

Equality and Diversity Policy

Luton Adult Learning

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Contents

Luton Adult Learning Equality and Diversity Policy	1
Our Statement	2
Who is the policy for?	2
Whose responsibility is equality and diversity?.....	3
Our commitment to equality and diversity.....	4
How will the service monitor, evaluate and review our commitment to equality and diversity?	6
Glossary	7

Luton Adult Learning (LAL) is a direct delivery service within Luton Council

Our Statement

Luton Adult Learning is (fully) committed to:

- actively promoting equality of opportunity and diversity across our service to enable all learners and staff to achieve their full potential, free from any form of discriminatory behaviour.
- developing an ethos/culture that celebrates all people, irrespective of their race, colour, disability, age, religion, belief, gender or sexual orientation.
- fostering the promotion of British Values, which our service refers to as our Core Values, to encourage the understanding and practice of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for others.

Who is the policy for?

This policy applies equally to anyone who is employed by or volunteers for the service, our Luton Council colleagues, subcontractors and internal commissioning colleagues, partners, our learners and employers who we work with and others we come into contact with, including through partnerships or the wider community and other stakeholders.

It is intended to enable Luton Adult Learning to promote an environment in which equality & diversity can be developed and embedded in our practice and applies to all staff and users of the facilities.

It will be reflected in curriculum design and delivery, teaching and learning activities, information, advice and guidance, staffing, staff development and the interaction between staff, clients, learners and the general public.

Whose responsibility is equality and diversity?

All staff, subcontractors and volunteers have a legal duty to promote equality and diversity, not to discriminate and to report incidents of discrimination against any individual or group of individuals. Following investigation, any member of staff found to be discriminating will face disciplinary proceedings.

Luton Adult Learning will not tolerate discrimination from any staff member, subcontractors, volunteers or learners on the grounds of the 9 protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010):

- age
- disability (including physical or sensory impairments, mental health, long term medical conditions such as epilepsy, HIV/AIDs and neuro-diverse conditions such as dyslexia and ADHD)
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (which includes ethnic or national origins)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

In addition, **Luton Adult Learning** will also not accept discrimination on the grounds of the following:

- social origin
- financial status
- HIV status,
- language
- political beliefs
- trade union membership
- unrelated criminal convictions.

Managers and leaders in the service are responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures have been understood and implemented by all staff and the subcontractors, partners and volunteers that they work with.

All staff, subcontractors and volunteers have a responsibility to actively promote and embed the principles of equality and diversity in their work with learners.

All learners have a responsibility to follow the Learner Charter and our Core Values, remaining respectful to others at all times and avoiding any discriminatory activity.

Staff who work with subcontractors, partners or internal commissioning colleagues have a responsibility to ensure that they are aware of their legal duty in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and that they have their own policies and procedures in place that are compliant.

Our commitment to equality and diversity

We are committed to all staff and learners by:

- addressing any incidents or allegations of harassment, bullying, discrimination, victimisation or abuse and dealing with them promptly and effectively
- routine consideration of equal opportunities aspects including access when negotiating any learning venues
- ensuring that Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are in place prior to course start for learners who need them and for staff with disabilities

We are committed to widening participation by:

- effective targeting of disadvantaged groups
- the employment of dedicated staffing – for liaison with communities, community development work, information, guidance, curriculum development, management of new provision, facilitating access for people with disabilities/learning disabilities
- recruiting and developing staff with an understanding of targeted communities and the diverse of needs of potential learners
- recruiting volunteers from targeted communities
- involving learners in planning for development of provision through learner focus groups
- working with a range of organisations, including professional bodies, statutory agencies, charities, community groups and the voluntary sector to identify and plan to meet needs
- making provision available, where possible, in a range of locations including community centres and schools and holding courses at different times/days of the week
- customising provision to address and meet diversity of needs
- developing a range of programmes which successfully attract new learners and offer progression to further learning, volunteering or into employment
- working with the National Careers Service and their partners to offer quality next steps guidance
- the inclusion of specific initiatives e.g. targeting men and boys and other under-represented groups
- developing projects which celebrate diversity and lead to the development of a wider range of provision/greater diversity of approach within existing core provision e.g. the Culture Chest project

We are committed to providing inclusive teaching and learning through:

- curriculum design that takes full account of access and inclusive learning strategies, progress and progression routes and acknowledges prior learning and experience
- using resource materials which are free from, or used to challenge, discriminatory attitudes and practice
- using resource materials which reflect and celebrate diversity
- mutually respectful teacher-learner relationships facilitated by implementing our core values
- identifying individual learning and support needs through effective initial assessment and subsequent differentiated learning
- effective learner induction, in which the principles of equality and diversity are clearly explained so that learners know what they should do if they encounter discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

We are committed to supporting learners through:

- responding appropriately to their individual support needs
- providing access to affordable and good quality childcare to enable participation by people with childcare responsibilities, using our learner support fund to pay for childcare where applicable.
- our concessionary fees policy for those eligible.
- providing information and advice services in a format that suits individual needs

We are committed to staff and staff recruitment through:

- ensuring all job opportunities are outlined through clear and transparent job descriptions and person specifications and employment is carried out following Luton Council policies.
- recruitment and selection processes that are free from bias and discriminatory practice
- all staff employed by Luton Adult Learning receiving an in-house induction, as well as a Luton Council induction
- all staff being made aware of their entitlement to Continuous Professional Development to support them with their current job and to enable them to progress both within and outside the organisation. Where training is deemed essential, staff will be released from duties.
- effective Equality and Diversity training provided for staff and periodically updated in response to changes in legislation, government initiatives and changes in the learner population or other reasons.
- Training priorities will include:
 - equality and diversity
 - training for all staff on current and changing legislation and implications for their practice
 - disability training
 - safeguarding
 - training in recruitment and selection practices for all staff involved in appointing staff
 - sharing of good practice in relation to promoting equality and diversity
 - mental health awareness
 - dyslexia awareness
 - unconscious bias

How will the service monitor, evaluate and review our commitment to equality and diversity?

We will:

- Report and record any incident of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of an individual who works in or uses our service
- Monitor and analyse any incidents or allegations of harassment, bullying, discrimination, victimisation or abuse and put in place effective actions to address common issues.
- Establish performance indicators for recruitment and achievement for both learners with protected characteristics and learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and communities
- Regularly monitor performance data to identify gaps in provision and/or outcomes for learners
- Regularly self-assess our performance
- Monitor the compliments, complaints and comments that the Service receives
- Conduct Observations of Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Learning Walks
- Monitor the take up of continuing professional development of staff
- Conduct learner feedback surveys and forums
- Collect the following data in relation to equal opportunities to inform planning in relation to the curriculum, support services, resources, access to accommodation and development of facilities:
 - learners' age
 - gender
 - ethnicity
 - disability & health
 - learning difficulty
- Monitor the equality and diversity processes and procedures of our subcontractors and internal commissioning colleagues through the due diligence process and contract management visits.

Glossary

Definitions or explanations of words referred to in this policy.

Word	Definition
Age	A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).
Associative discrimination	When a person is discriminated against because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
Belief	Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
Bullying	Repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically, and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.
Civil Partnership	Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).
Disability	A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This include physical or sensory impairments, mental health, long term medical conditions such as epilepsy, HIV/AIDs and neuro-diverse conditions such as dyslexia and ADHD
Discrimination	The unfair treatment of one particular person or group of people. Usually the different treatment is because of the person's sex, religion, nationality, ethnicity (culture), race, or other personal traits.
Direct discrimination	When a person is treated less favourably than another simply because of a protected characteristic.
Diversity	Celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions.
Equality	Breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups.
Ethnicity	Belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition
Gender	The characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed.
Gender reassignment	The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Word	Definition
Harassment	Behaviour that someone finds offensive even if it is not directed at them.
Indirect discrimination	When a policy or requirement, which at first glance seems fair, in fact operates to disadvantage a particular group of people because of a characteristic of that group and the requirement is not reasonable or necessary in the circumstances.
Marriage	Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple.
Maternity	Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Perceptive Discrimination	When there is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.
Pregnancy	Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby.
Protected Characteristics	The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic.
Race	Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.
Religion	Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion.
Sex	A man or a woman
Sexual Orientation	Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.
Victimisation	When someone has been treated unfairly for complaining or helping others to complain about an incidence of discrimination.