

Equality and Diversity Policy

Last Updated:	May 2021
SMT Approval Date:	Aug 2020
Annual Review Date:	May 2022
Audited as part of ISO Accreditation	As per audit plan
Owner(s):	SMT/Q
Document/catalogue Reference:	EDP/03

Policy Statement

This policy is exclusively in relation to Learners and Employers. A separate policy for Employees is provided in the Encompass Development Group Employee Handbook.

The policy can be found on our website, and is issued as part of the Learner Handbook at induction.

Aims

This Policy for Learners is about promoting positive attitudes towards equality and diversity and to ensure that every customer and learner is treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

This Policy aims to ensure that no prospective or existing learner shall receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origins, disability, HIV status, sexual orientation, gender, marital or parental status, gender re-assignment, religious belief or non-belief, political belief or social or economic class, pregnancy and maternity or any other basis that cannot be shown to be properly justifiable.

Encompass Group will ensure that its policies, procedures and practices comply with current equality legislation.

This Policy sets out the Company's work in support of equality in the key areas of current legislation.

Protected Characteristics

No Learner or Employer will be treated less favourably due to a protected characteristic or any of the following:

- Age
- Criminal record
- Disability (including mental illness)
- Gender

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- HIV status
- Income level
- Marital status
- National or ethnic origin
- Political beliefs
- Race
- Religion
- Responsibility for dependents
- Sexual orientation
- Social class

Encompass endeavours to only consider relevant factors when dealing with any Employer or Learner, for example academic ability or employment-related suitability.

In practice we expect all staff and those operating on our behalf to go above and beyond what is required by legislation to ensure that no undue discrimination occurs in the business other than where guidance is issued for filtering candidates on pre-determined criteria relevant to their programme.

Policy Scope & Purpose

Company Functions

All Company functions will take account of this Learner Equality and Diversity Policy. The following functions have specific responsibilities:

Enrolments

The Company is committed to fairness and transparency in enrolments and aims to provide a professional and fair service for potential learners.

Encompass Group only considers factors relevant to a person's ability to complete a programme when processing enrolments - typically, this means the only considerations are our entry requirements as specified by Awarding Body, funding criteria (for funded programmes), and the candidate's job role providing sufficient work experience to complete work-based learning programmes.

No prospective or existing learner will be treated less favourably on any other grounds.

Widening Participation

Encompass Group is committed to widening participation in work-based learning and is keen to see a socially and culturally diverse student body.

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To help achieve this the Company works with a diverse range of Employers and works within the community to identify and work with Employers who might not be picked up by traditional marketing means.

Encompass Group also works with community organisations to support Learners from atypical backgrounds and with special requirements to ensure our programmes are accessible to all.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Encompass Group values the diversity of backgrounds and experiences that Learners bring to our programmes and is committed to meeting the needs of a diverse and changing customer base. The Company aims to ensure that all teaching, learning and assessment strategies are equitable, undertaken with awareness of the different needs of students, and are directed towards the encouragement of academic, personal and professional development.

Encompass Group recognises the importance of encouraging diversity to be reflected in the content of courses, teaching methods and forms of assessment.

Facilities and Services

All facilities and services provided by or in association with the Company operate in accordance with the Company's Learner Equality and Diversity Policy.

Harassment

Encompass aims to provide a stimulating and supportive environment for learning and teaching which will enable Learners to fulfil their personal potential.

All representatives of the Company (including staff, associates, and self-employed sub-contractors) have an important role to play in creating an environment where harassment is unacceptable. Learners experiencing harassment or bullying in any form should speak in the first instance to their Tutor (if appropriate), or alternatively, request to speak to their programme's Internal Quality Assurer (IQA). Learners may also speak to the nominated Safeguarding Officer.

Complaints

Learners who wish to make a complaint about an equality and diversity related matter should seek to do so in accordance with the Complaints Policy, as detailed in the Learner Handbook.

Monitoring

Encompass is committed to equality and diversity monitoring of Learner applications, enrolments, progression and achievement. Comparisons are currently made by ethnicity, age, gender, under-represented groups and disability.

The results of such monitoring will be reviewed regularly by the E&D representative and SMT as well as during annual self-assessment and Management Review.

Implementation and Responsibilities

The Company seeks to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, staff members are informed of this Policy and associated procedures. All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with this Policy and its implementation.

All staff receive Equality and Diversity Training at Induction which is then updated annually, and continuously throughout their employment, including changes to legislation. This policy is reviewed at a minimum once annually.

A copy of the policy is posted on our website, and on our staff intranet.