



Gateshead Council learningSkills

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Implementing Gateshead Council's Equal Opportunities Policy

Revised September 2019



Preface

“Gateshead is a changing borough, and it is vital that learningSkills engage with that change. Everyone who lives, works in and visits Gateshead makes an important contribution to community life. They bring their own unique skills, ideas and fresh perspectives to the borough, and they all deserve to be equally valued.

Discrimination and harassment is a serious abuse of human rights that has no place in Gateshead. Legislation is in force that deals with crimes motivated or aggravated by discrimination based on disability, age, sex, transgender, race, religion, or sexual orientation.”



Cllr Dot Burnett



Cllr John Adams



Strategic Aim

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To make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives, so that all “Local people can realise their full potential enjoying the best quality of life.”

Objective

“Embrace equality and value difference. Support all learners, challenge inequality, remove barriers to learning, and support every resident in Gateshead to achieve their full potential.”

learningSkills:

- embraces equality and values difference for staff and learners
- ensures employers embrace and promote equality, diversity and inclusion
- promotes learning as a lifelong activity for all
- ensures learners and staff have safe and healthy environment in which to work and learn
- support staff to succeed and learners to progress into further learning, training or employment

learningSkills values:

- we will be professional and supportive
- we will be hard working and proactive
- we will be friendly, flexible and helpful
- we will be innovative, creative, inclusive and fair
- we will remember that we are one team and will check in and look after each other



Legislation

Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 which came into force on 1st October 2010 is a single document that provides a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all; to update, simplify and strengthen the previous legislation; and to deliver a simple, modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The Equality Act covers the same groups that were protected by previous equality legislation - age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. These are now called 'protected characteristics'.

The Act is a framework of protection for people discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic.

The following characteristics are protected:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- sex
- religion or belief

learningSkills are committed to provide a fair and equitable education for all learners.



Policy Statement

learningSkills value and recognise the social and cultural diversity in individuals to whom we provide a service. learningSkills aim to provide conditions that encourage everyone to participate in learning, actively combat harassment and where people are treated with dignity.

learningSkills recognises:

- That society consists of many diverse individuals and groups, and celebrates the diversity of our communities as an asset to the borough.
- learningSkills have a moral and legal responsibility to promote equal opportunities.
- learningSkills need a curriculum that meets the needs and demands of a diverse Gateshead.
- learningSkills are committed to a fair and equal recruitment and selection process in line with Gateshead Council's policy and practice.

Responsibilities

learningSkills is committed to raising awareness of equality and diversity amongst Gateshead citizens, employees and employers, ensuring that all learners and staff are treated with dignity and respect, within a safe and secure environment, free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

We do this by:

- Encouraging the full participation of learners in all aspects of their learning.
- Working towards inclusive learning by ensuring a high degree of flexibility to match the needs of individual learners with the delivery.

- Inclusion and empowerment; self-determination and personal growth; self-fulfilment and the development of confident citizens and consumers.
- Identifying and removing any discriminatory practices, procedures and customs and replacing them with systems which are fair to all.
- Developing our curriculum to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that there are a variety of programmes available at a wide range of locations and at a range of different times.
- Ensuring that publicity is representative, captures the imagination of hard to reach learners and attracts those learners who are under-represented into adult learning.
- Increasing the educational achievement for those from low income or disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Ensuring that equality of opportunity is built into all aspects of provision; the business planning process; the self-assessment process; and that its strategic plan identifies SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) priorities in this area.
- Actively promoting equality and diversity among staff, learners, employers, parents and partners.
- Ensuring that all staff receive training in equality and diversity and any additional training or support is identified in achievement and development reviews.
- Making sure training in equality and diversity is effective so that managers, associate providers, staff and learners understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.
- Assessing the equality impacts of our work, to ensure no groups are disadvantaged and taking appropriate action in response to its findings.
- Making sure that all learners and staff are protected from harassment, bullying and discrimination, including those based with employers and at other sites external to the providers.
- Managing any incidents or complaints relating to equality effectively and efficiently.

- Setting challenging targets and using data to monitor, analyse and improve engagement and performance by different groups of learners.
- Taking action to reduce any significant variation in outcomes for different groups of learners, to maximise their potential.
- Having strategies in place to safeguard learners - such as apprentices and vulnerable adults - who are based with employers, from harassment, bullying and discrimination.





Monitoring and Evaluation

learningSkills Senior Management Team will monitor and evaluate achievement in respect of equality by taking the following actions:

- Ensure that all employees who deliver services directly to the public receive training to ensure that they do not discriminate against service users unlawfully.
- Review and monitor our services to ensure that they do not discriminate against anyone, identify barriers to access, and assess where improvements can be made.
- Ensure that organisations providing services on behalf of the Learning and Skills comply with equal opportunities legislation and promote equality of opportunity.
- Encourage our partners and subcontractors to observe and adhere to the principles contained within the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Ensure that learningSkills include, consult and encourage representatives of the community.
- Ensure that the needs of all communities within the borough are considered and included within the strategic development of services.
- Provide culturally appropriate, accessible, effective services, facilities and information, to all sections of the borough's diverse communities, without prejudice or bias.
- Celebrate the variety of lifestyles and value the diverse cultures, religions and communities within the borough.
- Provide better access for disabled people and remove barriers to participation.
- Develop monitoring of services including data collation and analysis.

In order to achieve these objectives, we will provide clear good quality information about our services, and ensure that any information and publicity material aimed at the public, where practicable:

- Is available in appropriate alternative languages for those members of minority ethnic communities who may have difficulty speaking, reading, or understanding English.
- Is clear and understandable and reflects the diverse communities within the borough in relation to the use of visual imagery and illustrations.
- Is presented in a Plain Language format.
- Is available in appropriate alternative languages and other formats, wherever possible e.g. Braille, large print, and audio tape.
- Conforms, wherever possible, with Royal National Institute for the Blind Clear Print Guidelines.

Related Policies

Gateshead Council – Equal Opportunities Policy (2019)

Equality Act 2010

learningSkills – Safeguarding Policy and learningSkills
Behaviour Policy



For further information or discuss this policy please do not hesitate to contact learningSkills on 0191 433 8646.



Gateshead Council learningSkills

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