

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Abbey DLD Group is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and for each employee to feel respected.

Abbey DLD is committed to preventing unlawful discrimination.

We aim to foster a culture of equality and to recognise the positive contribution that each individual can make to the business irrespective of their sex, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, age or disability (the “**Protected Characteristics**”). This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, home-workers, part-time and fixed-term Employees, volunteers, casual workers and agency staff (“**Staff**”).

The policy’s purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all individuals working at all levels and grades including directors, senior managers, officers, employees, volunteers, casual workers and agency staff (“Staff”).
- Not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of the Equality Acts’ protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (the “Protected Characteristics”).
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, parental leave, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

We are committed to:

- Encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace
- Making opportunities for training and development available to all staff, helping and encouraging them to develop their full potential in their respective roles.
- Creating a working environment which is free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, which promotes dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training school and college leaders, and all other employees, about their rights and responsibilities relating to this policy, which includes equal opportunities in employment and the prevention of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

- Ensuring that all staff understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of their employment and so it is in all of our interests to engage in this training.
- Taking complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination very seriously, dealing with these complaints (if proven) as misconduct under our grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and taking action as appropriate. Particularly serious complaints could be considered as gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may be both an employment matter and a criminal matter, for example as in sexual assault allegations, and where harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 (which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic) is a criminal offence.
- Ensuring that decisions concerning staff will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Reviewing employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law (including adherence to ADC Fair Recruitment & Selection initiatives).
- Monitoring the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
- Assessing how the Equality and Inclusion Policy, and any supporting action plans, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues arising.

Staff are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity and the Group will not tolerate any less favourable treatment of any person on the grounds of the Protected Characteristics. It should be noted that Staff have a personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy and to ensure that they treat others with the respect and dignity that they expect to be treated with themselves.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

The Policy in Operation

This policy also applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment and appointment, promotion, training and development, terms and conditions of work, performance management, pay, termination of employment, any references issued and to every other aspect of employment. All terms and conditions of employment and related benefits shall be non-discriminatory, other than where there

are legal grounds for discriminating such as in the case of gender specific jobs. Applicants for employment will be assessed according to their skills, experience and suitability for the job.

Remedies

The senior management of the Group, with the assistance of members of the HR department, will take responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy. However, if any member of Staff believes that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised on any of the grounds referred to above, they may raise the matter informally with their immediate line manager or the Group's Human Resources department. If the member of Staff wishes to raise the matter further, they should use the Group's grievance procedure setting out in detail the basis of their complaint. All such complaints will be taken seriously by the Group. They shall be treated in confidence and investigated fully by an independent member of management.

If a member of Staff is found to have discriminated against, harassed or victimised another member of Staff they will be subject to disciplinary proceedings and depending on the seriousness of the incident, may be dismissed for Gross Misconduct. In exceptionally serious cases the police may also be involved.

There will be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, if it is discovered that a false allegation has been made maliciously, this will be treated as misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action.

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the Protected Characteristics set out above.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same Protected Characteristics at a particular disadvantage.

Associative discrimination is where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another person who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.

Third party harassment related to gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, age or disability is also unacceptable. While we may not have direct control over third-party individuals, we will take reasonable steps to prevent or respond to any instances of third-party harassment.

Victimisation is also prohibited under this policy. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has raised or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010 for discrimination or harassment, or because they are suspected of doing so.

Disability

The Group is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for those members of staff who are disabled or become disabled for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 during their employment with the Group.

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that the Group may support you as appropriate.

We will consider making reasonable adjustments to the workplace and to employment arrangements so that a disabled person is not at any substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. These may include, but are not limited to, the provision of auxiliary aids, or adjustments to working arrangements.

If a member of staff is unable to continue in their current role as a result of a disability, the Group will consider any alternative roles and vacancies they may have as a way of retaining the services of that member of Staff.

Any member of Staff who has any questions about the applicability of this policy should consult the senior management team or Human Resources Team.

Interpretation

This policy applies in all schools, colleges and other work environments within the Abbey DLD Group Limited, registered number 13933719.

The terms “Group” and “Company” should be interpreted accordingly, dependent on the employing company.

The registered office is C/O Abbey College Cambridge, Homerton Gardens, Cambridge, England, CB2 8EB. Any enquiries regarding the application of this policy should be addressed to the Head of HR at that address.

The Equality and Inclusion policy is fully supported by the Board of Abbey DLD Group and has been agreed by the Board.

Details of Abbey DLD Group’s grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found on the Portal. Use of the grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee’s right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

HR DOCUMENT

PORTAL

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