

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

Progressing lives through pioneering education.

Vision

Empowering people to unlock their full potential and achieve lasting success.

Values

Care

Expertise

Innovation

Accountability

Values



Care



Expertise



Innovation



Accountability

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1. Introduction

Busy Bees Education and Training Limited (BBET) is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work. We aim to create an environment where all learners, apprentices, staff, employers and partners are treated fairly, respectfully and without discrimination.

This policy outlines BBET's commitment to ensuring that all individuals have equal opportunity to access learning, employment and development, and that diversity is recognised as a strength that enriches learning environments, workplace culture and organisational performance.

BBET is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to promoting a culture where differences are valued and respected.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All prospective and current apprentices, learners and alumni
- All BBET employees including temporary, part-time and full-time staff
- Partner organisations and contractors
- Employers and workplaces hosting apprentices
- Visitors and stakeholders engaged with BBET activities

The policy applies to all BBET activities including:

- Recruitment and employment
- Education and training delivery
- Assessment and progression
- Employer engagement
- Online and blended learning environments

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy complies with and is informed by:

- Apprenticeship funding rules
- Department for Education statutory guidance
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

The Equality Act 2010 specifically protects individuals from discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

BBET will ensure that no individual is treated unfairly or disadvantaged due to these characteristics.

4. Related Policies

Equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded across BBET policies, procedures and operational practices. This policy should be read alongside other organisational policies that support the promotion of equality, the prevention of discrimination and the safeguarding of learners and staff.

Key related policies include:

- **Safeguarding Policy** - outlines BBET's approach to protecting learners from harm, including discrimination, harassment and abuse.
- **Prevent Policy** - supports the promotion of fundamental British values and protects learners from radicalisation and extremism.
- **Learner Inclusion Policy** - ensures equitable access to learning and support for all learners, including those with additional needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- **Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy** - sets out procedures for reporting and addressing bullying, harassment and victimisation.
- **Complaints Procedure** - provides a formal mechanism for raising concerns, including concerns relating to discrimination or unfair treatment.
- **Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy** - enables individuals to report concerns safely and confidentially.
- **Recruitment Policy** - outlines fair and inclusive recruitment and selection practices.
- **Health and Safety Policy** - ensures safe and inclusive learning and working environments.

5. Definitions

Equality: Ensuring individuals have fair access to opportunities and are not treated less favourably because of protected characteristics.

Diversity: Recognising, valuing and respecting the differences between people, including backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.

Inclusion: Creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, supported and able to participate fully. An inclusive environment encourages individuals to contribute ideas, raise concerns and participate confidently

6. Policy Principles

BBET is committed to:

- Encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as good practice
- Providing equal opportunities for all learners, apprentices and employees
- Creating a culture and environment free from bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful harassment
- Promoting respect, dignity and fairness in all interactions
- Recognising and valuing individual differences and the contributions of all staff, learners and apprentices
- Ensuring recruitment, selection and progression decisions are based on merit
- Supporting learners with additional needs through reasonable adjustments

- Challenging discriminatory behaviour and attitudes
- Promoting social mobility and widening participation in education and employment

BBET opposes and avoids all forms of unlawful discrimination including:

- Pay and Benefits
- Terms and Conditions of employment
- Dealing with grievances and discipline
- Unfair Dismissal or Redundancy
- Leave for parents
- Requests for flexible working
- Selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

7. Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

BBET actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion through:

Fair access to opportunities: Providing equal access to recruitment, training, progression and promotion opportunities.

Inclusive learning environments: Ensuring teaching materials, case study examples and discussions reflect diverse perspectives and experiences.

Removing barriers to participation: Identifying and addressing barriers that may affect learners' ability to participate fully in education or employment.

Employer engagement: Working with employer partners to promote inclusive workplaces and equal opportunities for apprentices.

Reasonable adjustments: Making reasonable adjustments for learners or staff with disabilities or additional needs to ensure fair access.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

All

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Promote equality and inclusive practice
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour where appropriate
- Report incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation

Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure compliance with equality legislation
- Embed inclusive practice across the organisation
- Allocate resources to support equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives
- Monitor equality outcomes and improvement actions

Managers

- Promote inclusive behaviour and challenge discrimination
- Ensure employees understand and implement this policy
- Address complaints promptly and fairly
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are implemented where required

Learners and Apprentices

- Treat others with respect and dignity
- Avoid discriminatory or offensive behaviour
- Report any concerns to coaches, managers or safeguarding officers

9. Addressing Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

BBET is committed to maintaining an inclusive environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. BBET does not tolerate bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation in any form.

Any concerns or incidents should be reported through the appropriate channels, including:

- Safeguarding procedures
- Complaints Procedure
- Speak Up Policy

All reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly. Appropriate action will be taken where behaviour is found to breach this policy or relevant legislation.

Further guidance on reporting and managing such incidents can be found in BBET's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

10. Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Teaching and Learning

BBET is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion throughout its teaching, learning and assessment practices.

This includes:

- ensuring learning environments are inclusive and respectful
- promoting understanding of different cultures, backgrounds and perspectives
- providing learning materials that are accessible and inclusive
- accommodating different learning needs and styles
- integrating equality, diversity and inclusion themes within curriculum delivery where appropriate
- encouraging respectful discussion and critical thinking
- supporting learners to develop awareness of equality within their workplaces and communities
- ensuring staff receive training in inclusive teaching practices.

Coaches are expected to create an inclusive learning environment and consistently promote equality and diversity in teaching and support sessions with learners and apprentices, challenging discriminatory attitudes or behaviours where they arise.

This approach supports the development of **fundamental British values**, including mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

11. Equality in Employer and Workplace Environments

BBET works closely with employer partners to ensure that apprentices and learners are treated fairly and respectfully within workplace settings.

Employer partners are expected to:

- provide safe and inclusive working environments
- comply with equality legislation and good employment practices
- treat learners fairly and without discrimination

- support learners' wellbeing and development.

Where concerns relating to discrimination or unfair treatment in the workplace are raised, BBET will work with the learner or apprentice and employer to address the issue appropriately.

Where necessary, concerns may be escalated through safeguarding or complaints procedures.

12. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in recruitment and employment

BBET will ensure that:

- recruitment processes are inclusive and free from bias
- advertisements and job descriptions avoid discriminatory language or stereotyping
- applicants are not asked questions that could indicate discriminatory intent based on protected characteristics
- health or disability information is not requested before a job offer is made, except where legally permitted
- reasonable adjustments are provided where required during recruitment and employment processes
- part-time and fixed-term staff are treated no less favourably than comparable full-time or permanent employees unless objectively justified.

Further guidance is available in the BBET Recruitment Policy.

13. Disability Inclusion

BBET is committed to promoting disability inclusion and ensuring that individuals with disabilities are supported to access employment, learning and development opportunities.

13.1 Inclusive Recruitment

BBET will ensure that recruitment processes are inclusive and accessible.

This includes:

- considering accessibility in recruitment campaigns, advertising and application processes
- offering reasonable adjustments for applicants during recruitment and selection activities
- ensuring interview arrangements are accessible where required.

Examples of adjustments may include:

- ensuring accessible interview locations
- adapting assessment methods
- offering alternative formats or communication methods

13.2 Disability Awareness and Respect

BBET recognises that disabilities may be visible or non-visible. Creating an environment where individuals feel safe to discuss their needs is essential to promoting inclusion.

BBET expects all staff, learners and partners to treat individuals with dignity, respect and understanding. Discriminatory or ableist language or behaviour will not be tolerated and may result in action under the Disciplinary Policy.

13.3 Reasonable adjustments

Individuals are not required to disclose a disability. However, disclosure enables BBET to consider appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

Where a disability affects an individual's ability to carry out their role or participate in learning, BBET will work with the individual to identify suitable adjustments. This may include:

- adjustments to working practices or learning arrangements
- adaptations to premises or equipment

- flexible arrangements where appropriate.

Where necessary, BBET may seek specialist advice, including from medical professionals or occupational health services, to ensure appropriate support is provided.

Staff may also access additional wellbeing support through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) where available.

14. Positive Action

BBET may take positive action, where appropriate and lawful, to support groups who may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in education or employment.

Positive action may include:

- targeted outreach activities
- support programmes
- mentoring or development initiatives

Contact

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding this policy, please contact:

Operations Director

Busy Bees Education and Training

St Matthews, Shaftsbury Drive, Burntwood, WS7 9QP, UK.

Email: trainingfeedback@busybees.com

Statutory information

Busy Bees Education and Training Limited

Registered in England and Wales under Company Registration No. 03026494

Registered Office: St Matthews, Shaftsbury Drive, Burntwood, WS7 9QP, UK.

Training and Roll Out

This policy will be made available via our website (busybeestraining.co.uk) and SharePoint. Training will be made available via our Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) and/or during Face-to-Face or Teams meetings as part of ongoing staff development, along with our commitment to this policy.

BBET will ensure that:

- Staff receive equality, diversity and inclusion training
- Learners receive EDI awareness during induction
- Managers receive additional training to support inclusive leadership

Training is refreshed regularly and recorded.

Review

This policy is:

- Monitored by senior leadership
- Reviewed at least annually, or in response to legislative changes or following updates to risk assessments or incidents
- Agreed and signed off by the CEO

Policy Owner: Operations Director

Ref: P09-Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Version: 2.0

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Appendix A – Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

The **Equality Act 2010** provides legal protection against discrimination for individuals who possess certain characteristics known as **protected characteristics**.

BBET is committed to ensuring that no learner, staff member, employer partner or visitor experiences discrimination, harassment or victimisation based on any of the following protected characteristics.

Age: Refers to a person belonging to a particular age group or range of ages. Protection applies to individuals of all ages.

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Disabilities may be visible or non-visible.

Gender Reassignment: Protection for individuals who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process to change their gender.

Marriage and Civil Partnership: Protection against discrimination for individuals who are married or in a civil partnership.

Pregnancy and Maternity: Protection for individuals who are pregnant, have recently given birth, or are on maternity leave.

Race: Includes colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins.

Religion or Belief: Includes any religion, religious belief, or philosophical belief. Protection also applies to individuals who do not hold a religious belief.

Sex: Protection from discrimination based on whether a person is male or female.

Sexual Orientation: Protection for individuals who identify as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or any other sexual orientation.

Commitment to Equality

BBET recognises that discrimination may occur through both direct and indirect practices and is committed to promoting an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and respected.

The organisation actively promotes equality of opportunity and seeks to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation in all aspects of its work, including:

- recruitment and employment practices
- teaching, learning and assessment
- learner support and progression
- engagement with employers and external partners

Appendix B - Examples of Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

The following examples illustrate behaviours that may constitute discrimination, harassment or victimisation under the **Equality Act 2010**. These examples are not exhaustive.

Direct Discrimination: Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Examples may include:

- Refusing to recruit or promote an individual because of their age, disability, gender or other protected characteristic.
- Treating a learner unfairly because of their race, religion or sexual orientation.
- Excluding an individual from opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity.

Indirect Discrimination: Applying a policy, practice or rule that appears neutral but disproportionately disadvantages individuals who share a protected characteristic.

Examples may include:

- Scheduling training or meetings at times that disadvantage individuals with caring responsibilities without justification.
- Applying workplace requirements that may disadvantage individuals with certain religious practices without reasonable consideration.

Harassment: Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment.

Examples may include:

- Offensive jokes, comments or remarks related to race, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Displaying or sharing inappropriate or discriminatory images or messages.
- Repeated unwanted comments or behaviour directed at an individual.

Harassment may occur in person or through digital communication, including email, messaging platforms or social media.

Sexual Harassment: Unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Examples may include:

- Unwanted sexual comments or advances.
- Sharing sexually explicit material or messages.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Victimisation: Treating an individual unfairly because they have raised a concern, made a complaint or supported another individual in raising a concern relating to discrimination or harassment.

Examples may include:

- Excluding someone from opportunities because they raised a discrimination concern.
- Treating someone negatively because they participated in an investigation.

Appendix C - Reporting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Concerns

BBET encourages all learners, apprentices, staff and partners to promptly report concerns relating to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Concerns may be reported through any of the following channels:

For Learners and Apprentices

- Development Coach, Skills Coach or Knowledge Coach
- Regional Operations Manager
- Safeguarding Officer or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Complaints Procedure

For Staff

- Line Manager
- Senior Leadership Team
- People Team
- Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy

How Concerns Are Managed

When a concern is raised:

- The concern will be acknowledged and recorded
- Appropriate safeguarding or support measures will be considered
- An investigation will be undertaken where required
- Appropriate action will be taken in line with BBET policies.

Where concerns involve safeguarding risks, they will be managed in accordance with the BBET Safeguarding Policy.

Where concerns involve staff conduct, they may be addressed through the BBET Disciplinary Procedure.

Confidentiality and Protection

BBET will handle all reports sensitively and, where possible, confidentially. Individuals who raise concerns in good faith will not be treated unfairly or subjected to victimisation.

Appendix D - Equality Monitoring and Data Use

BBET collects and reviews equality monitoring information to support its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and to ensure that no individual or group is disadvantaged within its provision.

Equality monitoring helps BBET to identify patterns, address inequalities and improve outcomes for learners and staff.

Purpose of Equality Monitoring

Equality monitoring data is used to:

- identify and address potential barriers to participation, achievement and progression
- monitor fairness and inclusivity within recruitment, employment and training practices
- inform quality improvement and curriculum development
- support compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and regulatory expectations
- ensure equitable access to learning opportunities and support.

Monitoring also helps BBET evaluate whether policies, procedures and practices are operating effectively and fairly.

Data Collected

BBET may collect equality monitoring data relating to the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, where appropriate and lawful. This may include information relating to:

- age
- disability
- sex
- race or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage and civil partnership (where relevant to employment).

Where appropriate, BBET may also monitor additional factors relevant to inclusion, such as:

- socio-economic background
- learning difficulty or disability
- additional learning support needs.

Use of Data

Equality monitoring data will be used only for legitimate organisational purposes, including:

- quality assurance and self-assessment
- improving learner outcomes and experiences
- identifying gaps in recruitment, retention, achievement or progression
- informing equality impact assessments where appropriate.

Data will be analysed in aggregated form to ensure individuals cannot be identified.

Data Protection

All equality monitoring data will be collected, stored and processed in accordance with:

- the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- the Data Protection Act 2018
- BBET's Data Protection and Privacy Policies.

Monitoring and Review

Equality monitoring information will be reviewed regularly by BBET leadership to inform:

- quality improvement planning
- curriculum and learner support development
- organisational equality objectives.

Where disparities or areas of concern are identified, BBET will take appropriate steps to address them and promote equitable outcomes.