

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.0	09/08/2024	Patsy Crocker	Initial policy creation
1.1	27/08/2025	Patsy Crocker	Reviewed for completeness
2.0	Jan 2026	Sophie Gilmore	Major revision: renamed to include 'Inclusion', expanded legal framework, detailed protected characteristics, enhanced reasonable adjustments, curriculum integration, positive action guidance

1. Introduction

Hybrid Training Centre (HTC) is committed to creating an inclusive environment where diversity is valued, and everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We believe that equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are fundamental to achieving excellence in training delivery and creating positive outcomes for all learners.

This policy sets out HTC's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, valuing diversity, and fostering an inclusive culture for staff, learners, employers, and all stakeholders.

2. Policy Statement

HTC is committed to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Creating an inclusive environment where everyone can achieve their full potential
- Challenging stereotypes and promoting positive images of all groups
- Embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout our curriculum and services
- Complying with all relevant legislation and best practice

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All HTC employees, including permanent, temporary, casual staff, and contractors
- All learners and apprentices
- Employers and workplace mentors
- Visitors and members of the public interacting with HTC
- Job applicants and prospective learners

The policy covers all aspects of employment and training, including recruitment, selection, training delivery, assessment, progression, and support services.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010 – the primary legislation prohibiting discrimination
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Public Sector Equality Duty (where applicable to publicly-funded provision)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Employment Rights Act 1996

HTC is committed to meeting its legal obligations and going beyond minimum requirements to create a genuinely inclusive organisation.

5. Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination based on the following nine protected characteristics:

Characteristic	Description
Age	Protection against discrimination based on age (young or old)
Disability	Physical or mental impairment with substantial, long-term effect on daily activities
Gender reassignment	People who are proposing, undergoing, or have undergone gender reassignment
Marriage & civil partnership	Protection in employment for married people and civil partners
Pregnancy & maternity	Protection during pregnancy and maternity leave
Race	Colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins
Religion or belief	Religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief
Sex	Being male or female
Sexual orientation	Attraction to people of the same sex, opposite sex, or both

6. Types of Discrimination

HTC will not tolerate any form of discrimination, including:

Direct discrimination: Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination: Applying a provision, criterion, or practice that disadvantages people with a protected characteristic, unless objectively justified.

Harassment: Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Victimisation: Treating someone unfavourably because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination.

Discrimination by association: Discriminating against someone because of their association with a person with a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by perception: Discriminating against someone because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic (whether or not they do).

7. Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

HTC is committed to supporting learners and staff with disabilities. We recognise that a disability is a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

7.1 Reasonable Adjustments

HTC will make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers for people with disabilities, including:

- Adapting assessment methods (e.g., extra time, readers, scribes)
- Providing information in accessible formats
- Adjusting training schedules or delivery methods
- Providing assistive technology or equipment
- Adapting physical premises where possible
- Flexible working arrangements for staff

7.2 Disclosure

Learners and staff are encouraged to disclose any disability or support needs as early as possible (during application, enrolment, or induction) so that appropriate support can be put in place. Disclosure is voluntary, and information is treated confidentially.

8. Equality in Employment

8.1 Recruitment and Selection

- Job advertisements will not discourage applications from any protected group
- Selection criteria are objective and related to job requirements
- Interview questions focus on skills, experience, and suitability
- Reasonable adjustments are made for candidates with disabilities
- Recruitment decisions are based on merit

8.2 Terms and Conditions

- Equal pay for work of equal value
- Fair and consistent application of policies
- Equal access to training and development opportunities
- Fair consideration for promotion based on merit

8.3 Positive Action

Where evidence shows under-representation or disadvantage, HTC may take positive action to encourage applications from under-represented groups, provide targeted support, or (as a tie-breaker) give preference to a candidate from an under-represented group where candidates are equally qualified.

9. Equality in Training Delivery

9.1 Curriculum and Teaching

- Learning materials reflect diversity and avoid stereotypes
- Examples and case studies include diverse perspectives
- Trainers use inclusive language and challenge discriminatory comments
- Assessment methods are fair and accommodate diverse needs
- Support is available for learners with additional needs

9.2 Embedding EDI

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are embedded throughout the learner journey:

- Induction includes EDI awareness
- EDI topics are integrated into relevant qualifications
- Progress reviews include discussion of EDI in the workplace
- Learners are encouraged to respect and value differences

9.3 Working with Employers

HTC expects employers to share our commitment to EDI. We will:

- Communicate our EDI expectations during employer engagement
- Support employers to understand their EDI responsibilities
- Address concerns about discriminatory practices in the workplace

10. Responsibilities

10.1 Senior Leadership Team

- Provide leadership and commitment to EDI
- Ensure resources are available for EDI initiatives
- Monitor progress against EDI objectives
- Role-model inclusive behaviours

10.2 COO (Policy Owner)

- Operational responsibility for implementing this policy
- Coordinating EDI training
- Investigating EDI complaints
- Reporting on EDI performance

10.3 All Staff

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Promote inclusive practices
- Participate in EDI training
- Report concerns about discrimination or harassment

10.4 Learners

- Treat staff, other learners, and employers with respect
- Respect diversity and difference
- Comply with the learner Code of Conduct
- Report any discrimination or harassment

11. Complaints and Concerns

Any person who believes they have been discriminated against, harassed, or victimised should raise their concern through:

- Informal resolution: Speak to a manager, tutor, or the COO
- Formal complaint: Follow the Complaints Policy or Grievance Procedure (for staff)

All complaints will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and treated confidentially. Victimisation of anyone who makes a complaint in good faith will not be tolerated.

Malicious or vexatious complaints may result in disciplinary action.

12. Breach of Policy

Breach of this policy is a serious matter:

- For staff: may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- For learners: may result in action under the Behaviour Policy, including termination of training
- Serious harassment may also be a criminal offence

13. Training

All staff receive EDI training:

- As part of induction
- Refresher training every two years
- Enhanced training for staff involved in recruitment and management

Learners receive EDI awareness during induction and throughout their programme.

14. Monitoring and Review

HTC monitors EDI performance through:

- Analysis of learner and staff diversity data
- Achievement rates by protected characteristic
- Complaints and incidents data
- Staff and learner surveys
- Self-assessment and quality improvement processes

Data is reported to the Senior Leadership Team and informs the Quality Improvement Plan. This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes to legislation or guidance.

15. Related Documents

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Learner Code of Conduct
- Recruitment Policy

Policy Approval

Signature:

Date:

Sophie Gilmore
Group Chief Executive Officer