

Up Grade Me Training Equality and Diversity Policy (Including Equal Opportunities)

Introduction

Up Grade Me Training is committed to treating everyone fairly. We respect and value the diversity of our learners, customers, employees, suppliers, partners, employers and all other people we work with. We strive to create a positive working environment to support learning and improve employment opportunities where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We will challenge any instance of inequality and will anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their full potential.

Scope and purpose

This policy applies to:

- Actual and prospective learners ('learner' is used as a common term to also denote customer where appropriate)
- Employees (individuals who work – or have applied to work for the company either on a permanent, temporary, contractual or voluntary basis)
- Employers (external partners who are in receipt of and/or provide work-based **Up Grade Me Training** services)

The words 'individual(s)' and 'everyone' is used in this policy to denote all those above.

Up Grade Me Training strives to ensure all individuals have equal opportunity to access learning and work and to realise their potential. We will not tolerate any inequality or any other actions that may limit the ability to participate and succeed.

We recognise and celebrate the diversity of our learners, employees and employers. We are committed to ensuring all individuals feel safe, respected and listened to, regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes. We will recognise and value individual differences and remove barriers that put people at a disadvantage.

We wholly support the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and related duties which are consistent with our vision and principles. We will oppose and always challenge any direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, childbearing or caring status, sexual orientation or marital or civil partnership status.

The purpose of this policy is to describe how we will put our vision and principles into practice and fulfil our statutory duties to promote equality, value diversity and eliminate discrimination so that all learners and employees realise their potential.

Where learners are learning or training in subcontracted suppliers, the 'local' (supplier's own) learner equality and diversity policy and arrangements will be applied and enforced first but where these do not exist or are incomplete, this policy will be applied.

Equality of opportunity and outcome in learning/employment

Access to learning and recruitment

We will strive to ensure that learning and recruitment opportunities are available to all. No individual will be excluded from learning or recruitment opportunity on the grounds of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, childbearing or caring status, sexual orientation or marital or civil partnership status. We will record and monitor individual participation/application and withdrawal/rejection of learning/recruitment opportunities to ensure equality of opportunity and fair representation.

Additionally:

For learners: We will support all learners as far as reasonably possible (subject to funding and health and safety requirements) to pursue the learning programme of their choice and make all reasonable efforts to ensure physical access to the learning/workplace environment. In circumstances where this is not possible, we will identify alternative options/provision.

For employees: Wherever possible, all recruitment opportunities will be advertised simultaneously internally and externally and will include an appropriate short statement on equality of opportunity. Selection criteria (role profile) will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable and non-discriminatory.

Wherever practicable, more than one person will be involved in the short-listing and interviewing process. All applicants and current employees invited to participate in a selection process will be asked if any assistance/adjustment is required to enable them to fully participate. We will ensure all employees who are involved in the recruitment selection or promotion process understand and support in non-discriminatory recruitment and selection techniques as part of the company Management Development Programme.

For employers: We will provide **Up Grade Me Training** services only to employers who support our commitment to equality and diversity and comply with related requirements. We expect employers to ensure fair access to **Up Grade Me Training** programmes/courses/products and work-based opportunities. We reserve the right to cease working with employers who do not support this commitment.

Disclosure and additional support provisions

Before starting and during learning/employment, individuals will be given the opportunity (in confidence) to disclose any disability or learning difficulty they may have. This is to ensure we put in place additional or alternative support or adapted working practices where reasonably practical and possible. We will explain why this information is being sought and how it will be used. We will ask individuals to let us know of any personal commitments or barriers which can affect their commitment or time in learning or employment and offer help/alternative ways of working to minimise their impact.

Additionally:

For learners: Where a learner discloses a disability or learning difficulty, we will identify what additional or alternative support provisions need to be put in place in discussion with them.

We will endeavor to secure and provide any additional support for the duration of the learning or employability programme where reasonably practical and with agreed disclosure by the learner. Support could be in the form of additional/alternative assistance, provision of a specialist service, provision of alternative or adaptive equipment or learning environment etc. Where it is not reasonably possible to provide required and sufficient (specialist) support to enable a learner to achieve with **Up Grade Me Training**, we will contact the learner and signpost them to a more suitable provision.

All learners will have their learning and access needs assessed to identify suitable learning programmes that are relevant to their development objectives and goals.

For employees: Where an employee declares a disability, reasonable steps will be taken to accommodate this by making reasonable adjustments. The company may consider redeployment and appropriate re-training to enable the employee to remain in employment where possible.

Induction and equality training

We will make everyone aware of our commitment to equality and diversity, arrangements in place to ensure all people are treated fairly and equally, standards of behavior and how to make us aware of any dissatisfaction or concern.

Learning and working environment

We are committed to creating open and conducive learning and working environments where everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We are opposed to and will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or unacceptable behavior where this makes an individual feel intimidated or offended. We will ensure all individuals have clear routes to report incidents and/or concerns and for these to be managed fairly and fully.

We will strive to ensure all individuals feel comfortable in expressing their views, experiences and perceptions but in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner. Any form of prejudice, discrimination and/or stereotypical attitude will be challenged and supported by training on equality and diversity practice.

Monitoring of learner participation, performance and satisfaction

All individuals will be asked to provide personal information on starting learning or working on their age, gender, ethnicity, disability and learning difficulty. This information is used for monitoring purposes only and will remain confidential to **Up Grade Me Training** and (where relevant) funding agencies. If individuals so wish, they may decline to provide this information. We will undertake a regular analysis of learner and employee group data to ensure any notable variation is addressed and any Participation and/or performance gaps are reduced.

All individuals will be encouraged to give their feedback on their experience of learning or working with **Up Grade Me Training** and these will be analysed to assess levels of satisfaction and to identify any improvements.

Responsibilities

We will:

- Provide learning and working environments in which people respect difference and protect the diversity of those working within them
- Raise individual awareness of the importance of equality and diversity and good relations between people of different groups
- Develop the awareness and skills of individuals to promote fairness, inclusivity and good relations
- Instill in everyone high expectations of achievement and progression and value positively the achievements they have made
- Ensure that everyone is enabled to achieve positive outcomes, whatever their background
- Ensure fair and equal access to learning and recruitment and take action to promote equality
- Make reasonable and practicable adjustments to enable individuals to participate in learning or work. Where this is not feasible, we will identify alternative options/solutions
- Consult with and involve individuals on their experience of learning and working with **Up Grade Me Training**
- Embed equality impact evaluation into key business projects, critical policies and where appropriate procedures.
- Create and maintain effective partnerships with employers, suppliers and partners and ensure that they support our commitment to equality and diversity

We will require all individuals:

- To communicate and behave with courtesy, kindness and respect and in accordance with our policies and procedures

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Checked By: Ozan Elmaz	Signed: <i>Ozan Elmaz</i>

- To inform us if they have any additional needs or are experiencing difficulties in learning or working with us
- To value and respect individual differences and the contributions of others
- To maintain a safe and secure learning and working environment
- To take responsibility for their own actions, personal development and performance
- To work to achieve their personal best and allow others to do the same
- To let us know immediately if they are unhappy with any aspect of learning or working with **"Up Grade Me"**

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Complaints/grievances

We will make all individuals aware of the steps to follow should they wish to raise a concern, grievance or make a complaint. We will aim to fully resolve any concerns or problems as quickly as possible and if we cannot resolve or put right straight away we will explain why and say what we can do.

For learners: The quickest and easiest way for a learner to raise a concern or make a complaint is to do so by informing the staff member with whom they most closely work, or that person's line manager if the learner does not feel able to do this.

Where a learner is learning through one of our supply chain partners, this will initiate their own procedure first and the learner will be advised of who will take responsibility for resolving their concern or complaint and how long this should take.

For employees: The company will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance which it upholds. Employees will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if the grievance is not upheld unless the complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Any employee (found to be) breaching this policy will be regarded as behaving in a manner that constitutes an act of misconduct and will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

We are committed to promoting equality for all. If you would like this information in an alternative format, please contact us:

"UP GRADE ME"

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