



Equality and Diversity Policy

East Birmingham Community Forum (EBCF)

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1. Scope

This policy is designed to ensure that EBCF complies with its obligations under equality legislation (The Equality Act 2010) and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly.

In England, Scotland and Wales, the Equality Act 2010 brought together and harmonised equality legislation. Legislation in Northern Ireland is different and is principally from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, revised to 2015 (ROI) and all other equivalent/relevant/legislation.

The Northern Ireland Act 1998 places public authorities, including HEIs, under a duty to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- People of different religious beliefs, political opinions, racial groups, ages, marital statuses or sexual orientations
- Men and women generally
- People with and without a disability
- People with and without dependants

Equality means everyone having the same chances to do what they can. Some people may need extra help to get the same chances.

Diversity recognises that each of us are different and unique, consequently, it makes sense that treating everyone the same is not necessarily going to work. Different people will have aspirations, expectations, opportunities, responsibilities and needs. Therefore, treating people fairly means recognising their differences, respecting them and acting accordingly. In short, diversity is about valuing differences.

We recognise and value people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.

EBCF is opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics).

EBCF is committed to fostering an inclusive culture where equality, diversity, and respect are embedded across all areas of its operations.

2. Responsibilities

The Directors have overall responsibility for promoting awareness of this policy and for monitoring its effectiveness and to ensure individuals and learners.

- Adhere to the policy
- Inform [Individual Name] if they become aware of any discrimination practices
- Help to create an environment in which all individuals are valued and respected.

All staff have a responsibility to actively promote equality and diversity and challenge inappropriate behaviour where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

3. Objectives

EBCF objectives are:

- Sustaining, regularly evaluating and continually improving its services to ensure equality and diversity principles and best practice are embedded in our performance to meet the needs of learners
- Working together to provide accessible and relevant service provision that responds to learners' needs
- Monitoring of services, publicity and events provided by EBCF to ensure that they are accessible to all sections of society.

Objectives will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain relevant and effective in meeting organisational and learner needs.

4. Commitment

EBCF is committed to upholding and promoting equality of opportunity through all aspects of its work and will treat all people with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all. It will eliminate all forms of discrimination and will tackle social exclusion, inequality, discrimination and disadvantage.

EBCF recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty and is committed to safeguarding learners from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Promoting equality, diversity and respect support Prevent by encouraging open discussion, critical thinking and tolerance. Staff are fully trained to recognise signs of vulnerability and to respond appropriately, ensuring that learners are supported in a safe and inclusive environment. The organisation promotes respectful debate and encourages learners to explore different viewpoints in a way that builds resilience and reduces susceptibility to extremist influences.

EBCF understands the diverse nature of individuals by:

- Appreciating the needs of individuals and learners
- Meeting the needs of individuals and learners
- Ensuring information and learning opportunities are available to everyone
- Ensuring individuals and learners are not prejudiced
- Insensitivity to difference – ensure individuals and learners are not ignored and will be included
- Over generalisation – efforts are made to obtain individual information
- Assumed homogeneity – differences of individuals and learners are acknowledged
- Overt double standards – provide the same treatment

- Under representation or exclusion – include individuals and learners whenever relevant •
- Stereotyping – avoid stereotyping individuals and learners

EBCF is committed to taking positive steps to ensure that:

- All people are treated with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all
- Equality of opportunity and diversity is promoted to all including all learners, apprentices, clients and stakeholders that engage with any of EBCF services
- The differences and individual contributions are recognised and valued
- Services are accessible, appropriate and delivered fairly to all
- This policy is consulted before engaging with any employers for the purposes of any work based learning, to ensure they are compliant with all current legislation surrounding the promotion of equality and diversity
- Individuals and learners are made aware, understand, agree and are willing to implement this policy
- All individuals and learners will have access to this policy
- All staff will complete mandatory training annually on implementing equality and diversity into their practices.
- Equality and diversity awareness is raised through information and training
- Recruitment and selection for employment is basis on aptitude and ability and applicants' diversity demographics are captured as part of the recruitment process to promote the elimination of unlawful discrimination
- Staff development is determined solely by criteria which is relevant to the duties of a post and will support career development and progression to ensure diverse representation
- Effective record keeping and monitoring is in place to measure effectiveness

EBCF will take appropriate action where breaches of this policy occur, in line with relevant organisational procedures.

EBCF ensures that equality and diversity are embedded throughout all out teaching, learning and assessment activities. Tutors and assessors are expected to create inclusive learning environments where all learners feel respected, valued and able to participate fully. This includes a range of teaching methods to meet different learning needs, ensuring that learning materials reflect diverse cultures and perspectives, and actively challenging discriminatory language or behaviour whenever it arises. Equality is not treated as a standalone concept but is woven into our curriculum planning, classroom interactions, work-based interaction and assessment practice to ensure that all learners have equitable access to learning, support and progression opportunities.

Training and Qualifications

- Every learner is assessed according to his or her personal capability prior to any training/qualification/assessment (including PLR checks)
- Training and qualification opportunities in diverse geographical locations is offered
- Training and qualifications are offered to learners who can achieve the required standards and free from unnecessary barriers that restrict access and progression
- Content and language of all written information including training and assessment materials are non-discriminatory and free from social and racial bias or stereotypical wording
- Promotional materials are monitored for the use of potentially discriminatory language and bias and make use of images that are representative of society
- Appeals policy is published and made available to individuals and learners
- Reasonable adjustments policy is published and made available to ensure that this is achieving its objective of providing all learners with equal access to fair training /qualifications/ assessment
- Monitoring of data on ethnicity, gender, age, and disability in relation to learners
- Learners with a protected characteristic, when they are undertaking one of our training /qualifications/assessment, are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in comparison to learners who do not share that characteristic.

Monitoring data will be used to identify trends and inform improvements to equality and diversity practices.

5. Common areas where discrimination can occur

Everyone has a responsibility to respect the feelings and sensibilities of others and to behave in a way that does not cause offence. Respect for all people is at the heart of our strategy and will take all reasonable steps to avoid discrimination against:

- **Direct discrimination:** When an individual is treated less favourably than you treat (or would treat) another individual because of a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by association:** When an individual is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- **Perceptive discrimination:** Where an individual is directly discrimination against an individual because others think, they possess a particular protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination:** When a certain criteria or practice is applied in the same way for all individuals but has the effect of putting others sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.
- **Age** – treating someone unfairly because they are being too old or too young

- **Disability** – treating someone unfairly because they have a disability such as sensory or mobility impairment, a form of disfigurement, or a learning or mental health problem
- **Gender reassignment** – treating someone unfairly because they are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex
- **Marriage or civil partnership** - treating someone unfairly because the person is married or is a civil partner
- **Race, religion or belief** – treating someone unfairly because of where they or their family, originate from or because of their faith, culture or skin colour, or failing to respect their religious or philosophical beliefs
- **Pregnancy and maternity** - treating someone unfavourably because of a pregnancy or given birth or breast feeding
- **Sex** - treating someone unfairly because of their sex - a man or a woman
- **Sexual orientation and transsexuality** – treating someone unfairly because they are a gay man, a lesbian, bisexual or transgendered or of another sex

All staff are expected to be aware of these forms of discrimination and take steps to prevent them within their roles.

6. Reasonable adjustment

It is the responsibility of EBCF and its instructors/assessors/staff/subcontractors to identify learners who are having difficulty or are likely to have difficulty in undertaking training or assessment activities. It is important that the learner is involved in all discussions to set any reasonable adjustments.

We will endeavour to accommodate the needs of learners with a particular training, qualification, or assessment requirement, according to individual circumstances, ensuring such learners are not disadvantaged in relation to other learners and that certificates accurately reflect learner attainment.

EBCF is committed to ensuring that all digital learning platforms, online resources and virtual learning environments are accessible to every learner, including those with disabilities or additional needs. Digital content is designed and reviewed to meet accessibility standards, with consideration given to screen-reader compatibility, alternative formats, clear layout and ease of navigation. Where learners experience barriers to accessing online materials, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure they are not disadvantaged. Staff are responsible for ensuring that digital delivery remains inclusive and that learners receive appropriate support to engage fully with online learning.

We will give every consideration to reasonable adjustment or special consideration requests and will consult with and follow the Awarding Organisation or Accrediting Body process for which the training /qualification/assessment is accredited with. Please refer to the Reasonable Adjustment Policy which

outlines reasonable adjustments for learners. Records of reasonable adjustments will be kept for audit purposes and evaluated for trends and continual improvement.

Reasonable adjustments will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate and effective for the individual learner

Action Items	Objective	Responsible Team/ Person	Timeline	Success Metrics
1. Conduct Diversity Audits	Assess current workforce diversity to identify gaps in representation	Senior leadership team	Q1 2026	Diversity data baseline; annual audit completion
2. Inclusive Recruitment Practices	Attract a diverse pool of candidates through bias-free job descriptions and expanded outreach	Senior leadership team	Ongoing	Increase in diverse applicants and employment
3. Provide Equality and Diversity Training	Provide up to date training to staff on matters regarding Equality and Diversity	Senior leadership team	Part of Induction process all staff complete.	Course completed by each member of staff who does join EBC. Completion rate above 90%
4. Review Promotion & Development Criteria	Ensure fair access to advancement opportunities by revising criteria and providing support	Senior leadership team	Annually	Increase in internal promotions for staff
5. Implement Flexible Work Policies	Support work-life balance and attract diverse talent by expanding remote and flexible work options	Senior leadership team	Annually	Employee feedback in review meetings
6. Regular Policy Review and Updates	Ensure policies reflect best practices and are free from biases	Senior leadership team	Annually	Policies reviewed and updated.
7. Set Up Anonymous Reporting Channels	Allow employees to report discrimination or harassment safely	HR	Ongoing	Number of cases resolved

7. Legal responsibility

Discrimination is a key concept of the legislation and direct and indirect discrimination are defined and recognised by the Act. EBCF has a clear duty to ensure that the provisions of relevant legislation and codes of practice are followed. We are committed to ensuring, through policies and procedures the promotion of equality and diversity and the prevention of discrimination. We will fulfil our legal and moral obligations as an employer and during our training activities.

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated annually or as and when required.

You may find this website useful: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com>

Republic of Ireland

- Equal Status Act 2000, revised to 2015 - <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/8/enacted/en/print>, includes the Employment Equality Act 1998
- Protection characteristics in ROI also includes the ‘Traveller community’



EBCF will ensure that policies and practices remain aligned with current legislation and guidance.

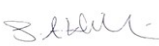
8. Review Process

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated annually or as and when required.

Feedback from staff, learners, and stakeholders may be considered as part of the review process.

9. Version Control

Version	Description of Change	Author	Date	Approved by
1.0	First version	S.Carragher	May 2022	S.Johnson
2.0	Updated version	S.Khan	May 2023	
3.0	Version 3.0 New action plan items	S.Khan	May 2024	

4.0	Version 4.0	S.Khan / J.Hall	January 2025	
5.0	Version 5.0 Policy updated to strengthen equality and diversity practices, including further embedding within teaching, learning and assessment, alignment with Prevent Duty responsibilities, and improved accessibility of digital learning platforms, with additional guidance on staff responsibilities, monitoring, and inclusive service delivery.	S.Khan (HR)	January 2026	S.Etheridge (Head of Quality)