

### **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

#### **Policy Statement**

*“The Equality Act 2010 is the law which bans unfair treatment and helps achieve equal opportunities in the workplace and in wider society.” (Home Office 2011)*

Wise Origin - WO recognises that it is imperative to adhere to equality legislation and it is our policy that everyone who comes into contact with WO shall be given equal access and equal opportunity with respect regardless of:

- Age.
- Disability, defined as physical, mental or learning disabilities and other limitations which may not fall into the legal definition of disability, for example being frail.
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race, colour, ethnic or national origin
- Religion or personal belief, defined as any religion, religious belief or philosophical belief.
- Sex
- sexual orientation

WO values, respects and encourages diversity of employees, customers and suppliers in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

WO embraces variety by recognising individual and personal characteristics as an opportunity to harness creativity and build continuous improvement.

#### **Promoting the policy**

WO will act to encourage diversity and ensure equal access to its qualifications at all levels, through continual improvement and training of all staff. Existing staff have been selected and potential members of staff will be selected based on merit, ability and potential regardless of the diversity characteristics mentioned above. All staff will have Personal Development Plans along with ongoing training to reflect changing legislation and

regulations within the Government. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they are not discriminatory in their intention or operation.

WO will also take the following actions to promote the Policy:

- producing and circulating an Equality and Diversity policy to everyone
- to recruit, support and develop a diverse workforce that meets the needs of learners.
- raising the profile of equality and diversity across the to encourage students and staff to discuss and participate in equality and diversity related activities.
- creating an Equal Opportunity policy, setting targets and devising an action plan
- running training courses for employees and managers in equality and diversity
- ensuring all the workforce and Learners understand the possible consequences of discrimination and that any complaints or grievances concerning equality or diversity matters are handled correctly.
- create a safe and inclusive environment where students and staff feel confident in who they are and in tackling unacceptable behaviour.
- offering flexible working, time off for religious holidays, career breaks, considering childcare facilities and reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities
- treating everyone as an individual and always with dignity and respect
- promote learning and working opportunities to diverse and under-represented groups to challenge occupational and curriculum stereotypes and to celebrate an inclusive organisational culture.
- to support access to learning for different groups of students
- sharing of good practice in promoting equality and diversity in teaching and learning activity.
- equipping staff and students with the skills to challenge inequality and discrimination in their work/study environment
- making certain that any learning materials do not discriminate against any individuals or groups.
- ensuring sure policies, procedures and processes promote equality and diversity supporting national campaigns.
- provide appropriate access to our training centre and facilities to staff and learners with physical disabilities.

WO is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination and to creating an atmosphere at work that is conducive to individual growth and development. Positive action initiatives will be introduced where appropriate.

WO will treat any incident of discrimination as a serious matter, which may lead to disciplinary action according to the terms of the Disciplinary Policy, up to, and including dismissal, being taken against the perpetrator. Victimisation of anyone who has complained of being discriminated against will be regarded as misconduct and may also lead to disciplinary action according to the terms of our Disciplinary Policy.

WO also recognise that avoidance of multiple discrimination e.g. discrimination against the same individual on the grounds of both gender and race, is an important element of this policy.

This policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 inclusive of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2004, the Employment Equality (Religion or belief) Regulations 2004 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

## Implementation

In providing services WO will ensure:

- The policy requires commitment of all staff.
- Review and improve its services regularly at senior management level to make sure they respond to the needs of all parts of the business.
- Create an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion champions group.
- Improve access to WO services by providing appropriate information, outreach services, translation and interpreting services, mini-com facilities, signage, and training of relevant staff and reasonable adaptation of buildings.
- Lead, train and encourage all staff to become responsible for the achievement of equality of opportunities for learners.
- Ensure that the specifications for contracted out or purchased services require contractors and sub-contractors to meet the needs of all sections of the community and monitor their performance.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all our services in meeting the needs of all our learners. This will include monitoring information about use and non-use of services, equality action planning and equality target setting. The analysis of this information will be used to plan our services.
- Use language in any activity, correspondence and literature to reflect the spirit of our diversity policy.
- Provide a complaints procedure for discrimination and other complaints.

As a Training Provider WO will train the employees and undertake following actions to implement the Policy.

- Introduce policies, procedures and practices that reflect the diverse needs of the community.
- Provide Equality and Diversity training for all staff at their induction to the company and ongoing as required for CPD and refresher training.
- Make use of equality target setting where deemed appropriate.
- Ensure that our employee development and training policies for all our employees give fair and equitable attention to the needs of underrepresented groups.
- Take determined action to ensure that learners are protected from all forms of harassment and are not the perpetrators of any harassment.
- Provide an effective complaints procedure to ensure that complaints of discrimination are resolved.

## Recruitment of Employees and Apprentices

Wherever possible all vacancy advertisements will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunity and diversity, and steps will be taken to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches all areas of the community. We will also endeavour to ensure that all vacancies are advertised both internally and externally simultaneously.

The selection criteria (job description and employee specification) for all roles will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are essential for the effective performance of the job.

Remuneration will be set for the advertised position before applicants are seen and selected. Wherever possible, more than one person must be involved in the recruitment and selection process.

### **Policy Actions when Training Apprentices**

- treating all learners fairly.
- creating an inclusive culture for all learners.
- ensuring equal access to opportunities to enable learners to fully participate in the learning process.
- enabling all learners to develop to their full potential by fully participating in the learning process and enrichment activities.

### **Specific Policy Areas**

The following information provides detail about the forms and types of discrimination that are covered by legislation and reflected in our policy.

#### **Discrimination in detail**

Direct discrimination takes place when a person is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances, for example due to their sex, sexual orientation or race.

Indirect discrimination is defined in law as where a 'an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice' would put people having for example a particular gender, at a particular disadvantage compared with others of another gender. This is unless that provision is a genuine material factor or can be objectively justified under age discrimination legislation.

The concept of indirect discrimination exists within sex, race, sexual orientation and religion/belief or age, but not within the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Harassment is unwarranted behaviour that is objectionable to the recipient. It has many forms including physical contact, intimidation, bullying, threatening behaviour, derogatory references, and remarks, jokes that are found offensive or objectionable, displaying or distributing obscene or offensive materials and making assumptions about people.

Currently, the law offers protection against discrimination on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, religious belief or age. Legislation also covers discrimination on the grounds of age.

### **Gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation**

Men and women may experience disadvantage from both direct and indirect discrimination. This may be that they are experiencing greater difficulty in achieving advancement in the workplace due to their sex or are subject to sexual harassment.

Lesbian women, gay men and bisexuals may experience discrimination in society – especially where high levels of intolerance exist. Many people who are lesbian or gay do not feel safe enough to acknowledge their sexual orientation to the wider world. As a result, they have the daily experience of denying a major part of their own identity. Coming out and being out may lead to victimisation, harassment or even attack. Transsexual or Transgender men and women may also experience discrimination and are protected by the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

### **Disability (physical, mental or learning disabilities)**

Many people in the community have a disability, including people with mobility difficulties, people with sensory impairment, people with learning difficulties and people with mental health problems. The needs and wants of those with different disabilities vary considerably. However, they often all share the adverse effects of prejudice and stereotyping which can lead to inaccurate assumptions about their abilities. For many, this is aggravated by a physical environment designed by and for 'able bodied' people, a lack of access to information and by a neglect of their particular rights and needs in the way services and work are organised.

Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 provides a statutory duty on service providers to consider reasonable adjustments to physical barriers.

### **Race, colour, ethnic or national origin**

Prejudice and stereotypes about people from different ethnic or racial backgrounds can lead to both direct and indirect discrimination. It can range from less favourable treatment in the recruitment process to racist remarks and in its most extreme forms to racial harassment and attack.

### **Age**

Discrimination against people because they are 'old' or 'young' can manifest itself through inaccurate assumptions about the abilities and characteristics of younger or older people.

### **Religion or belief (any religion, religious belief or philosophical belief)**

In this context, 'belief' should be taken to refer to a religious or similar belief, not political belief.

Despite its increasingly multicultural population, the UK is still geared towards the traditional Christian festivals. Managers and employees need to be aware of different religious festivals throughout the year.

Flexible working will also become more important so that individuals can observe different religious days.

### **Other forms of discrimination**

People can experience discrimination because of their political beliefs, their marital or parental status, their caring responsibilities or past unrelated convictions. People can also be discriminated against on grounds of their perceived social or economic status or because they are homeless or have a history of dependency on alcohol or drugs.

### **Outcomes**

This policy is used to clearly inform our learners of their responsibilities and rights. It is used to communicate our principles and arrangements to our partners or contractors and others who may be affected by our actions.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Director**

The Director, Senior Management Team are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and for ensuring that WO institutes effective monitoring and review mechanisms to measure progress and ensure continual improvement.

### **Managers**

Managers are responsible to the Director for ensuring that the policy is implemented within their remit. They are responsible for ensuring that the policy is acted upon within their services and is properly reflected in improvement plans, training, development plans and CPD. These will feature in the objectives and personal development of individual employees.

### **Employees**

All employees are responsible for implementing this policy and are expected to participate in the preparation and implementation of practical measures to improve WO performance within their service. Employees are also responsible for their behaviour towards colleagues, learners & customers of WO services, and are expected to meet appropriate legislative and company standards. WO will support all employees in their knowledge and understanding of our policy by involving them in service planning, providing supportive management, arranging training and other activities to improve understanding and knowledge and by making sure they understand their responsibilities under the law.

## **Policy Consultation**

This policy has been consulted with Director, Senior Management Team and the HR department.

## **Complaints Procedure in relation to Discrimination and Victimisation**

WO Grievance Policy and Procedure is available to support Learners wishing to raise a grievance in connection with this policy. It is often extremely effective to have an informal discussion to resolve the issue before raising a formal grievance. However, all discrimination complaints will be pursued through the company Grievance Procedure to facilitate a satisfactory resolution where informal discussion has not resolved the issue.

Any Grievance should be brought to the attention of the WO manager in the first instance. If after discussions with the manager you are still unsatisfied you should submit the discrimination grievance firstly in writing to Wise Origin, Dock – Space City, 75 Exploration Drive, Leicester, LE4 5NU or if preferred by e-mail to [hr@wiseorigin.co.uk](mailto:hr@wiseorigin.co.uk).

### Review of the Procedure

The Equality and Diversity Policy will be revised annually by the Senior Management Team and Director.

Policy Review	Review Date	Next Review Date	Approved by
Annually	27 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	27 <sup>th</sup> July 2026	Umair Khan