievance or report raised about discrimination will be kept confidential so far as this is practicable. We may ask you if you wish your complaint(s) to be put to the alleged discriminator if disciplinary action appears to be appropriate.

Sometimes it may be necessary to disclose the complaint or act even if this is not in line with your wishes, but we will seek to protect you from victimisation and, if you wish, we will seek to protect your identity. You should be aware that disciplinary action may be impossible without your co-operation or if you refuse to allow relevant information to be disclosed.

Staff who raise a complaint about or report discrimination in good faith will be protected from retaliation or victimisation. If you act in good faith, the fact that you have raised a complaint or report will not affect your position within Blue Lion Training Academy, even if the complaint is not upheld.



Making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith is a misconduct offence and will be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. Anyone who attempts acts of retaliation or victimisation may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

If you make a complaint, it may be necessary to ask you to stay at home while investigations are being conducted and the matter is being dealt with through the appropriate procedure. This may particularly be necessary in cases of alleged harassment.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES RULES

Any breach of equal opportunities rules or failure to comply with this procedure will be taken very seriously and is likely to result in disciplinary action against the offender, up to and including immediate dismissal.

It should be noted: In some cases, you may be personally liable for your acts of discrimination and that legal action may be taken against you directly by the victim of any discrimination; and it may be a criminal offence intentionally to harass another employee.

ACCESSIBILITY

All Blue Lion Training Academy tutors ensure that apprentices are fully aware of employer's accessibility arrangements and special adjustments to support their learning. This is identified as part of the onboarding of the apprentice with the employer in bud.

The following image will be shown under the learner plan for the learner if special adjustments are required in the apprenticeship platform bud.



A welfare tutor is also available if the learner has not initially identified a need, as over time, this may change. This is captured through the progress review in bud (skills scan or 1-1s).

Opportunity – Apprenticeship Support Tutors ensure that the learner is aware of support.

Inclusion – Apprenticeship tutors actively promote inclusion by ensuring opportunity and differentiated resources are available. Tutors have the opportunity to raise any issues in formal settings such as standardisation meetings/ 1:1's and they can also contact the apprentices line manager at any time to raise any issues or concerns with the learner. They adapt a hybrid model of teaching online and in classroom.

Tutors actively encourage learners in reviewing their employers' equality, diversity and inclusion policy and procedure. This provides the learner with confidence to approach the employer with any concerns/issues and provides the learner with skills, knowledge, behaviour and responsibility. This is introduced as part of the learner induction and is embedded into the learner's programme.



Tutors actively engage the learners in reviewing their job roles and discuss the industry requirements for training and personal development plans (PDP). Blue Lion Training Academy engages with employers to support and review policies and procedures for engaging apprenticeships. For example, this may be looking at how the employer recruits to meet the skill set required for the business (ONA – Operational Needs Analysis) or how the employer is enabling staff to upskill (TNA – Training Needs Analysis). Tutors should liaise with the directors of Blue Lion Training Academy, should any areas of concerns be raised by email clearly indicating a summary of the issue and any actions taken to date. The Directors will then:

- Liaise with the employer to discuss and resolve.
- Provide the employer with an agreed timeframe.
- Follow up with employer to review.

If the issue is not resolved the learner / employer will be asked to follow our Complaints Policy and procedures.



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