



## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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This policy meets all the requirements of SEN and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. It will be reviewed annually or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.

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# **LifeBridge ASEND Principles for Equality and Diversity**

## **PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES**

LifeBridge ASEND recognises that discrimination and victimisation are unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the organisation and its employees to use the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of LifeBridge to ensure that no employee, job applicant, volunteer or participant in any programme receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics).

## **INTRODUCTION**

Our aim is that our workforce or participant on programme will be truly representative of all sections of society and each member of staff or learner feels respected and able to give of their best.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment or involved in the LifeBridge offer.

All members of staff, whether part-time, full-time, permanent or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. All Students will also be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. Any individuals representing LifeBridge will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

We will discourage direct or indirect discrimination to staff colleagues or service users because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of LifeBridge's goods and services.

This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

At LifeBridge ASEND we are committed to

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all individuals are recognised and valued;
- Promoting a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated;
- Making learning, development and progression opportunities available to all staff and learners;
- Promoting equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense;
- reviewing all our practices and procedures to ensure fairness;

## **SCOPE**

This policy is intended for all staff, students, the governing body and trustees of LifeBridge ASEND.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**Management and leadership:** responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Head of Post-nineteen Provision. Directors and managers will ensure that they, their staff and students operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

- All staff and students are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- Grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- Proper records are maintained.

Human Resources will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees and job applicants, including periodic audits.

**Staff and students:** responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and students on programme and the positive attitudes of all individuals are crucial to the successful operation of fair practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- Comply with the policy and arrangements;
- Not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- Not victimise, harass or intimidate other individuals or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics;
- Ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic;
- Inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

## EQUALITY TRAINING

Training will be provided on this policy and the associated arrangements. All managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process will receive specialist training.

## MONITORING

- LifeBridge deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. The process will be monitored to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.

## GRIEVANCES AND DISCIPLINE

Members of staff have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the LifeBridge Grievance or Harassment Procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the LifeBridge Disciplinary Procedure.

## REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Head of LifeBridge ASEND.