

# Equality & Diversity in Work Based Learning for Employers and Apprentices



## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality and Diversity means protecting the rights of every worker. They should be treated fairly, based on value, not favouritism.

Equality and Diversity covers all kinds of discrimination and protects people from unfair treatment.

Equality and Diversity is also known as Equal Opportunities.

Unfair treatment because of...

- national or ethnic origin
- marital status
- physical or mental impairment
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy
- colour
- race
- age
- gender.

## GUARANTEED BY LAW

Equality and Diversity is guaranteed by law. Many of the Acts directly address E&D issues, such as discrimination based on race, sex or disability. Other Laws may indirectly cover E&D issues, such as bullying and age discrimination.

## A LEARNING CURVE

For employees, learning about Equality and Diversity helps guarantee that they are judged on merit, ability and past performance. For the employers it is all about good practice.

## FOR EMPLOYEES

These are the ways in which Equality and Diversity can affect employees:

- Recruitment.
- Dismissal.
- Transfers.
- Work related benefits.
- Training opportunities.
- Promotions.

## FOR EMPLOYERS

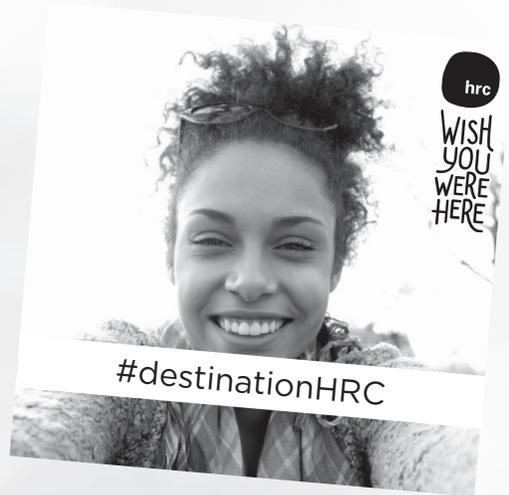
These are the ways in which Equality and Diversity can improve their business.

- Lower costs.
- Increase efficiency.
- Improve customer relations.
- Reduce staff turnover.

## BENEFITS OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRAMMES

Equality and Diversity offers a variety of benefits to make the workplace more enjoyable and efficient.

- **Boost Morale**  
Helps improve teamwork and team success.
- **Reduce Sick Time**  
By reducing workplace stress, emotional and physical pain is also reduced.
- **Lower Costs**  
Lower turnover means less expense for advertising and recruiting.
- **Improve Customer Relations**  
This helps the businesses reach a wider customer base and increase their market share.
- **Increase Efficiency**  
Qualified people mean a more committed workforce to better the output and lead to greater sales.
- **Cut down on Accidents**  
Equality & Diversity helps lower accidents in the workplace due to distracted workers.
- **Retain Valuable Employees**  
Fair treatment can lead to greater commitment.



## DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is about people being thought of as having lesser worth or value, being treated differently or given fewer opportunities because of something they have no control over.

Discrimination can be Direct or Indirect. If it is direct this could mean denying a person or people workplace opportunities or benefits. For example a woman and a man apply for exactly the same job, however, although the woman appears to be the best candidate for the job they give the job to the man because it is assumed that the woman will eventually ask for maternity leave.

Indirect discrimination could occur when a seemingly harmless attitude, rule or practice discriminates against a group. For example, if an organisation hires new staff from an internal network of friends and family members. This could unfairly exclude certain groups from employment.

## HARASSMENT

The dictionary definition of harassment is...

*“to torment, worry”.*

Harassment is very difficult to define because it can take many forms. It can be directed at an individual or a group. It is the effect that it has on an individual that is important, not the intention of the harasser. Whatever form the harassment takes it is unwelcome and unwanted and is both stressful and intimidating for the victim. Bullying is also a form of harassment.





Other types of Harassment may be against the law.

Some types of Harassment:

- Ignoring someone.
- Verbal abuse or taunting.
- Unwanted physical contact.
- Display or circulation of offensive materials/ books etc.
- Intrusive questioning about ethnic origin.
- Unnecessary references to sex.
- Unfair allocation of work
- Racist and/or sexist comments or jokes.

These may include:

- jokes or remarks based on a person's colour sex or other characteristics
- bullying and abuse usually made by people of unequal power
- threatening or discriminating against someone who witnessed and reported an Equality & Diversity situation.

## EQUALITY ACT 2010

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Hertford Regional College is committed to social cohesion and recognises the benefits that diversity brings to the organisation and the wider community it serves.

The single Equality Scheme is a public commitment to fulfil the legal duties placed on the college as it aims to promote equal opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination in service delivery and employment.

The purpose of the Equality Act 2010 is to replace existing anti-discrimination laws with a single act. It simplifies the law, removing inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it.

It also strengthens the law in important ways to help tackle discrimination and inequality.

The act applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public or a section of the public (service providers). It also applies to anyone who sells goods or provides facilities.



The act protects people from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics (previously called grounds).

The relevant characteristics are:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Age
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or Belief
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity.

Through this scheme  
the college seeks to:

- Provide the workforce, learners and partner organisations (including suppliers and employers who provide work experience opportunities for learners) with a clear statement of our intent on equality matters.
- Implement the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) with one comprehensive scheme of good practice for the treatment of its staff, learners and other members of the College community.
- Eliminate any discrimination in criteria set for admission to courses by unfair treatment with regard to access to facilities, services or other benefits or by any other unfavourable treatment of a learner.
- Eliminate any discrimination in criteria set for the recruitment and employment of staff.
- Highlight current legislation on equality to tackle discrimination.
- Make the members of the College community aware of the Scheme and their responsibilities to promote choice, opportunity and progression for all learners and staff in accordance with the law.
- Create a working and study environment underpinned by fair and equitable practices and procedures in which all members of the college community can feel comfortable.
- Ensure the Scheme is supported by other relevant College policies and procedures.

## THE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE...

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What steps to take if you feel you are being discriminated against!

### Step One

Keep records, write down the details of any incidents: include date, time, what happened, where it happened and what was said.

### Step Two

Confront the person involved. If you feel you can talk to the person confront them, ask them why they are behaving this way towards you. If you feel you can't approach the person ask for support from another colleague or write a letter keeping a copy for your own reference.



### Step Three

Seek other help. If the behaviour continues don't hesitate to talk to any of the following:

- Supervisor or Manager.
- Personnel Department.
- Trade Union Representative.
- A member of the College staff.

**Step One**  
Recording

**Step Two**  
Confrontation

**Step Three**  
Seek help

## FOR MORE ADVICE

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If you feel you need more advice on making a complaint you can also contact any of the following:

- Equality and Diversity Commission.
- Commission for Racial Equality.
- Racial Equality Councils.
- Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Jobcentre.
- Employment Service Agency.
- The College.

Contact numbers for these places can be found in the phone book or ask your Trade Union representative.





## HOW IS EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ENFORCED?

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It is the Equality and Diversity Commissions responsibility for enforcing the E&D laws. Complaints against organisations can be decided by Industrial Tribunals.

Individuals may be asked to pay for damage and face what actions the employer decides to take. Organisation may also be asked to pay for damages or reinstate unfairly treated employees.

## REMEMBER

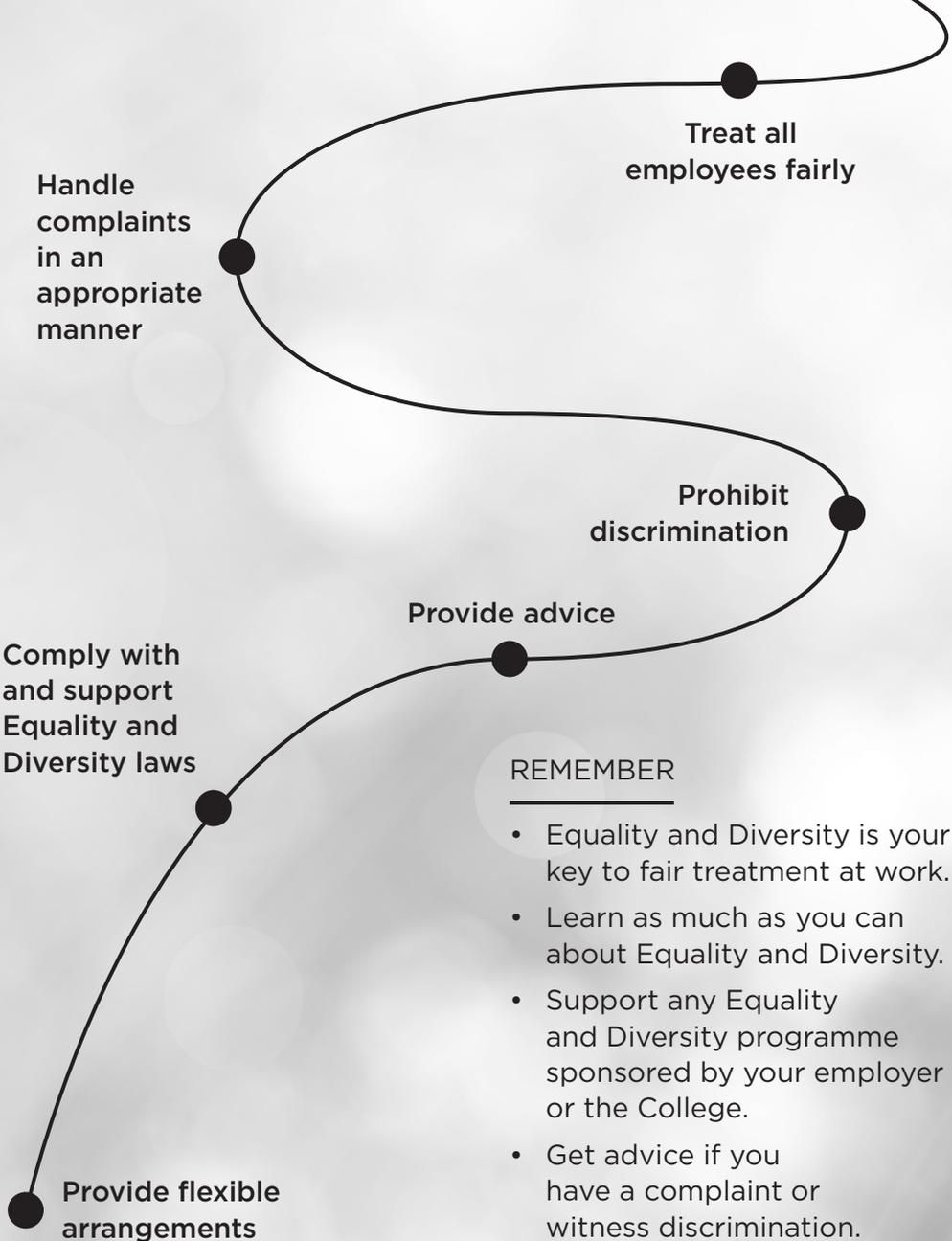
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This is how you can help support Equality and Diversity in the workplace.

- **Treat Everyone Fairly**  
Treat everyone the way you would be expected to be treated.
- **Encourage Teamwork**  
Working in a team depends on trust.
- **Don't ignore unfair treatment**  
Speak up!  
Make people aware.
- **Support Equality and Diversity Programmes**  
Co-operate with your employer and College programmes at all times.

## SUPPORT

How you can make Equality and Diversity programmes a success for your employees.



## REMEMBER

- Equality and Diversity is your key to fair treatment at work.
- Learn as much as you can about Equality and Diversity.
- Support any Equality and Diversity programme sponsored by your employer or the College.
- Get advice if you have a complaint or witness discrimination.



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