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# **Equality & Diversity Policy**

October 2019

**BDLD is fully committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and education and the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Equality of opportunity and respect for the individual are part of BDL D's principles and values, and BDL D welcomes the benefits that a diverse community brings.**

### **1. Policy Statement**

The purpose of BDL D policies is to provide equality and fairness in all activities. No one will be subject to discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, gender, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, age, sexual orientation, family status, trade union membership or any other factor.

This statement and associated policies are applicable to all staff, both permanent and temporary, customers, clients, associates, contractors, clients and learners. The policy applies to all processes relating to employment, education and training and dealings with learners, customers and clients.

This statement and associated policies will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect changes in the law, demographics and internal business requirements. Progress relating to the policy will be recorded and a full report will be presented to the senior management team to debate progress and review the policy status.

### **2. Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidance regarding equality and to establish key principles, structures and monitoring arrangements for BDL D. All staff are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy. Behaviour, actions or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the company disciplinary procedure.

### **3. Principles**

BDLD is committed to ensuring that:

- Fair and equitable procedures operate in relation to recruitment, selection and management of staff.
- Learners and clients receive fair and equitable treatment in relation to admission, administration and assessment procedures.
- Policies and procedures are operated fairly and free from discriminatory practices.
- BDL D publicity materials present opportunities and positive images for minority racial groups and people with disabilities.
- Directors, staff, learners, clients, employers and partner contractors are aware of the BDL D Equality and Diversity Policy and the action expected of them to support its implementation.
- Staff, learners, clients and employers are aware of the value placed upon equal opportunities and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the policy.
- Directors and staff are appropriately trained and have access to comprehensive information which assists them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the policy.

BDLD seeks to:

- Treat all staff and users with respect and dignity.
- Provide a working and service environment free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Eliminate any form of discrimination against its staff, clients and learners from other staff, clients, learners, associates and members of the public.
- Challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination.
- Create an inclusive environment where equality and diversity are celebrated.

#### **4. Responsibilities**

The Senior Management Team are responsible for ensuring that:

- The membership of the Board reflects the diversity of the communities served by BDL.
- They receive and respond to monitoring information on staff and Learners/Clients.
- They are aware of BDL's statutory duties in relation to equality and diversity legislation.
- Equality issues are embedded into all policies and procedures.
- The Safeguarding Committee effectively carries out its responsibilities.
- A positive, inclusive ethos is created allowing feedback
- Business communications reinforce the inclusive messages and become incorporated into day-to-day processes.

Managers and staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of BDL's statutory duties and policies and procedures are implemented with regard to equality and diversity issues.
- They challenge inappropriate behaviour by learners, clients, staff, associates, employers and other members of the public.
- Learner/Client induction programmes and tutorial programmes reflect BDL's commitment to promote equality of opportunity.
- Curriculum activities demonstrate sensitivity to equality and diversity issues.
- Staff induction, continuous professional development and performance management reflect BDL's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- All staff will be made familiar with the content & intent of this document.

The Safeguarding Committee is responsible for ensuring that:

- A strategy and action plan for the implementation of BDL's policy on equal opportunities, diversity, inclusiveness and widening participation is developed.
- The content and operation of equal opportunities policies are monitored and reviewed.
- Equal opportunities policies are promoted to Directors, staff, learners, employers and associates.
- Monitoring information is collected and analysed, and an action plan developed.
- Appropriate training and development is provided to support the appreciation and understanding of equality and diversity issues.

#### **5. Policy Development**

BDL will:

- Benchmark existing policy statements from other organisations and advisory groups.
- Undertake a full audit in relation to policies and procedures, practice of policy and perception of policy and process on an annual basis.
- Cascade and communicate new policies.

#### **6. Training and Education**

BDL will:

- Conduct a training needs analysis relating to the understanding and management of diversity.
- Integrate diversity into all training and development programmes.
- Integrate diversity competencies into development programmes and assessment and selection processes.

## **7. Monitoring**

Monitoring will be used to ensure that staff and learners are treated in accordance with this policy. Monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with best practice recommendations, particularly from the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, and with regard to data protection principles. Monitoring will occur in accordance with the following areas.

For learners:

- Applications, success and failure rates;
- Retention rates;
- Achievement rates;
- Disciplinary action;
- Complaints by learners or their employers;
- Learner surveys.

For staff:

- Job application profiles;
- Selection success rates;
- Type of contract;
- By grade, salary scales and type of work;
- Training/staff development;
- Promotion application and success rates;
- Disciplinary/competence proceedings;
- Grievances;
- Exit interviews.

## **8. Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups**

Who is a vulnerable adult?

An adult (a person aged 18 or over) who “is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation” (definition from Department of Health ‘No secrets’ guidance document).

BDLD is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and expects its entire staff to share this commitment. This also applies to associates, agencies and organisations that might not work with young people and vulnerable adults directly but, could come into contact through their daily duties.

These guidelines reflect the principles that:

- The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount.
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults should be treated with respect and dignity
- Staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard, and promote best working practise with regards to safeguarding
- All BDLD staff will demonstrate exemplary behaviour when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults in order to protect them from abuse and protect themselves from false allegations
- Staff will discuss and/or take advice promptly from the BDLD Nominated Person about any incident or behaviour that may give rise to concern.
- Any allegations or suspicions of abuse will be reported immediately.

## **BDLD Procedures if abuse is reported or suspected**

Any member of staff who:

- Suspects that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult has been, or is at the risk of being abused
- Has had a disclosure made to them
- Received a complaint from a member of the public relating to a safeguarding issue
- Is concerned about the actions of an individual
- Has had a direct allegation made against them; must report the concern immediately to the appropriate Nominated Person. If the relevant Nominated Person is not working they must be contacted the Lead or Deputy Nominated Person.

The BDL member of Staff/Assessor/Associate will make a full record of what is said and done.

This record should include;

- A verbatim record of the disclosure (this may be used later in a criminal trial and it is vital that it is recorded as accurately as possible). It should be drafted in the vulnerable person's words, and should not include the assumptions of others.
- A nature of the allegation or concern.
- A description of any visible physical injuries.
- Any dates, times, places or other useful information.

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality. Issues will not be discussed with anyone else within BDL.

Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse.

There may be a time where a member of staff is faced with a situation where suspected abuse is disclosed to them. This puts the person in a position of trust, in these situations, the person receiving the information must;

- React in a calm but concerned way.
- Tell the person that they are right to share what has happened.
- Take what the person says seriously.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum, only using them to clarify what the person is saying; NOT to interrogate. Do not use leading questions.
- Not interrupt the person.
- Reassure the person that the problem can be dealt with.
- Not give any assurances of confidentiality, but reassure the person that the information will only be passed onto people who need to know.
- Make a full record of what is said and done

The BDL Nominated Person will then evaluate the allegation and inform the relevant authorities/employer. The BDL Nominated Person will not investigate the allegation.

## **9. DBS Checks**

BDLD will carry out DBS checks on members of staff who will, or may, come into contact with learners, children or vulnerable adults.

## **10. Publicising this Policy**

A copy of BDL D's Equality and Diversity policy will be available for all learners upon request.

## **11. Complaints**

BDLD will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment, which are detailed in full in the staff Grievance policy, and the complaints procedures for learners and visitors.

## **12. Review**

The BDL D Safeguarding Committee will review this policy on an annual basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice. As part of the review, the Safeguarding Committee will seek and take into account the views of stakeholders and the appropriate equality bodies.

## **13. General**

This policy should not be read in isolation, but cross-referenced with all relevant BDL D employment and learner policies. It may be reviewed and varied from time to time.