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**Buckinghamshire Adult Learning Equality Policy 2020-21**

We are committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). We recognise that in order to improve outcomes for our learners we must identify the diverse range of learners’ needs and experiences and create a learning environment that is built on collaboration, peer learning, respect and tolerance.

**Our Equal Opportunities statement**

(displayed in classrooms as part of our **Stay Safe** campaign):

*We promote respect and tolerance, which is one of our British values.*

*We are committed to providing equal opportunity to learners and staff in a safe, supportive and welcoming environment, whatever a person’s age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, faith or no faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, background or personal circumstance.*

*We expect all staff and learners to play an active part in promoting tolerance and challenging any form of stereotyping, prejudice or bullying.*

*We take our responsibilities seriously in helping our learners and staff stay safe from radicalisation and extremism. We actively promote British values within our courses.*

**Responsibilities**

We are committed to carrying out the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) by supporting all learners at every stage of their learning, specifically:

**1/ Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation by:**

* Employing qualified tutors who challenge stereotypical and prejudiced views in order to establish a positive learning environment for all
* Providing a learner induction, including an introduction to our student charter and the setting of ground rules to ensure that learners and staff show respect and tolerance for each other
* Ensuring that all learners feel safe throughout their learning experience through the implementation of a rigorous safeguarding policy that protects learners from harassment, bullying and discrimination, including those learners based with employers and at other external sites
* Training all staff to take responsibility for safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of our learners
* Ensuring that all learners understand the purpose of the **Stay Safe** campaign and know how to protect themselves from all safeguarding risks including hate crime, radicalisation and online abuse
* Showing zero tolerance towards any behaviour or language which is racist, sexist or homophobic or which is offensive to people with disabilities, through the use of our Learner Code of Conduct, which is publicised on our website & covered at induction and through our Tutor Code of Conduct

**2/ Advancing Equality of Opportunity by:**

* Working with schools, communities, employers and others to widen participation in learning
* Ensuring that publicity materials and promotional activities are designed to encourage participation from all sections of the community and in particular groups who are underrepresented in adult learning
* Modelling and promoting British values in order to create and maintain a positive and supportive learning environment
* Using effective initial assessment to ensure that teaching and assessment meets the diverse learning needs of all of our learners
* Using learning support funding effectively to support the needs of learners who disclose a learning difficulty or disability
* Ensuring that course design, delivery and assessment takes account of equality issues and that course materials are fully accessible to all learners by being provided in different formats
* Monitoring data on age, gender, ethnicity and disability in order to be able to take action to reduce any significant variation in achievement between different groups of learners so as to ensure all learners can reach their potential

**3/ Fostering good relations between learners who share a protected characteristic (age, gender, disability, etc.) and those who do not by:**

* Providing appropriate training in EDI so that managers, staff and learners understand their roles and responsibilities
* Ensuring that teaching and learning involves the sharing of knowledge and experience of learners from different backgrounds, lifestyles and cultures
* Providing information on equality and diversity in easily understood formats so as to ensure that all learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities
* Using teaching methods that encourage peer learning, team work and collaboration
* Using teaching materials, sources of information & images that reflect the diversity of people in Buckinghamshire and that challenge rather than reinforce stereotypes

**4/ Monitoring and evaluation**

Buckinghamshire Adult Learning’s senior management team monitors and evaluates achievement in respect of its equality policy by taking the following actions:

* Making sure that learner feedback is collected and acted on effectively
* Gathering and analysing statistics about our learners and identifying specific actions to address any achievement gaps
* Preparing an annual self-assessment report (SAR) and quality improvement plan that includes an assessment of all aspects of EDI
* Carrying out regular course audits to ensure that curriculum planning and delivery take account of equality and diversity issues
* Observing classes to ensure that EDI is embedded in teaching and learning and that tutors model and promote British values
* Working within Buckinghamshire Council’s Equality Policy and Strategic Plan.