Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity (EDI) Policy

1. Objective

The objective of this Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy is to promote a culture that is inclusive, diverse, and free from discrimination across all PMS Progress operations. BMS Progress is committed to ensuring that all employees, learners and stakeholders are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their background or characteristics.

We'll provide equal access to learning and progression opportunities, creating a culture where diversity is valued and individuals feel safe, supported and able to contribute fully.

2. Introduction

This policy outlines the BMS Progress' commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace and learning environment. We believe that a diverse workforce and learning environment enhances innovation, productivity, and overall success.

BMS Progress will assess learners only on their suitability for training, experience, commitment and prior learning; never on protected characteristics. We will reject any instructions from employers that contain, imply or encourage unlawful discrimination.

This policy applies to all employees, workers, learners, and employer partners engaged with BMS Progress.

3. Definition

EDI:

- Equality: Ensuring that individuals or groups are not treated unfairly or discriminated against based on protected characteristics.

- Diversity: Recognising, respecting, and valuing individual differences.

- Inclusion: Creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, valued, and able to contribute fully.

Discrimination Types:

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

- Indirect discrimination: Applying a policy or practice that appears neutral but disadvantages people with a protected characteristic.

- Harassment: Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates a hostile environment.

- Victimisation: Treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint.

Reasonable Adjustments: Adjustments made to ensure disabled learners or employees can fully access services, employment or training.

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4. Compliance with Legislation

BMS Progress adheres to all relevant equality legislation including:

- Equality Act 2010

- ESFA funding rules

- GDPR relating to learner information

- WEEE regulations (in relation to accessibility and equipment standards)

Our policy protects individuals from discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:

- Age

- Disability

- Gender reassignment

- Marriage and civil partnership

- Pregnancy and maternity

- Race

- Religion or belief

- Sex

- Sexual orientation

We ensure:

- Recruitment, training and assessment practices are free from discrimination.

- Decisions relating to learners and employees comply with equality law.

- Employers and partners follow lawful and inclusive practices.

Where required, BMS Progress will share additional learning needs information with End Point Assessment Organisations (EPAOs) so that appropriate reasonable adjustments can be made.

5. BMS Progress Responsibilities

BMS Progress is responsible for:

- Promoting a culture of inclusivity and respect.

- Ensuring that recruitment, training, and promotion processes are free from bias.

- Providing equal opportunities for all learners and employees.

- Addressing any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in the workplace and learning environment.

- Regularly reviewing policies and procedures to ensure compliance with EDI principles.

- Ensuring all staff receive EDI training.

- Embedding EDI principles into recruitment, assessment, curriculum design and delivery.

- Keeping accurate records (e.g., learner age data) for monitoring and equality impact assessments.

- Supporting employees and learners undergoing gender reassignment or seeking reasonable adjustments.

- Ensuring employers do not request or impose discriminatory requirements.

- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of Prevent and safeguarding responsibilities.

6. Procedure

6.1 Recruitment and Learner Onboarding:

- Applicants are assessed only on skills, experience, job role suitability and commitment.

- No recruitment decisions may be made based on protected characteristics.

- Employers must not request discriminatory selection criteria.

6.2 Reasonable Adjustments:

- Learners declaring additional learning needs (ALN) will be supported through adjustments in delivery and assessment.

- Adjustments will be applied in line with the Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

- EPAOs will be informed where necessary so adjustments can be applied at End Point Assessment.

6.3 Gender Reassignment Support

- Employees and learners undergoing gender reassignment will be supported throughout the process.

- BMS will protect individuals from discrimination and harassment.

- Alternative roles may be explored if the change creates genuine operational challenges.

- Pastoral support is offered where needed.

- Name changes on certificates will follow ESFA guidance.

6.4 Fundamental British Values (FBV)

We promote:

- Democracy

- Rule of Law

- Respect and Tolerance

- Individual Liberty

FBV will be embedded throughout training programmes and reflected in staff conduct and learner experiences.

7. Concerns & Investigation Process

Concerns or complaints of discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment by learners or clients will be managed as follows:

1. Complaints may be raised through the BMS Complaints Policy.

2. Concerns will be referred to the Head of Quality (Katie Vincent), and then escalated to Managing Director and then Board of Directors if not satisfied.

3. Reports will be investigated confidentially, fairly and promptly.

4. Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

5. Learners and employees will be supported throughout the investigation process.

Concerns or complaints of discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment by employees of BMS Progress should follow the internal processes outlined in the Staff Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy (version 2).

8. Training & Awareness

- All employees will receive training on equality, diversity, and inclusivity, using the Education & raining Foundation (ETF) "Advancing EDI" module.

- Managers will be trained to identify and address discrimination.

- Regular workshops and awareness campaigns will be conducted.

- BMS Progress will encourage learner participation through Learner Voice and other involvement strategies.

- Pastoral and wellbeing support will be offered to learners who may be experiencing discrimination or undergoing gender reassignment.

- We will ensure learners and staff can request advice, raise concerns or seek adjustments without fear of disadvantage.

9. Policy Enforcement

Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Breaches may lead to:

- Formal investigation

- Corrective action

- Disciplinary procedures for staff

- Intervention for employer partners

- Support plans for learners

BMS Progress will:

- Publish the EDI Policy on its website.

- Monitor and analyse equality-related data to identify patterns and improvements.

- Review this policy regularly to ensure effectiveness.

Associated Documents:

- Initial Assessment Policy

- Safeguarding Policy

- Reasonable Adjustments Policy

- Complaints Policy

This policy has been approved by the Directors of BMS Progress and will be reviewed and updated as required.
Any questions should be directed to:
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