

## **WBTC EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

This policy is a high level overarching policy and sits on top of detailed policies/procedures and guidance as specified in point 8 - Associated Policies.

- WBTC is committed to providing equality of opportunity in education, training and employment for its learners, staff, employers and subcontractors. This commitment is shared and acted on by all WBTC staff and is the overall responsibility of the Operations Director and the Board of Directors. The effectiveness of our policy and the importance we place upon it, are central to the ‘**spirit**’ of our organisational values. We aim to prepare learners for successful life in modern Britain and promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs. We will provide a safe environment where learners are able to speak out about radicalisation, extremism and harassment.
- We are committed to learners knowing how to protect themselves from the risks associated with radicalisation, extremism, forms of abuse, grooming and bullying, including through the use of social media and how well they understand the risks posed by adults.

### **1. AUTHORITY**

The policy reflects national legislation and guidelines on good practice:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998

WBTC is committed to fully implementing all current equality legislation. We keep legislation under review to ensure our full compliance.

As part of our accountability as an employer, WBTC will ensure all staff receive appropriate induction concerning their personal rights and responsibility in relation to equal opportunity legislation and the implementation of our own policy and procedures.

#### ***Equality and Diversity Statement***

*“It is the policy of WBTC to value and encourage the enriching contribution made by all who work and learn here. We value the rights of all individuals who come into contact with WBTC.”*

*“We believe that people from a range of backgrounds and experiences can enhance the working practices of this organization. All individuals will be treated on the basis of individual merit and without prejudice. We aim to provide a learning and working environment which actively promotes equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination encompassing the nine protected characteristics.”*

**Protected characteristics:**

- |                        |                                 |                        |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Age                 | 4. Marriage & civil partnership | 7. Religion and belief |
| 2. Disability          | 5. Pregnancy and maternity      | 8. Sex                 |
| 3. Gender reassignment | 6. Race                         | 9. Sexual orientation  |

*“We will positively strive to remove conditions which place people at a disadvantage and will actively work to prevent prejudice and discrimination. Where reasonably possible, we will focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in education and training and work with other partners to widen participation and support learners’ progression to further learning and/or employment relevant to their personal circumstances.”*

WBTC expects all Trustees, Directors, employees, learners, employers and stakeholders to implement this policy.

The 2010 Act also extends some of these protections to characteristics that previously were not covered by equality legislation. Employers and business owners now need to be aware of the seven different types of discrimination under the new legislation.

These are:

**1. Direct Discrimination**

Direct Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see Perceptive Discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see Associative Discrimination below).

**2. Associative Discrimination**

This already applies to Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation. It is now extended to cover Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment and Sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

**3. Perceptive Discrimination**

This already applies to Age, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation. It is now extended to cover Disability, Gender Reassignment and Sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess the characteristic.

#### **4. Indirect Discrimination**

This already applies to Age, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation and Marriage and Civil Partnership. It is now extended to cover Disability and Gender Reassignment.

Indirect Discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your organisation that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

#### **5. Harassment**

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual".

Employees will now be able to complain of behavior that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

#### **6. Third Party Harassment**

This already applies to Sex. It is now expected to cover Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation.

The Equality Act makes you potentially liable for harassment of your employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of your company, such as customers or clients.

#### **7. Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. The Equality Act amends the definition 'victimisation', so that no longer needs to point to a comparator.

## **2. SCOPE OF POLICY**

All aspects of WBTC provision and working partnerships both internal and external, such as learners, employers and subcontractors are covered by this policy.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board of Trustees/Directors is responsible for promoting equal opportunities on behalf of WBTC. They are also responsible for ensuring that effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure the continued improvement of equality, diversity and Inclusion throughout the organisation to the benefit of all its users. At a strategic level, our policy will be reviewed periodically in conjunction with statistics, emerging trends and legislation to ensure it remains relevant, current and reflective of internal and external influencing factors.

### 4. HOW WE PROMOTE AND CHECK THAT OUR POLICY IS UPHOLD AMONGST STAFF, LEARNERS, EMPLOYERS AND SUBCONTRACTORS AND HOW IT IS MONITORED

- **The Operations Director** is responsible for implementing all aspects of the WBTC's Equal Opportunities Policy relating to the employment of staff.
- **The Managing Director** is responsible for ensuring that equal opportunities are actively promoted within all aspects of WBTC's operation. This includes the co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of its overall effectiveness both internally and externally, with staff, learners, employers and subcontractors.
- **All Directors, Managers and Staff** are responsible for promoting equal opportunities and putting our policy into practice within all aspects of their work, creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all. We aim to provide a safe environment free from any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. All will not tolerate prejudiced behaviour. The promotion of fundamental British values is at the heart of our work.
- We will all work to protect learners from radicalisation and extremism and we all respond swiftly where learners are vulnerable to these issues.
- **All Learners** receive comprehensive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion awareness training as part of their induction programme and a 'reader friendly' version of our policy within the induction pack. Their understanding, commitment to Equal Opportunities and its implementation is contextualised throughout their programme and captured in reviews where discussions take place to enhance learner knowledge. In addition, naturally occurring opportunities are also utilised to broaden learners' knowledge within training sessions and learner surveys and any other relevant opportunities.
- **All Employers** receive thorough Advice & Guidance about the apprenticeship programme from WBTC Advisers. An employer checklist is undertaken as part of our selection process. An employer 'reader friendly' version of our policy is issued to them and the employer's policy is reviewed to ensure it acts in accordance with our own. Formal compliance to our policy is captured within an Employer Agreement. Employer's checklists are reviewed annually to ensure conformity is maintained. In addition, employer's understanding, commitment to equal opportunities and its implementation is monitored throughout the learner's programme and captured in reviews, training, employer surveys and any other relevant opportunities.

- **Subcontractors and Suppliers** are risk assessed with our subcontractor's checklist to judge the amount of QA visits needed, dependant on experience of the provider, quality and size of provision with our learners and frequency of ongoing partnership meetings. Suppliers and subcontractors will be quality assured yearly or bi-yearly. Subcontractors will be met with during the year for partnership meetings. Frequency of these are again based on the above risk assessment. To ensure conformity is maintained, all visits/observations are formally recorded. Subcontractor's Agreements are renewed annually.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee** is responsible for supporting the delivery of a 'living' message of Equality Opportunity across the Company. The purpose of the group is to monitor the effectiveness of our policies, inform policy and disseminate good practice across the organisation. The Group meets at least three times per year to support the implementation of our Equal Opportunities processes. Our activity is captured in our Quality Improvement Plan. Impact Assessment Measures and the outcomes of objectives and targets are applied across the year. Other stakeholders can be brought into the group to underpin specific aims; these include learners, employers, Subcontractors, Suppliers and specialist representatives/organisations pertinent to our objectives.

## 5. POLICY CONTENT AND BREACHES TO OUR POLICY

- WBTC seeks to ensure equality of opportunity and the fair treatment for all those involved in our activities. This applies, whether a member of staff, learner, employer or subcontractor working with us in the delivery of our learning/training or employment programmes and services.
- WBTC will not tolerate, and vigorously works towards eliminating, any discrimination, harassment victimisation or bullying. This applies to all regardless of seniority, gender, religion, age, race/ethnicity, disability, religious or belief persuasion, marital status, and sexual orientation, gender reassignment or any other grounds. All parties are open to challenge any breach of this policy by making a formal complaint.
- In the event, if staff, learners, employers or subcontractors are alleged to be in breach of WBTC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, an investigation will be carried out in accordance with our agreed complaints procedure and appropriate actions taken as deemed suitable.

*For guidance on our complaints procedure, which supports the above covering harassment, bullying, other complaints and grievances, see Policy Links.*

## 6. WBTC WILL WORK ACTIVELY TO ADVANCE PROGRESSION IN FIVE KEY AREAS

These Five Key areas (A-E) also form the underpinning of WBTC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Performance Indicators, (PI's) as shown below. These indicators and sub-related PI's are detailed and highlighted within the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan. Our effectiveness is measured by these actions.

### A. Participation of Learners, Retention and Achievement

WBTC supports learners regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, religious or belief persuasion, gender reassignment, marital/civil single status, sexual orientation or pregnancy/maternity. We understand that sometimes your background can determine some of your learning needs. WBTC will work to ensure these are met and facilitate any learner's desire to remain in learning and achieve their learning aims to the best of their ability.

We will make reasonable efforts to meet the special needs of any individual arising from religious or cultural obligations.

*PI.1 Leaders monitor overall retention and achievement rates by age, ethnicity, gender and disability etc to match the SFA area of learning average (relative to population profile of West Berkshire) to ensure no group of learners is disadvantaged or underachieves.*

### B. Monitoring, Evaluation and Targeting Achievement

- WBTC will monitor full learner data on the basis of race, gender, disability, and age and other protected characteristics to ensure that all groups of learners achieve and that any gaps in progress and attainment between different groups of learners are narrowed. Where variation is found in the achievement of different groups of learners interventions will be taken.
  - Learners make progress during their programme compared with their starting points, with particular attention to progress by different groups of learners.
1. WBTC monitors staff in relation to a number of protected characteristics including religion and sexual orientation and is expanding its scope to include other protected categories. Any indication of inequality will be investigated and acted upon, such as under-representation of groups.
  2. Feedback from annual learner/employer surveys will be used to ascertain the effectiveness of our policy. Monthly learner retention and achievement data will be collected to underpin the survey results and formally reviewed twice a year to assist target setting; these processes will assist in confirming the success of our policy in terms of recruitment, retention and achievement. This will also identify any themes for specific action and assist benchmarking our performance against previous years. Leaver analysis will be collected monthly and reviewed alongside the above; any identified trends will be used to make targeted improvements.

Learners with severe and complex special educational needs will be encouraged to gain skills and progress to become more independent in their everyday life and/or progress to positive destinations such as work trials, employment or further education.

We will assist learners with special educational needs to become more independent in their everyday life by providing an enriching and relevant curriculum.

Learners will be encouraged to provide feedback and/or raise concerns through our safeguarding team and via “Ed” our confidential email support.

3. Monitor staff religion/belief and sexual orientation and expand to include all nine protected characteristics to remove any unforeseen barriers to learning and employment.

***PI.2 Recruitment by age, ethnicity, gender and disability etc. broadly reflects local population profile.***

#### C. Harassment and Discrimination

WBTC will protect learners from harassment, victimisation, discrimination or bullying of any kind. All learners, staff, employers and Subcontractors and Suppliers are required and expected to uphold these values.

***PI.3 Complaints of any nature reviewed throughout the year to ensure they are fairly resolved and in a manner that reflects our company policies.***

#### D. Meeting the needs of the Learner, Recruitment and Widening Participation

- WBTC’s ground floor is fully accessible to learners with mobility impairment. WBTC provides support to meet the learner needs and enable learners of different ability and social needs to access our programmes and succeed in their learning aims. (See Disability Statement which sets out our support mechanisms to learners.) Our centre will be reviewed for accessibility and reasonable adjustments to meet specific access needs where applicable, will be addressed where practicable. Alternative arrangements will be investigated to ensure no person is disadvantaged by not being able to access WBTC centre.
- The selection criteria applied to both staff and learners internally and by an employer will be assessed against how well a candidate can meet the requirements of the job description; meaning selection is made on ability to do the job/undertake training for the job.
- Recruitment of staff and volunteers will be subject to DRB checks appropriate to safeguarding principles.

- We will actively monitor our recruitment and staff development practice to measure our effectiveness in applying equality, diversity and inclusion to the recruitment, development and promotion of employees.
- Records of interviews are kept according to the company's procedures and include the reasons why applicants were not selected.
- Positive Action - Employers have been entitled to encourage applications from groups they reasonably consider to be under-represented in their industry. WBTC will use this option where relevant.
- WBTC respect the diversity of learners and wherever possible will draw on examples of cultural community backgrounds within teaching, training or assessment materials and marketing activities. Materials will NOT contain negative insulting stereotypes on any grounds.
- WBTC will engage Learners know how to keep themselves fit and healthy, both physically and emotionally.
- Enrichment activities will allow all learners to explore personal, social and ethical issues and take part in life in community activities and the wider society in Britain.
- All Staff respect each other and learners, and learners are expected to respect all staff and each other.

***P1.4 Learning, assessment and promotional materials reflect the local diversity of our community. Where relevant, materials encourage any under-represented groups and promote a variety of occupational choices.***

#### E. Celebrating diversity and promoting positive role models

- WBTC will reflect and promote positive contributions of all regardless of gender, age, race/ethnicity, disability, religious or belief persuasion, marital/civil or single status, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. It will ensure that our marketing plans reflect our policy and any special incentives to highlight under-represented groups/occupational areas. Where relevant, advertising will include our Equal Opportunities banner statement: ***“WBTC - paving the way for equality of opportunity in training, education and employment for all”***.
- WBTC will actively promote staff and training development in equal opportunities for all employees.
- WBTC will monitor and review the course materials and learning resources to ensure they are appropriate and promote, where appropriate, equal opportunities and do not contain any stereotypical or insulting images.

- We will ensure our teaching, learning and assessment promote equality, raise awareness of diversity and tackle discrimination, victimisation, harassment, stereotyping, radicalisation and bullying
- WBTC will maintain partnership activities with groups and organisations to support and develop equal opportunities and promote and engage in positive actions for the benefit of all.
- WBTC will review on an annual basis the effectiveness of our complaints procedures designed to assist learners, employers, staff and Subcontractors and Suppliers which will raise any issue under equal opportunities or any other grievances.
- WBTC will ensure that our policy is understood and upheld by all those who work with us including staff, learners, employers, Subcontractors, Suppliers and partner organisations.

***P1.5 Achievement of our Equality Diversity and Inclusion objectives set within Quality Improvement Plan***

## **7. REVIEW OF WBTC EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

The policy will be reviewed in full on an annual basis to ascertain its effectiveness. Where fundamental changes are made, stakeholders will be informed. This report will impart inform the Self Assessment Report and the Quality Improvement Plan. Revision of Performance Indicators may be adjusted following this process.

## **8. ASSOCIATED POLICIES**

There are further policies in support of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy covering areas such as discipline and grievance, safeguarding, data protection, Code of conduct behaviour and harassment and disabilities which can be found on the our web pages.

The above policy links to a number of associated policies and documents including but not exclusive to:

- Complaints/Appeals procedure
- Customer Charter
- Disability Statement
- Employer Agreement
- Employer Vacancy Specification
- Harassment Policy
- Learners Induction handbook
- Quality Improvement Plan
- Recruitment and Selection policy
- Self-Assessment Report
- Staff Personal Company Guide
- Strategic Business Plan
- Sub-contractors & Suppliers agreement

**WBTC will provide policies/documents on request if not issued as part of the stakeholders' involvement with us.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
TAMMERA EASTERLING  
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Review Date: November 2015\_\_\_\_\_  
Review Date: November 2016\_\_\_\_\_  
Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNEX 1

### EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION DEFINITIONS

#### Understanding Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

By the proactive use of equal opportunity, experiencing discrimination or being disadvantaged can be prevented or stopped through legislation and positive intervention. Equality of Opportunities is to ensure that no group receives less favourable treatment and encompasses the nine protected characteristics.

#### **Racism**

All attitudes, procedures and patterns - economic, social and cultural - whose effect (though not necessarily whose conscious intention) is to create, maintain and extend the power, influence and privilege of one group of people over another. An implicit set of negative beliefs about a racial or ethnic group can result in offensive or violent behaviour towards members of a racial or ethnic group.

#### **Sexism**

All attitudes, procedures and patterns - economic, social and cultural - whose effect (though not necessarily whose conscious intention) is to create, maintain and extend the power, influence and privilege of people of one sex over people of the other.

#### **Prejudice**

An opinion or feeling about people of a different group, which is formed beforehand, without informed knowledge, thought or reason and which is likely to be sustained even in the face of evidence to the contrary.

#### **Discrimination**

Less favourable treatment of an individual or group, which is not based on their work performance or conduct as a member of staff or student.

#### **Indirect Discrimination**

This occurs when a requirement or condition is applied which, whether intentionally or not, adversely affects a particular individual or group considerably more than others and cannot be justified.

#### **Disability Discrimination**

Less favourable treatment of an individual or group on account of their disability or, if without justification, a reasonable adjustment is not made.

#### **Institutional Discrimination**

This occurs when a person or a group of people become discriminated against on the basis of any of the nine protected characteristics as a result of the arrangements and accepted practices within an institute.

#### **Racial Discrimination**

Less favourable treatment of an individual or group on account of their racial origin or colour.

**Sexual Discrimination**

Less favourable treatment of an individual or group on account of their gender, marital status or sexual orientation.

**Age Discrimination**

Age Regulations make it unlawful to discriminate against an individual or a group on account of their age.

**Harassment**

Can be directed at any group or individual and can include unnecessary touching, unwanted physical contact, leering, personal remarks, verbal or written abuse, visual displays, coercion, isolation or non co-operation.

**Sexual Harassment**

Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of men or women at work. Repeated and/or unwanted verbal or sexual advance, sexually explicit or derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks.

**Racial Harassment**

Conduct (whether by act or omission) which is intended to cause or does cause, physical or mental distress to an individual or group on account of their colour, race, nationality or ethnic origins.

**Victimisation**

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others because that person has made a complaint or allegation of discrimination, or has acted as a witness or informant in connection with proceedings under any of the relevant Acts, or has been involved in any other way in their enforcement or intends to do any of these.

**Equal Rights**

The achievement and respect of equal civil rights for all.