



P002 Equality and Diversity Policy

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Promotion and Commitment to our Equality and Diversity Policy

This document sets out the Equality and Diversity policy of MBKB. MBKB promote this policy at all times by encouraging practices and raising awareness of equality and diversity amongst all team members, employers, apprentices and third parties. MBKB are committed to ensuring our Equality and Diversity policies and procedures are compliant with current legislation and guidance.

At staff induction team members are trained on and introduced to this policy; They are also issued with a team handbook and copy of all our policies. Equality Data and narrative reports are created quarterly by our Performance Director for dissemination into our Senior Team Meetings, Board of Governors and Quality Improvement plan. This report details our equality data, new local and regional updates, good practice and contemporary topics, all of which is then utilised to inform Apprentice discussions at formal reviews, and create new Staff training initiatives.

All employers are required to complete the MBKB ONA (Organisational Needs and Policy Analysis) within this we question their understanding of and commitment to Equality and Diversity, the results are analysed and, when required, they are trained by one of our team. Each employer must also commit to comply with our E&D policy, as detailed in our Apprenticeship Services agreement.

Within our Onboarding phase we issue and explain our E&D policy as part of a detailed induction, to both the Apprentice and Employer; a copy of our policy is also stored in the e-portfolio system we use and online at our website.

Equality and Diversity training is embedded within every programme we deliver, this includes training sessions, 12 weekly monitoring and relating Equality protocols directly to the apprentice's employment and role. Our 12-week impact and progress reviews discuss and challenge equality topics. Throughout the program at every tutor session we discuss Equality giving examples relevant to that topic and questioning apprentice and employers understanding, we record these on our session plans.

Equality and Diversity knowledge and awareness is further checked by our Quality Assurance Team when they carry out observations and also by our customer surveys, the results of both these feed into our 360 degree monitoring.

MBKB Training is committed to achieving equality and diversity of opportunity for all team, apprentices and clients, as such we strive to provide an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

All employees and apprentices are treated with respect and dignity, and the needs of minority and disadvantaged groups will be responded to with sensitivity, empathy and support, this is assured with our consistent monitoring of uptake of programmes, and targeted recruitment to attract a diverse cross section.

We have a welfare@mbkbgroup.com email, which is permanently monitored, this can be used for emergency contact. Employers and Apprentices confirm their commitment to our policy and protocols at the completion stage of Onboarding, where our customer liaison team again discuss this and re-iterate how we will monitor Equality and Diversity throughout, three party completion of the commitment statement formally agrees this.

As part of our commitment to provide equality throughout we have several touchpoints, these are explained fully within this policy, bullet pointed here for clarity.

Employer:

- Completion of MBKB Organisational Needs and Policy analysis
- Committing to annual Equality review with MBKB
- Have, update and review 'own' Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Commitment to provide working environment in which all can thrive
- Engagement in 12-week progress reviews (including completion ED section)
- Agree to update MBKB on any changes in working conditions, job role

Apprentice:

- Complete Equality overview session as part of initial assessment
- Confirmation of Employer led Equality Induction
- Commitment to promote equality within workplace
- Engagement in 12-week progress reviews (including completion ED section)
- Agree to update MBKB of any incidents, events that occur.

Training and support

At staff induction, team members are trained on and introduced to this policy. They are also issued with a team handbook and copy of all our policies. Team members are updated on changes in practice, legislation and any new/ further guidance through our team meetings.

Our Quality Improvement Plan and Data Strategy Measures have targets for inclusion and equality monitoring, these are also trained to the staff via meetings, with progress towards targets shared at training sessions and recorded on the QIP, which is a live working document.

As part of our employer onboarding process, all employers are required to complete the MBKB ONA (Organisational Needs Analysis). Within this we question their understanding of and commitment to equality and diversity. Each employer must commit to comply with our policy, as detailed in our Apprenticeship Services agreement.

Within our Onboarding phase we issue and explain our Equality policy as part of a detailed induction, to both the Apprentice and Employer; a copy of our policy is also stored in the e-portfolio system we use.

We check understanding and compliance throughout the programme, formally recording this and checking procedures at our impact and progress reviews, these are recorded and stored in the online portfolio.

Policy details:

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, MBKB Training encourages and supports the development of a society in which:

- People's ability to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination
- There is respect for and protection of each individual's human rights
- There is respect for the dignity and worth of each individual
- Each individual has an equal opportunity to participate in society, and
- There is mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing of diversity and on shared respect for equality and human rights.

It is MBKB's policy to provide equality for all, irrespective of:

- Age
- Gender, gender reassignment, transgender, sexual orientation, marital or family status including pregnancy
- Disability or learning difficulty
- Ethnic origin, perceived 'race', skin colour, nationality or national origin
- Religion or belief, philosophical belief or no belief
- Working hours including part time workers
- Membership/non-membership of trade unions
- Family arrangements and civil partnerships
- Or any other cause leading to unfair discrimination

Personal Dignity

It is an offence for any person to harass another person by unwanted conduct or to make them feel that their dignity has been offended or violated, or that there is an intimidating or hostile atmosphere for them, or to make them feel that they are being degraded or humiliated or being placed in an offensive environment.

Human Rights

We believe in human rights for all. No action shall be taken against any individual which may devalue their contribution to society as a whole and to this organisation or lead to a loss of self-respect for them or respect for them from others. We believe in order and social discipline both in society and in the organisation of work-based training.

The results of all initial assessments for apprentices and any tests for team will always be given to them and always in surroundings that preserve individual confidentiality. Furthermore, we confirm that we will, if unable to help them specifically, refer them to other agencies or organisations so that a continuous pathway of help and advice is formed.

We will comply fully with the letter and intention of all laws and directives set out at the Annex to this policy. We are committed to the fulfilment of all agreements, regulations and Acts that may have implications for our role in vocational training.

Positive attitude

The responsibility for compliance and for the positive attitude required to ensure success is laid upon all individuals within the organisation. All external persons connected with MBKB Training are encouraged to hold the same responsibility and commitment.

Effective Use of Policy

A copy of our Equality and Diversity Policy is issued to every apprentice and Employer. We furthermore ensure that each placement/company has their own policy. Where there is no policy, or we are not content with an employer on policy or reach, we will ensure our policy complied with, via declaration form EO1 to ensure compliance.

MBKB Training Equal Opportunities Procedures

To protect our team and apprentices alike there are procedures to ensure that each person has a redress against harassment and bullying at work or during any part of training. There are procedures for redress of complaint, and for the re-evaluation of decisions taken by assessors in accordance with the Common Accord following complaints from apprentices. A Complaints Book is kept, regularly reviewed and the causes of complaints analysed to prevent reoccurrence. Anyone whose personal data is stored on a MBKB training computer will have right of access to it. Anyone who is permitted to take up copyright of designed material will have that copyright honoured. Health and safety at work will be paramount.

These procedures are listed herewith:

- Advice and guidance for redress against harassment and bullying.
- Advice and guidance on making complaints and redressing grievances.
- The right to have a friend, supporter or mentor present during interviews.
- The assessment appeals procedure.
- Access to personal data.
- Copyright of designed training notes and other materials.
- Health and safety – procedure for identification and notification of omissions.
- Advice and guidance on referrals of team and apprentices to other agencies and organisations for further help and advice.
- Procedure for team recruitment, selection, promotion, training, redundancy and retirement or dismissal.
- Procedure for apprentice's recruitment including avoidance of stereotyping.
- Guidance on advice and permissions to team and apprentices concerning religious beliefs, including customs, festivals and holy days.
- Advice and guidance on the rehabilitation of ex-offenders.
- Restrictions in the use of the Internet – limitations on access to certain websites.
- Advice and guidance on the display of potentially offensive material
- Advice and guidance on the design and content of training materials and sessions
- Team and apprentices dress code

There are strict controls of the quality and wording of advertising and publicity. There are proper procedures for the recruitment of team and apprentices that meet and if possible, exceed the requirements for equality of opportunity. The facilities used by apprentices will be subject to regular formal review and necessary improvement. Apprentices are encouraged to discuss their concerns both formally and informally in private if requested. Training notes will be checked to ensure the contents do not offend any group. The use of electronic communication is monitored to ensure that no offensive material is introduced into the training or working environment and that personal privacy of data is protected.

Management strategies and techniques will be regularly evaluated to ensure fairness of conduct. The structure of training and its content will be evaluated to ensure that it does not offend or infringe upon any person's rights.

The workplace or work placement contract procedures will be examined periodically to ensure fairness. The wording of contracts or service level agreements will contain wording, which describes the equal opportunities policy of MBKB Training in an easily understandable way to any external organisation.

The wording of contracts for full and part-time team, including temporary, seasonal team and contracted consultants contains details of the policy. A copy of the policy is discussed at the commitment statement stage together with a copy being available on both Smart Assessor and MBKB.co.uk.

Statistics are gathered, analysed and used by managers to improve policy implementation and to increase the level of proactivity. Quarterly this data is fed into team and senior meetings along with being reported to the MBKB Governors board.

Our dress code takes into account concerns by any person who's religious or ethnic customs require a particular type of dress. Fasting periods and other periodic religious or ethnic requirements including time and location and privacy for prayer will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. Apprentices who wish to discuss issues they consider important in connection with religious festivals and celebrations should talk to the Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator.

Harassment and bullying

Harassment is an unacceptable form of behaviour. All team and apprentices can consider themselves fully protected by this policy and our separate anti-harassment and bullying policy and sexual harassment policies at MBKB, online, at workplaces or work placements or at any other place where work or training takes place. The policy applies to team and apprentices connected with this organisation even when they are on off-duty time. The occurrence of harassment must be reported to, without fear or favour, even if there is a separate policy in place at apprentices' workplaces or work placements that requires the incident to be reported to a workplace manager or supervisor. Because apprentices are in receipt of government funding for their training, they are to be separately protected by MBKB Training at all times. Apprentices are to be politely questioned in confidence on each occasion of formal review and at other appropriate times as to their level of contentment

with their workplace or work placement. Where an issue may arise, confidential records of discussions concerning these aspects will be recorded and stored separately from the documentation connected with individual training plans. Team complaints about harassment will also be treated fully in confidence. Wherever possible, concerns will be investigated by a person not involved with the apprentice or team member on a day-to-day basis. This person will be known as the confidential mentor. References to complaints of any kind will be recorded in the MBKB Training complaints book. However, specific confidential aspects of complaints may be noted and filed in a sealed confidential envelope and deposited within the person's personal file.

What is Harassment?

It is any unacceptable or unwarranted behaviour that disrupts the quality of life or work of an individual. Although the examples set out below are not exclusive, they show types of unacceptable conduct that are completely against our policy:

- Successive or single acts of bullying
- Verbal or physical abuse
- Ill-treatment
- Any offensive or oppressive act.
- Any defamatory remark.
- Causing a person to avoid or want to avoid any social, work, or training environment through
- poor behaviour towards them.
- Ill-advised comments or harassment about any person's sex, sexual orientation (including lesbian, male homosexual or transitional sexual status), religion or belief, race or ethnic origin, disability or age, marital status
- Any abuse of a position of authority by a team member over a apprentice or to another team member.
- Being under the influence of alcohol will be considered to aggravate the offence, and will not constitute an excuse for it

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment at work or in vocational training is now specifically defined in law. It is:

- Comments about the way you look which you find demeaning
- Indecent remarks
- Questions about your sex life
- Sexual demands by a member of your own or the opposite sex
- Any conduct of a sexual nature which creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating working environment for you; this includes displays of pornography and Internet downloading of offensive material at work or vocational training.

Harassment of a sexual nature should be complained about using our separate private procedure.

To ensure that all team and apprentices understand the limits of conduct, the following actions could constitute sexual harassment:

- Physical Conduct of a Sexual Nature: Unwanted and repeated physical contact including unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another employee's body, assault or coercing sexual intercourse.
- Verbal Conduct of a Sexual Nature: Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity, continued suggestions for social activity outside the workplace after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome, offensive flirtations, suggestive remarks, innuendoes or lewd comments.
- Non-verbal Conduct of a Sexual Nature: The display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects or written materials, leering, whistling or making sexually suggestive gestures.
- Sex-based Conduct: Conduct that ridicules or is intimidatory or physically abusive of an employee because of his or her sex, such as derogatory or degrading abuse or insults which are gender related.
- Category Abuse: Any action which causes alarm or distress to any person considering themselves to be transgender, in the process of gender reassignment, gay, lesbian, bisexual or genetically asexual.

Pressure Abuse: It is not acceptable as an argument in favour of sexual harassment, that 'it is just an initiation ceremony', 'just for fun', 'no harm was meant', 'everyone does it', 'you are far too sensitive', 'you are out-of-date', 'everyone swears', 'well, what is pornography nowadays?', and other comments which try to justify unacceptable behaviour at work or in learning.

- Harassing Aspects of Potentially Offensive
- Displayed Graphic Materials

Our policy is that it cannot be assumed that because one person does not find such material offensive, so all must put up with it. We will not put anyone in a situation in which they have to request that such items be removed. You are not to make available:

- The display of sexual material on posters or in any other form including graffiti.
- Any written or printed material intended to show that any person is inferior in any way, including any sexual or racist aspect.
- The use of 'playboy' or 'playgirl' style calendars or other potentially offensive magazines or pictures including those of a soft pornographic nature.

Managers and supervisors of apprentices at external workplaces or work placements are to be asked directly and without embarrassment, fear or favour to remove such items from the workplaces of government funded apprentices as part of the external company's commitment to the equality of opportunity and protection from harassment. To reiterate, no apprentice will be put in a position of having to ask that material offensive to him or her be removed.

False Accusation

MBKB Training will hold it as an offence against this equal opportunity policy if any person gives a false accusation against another apprentice or team member. Accusations of a false nature can be deemed as legally defamatory. All those involved in the investigation of any complaint must keep the matter strictly confidential.

Right to Advice and Counselling

MBKB Training ensures that all persons have a right to advice and to legal protection. This will be achieved by either by a person appointed by MBKB Training giving advice in confidence to any apprentice or team member, or by referral to an external specialist source such as a solicitor or counselling agency. Time off from training or team work will be given to attend external appointments until such matters are resolved.

Positive Discrimination against Gender Stereotyping

All team shall make every effort to inform apprentices of opportunities to break out of stereotypical roles at work. Vocational training providers are permitted by law to be proactive in trying to introduce men and women into areas of work not considered normal activity for a particular sex. Examples of this would be to encourage more men into childcare, more women into information technology and building work. Stereotyping can occur within working environments too – for example, expecting women always to make the tea or do washing up or expect men always to change light bulbs or mend electrical fuses or plugs. Team are to be aware of these aspects and show an example to apprentices in how to combat them.

Gender Equality Duty

Furthermore, team are to note the public duty placed upon them by the Gender Equality Duty. To Eliminate unlawful gender discrimination, Promote equality of opportunity between men, women, transgender and transsexual persons. Ensure that all employment and support requirements connected with pregnancy, care for children and family life are given the closest scrutiny to ensure fairness for all.

Race Equality Duty and Disability Equality Duty

We all have a duty to make every individual feel welcome, valued and to contribute in a positive manner to their development. At MBKB we have a vast range of resources that allow our flexible offer to be provided in various formats, delivery styles and locations to remove barriers to learning.

We actively recruit a diverse selection of apprentices this helps us to celebrate and promote various cultures, share good practice and ensure every apprentices has the opportunity to success and be celebrated for who they are.

Recruitment of Team and Apprentices, Interviews, and Initial Assessments

MBKB are committed to building programmes unique to each individual, allowing them to flourish in their role, career and plan for their future, incorporating the needs of their employer and sector. As such we ensure every individual has the opportunity to elevate their future. We utilise our data analysis to create targeted marketing material, which depict the broad range of individuals we work with whilst attracting new entrants.

We offer a pre-programme meeting to all potential apprentices at which point we discuss the various methods of initial assessments we use, that allow us to tailor the delivery, resources, support and entire programme to meet their specific needs and ensure no barriers to learning exist.

Team - MBKB Training has a policy, that access to team contracts is open and fair. Applicants are involved at the beginning of any interview that it is covered by the MBKB Training Equal Opportunities Policy. They are told that if they consider the manner or questioning to be ill-advised or too personal or intrusive, they should feel free to comment upon it without fear. Such questions can then be re-worded or avoided by interviewing team as appropriate. No person shall be forced to put down any detail on their application that they are concerned might lead to an infringement of their human rights.

Apprentices - MBKB Training has a policy, that access to training programmes is open and fair. Apprentices are involved pre programme in an exploratory meeting to discuss their potential apprenticeship in full, their options and the various support mechanisms available, we also discuss our core policies, including this MBKB Training Equal Opportunities Policy.

To assist with enrolment, determining correct career fit and ascertain any additional support that may be required we carry out several stages of initial assessments. These include the assessment of Maths, English, learning styles and working preferences are carried out to help establish a base line for commencement only. Apprentices who can demonstrate recognised prior learning or experience; that they already possess a skill or ability will have this taken into account in the planning of their learning journey. We offer various training and coaching delivery types together with having a range of alternative resources available to suit any apprentices individual needs. Our bespoke creation of the learning journey ensures a fully tailored, supportive programme is not only created at commencement but furthermore monitored throughout, and formally reviewed, allowing for adjustments as and when required.

20% Off the Job - Time Off-Work for Learning

Apprentices are entitled to 20% of their working hours, set aside as time to study for their programme. MBKB will work with the employer and apprentices to establish a routine for this and ensure fair, relevant time and support is given. MBKB will monitor this on a monthly basis and support the apprentice and employer is complying with this.

Health and Safety

All team and apprentices are protected from defects in their working environments that fall below standards set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act. Full details of this are held within MBKB Trainings Health and Safety Policy.

Selection for Redundancy or Redeployment to another Post

All direct or indirect discrimination will be avoided during selection processes for any redundancies or for redeployment to other or new posts. Nursing mothers, those expecting or on maternity leave will all be protected according to statute.

Victimisation

No person, team or apprentice shall be victimised as a result of them giving information about any act by a person that contravenes this Equal Opportunities policy. Persons making allegations that are proved to be false will be dealt with in accordance with the team procedures for dismissal. Any team member who bullies or harasses another team member or apprentice who they believe has made an accusation against them, whether it be proved or not, shall be liable to dismissal. All team will be able to report matters detailed in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 without fear.

Team and Apprentices – Right to Information

All team and apprentices will receive initial, regular and updating briefings on all appropriate aspects for equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities. As long as you are a member of this organisation or a participant in one of its training programmes you have an obligation to act in accordance with the ethos set out in this policy at all times, including your time away from work or training.

Suggestions for Improvement - Please feel free to offer suggestions on the improvement of equality opportunities systems and procedures within this organisation by emailing feedback@mbkbgroup.com

Quality Assurance Review

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of our self-assessment process. All Queries and concerns about equal opportunities issues should be referred to the Equal Opportunity Manager, Mark Bremner at the MBKB training and Development Offices

This policy is reviewed annually, along with our other key policies and protocols, which can be found here

<https://mbkbgroup.com/policies/>

Name - Mark Bremner
Review Date...05/11/2022



Annex A -Equality & Diversity Legislation - Both UK and European law has been extensively revised and improved. The trend of wide reaching and life-changing legislation will continue into the future. MBKB is bound by the following policies:

*Equal Pay Act 1970, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, European Equal Treatment Directive 1976, Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, Children Act 1989, Disability Discrimination Acts 1995, Employment Rights Act 1996, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Treaty of Amsterdam 1997, Public Interest Disclosures Act 1998, Data Protection Act 1998, Working Time Regulations 1998, Human Rights Act 1998, Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999, Part Time Workers Regulations 2000, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, **Special Education Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001**, The Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003*, The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003*, The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003*, The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003*, Gender Recognition Act 2004, Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations 2004, Children Act 2004, Disability Discrimination Act 2005, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005*, Equality Act 2010, Age – Employment and Vocational Training Law – 1st October 2006, Disability – Public Duty Code of Practice – 1st December 2006, Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, Race Employment Equality Code of Practice enforced 6th April 2006, Single Equalities Act – under consideration and in consultation now, Sexual orientation workplace regulations 2006 implemented in Oct 2007, Work and Families Act 2006 comes into force.*