



# Equality and Diversity Policy

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### Reviewers

Name	Title / Role	Date Issued	Version
James Sturdy	Head of Compliance	28/11/2018	1.2
Penny Guard	Head of Quality and Compliance	28/06/2020	1.4

### Approved by

Name	Title / Role	Date Approved	Version
Steven Guard	Managing Director	28/11/2018	1.2
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## 1 Background

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. Before the Act came into force there were several pieces of legislation to cover discrimination, including:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

## 2 Purpose

Guard Business Solutions Limited (GBS) is committed to creating a culture in which equality of opportunity and diversity are promoted actively and in which unlawful discrimination is not tolerated.

GBS recognises the real educational and business benefits of having a diverse community of staff and learners and is working towards building and maintaining an environment which values and celebrates diversity.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that in carrying out its activities GBS will have due regard to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity, across all its activities.
- Fostering and promoting good relations between people of a diverse background.
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Encouraging participation of all.

## 3 Scope

This policy applies to all business and academic staff, visiting lecturers, volunteers, learners, service users and visitors to the college, together with those contracted to work at or for GBS.

## 4 Definitions

This policy has been written in line with requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the 9 protected characteristics: -

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

## 5 Policy Statements

GBS believes in the principles of social justice and aims to ensure that:

- Individuals are treated fairly, with dignity and respect regardless of their age, gender, gender identity or re-assignment, marital status, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, social status, religion or belief, union membership, political or other ideology or inappropriate distinction.
- It affords all individuals, learners and employees the opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- It promotes an inclusive and supportive environment for staff, learners and visitors.
- It provides services that are accessible according to need.
- It recognises the varied contributions made by individuals from diverse backgrounds and wide-ranging experiences.
- Effective partnerships with all parts of our community are created.

### 5.1 Underpinning principles

This policy is guided by the following principles, that:

- All staff, learners and visitors should enjoy a safe environment free from unfair/unlawful discrimination including harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- All learners and employees should have equal access to quality services that are made available by GBS.
- All staff and learners should have equal access to opportunities for personal, professional, or academic training and development, career progression and promotion opportunities.
- All staff and learners should be able to participate fully in the work and life of GBS and celebrate its diversity.
- Staff and learners at the college should reflect the diversity of talent, experience and skills from the local, national and international pool from which it draws its learners and workforce.
- Positive action initiatives continue to be used to redress inequalities and unfair / unlawful discriminatory practice.

### 5.2 Responsibilities

All board members, management, staff and learners are responsible for ensuring GBS meets its legal obligations in respect of equal opportunities and maintains an environment where there is genuine inclusion and respect for diversity. Individual members of GBS are responsible for promoting equality of opportunity, contributing to an environment free of fear or intimidation and ensuring that their behaviour and actions do not amount to unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Visitors to GBS, together with those contracted to work at or for the GBS will be expected to comply with this policy. Contractors or suppliers should also comply with equal opportunities legislation and if they are unable to demonstrate such compliance they should be excluded from consideration of the contract in question.

GBS recognises that it also has moral and social responsibilities that go beyond the legislation and it will contribute to the wider process of change through all aspects of its work and practices in order to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote Equality & Diversity.

## **6 Procedures**

### **6.1 Implementation of the Policy**

The successful implementation of this policy relies on the mainstreaming of Equality & Diversity issues within the GBS strategic plan, which in turn, is supported by operational plans.

GBS will assess the impact of this policy on staff and learners to ensure it does not have an adverse impact for different groups of people, primarily in terms of race, gender and disability, as well as regarding age, religion/belief and sexual orientation.

### **6.2 Breach of the Policy**

GBS will take seriously any instances or alleged incidents of non-adherence to the Equality & Diversity policy by learners, staff or visitors. Such instances or allegations will be investigated and where appropriate will be considered under the relevant disciplinary procedure for staff or learners.

Regarding any breach of the policy by visitors, GBS will take appropriate action in relation to the nature of the incident.

### **6.3 Complaints**

Any complaint will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner as indicated in the How Are We Performing procedure (complaints, compliments, and suggestions) and in accordance with the relevant grievance and disciplinary procedures.

### **6.4 Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier should it become necessary by the Head of Quality and Compliance.

## 7 Related Policies

NO related policies are defined

## 8 References / Citations

More information can be found on the gov.uk website

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

End.