

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI) POLICY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out our commitment and responsibilities and explains how we intend to continue to show due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations for all our stakeholders. Mercury Training Services Ltd is ambitious for its Apprentices and Other learners, staff, and local communities. Our strategy demonstrates commitment to go beyond compliance with equality legislation and to strive towards demonstrating best practice in our approach to equality and diversity across all Mercury Training's functions.

1.2 Policy Statement

Mercury Training Services Ltd celebrates and values the diversity brought to it by members of the community and is committed to providing such services and support that enable all members of its community to achieve their full potential. Mercury Training aims to ensure that everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect and dignity. We are seeking to provide a positive working and learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation and place equality, diversity, and inclusion at the heart of our business by demonstrating the following:

- Being proactive in our response to our equality duties
- Maintaining a learning and working environment for our Apprentices, Learners and staff that is free from discrimination
- Challenging inequality and discrimination
- Providing high quality responsive provision, services and support that meet the individual needs of staff, Apprentices, learners, and service users
- Embracing and celebrating the diversity of our Apprentices, learners, staff, and local communities
- Promoting equality in our policies, procedures, plans and practices
- Making every effort to ensure that our learners and workforce reflect the diverse communities of not only the local area of Birmingham, Black Country, but also our provision across the UK
- Involving staff, Apprentices, Learners, and service users in securing improvements to our programmes, services and learning and work environment
- Providing an environment where difference is respected, and it is safe to disclose equality information relating to protected characteristics
- Providing professional development opportunities that ensure staff have the skills and confidence to respond effectively to the aims of the Equality Act
- Creating an environment where staff, apprentice and Learners are willing to disclose protected characteristics for monitoring purposes

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Mercury Training complies with equality legislation in adopting a pro-active approach to mainstreaming equality into all decisions and activities. This will ensure that all employees and learners are valued for the skills, attributes and experiences that they bring, and that Mercury Training works towards removing barriers that prevent employees and learners from fulfilling their potential.

3 Equality Duties

3.1 When carrying out functions, all public sector organisations have a statutory duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 which sets out a general duty, supplemented by specific duties and regulations.

3.1.2 The General Duty

The general duty is set out in section 149 Equality Act and states, we must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

3.1.3 The General Duty consists of three individual parts. The first part which focuses on having due regard to eliminate discrimination applies to **all** the protected characteristics, namely:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage & civil partnership
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Race
- Religion & belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three main aims encompassed by the duty as part of the decision-making process. We will comply with this duty by conducting equality analysis activity that includes stakeholder feedback.

3.1.4 Having due regard to advancing equality of opportunity will include us taking action to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by those who share a protected characteristic. We will comply with this by ensuring equality analysis activity is embedded across our functions and will monitor compliance through the self-assessment and quality audit process. We will include in the analysis the extended protected characteristics religion and belief and sexual orientation, where appropriate, so that we are able to identify our progress clearly.
- Where a need is identified, we will take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of those who do not share it.
- Encourage persons 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
- Ensure our service provision extends to the needs of all those with protected characteristics
- Set and monitor equality objectives to improve our equality practice

3.1.5 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations.

We will comply with this by ensuring the equality analysis process includes attention to this aspect. We will consider ways of developing understanding between people from different groups as a way of eliminating prejudice and, where deemed appropriate, we will treat some people more favourably than others. Best practice and advice and guidance across all our functions is provided by the Managing Director who works with our independent advisory board

Collecting Equality Information

Engagement Activity

- 4.1 Engagement activity is critical to the success of an equality strategy. We will continue to consult with our independent Advisory board and stakeholders on our policies, practices and procedures and will regularly seek feedback. We have improved our practice and now have an effective learner voice strategy that includes representation of people with protected characteristics.

4.1.1 Equality Analysis

Equality analysis is a way of considering the effect on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act. We recognise the need to consider if there are any unintended consequences for some groups, and to consider if the function or policy will be fully effective for all target groups. We use equality information, and the results of engagement activity with protected

groups and others, to understand the actual effect or the potential effect of our functions, policies, or decisions. This helps us to identify practical steps to tackle any negative effects such as discrimination, and to ensure that we are being proactive in advancing equality opportunity and the fostering of good relations. Equality analysis will be conducted across all our functions and will be recorded, monitored, and audited by the Quality Improvement team

- 4.1.2 Outcomes of equality analysis will be reported to the Senior Management Team. The Quality Team will ensure the register of policies and procedures incorporates the recording of equality analysis and their outcomes. Training will continue to be provided for managers involved to ensure a consistent approach is maintained across Mercury Training.

5 Monitoring & Evaluation

- 5.1.1 The self-assessment process includes monitoring and evaluation of our functions and includes some attention to equality analysis. A key objective will be to improve the way in which we record and monitor equality information in future. We believe the parameters of current legislation provide a useful framework within which to develop good practice. Current monitoring and reporting is undertaken centrally in respect of in respect of age, ethnicity, gender and disability in the following areas:

5.1.2 Apprentices & Learners

- learner enrolment
- achievement, retention and success rates
- applications
- admissions/letters of offer
- conversion rates from admissions to enrolment
- disciplinary action, complaints and incidents of harassment/bullying
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion is embedded across our curriculum provision and also plays a key role in our review/ILP processes

Employees

- employee numbers
- grade and category of staff including full and part-time status
- applications for appointment
- shortlisted candidates
- appointments and promotions
- type of contract (permanent, fixed term)
- employee relations – grievance, disciplinary, harassment, capability, complaints
- leavers
- training and staff development opportunities
- requests for flexible working
- return rates from maternity leave and the roles to which staff return

- pay levels
- profile of those with dependants and caring responsibilities

5.1.3 Collected data will be used to inform management decisions and the review of policies and practices within Mercury Training and within the strategic and business planning processes. It will also be reported upon within the quality assurance processes through the Quality and Senior Management Team.

Policy Ownership

This Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy is owned by all relevant Mercury Training staff. Its lead originator and point of contact in relation to its content is:

Paul Lawton Jones, Managing Director of Mercury Training Services LTD

Name of Reviewer: Paul Lawton Jones

Last Reviewed August 2022

Signature of Reviewer: *Paul Lawton Jones*

Review date: July 2023