



EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

JUNE 2018

Equality and Diversity Policy

Achieve Through Learning Ltd (ATL) is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce and learners. Our aim is that our workforce and learners will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee and learner feels respected and able to give of their best.

To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in both our employment and undertaking training with us. ATL will seek to safeguard the interests of all equality groups outlined in the Equality Act 2010 with reference to the nine protected human characteristics; ethnicity, gender, gender identity, disability, religion and belief, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and sexual orientation. ATL will work towards eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics as well as discrimination on the grounds of a perceived or associative protected characteristic. ATL will promote equality of opportunity and ensure that learners, staff and visitors feel welcome, safe, valued, included and respected in the ATL community.

All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

General aims of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 outlines the general duties for the public sector with respect to employment matters and the services they provide to their community. The Act 2010 also outlines specific duties for the providers of further and higher education. This Policy outlines the following aims which are derived from the general and specific duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Achieve Through Learning will:

- Work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in connection with the nine protected characteristics.
- Promote equality of opportunity, positive attitudes and good relations between all members of the ATL community.
- Provide relevant equality, Inclusion and human rights training to all staff to help them carry out their role with respect to the promotion of equality of opportunity in the ATL community.
- Monitor complaints received.
- Take positive steps where possible to address any under-representation of minority groups in the provision of employment and training.
- Carry out a self-assessment exercise to evaluate the implementation of the policy and produce a report which will summarise any action that needs to be taken to address any identified areas of weakness.
- ATL will carry out an annual review of the procedures for supporting learners who have disabilities and or learning difficulties.

Roles and responsibilities

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Operations Manager who will ensure that staff operates within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination.

The Operations Manager will ensure that:

- All staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy
- Grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible.
- Proper records are maintained.

Responsibilities of staff

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- Comply with the policy and arrangements.
- Not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so.
- Not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- Ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- Inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

Third parties

Third-party harassment occurs where a Company employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or customers. ATL will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform their manager/supervisor at once that this has occurred. ATL will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

Related policies and arrangements

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The company policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed.

Rights of disabled people

ATL attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- Make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training and provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment).

- Give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

Employment Practice

- All staff recruitment material will clearly state and reflect ATL's commitment to equality and Inclusion and will promote ATL as an equal opportunities employer.
- ATL will ensure that no job applicant will receive less favourable treatment than another on grounds of the nine named protected characteristics or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- No ATL employee will discriminate unfairly, directly or indirectly in making selection decisions.
- All applications will be assessed accurately to clear, objective and job related criteria.
- ATL will work in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 section 8 recruitment and selection requirements.
- Staff with same sex partners shall be entitled to the same benefits in terms of special leave as their heterosexual colleagues. Staff with carer responsibilities will be supported through access to dependent care leave. Job sharing shall be considered where this is practical. Requests for flexible and home working will be considered where appropriate.
- Appropriate monitoring information will be collated during the recruitment of staff.
- Everyone is required to work according to their contract of employment, including the number of days of annual leave overall and the annual hours worked. Where an employee makes a request for annual leave for a day related to a belief system, every attempt should be made to meet the request taking into account the needs of ATL.
- ATL will treat sympathetically requests for unpaid extended leave of absence for religious purposes, such as pilgrimages, births, weddings, deaths in another country etc. Such requests will be granted if reasonable and practicable and in line with the needs of the business.
- Participation in training and development activities will be monitored by ethnicity, gender, disability or learning difficulty and age. Where appropriate if inequality becomes apparent, positive action will be taken to redress the imbalance
- ATL will use any specific assistance packages provided by the Employment Service when/if the need arises to do so. These include Access to Work and the Supported Employment Programme.

Complaints

- ATL will seek to provide a supportive environment for all members of ATL community who make claims of discrimination or harassment.
- Any discriminatory behaviour directed at any individual or group will be dealt with under ATL Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure.
- Programme, teaching and learning (including language, cultural, religious and spiritual needs)
- All programmes of learning will have open access, subject to meeting entry requirements.
- Programmes of learning will be delivered in a manner which is not discriminatory.
- Wherever possible, programme content should consider the specific needs of disadvantaged groups.
- Positive steps will be taken to balance the curriculum in respect of programmes of study for under-represented groups if required.