

## **Equality & Diversity Policy Statement**

### **Commitment**

LAGAT is committed to Equal Opportunities in education, training and employment. No one will receive less favourable treatment based on gender, pregnancy, age, racial origin, nationality, creed, sexual orientation, marital status, employment status, or any disability, ex-offenders, lack of formal qualifications, basic skills needs, social isolation or homelessness.

LAGAT aims to promote practices and procedures which ensure equality of opportunity and aims to eliminate any which unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly.

All customers and stakeholders connected to LAGAT are encouraged to hold the same responsibilities and commitments to equality of opportunity.

LAGAT will not tolerate any form of harassment against learners, staff or customers and will endeavour to investigate any complaints of such harassment and take appropriate action.

### **Our operating principles:**

To promote equality and tackle discrimination in all its forms

To narrow any identified achievement gaps between learner groups where such gaps may be attributable to learners' gender, ethnicity of certain disabilities.

### **Aims**

LAGAT seeks to ensure:

- The content and assessment of all programmes allow for the widest diversity of candidates.
- The content and demand of its programmes are non-discriminatory and are appropriate to the knowledge and skills specified. The structure of the training will be examined to ensure that it does not infringe on any person's rights.
- The style and language of its documentation are readily understood and do not reflect stereotyped or biased attitudes.
- There will be control of the quality and wording of advertising and publicity. Applications will be welcomed from under-represented groups of staff and learners.
- Candidates, assessors, internal verifiers and all associated with assessment, apply a fair and just process. .
- All candidates, assessors and internal verifiers adhere to the company's values

- Mechanisms are developed which deal fairly, swiftly and firmly with incidents of discrimination among assessors, verifiers, candidates and others involved in the centre's work of NVQ assessment.

**All forms of bullying and harassment are unacceptable to LAGAT.**

There will be effective procedures in place to ensure redress against harassment and bullying at work or during any part of training. Learners will be encouraged to discuss any concerns formally or informally.

Bullying or harassment refers to all unacceptable and unwarranted behaviour, which disrupts the quality of life or work of the individual – although the following list does not include all forms of bullying and harassment, the following are some examples of behaviour that are against LAGAT's equality policy and will not be tolerated:

- Physical Contact – physical assault, threatening behaviour or gesture, unwanted and unnecessary touching, patting, pinching etc.
- Verbal Conduct – sexual innuendo, lewd remarks, offensive jokes, mimicry of accents, abusive language, questions about a person's private life, derogatory remarks about a person's colour, religions, sexuality, lifestyle, disability, customs or culture, gossip or slander.
- Non-Verbal Conduct – display of pornographic or suggestive pictures or posters, offensive graffiti, defacing notices or letters, offensive cartoons, flags or emblems, screensavers, leering etc.
- Unacceptable Conduct – isolation, aggressive or threatening behaviour, setting a person up to fail, belittling a person professionally or personally, changing or taking away responsibilities without notice, over scrutiny, unfair allocation of jobs, misuse of internet, email, memos etc.

All occurrences of harassment and bullying must be reported (in the first instance) to the Managing Director

Once a complaint has been made regarding any issue of bullying or harassment, a representative of LAGAT will be appointed to investigate the situation within 48 hours of the report. A meeting will be set up with the employer (where there is employer involvement) within 5 working days of the initial report and a full investigation into the events will take place. The intention of such a meeting will be to bring the situation to the attention of the employer and to ensure the bullying or harassment is stopped as soon as is practicably possible.

If the intervention of LAGAT is not successful in stopping the unacceptable situation, the person making the complaint will have recourse to approach the Skills Funding Agency or other relevant external organisation.

Learners' understanding of equality and diversity will be developed through discussion at appropriate stages of their learning cycle. Where this discussion occurs at learner review, results will be recorded as part of the review.

Any allegations of harassment will be, as far as is practicable, investigated by a person not involved with the staff member or learner on a day-to-day basis.

False allegations of harassment or bullying will be taken as an offence against the policy and will be investigated. Any staff member or learner who bullies another individual they believe has made accusations against them (proved or not) will be liable to dismissal.

It is the duty of all staff, learners and employers to comply with our measures to set out to improve equality of opportunity. Any behaviour that contravenes this must be reported and no one must encourage or allow others (even by omission) to carry out a discriminatory act.

## **Implementation**

In order to achieve the successful implementation of this policy, LAGAT will:

- Ensure the commitment is understood and accepted by all staff, registered learners, appointed agents and employers and ensure the policy is available on request to all other interested parties. Contracts or Service Level Agreements will contain wording which is easily understandable. A simplified copy of the equal opportunities policy will be given to all learners at induction and the ethos of the policy discussed with the learners.

Employers will be regularly monitored in terms of equality of opportunity to:

- Provide development activity appropriate to the needs of its staff.
- Monitor the ethnicity, gender and disability rate of all new learners and staff members, including sub-contracted assessors and verifiers. Statistics will be analysed and used by management to improve the effectiveness of the policy.

Prospective learners will be told at the beginning of any interview that they are covered by LAGAT's Equal Opportunities Policy and that they should feel free to comment on any questions that they feel are inappropriate, without fear.

There will be no unnecessary testing.

Learner's previous experiences will be formally taken into account for the accreditation of prior learning.

Learners whom LAGAT are unable to help will be sensitively referred to other agencies so there is a continuous pathway to help and advice. Referral information will be kept accurately and up to date.

Facilities used by learners will be regularly reviewed and monitored and any necessary improvements made.

The dress code will take into account persons who have religious or cultural customs requiring a particular type of dress.

LAGAT respects the rights of staff and learners to practise their own faith. Fasting periods and other religious requirements such as private prayer will be considered on a case by case basis.

LAGAT will take a proactive approach to positive discrimination within the remit of the law and its applications to work-based learning. All staff will be aware of sex stereotyping and will encourage learners to consider opportunities in non-traditional areas of work as appropriate to their ambitions.

Learners who wish to discuss issues they feel are important should speak to their assigned Training Officer / Tutor.

Staff and learners will receive regular training and updates on equal opportunities and employment rights and responsibilities

LAGAT will implement this policy in accordance with all legislation. The main legislation is:

- Human Rights Act 1948 and 1998
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 2003 and 2005 Regulations
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and 2003 Regulations
- European Equal Treatment Directive 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2003 and 2005 Regulations
- Special Education Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Public Interest Disclosures Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Part Time Workers Regulations 2000
- Common Accord for Awarding Bodies
- The Equality Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010

Any questions concerning this policy, or any comments or suggestions, should be directed to the Managing Director.

This policy is supported by all staff whether directly employed or employed on a sub-contract or sessional basis and is the ultimate responsibility of the Managing Director.

The signed copy of the policy is available for inspection at the company's premises and is held in the Quality Policy Manual for LAGAT.

**Review:**

The Managing Director will review and revise this policy at a minimum annually.

**Management Approval:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hannah Spencer', written over a horizontal line.

**Hannah Spencer**

**Managing Director**