

Excel Education Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines Excel Education's legal obligations under Equality and Diversity legislation.

Equality and Diversity is governed by the Equality Act 2010. It is comprised of general duties, which came into force from April 2011, and specific duties, enforceable against public sector bodies from 2012. The Act covers 'protected characteristics' of 'race', 'sex', 'disability', religion or belief', 'age', 'sexual orientation', 'gender reassignment', 'pregnancy & maternity' and 'marriage & civil partnership'.

The General duties include the following:

- 1) Protection against unlawful discrimination: this makes it unlawful to discriminate against the all protected characteristics. The scope of this provision applies to all sectors and organisations, including those receiving and not receiving public funding.
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity: this introduces a duty to advance equality of opportunity across all protected characteristics, except for the protected characteristic of 'marriage & civil partnership'. This provision is better known as the Public Sector Equality Duty. It applies only to public sector organisations or those receiving public sector funding.
- 3) Foster good relations (tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people sharing and not sharing a protected characteristic): this requires organisations to foster good relations, tackle prejudice and promote understanding across all protected characteristics, except for the protected characteristic of 'marriage & civil partnership'. This provision forms part of the Public Sector Equality Duty and applies only to public sector organisations or those receiving public sector funding.
- 4) 'Positive discrimination': although the Act does not use these terms, the effect is the same for provisions in s.13(3) and (6)(b) of the Act. The first of these permits 'favourable treatment' for the protected characteristic of disability, while the latter permits 'special treatment' for the protected characteristic of 'pregnancy & maternity'. These provisions apply to all sectors and organisations.

As a company limited by shares and not in receipt of public funding, Excel Education recognises its legal obligations to its stakeholders to provide protection against unlawful discrimination and to ensure favourable treatment of those with a disability and special treatment to those that are pregnant. It is not subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. However, Excel Education does recognise the principles and scope of the Public Sector Equality Duty to be in line with good practice and will endeavour to embed its philosophy, especially in relation to its students.

Recruitment, selection and progression

Staff

Excel Education currently provides a range English, FE and HE programmes to domestic and, in due course, to international learners. It aims to recruit a highly qualified and experienced lecturing team from a diverse background.

It is envisaged that a diverse lecturing team possesses the potential and will be able to engage with 'internationalising the curriculum' and use this as a vehicle to improve learner engagement with programmes and units and embed equality and diversity - viewing it as a means of adding value to the curriculum rather than a 'bolt-on' afterthought.

Although a diverse lecturing team is preferred, recruitment, selection and internal progression will be based purely on merit and will not exceed the parameters of positive action.

Learners

Recruitment and selection of students will be based on awarding body entry criteria, ability to pay fees or eligibility to receive Learner Loans Company funding and, in the case of international students, be in line with UKBA requirements for international students.

Excel Education will make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities and learning difficulties, in line with legal and awarding body obligations and guidelines and will not refuse admission to students on these grounds alone.

There will be efforts to contextualise and internationalise the curriculum, using a range of appropriate assessment methods that seek to enhance the student learning experience, broaden their skill set, improve progression opportunities and being responsive to student preferences.

Standard progression criteria will be applied to all students. Such criteria will be made available in Excel Education's prospectus and student handbook. Progression interviews will take place for internal students in order to ensure that all students make an informed choice.

Complaints

Staff

Complaints relating to E & D against other members of staff will be referred to the Principal or a Director, who will investigate the complaint.

Complaints relating to E & D against students will be referred to a programme leader initially and then, where necessary, progress to the Principal or a Director, who will investigate the matter or delegate such investigation accordingly.

Learners

Complaints relating to E & D against members of staff will be referred to the academic office initially. The Principal or a Director will meet with the subject of the complaint and the student (privately or together, depending on the seriousness of the allegations). Where the matter cannot be resolved amicably, or the matter is serious, a formal investigation will take place and disciplinary action could ensue where allegations are proven.

Monitoring

Excel Education will monitor implementation of its equality and diversity policy. It will collect equality and diversity data across the stakeholders it serves and analyse the said data, taking remedial action where necessary.

Data collection systems for monitoring of E & D include:

- an Equality Monitoring Form attached to the end of Learner Recruitment and Staff Recruitment forms (see Appendix 1);
- a table of staff and learner E & D related complaints and outcomes (see Appendix 2)
- a table of requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration by programme / awarding body (see Appendix 3)

Monitoring of E & D implementation includes:

- agenda items at senior management team meetings scheduled for once a term and more frequently where E & D related issues have been identified and/or raised, requiring attention or remedial action;

- E & D action plan completed following senior management team meetings (see Appendix 4).
- examination of any E & D related issues

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Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Excel Education is committed to recruiting, retaining and developing an effective and responsive workforce that reflects the communities we serve. It is important that we monitor and analyse diversity information so that we can ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all staff, howsoever engaged, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group. Selection will be on merit alone and lined to published criteria, such as job description and person specification. Your cooperation in providing us with accurate data will ensure that we meet our legal obligations and assist us in designing and applying policies and procedures consistently, hopefully attracting a diverse and talented workforce. Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

Name:

Date:

Gender: Male Female

Are you married or in a civil partnership: Yes No

Age: 16-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44
 45-49 50-54 55-59 60-64 65+
 prefer not to say

How would you describe your national identity?

English Welsh Scottish Northern Irish Irish
 British Other Prefer not to say

What is your ethnicity?

Ethnic origin categories are not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. They are about the group to which you as an individual perceive you belong. Please indicate your ethnic origin by checking the appropriate box.

White

English Welsh Scottish Northern Irish Irish
 British Gypsy or Irish Traveller Other White background

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean White and Black African
 White and Asian Any other mixed background

Asian/Asian British

Indian Pakistani
 Bangladeshi Chinese
 Any other Asian background

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

African Caribbean
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background

Other ethnic group

Arab Any other ethnic group
Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to be disabled? Yes No Prefer not to say

Any information you provide here will be used for monitoring purposes only – if you need a 'reasonable adjustment', then please follow some of our other processes. We will take reasonable steps to meet your particular needs.

What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual / straight Gay woman / lesbian
Gay man Bisexual
Other Prefer not to say

What is your religion or belief?

No religion Buddhist Christian
Hindu Jewish Muslim
Sikh Any other religion Prefer not to say

What is your current working pattern?

Full-time Part-time
Prefer not to say

Do you have caring responsibilities? If yes please check all boxes that apply

None
Primary carer of a child/children (under 18) Primary carer of disabled child/children
Primary carer of disabled adult (18 and over) Primary carer of older person (65+)
Secondary carer Prefer not to say

By completing this form you have helped us better understand how we as an organisation ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Thank you for completing this form.

