Equality & Diversity Policy

Riverside Training is an Equal Opportunity employer. As such, we endeavour to secure genuine equality of opportunity whether required by legislation or not, in all aspects of recruitment, employment, training, service delivery and relationships between business partners, clients and others.

Riverside Training will take every reasonable and practicable step to ensure that there is no discrimination against employees or learners on account of their disability, gender, marital status, age, race, sexual orientation, criminal record, or other criteria.

Riverside Training recognises our responsibility to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This should be understood, supported by and implemented by all employees.

In working with partners and wider stakeholders, we encourage all parties in our learning community to be treated equally and fairly and promote equality and diversity where we have a direct and indirect influence.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Riverside Training has access to the widest labour market and is able to secure the best employees for its needs;
- No applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment; and, wherever possible, they are given the help they need to attain their full potential to the benefit of the company and themselves;
- No learner receives less favourable treatment during selection or at any stage of their programme;
- Riverside Training can achieve an ability-based workforce that is in line with the working population mix in the relevant labour market areas;
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Riverside Training recognises that we have a broader duty that is required by legislation, and our Equality and Diversity Policy is not limited to the demands of the Equality Act. But for avoidance of doubt, these are the principal sources we have used as the basis for the Policy:

Equality Act 2010:

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening its protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

Sex Discrimination:

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against employees because of their sex, either directly or indirectly.

Equal Pay:

The Equality Act 2010 states that men and women in full-time or part-time employment have a right to equal pay (Sex Equality) - which in law means 'no less favourable' pay, benefits and terms and conditions in their employment contracts where they are doing equal work.

Disability:

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of disability, by treating disabled employees less favourably for a reason related to their disability without justification. If a workplace feature or practice puts an employee with a disability at a disadvantage, an employer should look to see what 'reasonable adjustments' it can make and meet with them to discuss what can be done to help them. For example, this could be as simple as supplying a special chair or power-assisted piece of equipment. Reasonable adjustments might also include changing some of the employee's duties, but an employer does not have to change functions essential to the role.

Riverside Training is committed to upholding the principles of the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate either directly or indirectly on the basis of race. This includes discrimination related to colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin

Nine Protected Characteristics

There are nine specific areas (or protected characteristics) covered by equality and diversity guidelines and legislation. This Policy covers all nine including discrimination against: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; sexual orientation.

Awareness

The leadership team will bring to the attention of all employees the provisions of this Policy and will provide any training necessary to ensure the effective implementation of the Policy operates in practice. All employees and associates of Riverside Training will be provided with a copy of the company's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Recruitment

Riverside Training will ensure that job descriptions, application forms, the selection process, and offer of employments reflect the Equal Opportunity Policy. Advertisements and other recruitment materials will state that the company is an equal opportunities employer.

A copy of this Equality and Diversity Policy statement will be available to all job applicants and will be provided to all successful candidates for jobs at Riverside Training or for training.

Training & Career Development

Specific steps will be taken to ensure that all employees have the same opportunity to develop their full potential within the organisation. The company recognises that this may, in some cases, require positive action.

Working Practices

Riverside Training will ensure that there is no discrimination against anyone appointed to the organisation in the terms and conditions of service, induction arrangements or occupational pensions.

Staff will be informed of our approaches to good working practices and will be informed of all policies supporting equality and diversity including; safeguarding; online safety; anti-bullying and harassment.

All staff will receive a copy of our Staff Handbook at induction and will have access to a current copy on our shared drive. Updates to the policy and refresher activities will be organised through company update meetings.

Enforcement

Riverside Training will take whatever steps are necessary to enforce the policy, including appropriate disciplinary mechanisms when necessary.

Any employee or learner who considers that they are suffering from unequal treatment on any grounds may implement the company's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures as set out in the employee's Conditions of Service.

Learners

Riverside Training will ensure that no prospective learner is discriminated against. This will be highlighted to learners at induction and monitored at each Quarterly Progress Review.

In particular, Riverside Training will ensure that all employers are aware of the relevant legislation relating to workplace discrimination; and that employers appreciate the availability of equal opportunities initiatives such as flexible working patterns and workplace modifications.

Monitoring

In order to ensure the effective operation of the Equality and Diversity Policy and in accordance with GDPR legislation (and for no other purpose), Riverside Training will seek information from all applicants for employment and from learners. This information will be gathered for essential purposes only, it will be treated as confidential, and where possible it will be provided voluntarily by the individuals. All this will be explained at the time when monitoring information is being sought.

Riverside Training will report key statistical data on the company website on an annual basis in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Responsibilities

The leadership team is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Strategy, reviewing the policy on an annual basis and amending the Strategy and the Equality and Diversity Policy as required and securing compliance with the Policy.

The leadership team is also responsible for:

- Monitoring relevant legislation and publicising new information to staff and others
- Ensuring that staff are trained in the application of equal opportunities and diversity law and policies
- Preparing and delivering relevant training to staff and others
- Reporting on Equality and Diversity related legislation and training to the management meeting
- Distributing the Equality and Diversity Policy to any employers who request it
- Collecting and collating data on referrals in respect of Equality and Diversity issues (gender, disability, ethnic origin) and providing a summary to the SMG
- Attending relevant external courses and seminars in support of this role

All staff are responsible for ensuring that this policy is embedded in their duties and functions. This includes attending relevant training courses and ensuring that the operation of their duties conforms to and promotes the policy. All staff will champion Equality and Diversity opportunities as a matter of course.

Staff involved with learners will additionally verify their candidates' awareness of Equality and Diversity opportunities, discuss instances of possible discrimination with candidates, and if necessary take appropriate action to help remedy the problem. This policy should be read in conjunction with Riverside Training's Safeguarding Policy.

Monitoring & Review

This policy is reviewed annually

Current Review Date	July 2026
Next Review Date	July 2027

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