

Title	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Cross References	Internal:  SEND/EHCP Policy  Admissions Policy  Curriculum Policy  Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy  Behaviour Policy
Date	October 2026

1. Our Commitment

Apricot Online is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to preventing unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

We aim to reduce disadvantage and barriers to participation, promote inclusion and diversity, and ensure that students, employees, applicants and others who engage with Apricot Online are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

As an online alternative education provider, we recognise that many of our students have experienced barriers to accessing or engaging with education. We seek to provide flexible, inclusive provision that enables students to participate, make progress and achieve their potential.

2. Students and Education

Apricot Online will support students to achieve to the best of their ability and will seek to identify and reduce barriers to learning within the provision we deliver.

We will:

- promote an inclusive and respectful online learning environment;
- consider individual needs and appropriate reasonable adjustments for disabled students;
- seek to ensure that teaching, resources and digital learning activities are accessible and inclusive where reasonably practicable;
- challenge discriminatory language, harassment, bullying and prejudicial behaviour in accordance with relevant Apricot Online policies;
- teach students, where appropriate within the curriculum, about equality, diversity, respect and the impact of discrimination; and
- encourage students to value difference and contribute positively to an inclusive learning community.

3. Protected Characteristics

Apricot Online will not unlawfully discriminate because of a protected characteristic. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

The way in which particular provisions of the Equality Act apply can differ according to the context. For example, some provisions relating to age and marriage and civil partnership apply differently in education and employment. Apricot Online will apply the Equality Act in accordance with its legal responsibilities in the relevant circumstances.

The Equality Act permits certain lawful differences in treatment in defined circumstances, including appropriate positive action where the statutory requirements are met. Any such action must be lawful, proportionate and appropriately considered.

4. Reasonable Adjustments and Disability

Apricot Online recognises the importance of removing or reducing substantial disadvantages experienced by disabled people.

Where the Equality Act duty applies, we will consider reasonable adjustments for disabled students, employees and applicants. Adjustments will be considered according to individual circumstances and may include changes to communication, teaching methods, digital resources, working arrangements, recruitment processes or other aspects of access to Apricot Online's services or employment.

For students, reasonable adjustments will be considered alongside available SEND information, EHC plans where relevant, commissioning arrangements and the nature of the online provision.

5. Employment and Recruitment

Apricot Online is committed to fair and inclusive employment practices. We will not unlawfully discriminate in recruitment, selection, terms and conditions, access to training and development, promotion, performance management or other aspects of employment.

- We will not tolerate unlawful:
- direct discrimination;
- indirect discrimination;
- harassment;
- victimisation; or
- other prohibited conduct under the Equality Act 2010.

Employment decisions will be based on appropriate, objective and relevant criteria, subject to any lawful exceptions or positive action permitted by legislation.

6. Admissions, Referrals and Access to Provision

Apricot Online will apply its admissions and referral arrangements fairly and consistently. Decisions about whether Apricot Online can meet a student's needs will be based on relevant information about the proposed provision, the student's needs, safety, accessibility and the organisation's ability to deliver an appropriate commissioned package.

A student's protected characteristic will not be used as a reason for unlawful discrimination. Where disability or additional needs affect access to provision, reasonable adjustments will be considered in accordance with applicable duties and Apricot Online's role within the commissioned arrangement.

7. Curriculum, Resources and Online Environment

Apricot Online aims to ensure that curriculum delivery and learning resources promote respect and do not unlawfully discriminate. Staff should be mindful of equality, diversity and inclusion when selecting examples, resources and approaches to teaching.

The online learning environment should be one in which students and staff are treated with dignity and where discriminatory behaviour, harassment and prejudicial language are challenged and addressed through the appropriate safeguarding, behaviour or employment procedures.

8. Responsibilities and Review

All employees have a responsibility to support Apricot Online's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and to comply with relevant organisational policies.

Concerns about discrimination, harassment or victimisation should be raised through the appropriate Apricot Online procedure. Students' concerns may also require consideration under safeguarding or behaviour procedures depending on the circumstances.

This statement will be reviewed annually and sooner where significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or Apricot Online's provision make this necessary.

Authorised by: Jodie Phillips, Operations Director

Date: October 2026

Review Date: October 2027