



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Policy updated by: Sue Fielding (Managing Director)

Date: 24th May 2021 v1

This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis

Plan to be reviewed on 24th May 2022

Signed

Sue Fielding – Managing Director 24/05/21

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1. Policy Statement

This policy describes how we will carry out our Legal duties under the requirements of The Equality Act 2010

The purpose of this document is to communicate Gordon Franks Training's (GFT) commitment to tackling all forms of discrimination and inequality in the workplace and the services it gives by setting out how it will promote equality of opportunity and inclusion to prevent all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

GFT is passionate about inclusion, respect and enabling all students and staff to reach their full potential.

We all have the right to expect to be able to work and learn in an environment where we are shown respect and consideration, and in which the dignity of each and every individual is valued and maintained.

We also have a responsibility to ensure that our behaviour contributes to a positive work and learning environment and that it does not cause any offence.

2. Our Vision and Commitment to Inclusion

Our vision for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is clear; we want to ensure that we pro-actively promote inclusion for all. Staff and students must feel that they have a fair and equal chance to reach their potential whilst working and learning at GFT

GFT is committed to creating inclusive environments, where unlawful discrimination on any grounds is eliminated and good relations between people from different backgrounds and equality of opportunity are promoted.

We are committed to actively promote personal development, build confidence and ambition in our staff and students.

The promotion of diversity and inclusion and the genuine equality of opportunity for all are central to ensuring fair employment and high-quality service provision. In pursuing this, GFT will ensure that in the development and use of employment procedures and practices, no person or group of people will suffer detrimentally in recruitment, promotion and dismissal, or in the access to training facilities or other benefits. They will also not endure discriminatory behaviour in their everyday work, or when they are in receipt of services from GFT.

GFT shall continue to actively work towards eliminating discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, maternity, and pregnancy. (See Appendix 1)

GFT must work towards a culture where discriminatory behaviour by its employees, volunteers and freelance staff are routinely challenged in a polite and constructive manner so the person making them has an opportunity to correct their behaviour.

3. Scope

This policy has direct implications for all other company policies. We believe that delivering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is one crucial strand of GFT's approach to overall quality improvement and we place it at the very heart of everything we do.

All members of staff, students and volunteers are subject to this policy. The policy is also binding on our employers that GFT works with.

Diversity is about valuing all visible and non-visible differences and recognising and accepting that everyone has something to offer. Just because people don't all look or act the same, it does not mean they cannot positively contribute towards achieving the organisation's objectives or be helped by the organisation.

Governing Body responsibilities:

Our Governors have a significant role in creating and maintaining an inclusive organisation, where all can work, learn, and reach their full potential

- Ensure that relevant policies are in place, up to date and effectively implemented and monitored for impact.
- Set and monitor challenging equality targets.
- Promote equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity.
- Not discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic in any aspect of our work.
- Listen to the voice of our students and use it to make improvements which support inclusion and drive equality forward.
- Ensure that all in staff and students are protected from bullying, and discrimination wherever they may be learning or working.

The Chief Executive Officer, Managing Director and GFT Senior Management Team take the lead in ensuring the above are implemented. (For roles and responsibilities see Appendix 2)

4. Recruitment and employment

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of any of the nine "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act 2010.

No member of staff, or prospective member of staff, should receive unfair or unlawful treatment due to their protected characteristic or characteristics. GFT will seek to identify and act upon any unfair or unlawful discrimination which denies individual opportunities due to the criteria mentioned above

The success of GFT depends on our people. GFT takes pride in being a diverse organisation, enriched by the participation of all individuals, capitalising on what is unique about people and drawing on their different perspectives and experiences, adds value to the way we deliver our services.

By accessing, recruiting, and developing people from the widest possible talent pool GFT can gain an insight into different communities and generate greater creativity in the delivery of its services.

GFT will constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed.

To achieve our business aims, we need to make sure that GFT puts anti-discriminatory practices into effect in both employment and service delivery.

Diversity and inclusion are morally and ethically right. A commitment to this policy is required by all members of the organisation.

5. Provision of Service

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for staff to discriminate directly or indirectly or harass customers or clients because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services. (See Appendix 1)

Reasonable adjustments will be provided for staff, students and customers who may be experiencing barriers due to disability, including alternative formats for other relevant 'protected characteristics'.

The recruitment, retention and achievement of students will be monitored by 'protected characteristics' where possible to determine trends and enable GFT to provide focused support or action where it may be needed to ensure success.

The Admissions Policy of GFT supports non-discriminatory access. Every effort will be made to ensure equality of opportunity for all students providing suitable support in order them to access all services and facilities at GFT

All activity will consider Equality and Diversity issues and will be reflected in quality processes.

All forms of unreasonable behaviour/bullying/harassment should be directly and appropriately challenged by staff and students at all times in accordance with our Zero Tolerance policy, Student behaviour policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Dignity at Work Policy. Training will be available to staff to support them in this activity.

GFT's Anti-bullying Policy/Procedure, Grievance Procedure and the Complaints Procedure will enable those who believe they have been victims of discrimination and harassment to raise concerns and achieve redress without undue delay or difficulty.

Student induction, and programme curriculums will continue to use all opportunities to embed the principles that underpin Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

A range of feedback activities will be used to identify staff and student perceptions of GFT's environment and the quality of their experience throughout the year.

6. Quality of Provision

Effective Teaching, Training and Learning.

All teaching and training resources and curriculum will ensure that they reflect and promote Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, where appropriate.

GFT will take the necessary steps to ensure that students have access to all opportunities irrespective of protected characteristic.

Recruitment processes and initial assessment prior to courses beginning will be used to personalise support for students, including those with additional support needs.

Every opportunity will be given for staff and students to disclose any disabilities or learning difficulties or other needs relating to 'protected characteristics' that they may have. GFT will through their culture of inclusivity, ensure an environment in which people feel able and confident to disclose and to see disclosure as the right course of action. GFT will seek to provide where possible reasonable adjustments in response to a disclosure.

Equality and Diversity issues will be raised in visits to employers and with students on apprenticeship programmes.

Apprentices will be empowered and supported to challenge practices and behaviours in the workplace which they feel contravene GFT's policy in relation to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

7. Meeting the Needs and Interests of Students

GFT will provide support through its SEND offer by ensuring the necessary resources are available

GFT will promote apprenticeships and other training activity and experience within ethnic, religious, or other cultural communities.

GFT will provide opportunities to celebrate diversity and to share experiences and knowledge by having strong links with organisations with equality objectives relating to protected characteristics. (eg: BAME Apprenticeship Alliance, Inclusive Provider Hub, MENCAP, BASE)

8. Student Support and Guidance

GFT will ensure Information, advice, and guidance including Careers Information, Advice and Guidance will be delivered in ways accessible to different groups with protected characteristics

Support services will meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and communities.

9. Training and Development

In conjunction with this policy, Equality and Diversity training will be updated and offered to all staff and other relevant stakeholders to raise knowledge of equality legislation, develop Equality and Diversity competencies, and tackle discriminatory practice and behaviours. Staff will be required to undergo refresher training every year as a minimum.

10. Complaints/Alleged Breaches

GFT has a number of ways in which staff and students can raise concerns in relation to any breach of this Policy, e.g., the Complaints Policy, the Anti Bullying Policy, the Grievance Policy and the Dignity at Work Policy. The Disciplinary Procedure for staff and the Zero Tolerance procedure for students will be followed where necessary.

11. Monitoring

The effectiveness of this Policy will be monitored through student and staff data. Data in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be included in the quarterly Governors report

12. Associated Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with all of GFT's policies, procedures, and mandatory documents. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is an integral part of all policies and practices within the organisation.

For breaches of this policy and/or acts of discrimination, see:

- Recruitment and selection policy
- Disciplinary procedure.
- Zero Tolerance Procedure (Students only)

For circumstances where the employee considers they have been the subject of harassment or discrimination, see:

- Grievance procedure
- Bullying and harassment procedure.
- Dignity at work policy

For circumstances where a student considers they have been the subject of harassment or discrimination, see:

- Complaints procedure.

Appendix1

Protected characteristics:

Sex

Women and men are fully and properly represented and rewarded for their contribution at all levels of the organisation through:

- challenging gender stereotypes
- supporting employees in balancing their life at work and at home.

Gender reassignment

Employees who plan to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone gender reassignment are protected against all forms of discrimination and harassment. GFT will take positive steps to support a transgender person and ensure they are treated with dignity and respect.

Marital/civil partnership status

Employees are treated fairly and equally in the workplace irrespective of their marital or family status.

Race

The racial and cultural diversity of our communities is represented at all levels of the organisation through:

- challenging racial stereotypes
- understanding, respecting and valuing racial and cultural differences and perspectives
- encouraging and enabling members of minority ethnic groups to volunteer or work for GFT at all levels.

Disability

The abilities of disabled people are recognised and valued at all levels of the organisation through:

- focusing on what employees can do rather than on what they cannot
- challenging stereotypes about people with disabilities and in particular, not making assumptions about an individual's ability.
- making appropriate adjustments in the workplace and classroom so that all students and employees can reach their full potential regardless of any disability.

Age

Age diversity within the workforce is promoted and valued through:

- challenging age stereotyping, recognising that new ideas and fresh approaches can come from anyone irrespective of their age
- recognising the benefits of a mixed-age workforce.

Religion or belief

Employees and students are treated fairly in the workplace and classroom irrespective of their religious beliefs, faith or lack of belief. Employees and students are also expected to recognise the individual freedom of belief and right to protection from intolerance and persecution of other individuals and groups.

Note: The expression of beliefs and opinions should not contravene GFT's values or its capability to carry out its work.

Sexual orientation

People are treated fairly in the workplace and classroom irrespective of their sexuality through:

- respecting the rights of everyone irrespective of whether or not they are open about their sexual orientation
- respecting different lifestyles, even if they conflict with one's own religious or cultural beliefs
- challenging negative stereotypical views
- celebrating and welcoming significant lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) events in the same way that similar events of importance to heterosexual people would be, for example civil partnerships.

Pregnancy and maternity

People should be treated fairly in the workplace throughout their maternity period and supported appropriately through pregnancy. Women will not be discriminated against within GFT's employment policies.

Although paternity is not a protected characteristic, GFT understands that staff on paternity leave should be treated fairly and not discriminated against within its employment policies.

Appendix 2

Responsibilities

The CEO, Managing Director and Board of Governors believe that it is the responsibility of everyone at GFT to uphold strong working practices. This is to ensure that an environment of diversity and inclusion is maintained and celebrated throughout employment and service delivery. Our commitment to equality and diversity means that everyone involved with GFT has a duty to:

- promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in the delivery of GFT's services
- ensure that everyone associated with GFT is treated in a non-discriminatory way
- promote a welcoming environment in which individuals from all backgrounds feel welcome, valued and respected
- promote the equality and diversity policy.

Role of Department Managers

Manager's responsibility is to:

- ensure systems, procedures and services do not discriminate
- set a positive example in everything they do
- listen to and respect others, and not dismiss their problems as "trivial"
- challenge discrimination
- observe people and stop inappropriate behaviour immediately
- support and implement action that GFT takes to improve diversity and equal opportunities.
- promote and implement diversity within the management of service provision
- provide appropriate training programmes in order to put our Equality and Diversity policy into practice.

Role of employees

Every employee has a responsibility to:

- challenge any behaviour that could be interpreted as discrimination
- understand what is expected of them in terms of performance, the standards they seek to achieve, their behaviour and conduct towards others
- set a positive example in everything they do especially to our students
- listen to and respect others, and not dismiss their problems as "trivial"
- challenge and discourage discriminatory speculations
- observe people and challenge any behaviour that could be interpreted as unfair discrimination.

