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1. Introduction

1.1 MetaGedu is committed to providing a learning and work environment free from direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, or victimisation where all members of our community are treated with respect and dignity and valued for their contribution and individuality. We believe in inclusivity and opportunity for all students, staff and the wider community and recognise the key role education has in helping to transform society for the benefit of individuals and communities.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is to set out the company's commitment to an inclusive and supportive environment for students, staff, contractors and visitors that is free from discrimination, where all are able to participate and where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

2.2 The Policy also outlines the responsibilities of members of MetaGedu's community to adhere to and uphold the Policy. These responsibilities are detailed in Section 5.

2.3 The aim of the Policy is to promote positive attitudes towards inclusivity and valuing diversity and sets out how the MetaGedu will meet its public Equity duty and integrate Equity of opportunity into all aspects of apprenticeship life; how policies, procedures and plans will be monitored for adverse impact; how the overall practice and outcomes of MetaGedu will be monitored and how action will be planned and delivered to address any concerns that are identified.

3. Scope

3.1 The policy applies to all learners, staff and visitors to MetaGedu premises and those contracted to work at or for MetaGedu. This includes volunteers, agency workers, contractors, and occasional workers.

3.2 The Policy applies to all aspects of the learner's lifecycle including recruitment, selection, and admission. MetaGedu's policies are underpinned by the principles of fairness, equity of opportunity and access to courses and the range of services.

3.3 The Policy applies to all areas of employment including recruitment applications, short-listing, selection, progression, training, reward, benefits, capability and performance, discipline, grievance, absence, conditions of service and reasons for termination of employment.

3.4 An equity and diversity action plan support this Policy and sets out the activities MetaGedu shall undertake to meet and exceed our statutory duties. These activities will support us to meet our legal duties, in particular, the need to have due regard to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other prohibited conduct within the Act.
- b) advance equity of opportunity between those that share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.
- c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4. Principles

MetaGedu will:

- Ensure that people are treated equally regardless of their identification with one or more of the protected characteristics, including those who identify as trans*, gender non-binary and gender fluid, socio-economic background, family responsibilities, or other appropriate distinction.
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, victimisation, harassment or any other prohibited conduct of any kind by any party. Behaviour found to be in breach of this policy will be addressed in accordance with the company's policies and procedures.
- Be proactive in all matters relating to equity, diversity and inclusion, valuing and celebrating the richness brought by a diverse population of staff, students and partners.
- Develop and improve our responses and learning provision to under-represented groups to increase participation and improve community cohesion.
- Develop responses to address social and economic disadvantage developing and delivering projects that seek to engage hard to reach learners.
- Narrow the gaps in achievement between different groups of learners by providing timely support to enable curriculum teams to respond positively to under-achievement.
- Ensure our learners are well-equipped with the skills and knowledge to live and work in a diverse and multi-cultural society through the delivery of teaching, learning and enrichment activities that positively represents different groups within society, improves group cohesion and values diverse contribution.
- Ensure the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are applied consistently across all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, including admissions, student services and learner support.

- Ensure the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are applied to recruitment, redeployment, staff development and promotion, to ensure that all individuals are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 An Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy cannot succeed without the active support of the entire company and learning community.

The responsibility for delivering the Policy extends to every member of the organisation including managers, those with an explicit remit for diversity, and individual members of staff. The implementation of this Policy is therefore a shared responsibility as set out below.

Line Managers are responsible for

- understanding, adhering to and applying the policy and associated policies and plans;
- Ensuring that procedures relating to staff recruitment, selection, career development, discipline and grievance are carried out in accordance with the statutory duties to promote equity and eliminate discrimination;
- role modelling positive workplace behaviours to champion and promote equity and diversity, treating employees in an inclusive way and creating an inclusive culture where staff and students are able to be themselves and bring their best;
- identifying, challenging and dealing with unacceptable behaviours as they arise;
- sensitively resolving concerns through informal discussion, and seeking guidance should formal procedures be required;
- seeking advice and, where relevant, training to understand and implement the policy.

Individual members of staff are responsible for:

- understanding and adhering to this policy and associated policies.
- modelling positive workplace behaviours to create an inclusive culture where people feel able to be themselves and bring their best.
- raising with their manager any concerns or matters which they feel are a breach of this policy.
- completing equity, diversity and inclusion training as a minimum every three years.

Human Resources are responsible for:

- training and advising all employees and managers, ensuring an understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion and their responsibilities.
- contributing to the development and monitoring of MetaGedu Equity and diversity action plan including the review of employment processes.
- engaging company employees to ensure shared ownership of relevant actions.
- supporting the application of appropriate procedures to address a breach of the Policy.
- monitoring workforce demographics

Learners are responsible for:

- Upholding the principles of this policy.
- Contributing to a safe and inclusive environment that celebrates diversity
- Demonstrating positive inclusive behaviours

5.2 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is communicated, implemented, monitored and continuously reviewed according to legislation.

6. Implementation

6.1 The Head of Quality & Compliance and Human Resources are responsible for the overall implementation and monitoring of the Policy through the Equity and Diversity Action Plan and will provide progress reports on an annual basis.

6.2 The Quality Team are responsible for the development, monitoring and implementation of an equity and diversity action plan, to ensure that the objectives of this policy are met and a working and learning environment in which all staff and learners can fulfil their potential is fostered.

6.3 All applicants to MetaGedu will be made aware of a clear commitment to an equitable, diverse and inclusive learner population where harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated. Learners will be provided with information about this Policy through induction and will be expected to abide by its principles.

6.4 Data on the characteristics of all applicants, learners and staff will be collected for statistical reporting, equity analysis, to inform policy development and for action planning to drive quality improvement. Data will be based on self-declaration by staff and learners and every effort will be made to reduce the category of 'not known/not

provided' to increase the validity and analysis of data. However, MetaGedu will respect the right of an individual not to declare.

6.5 All employees are required to familiarise themselves with this Policy and ensure their practices are consistent with its contents and legislation. New employees will be provided with a copy as part of their induction

6.6 All staff are required to complete mandatory on-line Equity, Diversity and Inclusion awareness training every three years and refresher training as required. Line managers are responsible for ensuring the training is undertaken and completion will be monitored by Human Resources.

6.7 Individual members of staff should inform their line manager or Human Resources if they think that discrimination is taking place.

6.8 In order to ensure their effectiveness, all policies and procedures will be monitored and reviewed and be subject to an Equity Impact Assessment (EIA). Appropriate modifications will be made where these are suggested.

6.9 The Policy will be published online and made available in hard copy and alternative formats upon request.

7. Complaints

7.1 MetaGedu will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy by employees, prospective employees, learners, and visitors, as well as any persons or companies associated with the functions of the company. Any instances of non-adherence will be investigated and where appropriate will be considered under the relevant Disciplinary Policy for staff or learners. Appropriate action, according to the nature of the incident, will be taken in relation to any breach of the Policy by visitors or any persons or companies associated with the functions of the company.

7.2 Any learner who wishes to raise a complaint of discrimination, harassment or victimisation should raise their concerns through the Complaints Process.

7.3 Any member of staff who wishes to raise a complaint of discrimination, harassment or victimisation should raise their concerns through the Staff Grievance Procedure.

7.4 Any applicant for employment concerned about the application of the Policy should contact the Human Resources Department

8. Equity Impact Assessment

8.1 This Policy has been reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate (either intentionally or unintentionally) against any of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or sexual orientation and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

9. Change History

Version	Changes made to previous version	Approved By	Date
v1	Initial release	Eric Sykes	27/02/2023
v2	Font Changes	Eric Sykes	12/06/2023
v3	Equiity terminology change to 'Equity'	Eric Sykes	20/07/2023