


EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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Signature	Jim O'Brien 

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. The management and staff of ESL Gi Group are committed to providing a safe, secure and pleasant working environment in which Employees and Apprentices are able to maximise their full potential irrespective of their of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation – or any other grounds.
- 1.2. We are committed to identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices, procedures attitudes and behaviour throughout our organisation. We will extend this philosophy to ensure that our Apprentices, Trainers, Employees and external suppliers, understand this policy and its implications.
- 1.3. We believe that all Apprentices, Trainers and Employees are entitled to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness while at work and when representing the organisation in any outside capacity.
- 1.4. The clear and unambiguous aim of this policy is to prevent discrimination, provide guidance to resolve any problems and implement any appropriate corrective and preventative actions.

2. LEGISLATION

- 2.1. It is unlawful to discriminate against individuals directly or indirectly in respect of their either race, gender or disability.
- 2.2. The relevant legislation is found in; Equality Act 2010.
- 2.3. In writing this policy and the Codes of Practice, relating to both sex and racial discrimination produced and published by The Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality and a Code of Practice relating to the employment of disabled persons by the Department of Employment [Training] have been researched and informed this document.

3. PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

- 3.1. ESL Gi Group will endeavour to ensure that no Employee, job applicant or Apprentice is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of sex, race, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or age.

4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AWARENESS

- 4.1. All employees will be made aware of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion from the point of their employment commencing. During induction the policy will be provided to be read, discussed and understood in its entirety. A full explanation of the reporting procedure will be explained, and it shall be stipulated that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion should be promoted and embedded during communications with Employers and Apprentices.
- 4.2. Sufficient training and guidance will be provided to ensure all are competent in implementing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion effectively.

5. FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

- 5.1. **Direct discrimination** – ‘Where a person is less favourably treated because of sex, race, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or age. A clear example is if someone is refused a promotion because they were of Asian origin.
- 5.2. **Indirect discrimination** – ‘Where an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied equally to all groups but has a disproportionate and adverse effect on one particular group. A clear example is to set a dress code that would exclude many religious groups or to require a driving licence for an office-based job.
- 5.3. **Victimisation** – Where someone is less favourably treated than others are because he or she has taken action against ESL Gi Group under one of the relevant Acts: The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, The Race Relations Act 1976, The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, The Employment Rights Act 1996 or The Industrial Tribunals Act 1996.
- 5.4. **Harassment** –
 - 5.4.1 Is unwanted conduct directed towards an Employee, Apprentice or Candidate, by an Employee of ESL Gi Group, because of their gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation or disability, which is regarded as unwelcome and or offensive by the recipient. Harassment may include unwelcome suggestions or pressure to participate in social activities outside work where it has been made clear that it is not welcome.
 - 5.4.2 Conduct, which is intimidating, such as physical, verbal and non-verbal abuse. This includes the display of sexually explicit or racially offensive material, the use of sexually explicit or racially offensive humour, and comments of a discriminatory nature, whether directed towards the individual or not.
 - 5.4.3 It is the impact of the behaviour, which is relevant, not the motive or intended aim.
- 5.5. **Sex discrimination** –
 The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 also makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly against married persons. It is also unlawful to victimise anyone who has sought to exercise, or has assisted another to exercise, rights under the sex or race legislation.
- 5.6. **Sexual harassment** –
 - 5.6.1 **SEXUAL HARASSMENT WILL NOT BE ALLOWED OR CONDONED**
 - 5.6.2 Definition – Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex, affecting the dignity of women and men at work. Sexual harassment can include:
 - unwelcome attention;
 - subjecting someone to insults or ridicule because of their sex;
 - suggesting that sexual favours may in some way further someone’s career or refusing sexual favours may harm it;
 - lewd, suggestive or over familiar behaviour;
 - display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures or written material.

6. APPRENTICES, TRAINERS and EMPLOYERS RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1. As an Apprentice, Trainer or Employee of ESL Gi Group, you have the right to work, learn and train in an environment, which is free from any form of harassment. All Employees, Apprentices and Trainers have a responsibility to help ensure a working environment in which the dignity of Employees, Apprentices and Trainers is respected; Employees must ensure that their behaviour towards colleagues, Apprentices and Trainers does not cause offence and could not in any way be considered to be harassment.

ESL Gi Group recognises the right of Apprentices, Trainers and Employees to complain about harassment should it occur and recommends the following procedure:

6.2. Informal complaint:

6.2.1 Where you do not consider the harassment to be serious or where it has not been repeated and you simply want the behaviour to stop, you should approach the alleged harasser directly, making it clear to the individual [s] harassing you that the behaviour is offensive, is not welcome and that it should stop.

6.2.2 Where you find this difficult or embarrassing, you may request a member of the ESL Gi Group Management Team to approach the alleged harasser informally on your behalf.

6.3. Formal complaint:

6.3.1 If you view any harassment to be serious, if you prefer this method or if the harassment continues after the informal procedure has been used, then you will be supported in pursuing a formal complaint. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially under the company's grievance procedure.

6.3.2 Formal complaints should be made in accordance with ESL Gi Group grievance procedure. A member of the Management Team will conduct an investigation.

6.3.3 The initial investigation will establish and record the details of the complaint being made. Support will be provided to the member of staff making the complaint and measures put in place to ensure that they are not further distressed during the investigation.

6.3.4 The member of the Management Team conducting the investigation will report the progress of and final outcome of the investigation to the Governance Board on a weekly basis until finalisation.

6.4. If you are accused of discrimination or harassment:

6.4.1 If you are accused of harassment or acting in a discriminatory manner towards a fellow Employee, job applicant, Apprentice or Trainer you will be given a formal opportunity to rebut the allegation and you will be provided with support by another member of the Management Team during the investigation.

6.4.2 If the investigation concludes that the allegation was not proved and that there was no harassment or discrimination, this will be the end of the matter. If it is concluded that the allegation was false or malicious then the individual making the allegation may be the subject of disciplinary procedures.

6.4.3 If the investigation concludes that you have acted in a discriminatory manner, or have harassed another Employee, job applicant, Apprentice or Trainer, the Management Team will consider the action to be taken. The measures open include counselling, mediation, disciplinary action and dismissal.

7. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. The management and staff of ESL Gi Group must lead by example and ensure a safe, secure and pleasant working environment in which Apprentices, Trainers and Employees are able to maximise their full potential, irrespective of their gender, race, disability or marital status.

7.2. Whenever a formal complaint is being investigated, it is essential that both the person making the complaint and the alleged offender are treated fairly and with dignity.

7.3. The formal complaint will be investigated by a member of the Management Team.

7.4. The initial investigation will establish and record the details of the complaint being made. Support will be provided to the member of staff making the complaint and measures put in place to ensure that they are not further distressed during the investigation.

- 7.5. The person accused will be provided with support by another member of the Management Team during the investigation.
- 7.6. The member of the Management Team conducting the investigation will report the progress of and final outcome of the investigation to the Governance Board on a weekly basis until finalisation.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE RELEVANCE OF THIS POLICY

- 8.1. Finally, remember that Equality Diversity & Inclusion is about good and effective learning and employment practice, it is about creating a working environment in which everyone can be assured that his or her contribution is valued. ESL Gi Group will not tolerate harassment of any kind in the working environment and will take positive action to prevent its occurrence.
- 8.2. Equality Diversity & Inclusion practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation evolve. ESL Gi Group will monitor this progression and the effectiveness of this policy and will implement any necessary changes.

9. MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

- 9.1. Feedback from Employees, job applicants, Apprentices and Trainers will be used to inform the annual review.
- 9.2. This Equality Diversity & Inclusion Policy will be reviewed annually.
- 9.3. This policy was most recently reviewed on 8th November 2021.

IT IS OUR DESIRE TO BE A WORLD CLASS COMPANY PROVIDING A WORLD CLASS LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR APPRENTICES, TRAINERS AND EMPLOYEES.

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact the Head of Apprenticeships – kashmiro.capes-bhatti@gigroup.com

10. Promotion and Engagement

- 10.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [EDI] will be consistently embedded and promoted with Employers, Apprentices and Employees to improve awareness and ensure compliance from the point of recruitment, during the delivery of the apprenticeship programme as well as when working with Apprentices and Employers. Our legal obligation to do so is explained during pre-enrolment stages, and again during any engagement where this is naturally occurring. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be discussed with Employees from successful employment, induction to communication received from Gi Group internally and through training and development activities.
- 10.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be discussed during Apprentice progress reviews to discuss any prevalent matters and to ensure a thorough understanding.
- 10.3 Where naturally occurring, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be raised as a discussion point during Apprentice plenary and group sessions.
Where naturally occurring, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be raised as a discussion point during Employee meetings and training events to include CPD activity both internal and external.
- 10.5 ESL Gi Group endeavour to prevent any breach of this policy, and should this occur, will challenge and address any matters accordingly in accordance with the responsibilities aforementioned.
- 10.4 This document is readily available on the intranet to which all Apprentices, Employers and Employees have access, to be read as necessary.

11. Policy Consideration

- 11.1 This policy is taken into consideration during all stages of the apprenticeship process. Within registration documentations information regarding ethnicity, additional needs and residency is requested from the Apprentice.

- 11.2 Any requirements needed to ensure inclusivity will be accommodated for. This may include additional support needs, religious requirements and/or disabilities.
- 11.3 The Funding and Data Manager will present information regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion during monthly Leadership & Management meetings for review.