



Equality & Diversity Policy

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Equality and Diversity

Introduction

Vision Rehabilitation Training Ltd is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

Purpose

This **'Equality & Diversity'**

- provides Equality and Diversity, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- ensures employees are not unlawfully discriminated because of the Equality Act 2010 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 (gender) and sexual orientation
- Opposes and avoids all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Vision Rehabilitation Training Ltd Commits To:

Encourage equality and diversity in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense

Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued

- This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the Equality and Diversity policy.
 - Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination

- All staff should understand 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, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public
- We will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities
 - Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken.
 - Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, 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
- There will be opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation
- Decisions concerning staff will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- Employment review practices and procedures will be undertaken when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law
- We will monitor the 'make-up' of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the Equality and Diversity policy

Monitoring will also include assessing how the Equality and Diversity policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues

The Equality and Diversity policy is fully supported by senior management and will be agreed with all employees, apprentices and volunteers.

Any Equality and Diversity issue should be reported directly to the staff member, volunteer or apprentice's line manager. This does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Promoting Equality and Diversity Policy

Vision Rehabilitation Training Ltd will Promote Equality and Diversity by:

- 1) The use appropriate images and language that promotes the organisations diversity and commitment to equality
- 2) Providing an accessible version of the policy on the website
- 3) Including the policy in course literature
- 4) Referring to the policy in all apprentice and staff recruitment activities
- 5) Providing evidence of policy review, findings and outcomes
- 6) Including the policy as part of staff induction and performance reviews
- 7) Including reference to the policy in all management and staff team meetings
- 8) Engaging with employers to review the implementation of their own Equality and Diversity Policy within apprenticeship training

Staff Commitment to Equality and Diversity

It is the responsibility of all staff to promote equality and diversity in all that they do. They will be encouraged to do this by:

- 1) Being familiar with the organisation policy on Equality and Diversity
- 2) Understanding statutory and legal duties of the organisation and individuals
Developing good communications and relationships between staff and apprentice groups
- 3) Challenging discrimination in all forms – race/gender/disability/protected characteristics
- 4) Demonstrating Diversity and Equality sensitivity in all their work
- 5) Including Equality and Diversity objectives in annual performance requirements

Equality and Diversity Training

Equality and Diversity training is **Mandatory** for all staff.

This training is provided during the induction stage and as identified as part of staff development and Continued Professional Development.

Equality and Diversity in Recruitment

The Equality and Diversity policy is referenced during all recruitment campaigns.

All recruitment literature and activities are reviewed prior to use to ensure they are non-discriminatory.

Equality and Diversity form an essential aspect of the recruitment process with interview questions designed to enquire about applicants understanding of the term and the legal requirements.

Vision Rehabilitation Training Ltd gathers recruitment data for analysis with the aim of identifying positive Equality and Diversity action.

Equality and Diversity in Apprenticeship Recruitment and Training

It is essential that all apprentices respect other people's cultural, religious and personal beliefs. To achieve this Vision Rehabilitation Training Ltd:

- 1) Makes all apprentices aware of the Diversity and Equality policy at the onset of their training programme
- 2) Includes aspects of the policy in course materials and training activities
- 3) Fully investigates the legal obligations of Equality and Diversity as part of the course curriculum they are undertaking
- 4) Gathers and analyses recruitment data to identify positive equality and diversity action
- 5) Gathers and analysis apprentice achievement data to identify the influence of Equality and Diversity policy
- 6) Encouraging apprentices to report any instances of perceived discrimination
- 7) Observations of teaching and training include Equality and Diversity criteria

Roles and Responsibilities

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Company's policy. He is responsible for ensuring that the policy is widely communicated and that its effectiveness is monitored.

DIRECTORS AND SENIOR MANAGERS

These managers are wholly accountable to the Executive Director for the implementation and monitoring of the policy within the area of their specified responsibility.

- the production and maintenance of any health and safety documents or codes of practice as necessary for any relevant area of the Company services where this is required