

Venture Learning

Equalities Policy

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Introduction

This policy is written to reflect Venture Learning's duties under the Equality Act 2010, as both a provider of education and an employer, to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity.

We believe that all students and members of staff should have equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our provision.

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, race, gender (including issues of transgender), maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff).

Venture Learning recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion by developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998

Venture Learning recognise that we are operating within a diverse community and that our students, staff and stakeholders represent a wide range of cultural, religious and socio-economic differences. We promote an ethos of acceptance and understanding of these differences. Staff and students are expected to respect and encouraged to celebrate diversity.

Key Staff and Contacts

Provision Based Contacts

Name	Role
Rhys Griffiths	**Head of Provision**
Holly Crann	**Deputy Head of Provision**
Contact details:	**Venture Learning** **19A Forester Street** **Netherfield** **Nottingham** **NG4 2LJ**
	www.venturelearning.co.uk
	0115 987 6621 / 07587 408 996
	Rhys.griffiths@venturelearning.co.uk
	Holly.crann@venturelearning.co.uk

Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Venture Learning will inform all employees that an equalities policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and promote fairness and equality in the workplace. This policy will also be drawn to the attention of current/prospective students; parents/carers; members of staff; job applicants; service providers; and any/all other stakeholders.

1.1 Head of Provision

Has overall responsibility for:

• the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated legislation and for observing relevant Codes of Practice; and,

• monitoring and reviewing the policy and for ensuring that all employment-related policies, procedures and practices adhere to this policy.

The head of provision may choose to delegate these responsibilities but retains ultimate accountability.

1.2 All staff

All staff have a responsibility not to discriminate against or harass other staff, students, service providers, stakeholders or visitors and to report any such behaviour of which they become aware to their line manager or directly to the Head of Provision.

Managers and members of staff with supervisory roles are responsible for implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy and must apply the policy as part of their day-to-day practice.

1.3 Teaching staff

All staff who work with students should:

• model and promote an ethos of acceptance and understanding;

• challenge discriminatory behaviour in lessons and around site, and alert senior staff of serious or repeated occurrences;

• set ground rules and facilitate discussions around diversity closely, whether as part of the curriculum or ad hoc work, especially if the topic is sensitive; and,

• take opportunities to teach students about cultural, religious, poitical, sexual, socio-economic, circumstantial and identity differences when relevant to the curriculum.

Section 2: Operation of the Policy

2.1 Equality and diversity

Venture Learning is committed to:

• creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued;

• creating an environment that promotes dignity and respect for every student, member of staff, service provider, stakeholder and visitor;

• challenge any form of discrimination, intimidation, bullying, or harassment in line with the grievance & disciplinary procedure; and,

• regularly reviewing all our employment practices and procedures so that fairness and equality are maintained at all times.

2.2 Creating Equal Opportunities

There are a number of ways in which Venture Learning aims to ensure equal opportunities including:

• **recruitment and selection -** procedures will be free from bias or discrimination. Recruitment procedures will be conducted objectively and will be based upon specific and reasonable job-related criteria. Decisions regarding an individual's suitability for a particular role will be based on aptitude and ability. We will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process to ensure that disabled applicants are not substantially disadvantaged.;

• **career development and training -** all staff will be given an appropriate induction to enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of their role. All employees will be encouraged to develop their full potential and we will not unreasonably deny an employee access to training or other career development opportunities. These will be identified as part of an ongoing performance management process and will be determined objectively, taking into account the needs of the business and available resources. Selection for promotion will be based on objective criteria and decisions will be made on the basis of merit.;

• **terms and conditions of employment -** will be applied fairly and benefits and facilities will be made available to all staff who should have access to them, as appropriate. Venture Learning operates a pay and benefits system that is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias to ensure that all employees are rewarded fairly for their contribution and loyalty.; and,

• **employment policy and practices -** do not directly or indirectly discriminate and are applied in a non-discriminatory manner. In particular we will ensure that all disciplinary decisions are fair and consistent and that selection for redundancy is based on objective criteria. Venture Learning will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the working environment or any work arrangements that would alleviate any substantial disadvantage these cause disabled staff. We will aim as far as reasonably practicable to accommodate the requirements of different religions and cultures, and to be flexible to the needs of staff who care for a dependant.

Appendix A: Forms of Discrimination

The following are forms of discrimination that this policy aims to avoid:

Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic that they either have or are thought to have. Direct discrimination can also occur by way of association, which is when a person is treated less favourably because, for example, their spouse or partner or other relative has the protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but has a disproportionately adverse effect on people who share a particular protected characteristic. A person with the protected characteristic who is disadvantaged in that way has the right to complain.

To be justified the provision, criterion, or practice must be necessary for legitimate business reasons in circumstances where less discriminatory alternatives are not reasonably available.

Victimisation occurs where someone is treated unfavourably because he/she has raised a complaint under this policy or taken legal action, in relation to any alleged act of unlawful discrimination, against the Company or because he/she has supported someone else in doing this.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment can take many different forms and may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments, emails or physical contact that causes offence or are objectionable.

Harassment may involve a single incident or persistent behaviour that extends over a period of time and can occur even if someone did not mean to cause offence. It also means that a person can be subjected to harassment by behaviour that is not aimed at them directly but which they nonetheless find unpleasant.

Harassment is always unacceptable and where it relates to a protected characteristic it will amount to an unlawful act of discrimination.

Discrimination arising from Disability - In addition to the above, it is unlawful to treat a person unfavourably because of something that is the result, effect or outcome of their disability, unless the treatment is necessary and can be objectively justified. Furthermore, employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled applicants, employees or other workers are not substantially disadvantaged.