

POLICY



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

VERSION CONTROL

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What is this policy about?

This policy statement outlines the philosophy of equality for all staff, learners, visitors and stakeholders at Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited.

Who is the policy for?

All staff, associates, learners and other stakeholders.

Policy statement

Introduction

This document is set within the context of The Equalities Act 2010 and sets out Orangebox's main ambition: to deliver high-quality learning in relation to promoting the following protected characteristics across all of its programmes: **age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.**

The policy describes the minimum standards and guidance relating to developing a cooperative and non-discriminatory environment which is both supportive and challenging and dealing with instances of harassment, bullying and discrimination, and ensures that all protected characteristics are understood, respected and given the necessary support and adjustment to allow all people to thrive.

At Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited we believe that all staff and learners must be equally respected and treated as individuals, taking positive account of age, gender, religion or belief, ethnic origin, cultural origin, sexual preferences, disability, pregnancy or maternity and marital status. We will constantly implement to apply this principle to all our policies, procedures, delivery and interactions across the projects.

In particular, we will use the expected practice highlighted in the Education Inspection Framework to drive our proactive approach to ED&I:

- leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practice
- leaders protect their staff from bullying and harassment
- those with responsibility for governance ensure that the provider fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' strategy and safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of learners

Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Transgender, Marital Status

No discrimination will be accepted with regards to the gender of the individual. All learners will be encouraged to participate in all activities regardless of gender or age. All staff and learners will have the same opportunities and be treated in the same manner regardless of their gender or age. No discrimination will be made with regards to individual sexual preferences and marital status.

Reference:

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Employment, Equality Sexual Orientation Regulations Dec 2003

Equalities Act (2010)

Protected Characteristics: Religion, Ethnic origin, Cultural origin

No individual will be refused a place on the grounds of religion, ethnic origin or culture. Information will be available to all whenever possible, this will be in the first language if English is not understood, or where practical an interpreter will be used to ensure

information is exchanged accurately in a timely manner. All learners and staff will be expected to respect individual religion, ethnicity and cultural differences.

The curriculum encourages both staff and learners to treat everyone with equal concern and respect and to value each other. Questions about racial and cultural differences will be answered in a clear, factual way that is understood in an appropriate manner. Positive support for a learner's home language and cultures will be given as this provides a framework for learning English.

We can also arrange use of quiet rooms for the use of faith-related activity and learners are asked if they have this requirement during initial assessment.

Reference:

The Race Relations Act 1976

Employment Equality Religion or Belief Regulations Dec 2003

Protected Characteristic: Disability

Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited is committed to the integration of learners and staff with a disability or additional needs. Extra help or special arrangements may be required including 'reasonable adjustment'.

The organisation will not discriminate directly or indirectly against a disabled learner or staff member. It is recommended that all disabilities or special needs are made known so any necessary reasonable adjustments can be made as soon as possible to promote engagement in work and learning.

Reference:

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Definitions

- Direct discrimination - means treating people less favourably because of their race, disability, race, gender, the colour of their skin, ethnic and national origin, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or age.
- Indirect discrimination - occurs when an unjustifiable requirement or condition, whether intentional or not affects adults or children from certain groups.

Offensive Behaviour

The organisation will not allow harassment or bullying to learners or staff. This can include unwelcome comments or behaviour, repetitive criticism, intimidation, insulting, aggressive, undermining self-confidence or the misuse of power, or any action which makes the recipient feels upset, humiliated, threatened or vulnerable.

If any offensive behaviour is made by learners, staff members or visitors an on-the-spot explanation of why it is not accepted will be made and the Anti-bullying & Harassment policy should be followed and a record of the incident kept within the relevant department. A summary of the incident will also be shared with the EDI Champion to support monitoring and reporting.

Any breach of this policy by any adult or young person working in or visiting Orangebox premises may result in disciplinary action.

Should the incident raise any specific safeguarding concerns Orangebox's procedure for reporting issues to the Safeguarding team will be followed.

Policy requirements

All staff and associates will follow this policy statement at all times. Managers and other staff will ensure that this statement is understood and adhered to through Orangebox's supervision and performance management processes.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited staff have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of and implement the policy on Equality and Diversity
- Promote a “challenge inequality and celebrate diversity” ethos
- Undertake staff development appropriate to their role
- Promptly report any discriminatory issues, unfair treatment, poor practice or misconduct to the EDI Champion
- Promote equality and diversity in induction and teaching and at learner progress reviews

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited managers, directors & CEO have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that all staff, learners, subcontractors and employers are aware of this policy and actively promote its implementation
- Promote learning to ensure participation is representative of the local, regional and national demographical data
- Ensure our learning environments are non-discriminatory and challenge negative behaviours towards race, religion, gender, disability or culture
- Embrace a whole approach to challenging inequality and celebrate diversity
- Ensure all staff are aware of the policy and ensure they receive appropriate and annual training and support to undertake their roles effectively

- If Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited is working with a partner and any equality and diversity issue arises, Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited's EDI Champion will work with the partners' appointed person
- Ensure learning resources and marketing literature will promote fair and equal access to teaching, learning and assessment. Particular care will be taken to avoid the use of statements and stereotypes that might reasonably be expected to give offence on the grounds of Age, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Race, and Religion & Belief
- Collect data to analyse participation and achievement of under-represented groups by subject and programme area
- Discuss EDI reports and issues at Senior Management level to promote participation and achievement of under-represented groups
- Process all data in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998
- Learner registration forms ask to detail any additional support requirements that need to be in place. It is the responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure that reasonable adjustments are in place to accommodate those with additional support requirements in time for the start of the training course

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited is fully committed to providing a good and harmonious working environment that offers equal treatment and equal opportunities for all its employees and where every employee is treated with respect and dignity. Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense.

Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited's policy will help all employees develop their full potential so that the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilized to maximize the efficiency of the organisation.

Breaches of Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy will result in the Company's disciplinary procedure being invoked against the individuals responsible or involved.

Recruitment

No job vacancy will be advertised or publicised (internally or externally) in a way which discourages applications from any sector of the population. This includes both Orangebox's own recruitment and that carried out on behalf of partner employers.

All applications will be considered on merit. Each individual will be assessed against a set of objectives, non-discriminatory criteria that will be directly related to the demands of the particular vacancy.

All advertisements, application forms and other recruitment material will clearly state that we are an equal opportunities employer and will avoid statements or questions which tend to discourage applications for employment from any sector of the population.

All interviews will be conducted in accordance with the terms and spirit of this policy, covered further by Orangebox's commitment to Safer Recruitment. The questions asked of candidates will be closely related to the selection criteria and will be asked in order to elicit information which will give a fair assessment of that particular applicant's ability to perform the tasks required by the vacancy. Specific questions will not be asked of candidates which make assumptions about a candidate's commitment or ability based on any of the grounds identified in the statement of this policy.

No one sector of the population will be disadvantaged or discriminated against in relation to the terms of employment offered or applied to them.

Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited will, where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to its arrangements for interviews and conditions of employment for disabled applicants where necessary to ensure that existing arrangements or conditions of employment do not place such applicants at a significant disadvantage to other applicants.

Promotion

Internal vacancies will, if possible, be filled by promotion. This ambition is supported by Orangebox's inclusive People Development process and informal support for staff to progress within the business.

Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited will also consider enlarging the pool of applicants for promotion where this proves necessary to ensure that, in accordance with its policy, the pool of applicants is capable of fairly representing all sectors of the population.

Applicants for promotion will be considered only on the basis of their skill, aptitude, experience and suitability for the vacancy.

Training

Employees involved in recruitment and the management or supervision of others will receive training to help them understand and comply with the law and our policy. This comprises an annual online refresher programme at Level 2, as well as additional support from the EDI Champion through the sharing of resources and reports.

No employee will be denied access to training on discriminatory grounds. Specific and/or additional training will be made available for disabled employees as is reasonably necessary.

Monitoring

Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited will regularly monitor the effectiveness of its processes and procedures to ensure that they are achieving our stated aims.

Where practical and in line with Orangebox's ambition to have active champions providing information, promotion and support for key themes linked to its service there will be a nominated EDI Champion in post. This person will be responsible for the positive promotion of all EDI matters, the sharing of good practice within the education & skills sector and the monitoring and reporting of EDI issues on a monthly basis.

Harassment

- Harassment is either:
- Unwanted conduct, whether verbal or not, which is of a sexual or racial nature or which refers to or is based upon a person's disability, or other conduct based on someone's race and/or gender and/or disability which affects the dignity of men or women at work
- Bullying of colleagues, especially junior colleagues, by intimidating behaviour
- Unfavourable conduct at work, whether verbal or non-verbal, towards someone based on his/her disability which could affect his/her dignity at work

Harassment or any form of discrimination will not be tolerated under any circumstances. A member of staff who harasses or discriminates against another employee or client or customer of the Company will be subject to Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited's disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal.

Harassment generally may include any unwanted verbal or physical abuse and/or advances and/or behaviour which an employee may find offensive and which causes them to feel threatened, humiliated, patronized, distressed or harassed. It will not necessarily be a defence that such incidents consist of words or behaviour which might be claimed to be "commonplace" or which were intended as a joke or were not intended to be offensive.

Harassment may be deliberate or unconscious, open or covert, direct or indirect, an isolated incident or a series of repeated actions. It may also include, in certain circumstances, off-duty conduct.

It is the duty and responsibility of Orangebox Training Solutions UK Limited and every employee to stop all types of harassment and discrimination in the workplace. It is only through the efforts of individual employees that harassment and discrimination can be eradicated. We must all recognize that every employee in the Company has the right not to be subjected to any form of harassment or discrimination.

Racial Harassment

Racial harassment is racial discrimination and is contrary to the Company's equal opportunities policy. It is also unlawful. This type of harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances and the Company will take prompt action upon becoming aware that such incidents have taken place.

Examples of racial harassment may include:

- abusive language and racist jokes;
- racial name calling;
- the display or circulation of racially offensive written or visual material including graffiti;
- physical threats, assault and insulting behaviour or gestures;
- open hostility towards workers of a particular racial group, including organized hostility in the workplace;
- unfair allocation of work and responsibilities;
- exclusion from normal workplace conversation or social events, i.e. being "frozen out"

The above examples are not exhaustive and each incident of harassment or discrimination will be viewed on its individual facts.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is similarly sex discrimination, unlawful and contrary to the Company's policy. It is defined as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature by one employee towards another.

Examples of sexual harassment may include:

- insensitive jokes and/or pranks;
- lewd comments about appearance;
- unnecessary bodily or physical contact;
- displays of sexually offensive material, for example, pin-ups and calendars;
- requests for sexual favours;
- speculation about an employee's private life and/or sexual activities;
- threatened or actual sexual violence;
- the threat of dismissal, loss of promotion etc. for refusal of sexual favours.
- exclusion from normal workplace conversation and social events.

Whilst the above list gives examples of sexual harassment, harassment takes many forms from relatively mild sexual banter to actual physical violence. The above examples are not intended to be exhaustive. Harassment of an individual in this manner on the basis of their sexual orientation (i.e., because they are homosexual, transsexual or undergoing “sex change treatment”) will also be regarded by the Company as sexual harassment and will not be tolerated.

Harassment on grounds of disability

Harassment of an individual who has a disability or who has had a disability in the past is unlawful. It is also contrary to the Company's policy, which seeks to ensure that people with disabilities receive treatment that is fair, equitable and consistent with their skills and abilities.

In accordance with statutory requirements, the Company recognizes that a person with a disability is someone who has or has had a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her normal day-to-day activities. Therefore, depending on individual circumstances a person who has been seriously injured, has or had a progressive illness, significant learning difficulties or poor hearing, vision or mobility may be a person with a disability.

Harassment on grounds of disability may include the following:

- abusive or insensitive language
- inappropriate jokes or pranks
- non-verbal offensive gestures (e.g. staring at a particular affliction)
- inappropriate assumptions about the capabilities of a disabled person
- unfair allocation of work and responsibilities
- exclusion from normal workplace conversation or social events
- physical mistreatment (e.g. jostling or assault)

The above examples are not exhaustive and each incident of harassment or discrimination will be viewed on its individual facts.

As part of this EDI policy, we will make every effort, if a disabled person joins the Company or if an existing employee becomes disabled, to make such adjustments as are required by law, whether in their existing job or in a suitable available alternative.

The Company will seek to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are considered generally in both the context of the Company's working practices and in the nature of its premises and continuing services.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a member of staff treats another member of staff less favourably because that other person has:

- brought proceedings alleging that he or she has been discriminated against contrary to this Policy
- indicated that they intend to make such a claim or claims
- assisted a colleague to make a claim.

Victimisation will not be tolerated under any circumstances and any member of staff who victimises another employee will be subject to the Company's disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct resulting in summary dismissal.

Complaints and disciplinary action

Where an employee believes that he/she is being harassed, victimised or discriminated against contrary to the law or to the Equality and Diversity policy, he/she can invoke the complaints procedure, whether formal or informal, against the harasser or discriminator.

Every complaint will be investigated and dealt with sympathetically without bias and as quickly as is practicable.

Every effort will be made to ensure that individuals who make a complaint in good faith will not suffer any further detriment or be victimised because of making such a complaint. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action, which may include summary dismissal.

Any acts of discrimination or acts which contravene this policy will result in the disciplinary procedure being invoked against the individuals responsible or involved. In severe cases, summary dismissal may be justified.

Informal Procedure

Prior to adopting the formal procedure set out below, an informal approach may be taken.

If an individual feels, that he/she is or has been subjected to harassment and/or discrimination or victimisation and considers that the informal procedure is appropriate he/she should, if possible, advise the harasser that the behaviour is unwelcome, must be stopped and is interpreted as harassment and/or discrimination and/or victimisation as defined by the Company's policy. If preferred, this may be in writing.

If the behaviour does not cease or the employee finds approaching the harasser difficult, further informal assistance is available. Employees, who wish to discuss such a complaint in confidence, should contact People Services. Where the informal method fails or serious harassment or discrimination occurs or if the individual prefers, employees are advised to bring a formal complaint against the alleged harasser or discriminator and to seek assistance as above in doing so. The complaint should be made in writing and, where possible, state the following:

- the name of the alleged harasser/discriminator;
- the nature of the harassment/discrimination/victimisation;
- the date and time when the harassment/discrimination or victimisation occurred;
- the names of any witnesses to the harassment/discrimination or victimisation; and details of any action, which may already have been taken by the complainant to stop the harassment/discrimination or victimisation.

The complaint should be sent or given to the where a complaint of harassment, discrimination or victimisation is received; consideration will be given to whether it would be helpful and/or practicable to separate the alleged harasser/discriminator from the complainant. This may involve the temporary transfer of the alleged harasser/discriminator or the complainant to another department or suspension with pay until the complaint has been resolved.

The identified Manager will carry out a thorough investigation as quickly as possible, maintaining as much confidentiality as possible at all times. The complainant should be aware, however, that if the complaint is to be properly investigated, other employees may have to be asked for witness statements.

All employees involved in the investigation are expected to respect the need for confidentiality. Failure to do so will be considered a disciplinary offence.

Copies of any witness statements taken will be made available to the alleged harasser and the complainant. Witnesses will be encouraged to appear at any hearing if requested by either party. It is acknowledged that some witnesses may be reluctant to do so. In these circumstances, People Services will, if necessary, adjourn the hearing and ask supplementary questions of witnesses in private.

The complainant may if he/she wishes, be supported throughout the procedure and hearing by a colleague of his/her choice. The employee accused of harassment or discrimination will have the right to be accompanied at the hearing.

If the offence is proved the severity of the penalty imposed on the harasser will be consistent with those detailed in the disciplinary procedure. Serious harassment or acts of discrimination or victimisation may result in summary dismissal. Where a lesser penalty is appropriate, for example, a written warning, this may be coupled with action to ensure that the complainant is able to continue working without embarrassment or anxiety. After discussion with the complainant, Orangebox's HR function may transfer the harasser to a different work area or arrange for an amendment of working practices to minimize contact between the two employees. If the complainant wishes, his/her own transfer will be arranged, subject to practical limitations. The result of the hearing will be confirmed in writing to both employees.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the way his/her complaint has been handled, he/she may appeal to the CEO. The appeal should be made in writing within 5 working days of the first hearing. The decision of this second hearing will be sent in writing to both parties and will be final.

An employee who receives a warning or is dismissed for harassment or discrimination may appeal against the penalty in accordance with the appeals procedure in the Company's disciplinary procedure.

All members of staff are encouraged to use the procedure outlined in this Policy if they are harassed, discriminated or victimised. The Company takes all allegations seriously. However, if an allegation is made which the Company (after investigation) believes has been made dishonestly or maliciously, the Company may invoke the disciplinary procedure against the complainant. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal.

Version Change Log

Provide a brief synopsis of changes made to this policy and any document changes, named staff or references to other materials.

Date	Change made	Changed by	Reason