

Equality & Diversity Policy and Implementation Plan

Careers Clusters – Croydon & Hillingdon

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| Maintenance Policy Owner | Careers SLT |
| Review (Policy) | Annual |
| Review Implementation Plan | Quarterly |
| Policy reviewed | July 2022 contract end June 2023 |
| Implementation Plan next review | Reviewed quarterly |

Introduction

Education Development Trust is committed to encouraging, valuing and managing diversity in all its activities, as we believe this to be ethically right and socially responsible, as well as making sound business sense. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and aim to provide a working environment and culture which recognises and values differences and supports employees to reach their full potential. We will take positive action, where necessary, to encourage a more diverse workforce which reflects the society within which we operate.

Inclusion & Diversity is a strategic priority for EDT. 'Our priority is to achieve a diverse and inclusive working environment, in which differences are valued, and all individuals, regardless of their background, can access opportunities equally to reach their full potential'. Inclusion is EDT's fifth corporate value. We are now a 'Disability Confident committed' employer.

The Careers Clusters in Croydon and Hillingdon aim to provide a workplace and a programme of activities and support, free of discrimination and harassment by proactively tackling and eliminating discrimination to ensure that no individual or group is discriminated against for any reason. This policy is aligned with Education Development Trust's corporate Global Inclusion and Diversity Policy and associated policies, and as such reflects our corporate commitment to comply with relevant legislation and codes of practice to ensure the fair treatment of all individuals throughout the project life cycle, and ensure all staff understand their responsibility to be proactive in their approach to equality and diversity, and in tackling unlawful discrimination.

Policy Statement

Through Careers Clusters in Croydon and Hillingdon, Education Development Trust is committed to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contribution of all our staff and all project participants are recognised and valued.
- Seeking to ensure that both Careers Clusters are relevant and accessible to all within the cluster, and that they meet the changing needs of schools, employers, participants and stakeholders.
- Attracting, recruiting, retaining and developing the very best talented people from all sections of the community to contribute at every level.
- Recognising that people from different backgrounds, cultures, skills and experiences can bring new ideas and perceptions that will help increase organisational efficiency and improve our services.
- Creating an environment that upholds the right of everyone to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Creating an environment where intimidation, bullying or harassment are not tolerated and where any breaches will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

- Ensuring that no-one involved with the Careers Clusters project will receive less favourable treatment because of their age, gender, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, faith, family circumstance, disability, sexual orientation or for any other reason.
- Maintaining an ongoing commitment to Equality & Diversity. To ensure that it is integrated into all policies and practises, training and service delivery.
- Ensuring that all staff involved in the Careers Clusters project have a responsibility to be proactive in promoting diversity and equality and in tackling unlawful discrimination.
- Ensuring equal opportunity for both disabled employees and project participants in relation to career development and advancement, reasonable adjustments to working conditions and place of work, provision of specialist equipment and access to facilities.

Responsibilities

Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

1. The Careers Clusters in both Croydon and Hillingdon meet the corporate obligations as outlined in Education Development Trust's corporate Global Inclusion and Diversity Policy, thereby meeting its legal obligations in respect of legislation
2. Ensuring the policy and its related procedures, mechanisms and strategies are implemented effectively.
3. Providing a consistently high-profile lead on issues covered by the policy.
4. Ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities under the policy.
5. Ensuring training is provided for staff as appropriate.
6. Ensuring that appropriate action, under the policy, is taken against anyone who is found to have acted in any way in a discriminatory manner.
7. The policy is regularly reviewed.

The Project Manager is responsible for:

1. Implementing the policy and any related procedures and strategies.
2. Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support.
3. Taking appropriate action against anyone who discriminates.
4. Ensuring external partners are aware of the policy.
5. Not discriminating if involved in the recruitment, promotion, management, development or termination of staff.
6. Delivering services to meet the needs of our diverse beneficiary group.
7. Ensuring any reasonable adjustments are made where needed.

Employees have responsibility for:

1. Fostering an environment in which compliance within this policy is regarded as integral to their work.
2. Striving to create an environment in which individual goals may be pursued without fear or intimidation.

3. Being proactive in their approach to discrimination within the workplace and to respond to situations appropriately to ensure that the Careers Clusters Equality and Diversity Policy is put into practice, by not discriminating or inducing others to discriminate.
4. Not victimising any person who has complained, including complaints of harassment or unfair discrimination, or who has given information in connection with such a complaint.
5. Ensuring that all project participants are treated fairly and in line with the principles outlined in this policy.

Implementation

Appropriate training and support for employees will be provided where necessary to ensure successful implementation of this policy; including raising awareness of equality and diversity issues, and ensuring staff have a clear understanding of our commitment to equality and diversity and their responsibilities towards this.

The Careers Clusters aim to achieve its Equality and Diversity Policy through an associated Implementation Plan, which is the overall responsibility of the Cluster Manager. The Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis by our Inclusion and Diversity strategic working group who will flag any concerns to the Careers Clusters Contract Manager and where needed will escalate any identified issues or under-performance against targets to the Careers and Employability Senior Leadership Team.

Reference Material

Please refer to the following Education Development Trust policies:

- Global Inclusion & Diversity Policy
- Global Code of Conduct
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

In addition, there are several pieces of legislation which combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities and diversity:

- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Act 2002
- Work and Families Act 2006

Complaints

Any complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner, in accordance with the appropriate grievance and disciplinary procedure.

The HR Operations Team are available for confidential consultation on any issues that concerns any individual member of staff relating to discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation and can be contacted on 0118 902 1928.

Support

Support can be provided by our Employee Assistance Programme, delivered by AXA. They provide 24/7 access to a confidential counselling and advice helpline to all employees.

Details of the confidential 24-hour helpline number and the AXA employee portal is available to staff through our intranet and via Line Manager.

Monitoring and Review Process

The policy and implementation plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet the growing needs of the business and the diverse culture in which we operate. All HR policies and processes will be reviewed regularly to ensure they do not intentionally or inadvertently discriminate against, disadvantage or exclude any group(s) of people or individuals.

We are committed to monitoring our staff profile to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and to highlight areas to address. Where appropriate, personal data will be gathered using questionnaires from both prospective and current employees. The data may be analysed to provide a benchmark to evaluate our effectiveness against other third sector organisations and in relation to the communities within which we operate. Data will be shared with, and reviewed by, the senior managers on a quarterly basis. Data will be stored and processed in line with our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU).

Coordinated monitoring will be the responsibility of our Inclusion and Diversity strategic working group, who will undertake quarterly audits of the Equality and Diversity Implementation Plan as part of their quality assurance remit.

The Careers and Employability Senior Leadership Team have a remit to ensure that the review of this Policy and its associated Implementation Plan informs the review of Education Development Trust's Global Inclusion and Diversity policy by Education Development Trust's Executive Management Team.

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for the overall development and application of the Careers Clusters Equality and Diversity Policy is the Careers Cluster Project Manager. Annual review of the Policy will be undertaken by the Cluster Manager and the IAG Commercial Manager.

Implementation Plan

A copy of our Equality and Diversity Implementation Plan is updated quarterly and is available on request.