

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Aiming to improve the quality-of-life skills and employability of residents in the borough, making Wandsworth a vibrant and prosperous learning community.

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## Related policies and publications

### Wandsworth Council

- SSA Equality Policy
- Equality Impact Needs Assessments (EINA)
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Code of Practice on Dealing with Employee Grievances
- Staff disciplinary procedure
- Dealing with Employee Grievances – Managers Guidance

### Lifelong Learning

- Safeguarding Policy
- Learner Handbook
- Apprentice Handbook
- Learner complaints

# Wandsworth Lifelong Learning Equality & Diversity Policy

## 1 | Mission Statement

“All Wandsworth residents will have access to a wide range of high-quality learning opportunities in a safe learning environment. Provision will be demand-led, flexible and held at times and in places designed to meet the needs of learners, employers and the local community. The Lifelong Learning team aims to improve the quality-of-life skills and employability of residents in the Borough, making Wandsworth a vibrant, prosperous learning community.”

## 2 | Introduction

Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning (WCLL) takes issues of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion seriously and ensures equality of opportunity by welcoming learners, Apprentices and staff from all backgrounds and communities. Equality and Equity is of paramount importance in everything we do, and we promote an ethos of treating all individuals with dignity and respect. We will ensure that all learners, Apprentices, employers, staff members, partners and other stakeholders are aware of the commitment we have to the elimination of discrimination, by fostering good relations between different groups of people, and promoting, advancing and celebrating diversity across the organisation.

WCLL will regularly seek advice and guidance from the council’s Adult and Children’s Safeguarding Board.

## 3 | Scope

This policy applies to everyone who becomes or seeks to become a member of WCLL whether as a member of staff (permanent or temporary), applicants, learners/Apprentices, parents / carers, Sub-Contractors, Governors, volunteers, visitors or any other stakeholders. This policy applies to all WCLL activities. We will promote and advance equality, equity and celebrate diversity by ensuring that we:

- Promote a learning and working culture where diversity is valued.
- Treat everyone fairly and with dignity and respect.
- Operate a zero tolerance of all forms of victimisation, discrimination, bullying and harassment.

WCLL aims to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership or social class.

## **4 | Legal Requirements**

The 2010 Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA); however, the Disability Equality Duty still applies, and makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of disability in education, training and services.

### **Disability**

We will meet our duty under the 2010 Equality Act not to treat disabled people less favourably than others by making reasonable adjustments to ensure that individuals have the same rights to fully participate and have access to the full range of services, achievements and successful outcomes, and that these rights remain unaffected by a disability or a learning difficulty.

Ensuring that additional learning needs and social needs are discussed during the interview/ recruitment process and taking into account initial assessments and key skills diagnostic assessment results, to enable staff to make an informed decision on individualised learning.

### **Race Equality**

We will engage with a diverse workforce and learner groups, including people from a variety of racial, ethnic, national backgrounds and disadvantaged groups, and will create an environment based on positive relations between members of different racial groups.

### **Sex Equality**

We will aim to eliminate discrimination and harassment relating to gender and gender reassignment and promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

We will address gender imbalance and will actively promote and encourage participation from under-represented groups within areas of learning and employment, relating to non-traditional roles.

### **Gender Reassignment Equality**

We will provide time off for employees and learners/Apprentices who require medical or therapeutic sessions in relation to gender reassignment and will support individuals through referrals to external support groups, who may be able to provide confidential advice and guidance.

### **Sexual Orientation Equality**

We will challenge homophobic language or behaviours and will ensure that everyone demonstrates respect and tolerance of different sexual identities.

### **Marriage and Civil Partnerships Equality**

We will respect marital status and civil partnerships and ensure that no one is placed at a disadvantage relating to recruitment, employment, learning and progression.

## Pregnancy and Maternity Equality

We will respect pregnancy, maternity and paternity rights, and make reasonable adjustments where appropriate to support flexible working arrangements.

## Age Equality

We will address age imbalance in learning, working and recruitment and misconceptions relating to age. We will ensure that recruitment decisions are based on the skills and abilities of an individual, and we will remove age-biased language from our advertising. We will ensure that training, development and career advancement is not aged-linked.

## Religion and Belief Equality

We will respect all individuals who have a religion or belief, and where practical or appropriate, we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that no one is placed at a disadvantage because of their religion or belief. LLL policies, practices and procedures will reflect consistent, fair and equitable treatment for all individuals, no matter what their religion or belief.

### Religion, Beliefs and Practices include:

- **Community** – social and religious aspects or religious belief, and non-belief that may bring communities together.
- **Creed and Doctrine** – beliefs and ideas, creation, salvation, gods and divinities.
- **Rituals** – the practice of a belief to express commitment.
- **Faith** – a commitment to a group in order to feel a sense of belonging and/or a belief in something greater than oneself.
- **Ethics** – behaviour relating to beliefs or non-beliefs.

### Persuasion associated with a religion or belief:

- WCLL will eliminate all radical behaviour that can perpetuate and encourage radicalism and extremism (PREVENT).

### Sensitive to the needs of individuals relating to their religion or belief by:

- Giving consideration to the needs of diverse groups and religious activities where requests are made to observe or celebrate religious events, festivals or holy days.
- Providing a suitable room for praying, where possible.
- Taking into account dietary requirements, if we provide food for an individual.
- Taking into account dress requirements for religious observance; in some circumstances there may be justifiable reasons for requesting that particular clothing or jewellery is not worn. For example, health and safety or security reasons.

## 5 | Equality and Diversity Objectives

- To understand that the journey to success starts with recognising the different needs of the individual, their goals, aspirations and realising the full potential in everyone.
- To help remove barriers to achievement and move people toward the place they aspire to be in order to meet their personal ambitions, whether through learning or employment. Closing the achievement gap between different groups of learners/Apprentices and social groups.
- To provide a wide range of individualised support by developing appropriate assessment methods, offering continuous professional development and training for staff, and extending opportunities for achievement.
- Where appropriate, we will make reasonable adjustments that may include additional arrangements for people with dyslexia, learning difficulties, sight impairment, hearing impairment or physical disabilities, and we will endeavour to support people both in their learning and working environment.
- We will promote our zero-tolerance approach to victimisation, discrimination, harassment or bullying on the grounds of all the protected characteristics.
- We will promote the elimination of discrimination by association with another person, or unfavourable treatment based on perception or unconscious bias, relating to the protected characteristics of the 2010 Equality Act.

## 6 | Policy Implementation

- Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning will ensure that its equality and diversity policy commitments are delivered through the following strategies and processes:
- The implementation, monitoring and review of our policies, practices and procedures for the right reasons, in order not to disadvantage any individual or particular group of people, and develop a culture of **'building on strengths and changing attitudes.'**
- Increase the success rates of all learners/Apprentices, particularly where performance gaps are highlighted through regular data monitoring and analysis.
- Maintain high achievement rates between particular groups of learners/Apprentices by gender, age, disability, race or learning difficulty.
- Conduct a robust learner/Apprentice review process, which is well-planned, supports retention, is audited regularly, encourages personal achievement, develops progression routes and offers rewards in the form of a celebration, ceremony or event. .
- Enable all learners/Apprentices to have equal access to learning, support, and resources, and to carry out quality assurance checks and sampling on ILPs, individualised learning, reviews and progression.
- Advance opportunities for enrichment, social skills and personal well-being by offering appropriate information, advice and guidance that is individualised. Where appropriate offer access to events, social networks, speakers and role models to inspire learners/Apprentices to achieve.
- Offer staff opportunities for personal development and training, and access to resources, to equip them with the skills to embed equality and diversity in their job role.
- Educate staff on equality and diversity, equity, unconscious bias and disseminate information at training sessions, the WCLL website, newsletters, forums, notice boards and lunch and learning events etc.

## 7 | Our Key Objectives:

Our plan encompasses local and national priorities and is directly linked to Wandsworth Council's corporate objectives.

There are three overarching objectives:

### **A fairer Wandsworth**

To make Wandsworth fairer we will:

- Work towards ensuring all local people have a genuinely affordable place to call home
- Support residents who are impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and COVID-19

### **A compassionate Wandsworth**

To make Wandsworth more compassionate we will:

- Be a compassionate council that truly listens and is ambitious for all
- Create safer neighbourhoods where communities feel confident and protected and victims and survivors are supported.

### **A more sustainable Wandsworth**

To make Wandsworth more sustainable we will:

- Tackle climate change by working together with our residents, businesses and communities and will be carbon neutral as a council by 2030

## 8 | Responsibilities

### **Monitoring and Advisory Group**

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented across the organisation and subcontractors' provision and that we remove barriers that may impact upon individuals or groups of people.

The responsibilities of the Monitoring and Advisory Group with regard to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are:

- a) to ensure that unfair discrimination does not take place.
- b) to act positively where appropriate to ensure legal duties are met.
- c) to ensure that all employees are aware of their equality and diversity duties and responsibilities.
- d) to promote WCLL's ability to respond appropriately to the needs of a diverse group of adult learners/ Apprentices, the wider community we serve, our partners and our employees.
- e) to ensure that unfair or unlawful discrimination does not take place and to recognise that they will be liable for the discriminatory acts of employees.
- f) to ensure that policies, procedures and action plans comply with anti-discrimination legislation and are not unlawfully discriminatory.
- g) to take responsibility for eliminating discrimination.
- h) to promote equality for all.

## Management Team

It is the responsibility of the management team to ensure that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, is implemented, monitored and reviewed effectively and to use effective leadership and management to ensure that:

- a) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is incorporated into strategic and operational planning, and is effectively monitored against national/local benchmarks etc.
- b) WCLL policies and procedures are the subject of Equality & Diversity Impact Measures.
- c) WCLL provision is responsive, accessible and flexible in meeting diverse learner/Apprentice needs.
- d) there is disabled access, advice and support in respect of childcare, and provision for meeting religious and dietary needs
- e) there are positive action measures in place to address any issues of staff and/or learner/Apprentice under-representation.
- f) there is a programme of effective support measures for both learners/Apprentices and staff which promotes a culture of inclusiveness and reinforces positive values and codes of behaviour consistent with a policy of non-tolerance of all forms of discrimination.

## Learners and Apprentices

All learners and Apprentices have a role to play in supporting WCLL in delivering the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. WCLL requires all learners/Apprentices to:

- a) conduct themselves at all times in a way that shows consideration for all members of the WCLL community and is not detrimental our reputation.
- b) observe all WCLL regulations and Code of Conduct.
- c) show respect for WCLL premises, environment and encourage others to do the same

# 9 | Consequence of Non-Compliance with the Policy

**Learners and Apprentices:** Initially, tutors will address any breaches of policy by issuing a warning. Further incidents will be managed according to the Learner Conduct Procedure.

**Staff:** For staff members who breach policy, line managers will respond in accordance with the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

**Subcontractors and Other Contractors:** In the event of policy breaches, WCLL will need to take appropriate measures to resolve the issues. If these are not addressed, the contract may be cancelled at the discretion of the Head of Service.



## 9 | Equal Opportunities in Employment

WCLL will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, and opportunities for training, pay and benefits, disciplinary, grievance, and selection for redundancy.

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability.

WCLL will consider any possible indirect discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done. When considering requests for variations to these standard working practices, requests will only be refused if the organisation considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. WCLL will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. WCLL will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices, where required, for those with disabilities.

WCLL will abide by the Shared Staffing Arrangement (SSA) Equality Policy at all times.

## 10 | Complaints Procedure

All individuals who believe they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised have the right to make an informal or formal complaint.

All complaints will be dealt with fairly and following the process documented in WCLL Complaints Policy.



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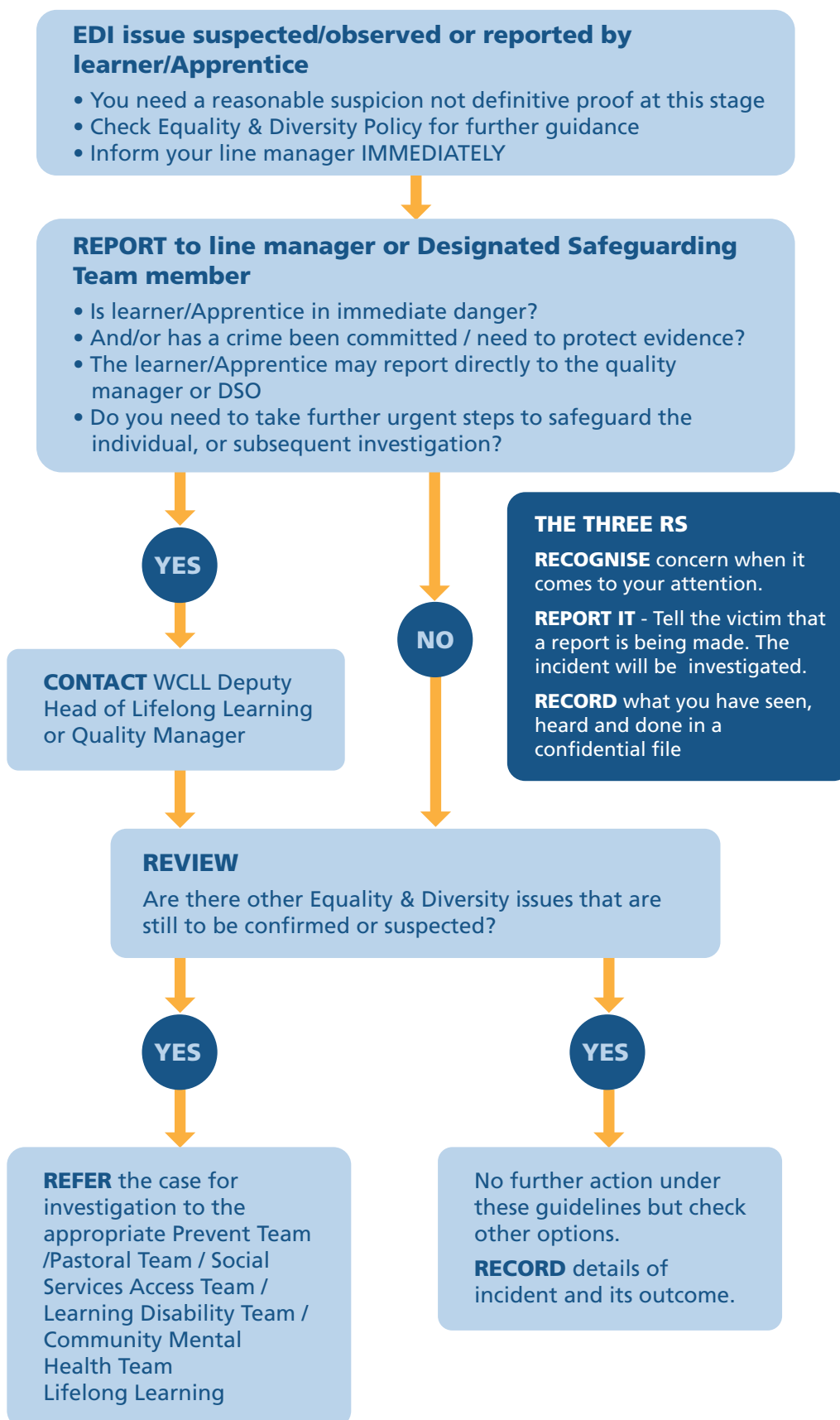
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## 11 | Procedure for Reporting ED&I issues - Tutors

REMEMBER TO ASSESS THE SITUATION, ALWAYS RECORD WHAT YOU HAVE DONE AND WHY



DO NOT SHARE INFORMATION WITH ANYONE EXCEPT THROUGH YOUR LINE MANAGER OR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING TEAM MEMBER