

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Introduction

Pier Training actively promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work and aims to provide an environment where all individuals work towards achieving their full potential with pride. We aim to eliminate discrimination through a zero-tolerance approach, regular target setting and monitoring the development of inclusive positive programmes.

Pier Training is firmly committed to a policy of equal access and equality of opportunity in the provision of all its services regardless of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability and political or cultural beliefs. This firmly meets the requirements of the Equality Act as they relate to further and higher education.

Mission

Our mission is to help apprentices realise their potential by making training an inclusive and enjoyable journey, where they can start to differentiate yesterday from today and make their future look even brighter.

Legislative context

Nine main pieces of legislation have been merged to form the Equality Act 2010:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Pier Training celebrates and values the diversity brought to its workforce by individuals. We believe that we benefit from engaging staff from a variety of backgrounds and abilities thus allowing us to meet the needs of all stakeholders, as well as fostering positive relationships.

Pier Training treats employees and students with respect and dignity and seeks to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation. We are committed to treating all staff, apprentices and stakeholders fairly and equitably regardless of protected characteristics. We will ensure that no unjustifiable requirements or conditions are imposed that could disadvantage any individuals on any of the above grounds.

Pier Training will seek to eliminate discrimination by creating a working and learning environment based on positive relations, equality of opportunity, inclusion and diversity.

Promotion of this policy

Our policies are readily available to all stakeholders via our website, and they are included in the employer contract pack. Moreover, it is holistically interwoven throughout our daily practice; from marketing materials used for social media posts to the teaching sessions and materials developed and used by tutors. We also promote a policy each month to bring it into focus. The policy is shared with employees and discussed at monthly 121 supervision meetings and standardisation meetings. This time is used to train employees in implementing this policy.

Protected characteristics

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity/paternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Information gathering and monitoring arrangements

Pier Training monitors the recruitment, occupancy and achievement of all students and collects data of students aged 16 – 19 as well as 19+, BAME, apprentices with additional learning needs (ALN), male and female students. This information is collected and reported monthly. This data is used by the senior leadership team to make comparisons and identify trends; such feedback gives us suggestions for improvement within the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The strong focus on equality of opportunity and our support for apprentices form a key part of our self-assessment reporting, quality improvement and development planning.

The Education Inspection Framework (EIF) identifies performance against equality and diversity as a key indicator for Leadership and Management. This includes the extent to which leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality and inclusive education for all apprentices.

Feedback from apprentices on issues of equality are collected through surveys and these form a part of our QIP.

Equal opportunities monitoring of staff is undertaken when they commence employment. All new staff must complete a staff monitoring form. Pier Training gathers information on sexual orientation and religion or belief. The monitoring process is used to ensure that staff are treated equally in terms of promotion, staff development, grading and that relevant policies are well-publicised, and their usage recorded.

Data collection on apprentices is completed by the office administrators. All data collected is subject to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) but used generically and aggregated to support improvements and target setting. Use of specific information is tightly controlled; it is circulated only on a need-to-know basis and with strict guidelines for its storage and retrieval. Students are

encouraged to respond to the gathering of information on protected characteristics gathered through the enrolment process.

Pier Training are responsible for ensuring that:

- A positive, inclusive ethos is created where any issues of stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly, with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing discrimination.
- Everyone works towards the elimination of overt and implicit discrimination and will seek to ensure that individuals and communities have equal access to learning programmes and facilities.
- Diversity and difference are respected and good relations between people are encouraged.
- Equal opportunities to all its staff and volunteers are in place both during recruitment and throughout employment.
- Compliance with the requirements of all relevant legislation and approved codes of practice are upheld, which relate to equal opportunities and diversity. This is to be the minimum standard of Pier Training's obligations.
- All potential staff receive equal consideration at the recruitment stage and will not be discriminated against.
- All staff, in close liaison with each other, do not discriminate or put pressure on others to discriminate. This would be classed as a disciplinary offence.
- Harassment (including sexual) or victimisation of any nature is dealt with as gross misconduct through the disciplinary procedure.
- Discrimination is treated as a serious matter and staff who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to follow the guidelines as laid out in the grievance procedure.
- ESFA requirements are met ensuring all courses are accessible to all sections of the community.
- Each participant undertaking training is treated as an individual in their own right and any additional requirements or inputs are put in place to cater for this need (it is the responsibility of the individual to make known any specific need prior to commencement of any programme). This will enable all arrangements to be made well in advance and approval can be obtained where applicable.
- Diverse images are used in all materials that are produced for apprentices, staff and other stakeholders.
- Inclusive language is used in teaching and learning sessions and is built into resources used with apprentices.

- There are no unnecessary barriers to assessment which prevent candidates from effectively demonstrating their attainment. Suitable arrangements will be made for candidates with particular assessment requirements, to ensure that they are not given, or do not appear to be given, an unfair advantage.
- Each candidate completes an initial assessment to identify individual specific needs. The outcome of the initial assessment will be recorded on the individual learning plan (ILP) with detailed support to ensure the apprentice achieves their full potential. Pier Training will make special arrangements according to the needs of the candidate, reflecting their usual method of working. In making these arrangements, Pier Training will ensure that the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment process are preserved.
- All groups within the local community have appropriate and fair access to learning and development opportunities.
- Equality of opportunity is provided and discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation – or any other grounds is not tolerated.

Engagement and monitoring

The Managing Director has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy; however, it is recognised that it is the collective responsibility of all persons connected within the organisation to contribute to the successful implementation of this policy.

Engagement of this policy is vital; therefore, Pier Training mandates that all staff must attend equality and diversity training annually, which includes reading the company policy. Furthermore, the Quality Assurance team monitors tutor delivery which includes resources to ensure compliance with this policy. Since the last policy review, Pier Training employees have completed the online course Advancing Equality and Diversity by Education and Training Foundation.

To inform the measurement of our progress and action planning, Pier Training analyse the following information by the protected characteristics of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

For Apprentices:

- Applications and progression rates for admission to courses
- Retention rates
- Achievement rates
- Disciplinary action
- Complaints
- Apprentice surveys

Employees:

- Recruitment application, shortlisting and appointment
- Type of contract (permanent, temporary)
- Training/Staff development
- Promotion application and success rates

- Take up of flexible working arrangements
- Disciplinary/capability proceedings
- Grievances
- Exit surveys

In support of this policy, Pier Training will:

- Annually review the policy in line with current legislation requirements.
- Promote the policy annually and will ensure that all stakeholders have access to the latest updated policy.
- Provide equal opportunities and diversity training to all staff and apprentices to encourage an understanding of why valuing people as individuals is important to the organisation. For staff, this will be included as part of the induction and refresher training annually. For apprentices, this will be holistically covered at tutor-led sessions through the information shared about fundamental British values, including democracy, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith.
- Include equality and diversity as one of the key areas for discussion at monthly one-to-one supervisory monitoring meetings with tutors.
- Ensure that employers, suppliers and associates adopt diversity management approaches and actively pursue measures which will contribute to the achievement of equal opportunities.
- Ensure, through appropriate marketing and publicity, that knowledge of Pier Training products and services reaches all potential groups.
- Seek and consider the views of stakeholders including staff, apprentices, employers and appropriate equality bodies by sending out annual questionnaires.

POLICY REVIEW

How will this policy be reviewed?

The Operations and Commercial Manager is responsible for the implementation and review of the Equality and Diversity policy. This review is completed annually or when considered necessary. The date of review is also recorded within the footer of the document and includes the date of the next required review. This enables the senior management team (SMT) to easily track when the last review was completed ensuring the policy is relevant and up to date.

Following the annual review, the senior management team (SMT) read the policy, make any suggestions for amendments and then it is finally approved by the Managing Director.

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