

# Equality & Diversity Policy

Expanse Learning Group

October 2024

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**Version:**

4

**This Policy was approved by:**

Board of Directors on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**Date for Review:**

October 2026

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## 1. Scope

All employees of Expanse Learning

## 2. Statement /Principles

This policy outlines the commitment of both staff and Governors to promote equality across Expanse Learning. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes. We strive to promote equality of access and opportunity. We will celebrate and value diversity across Expanse Learning.

We believe that equality at Expanse Learning should permeate all aspects of life and is the responsibility of every member of the team at Expanse Learning. Everyone should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Expanse Learning equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other of the protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010).

Expanse Learning embrace the duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 including:

- eliminating discrimination
- fostering good relationship
- advancing equality of opportunity.

We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise any member of our team, or student, prospective student or their families, due to:

- |                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Age                           | • Race               |
| • Disability                    | • Religion or belief |
| • Gender reassignment           | • Sex                |
| • Marriage or civil partnership | • Sexual orientation |
| • Pregnancy and maternity       |                      |

In addition, we respect the rights of carers.

Expanse Learning aims to promote students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, with special emphasis on promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, whilst eradicating prejudicial incidents for students and staff. Expanse Learning is committed to not only eliminating discrimination, but also increasing understanding and appreciation of diversity.

## 3. When does this policy apply?

This policy applies to all conduct within Expanse Learning and also to conduct outside of the organisation (e.g. at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues/students) or which may impact on Expanse Learning's reputation (e.g. the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to Expanse Learning).

## 4. Aims to eradicate discrimination

Expanse Learning believes that a greater level of success from students and staff can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. Expanse Learning is committed to creating a prejudice-free environment where individuals feel confident and at ease. This environment will be achieved by:

- Raising awareness of difference
- Developing a solution focussed approach to inclusion
- Being respectful
- Always treating everyone fairly
- Developing an understanding of diversity and the benefits it can have
- Adopting an inclusive attitude
- Adopting an inclusive curriculum that is accessible to all
- Encouraging compassion and open-mindedness

We are committed to having a balanced and fair curriculum. We believe that our students should be exposed to ideas and concepts that may challenge their understanding to help ensure that students learn to become more accepting and inclusive of others. Challenging and controversial concepts will be delivered in a way that prevents discrimination, and instead

promotes inclusive attitudes. We will also respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from classes which pose conflicts to their own beliefs.

## 5. Dealing with prejudice

Expanse Learning does not tolerate any form of prejudice-related incident. Whether direct or indirect, we treat discrimination against all stakeholders of Expanse Learning with the utmost severity. When an incident is reported through a thorough reporting procedure Expanse Learning is devoted to ensuring appropriate action is taken and a resolution is put into place which is both fair and firm.

All prejudice related incidents are recorded and reported to Expanse Learning Governing Body on a termly basis.

At Expanse Learning, our students are taught to be:

- Understanding of others
- Celebratory of cultural diversity
- Eager to reach their full potential
- Inclusive
- Aware of what constitutes discriminatory behaviour

Expanse Learnings employees will not:

- Discriminate against any member of the organisation
- Treat other members of the organisation unfairly

Expanse Learnings employee's will:

- Promote diversity and equality
- Encourage and adopt an inclusive attitude
- Lead by example
- Follow company values and behaviours (Refer to the Staff Code of conduct Policy)

## 6. Equality and dignity in the workplace

Every member of staff is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality, and respect for all. Expanse Learning will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of a protected characteristic:

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| • Age                          | • Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin |
| • Disability                   | • Religion or belief                                   |
| • Gender reassignment          | • Gender   |
| • Marital or civil partnership | • sexual orientation                                   |
| • Pregnancy or maternity       |  |

Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination extends to the treatment of all members of Expanse Learning. All staff members are obliged to act in accordance with the organisations various policies relating to equality.

We will guarantee that no redundancy is the result of direct or indirect prejudice. All disciplinary procedures are non-prejudicial, whether they result in warnings, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action.

Prejudice, in any form, is not tolerated at Expanse Learning and we are continuously working towards a more accepting and respectful environment for our community.

Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working) which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated.

All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities at Expanse Learning. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If you believe that you may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, you should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with your line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. You may decide in the alternative to raise the matter through Expanse Learnings Harassment Policy or Grievance Policy. For types of discrimination see the Annex to this policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. Expanse Learning will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under Expanse Learning Disciplinary Policy.

A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under Expanse Learning Disciplinary Policy. Staff may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

We set out below some specific areas of application:

- a. Recruitment - Selection for employment at Expanse Learning will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. Further detail is set out in Expanse Learning’s Safer Recruitment Policy. Where possible, Expanse Learning will capture applicants’ diversity demographics as part of its recruitment processes to promote the elimination of unlawful discrimination, offering reasonable adjustments wherever necessary.
- b. Training - You may also be required to participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of this policy.
- c. Promotion - All promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit and will not be influenced by any of the protected characteristics listed above. Promotion opportunities will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers to promotion.
- d. During employment - The terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to Expanse Learning employees will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means and to provide appropriate conditions to meet the additional needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups. Expanse Learning will promote opportunities for staff to discuss any reasonable adjustment that are required to ensure that staff can fulfil their **potential**.

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by Expanse Learning to assess its effectiveness and may be amended from time to time.

Impact of non-compliance

<b>Staff:</b>	Disciplinary action, Support, Action Plan
<b>Student:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Legislation/organisational:</b>	statutory and non-regulated compliance. Prosecution, Staff Retention, Poor employee performance etc
<b>Compliance lead:</b>	Shared Services
<b>Policy Reference:</b>	ELGR-HRIM-POL-0017_(Exp-Oct26)
<b>Version:</b>	2
<b>Agreed policy location:</b>	Document Hub, Employee Webpage, employee intranet and PeopleHR
<b>Review Schedule:</b>	24 months
<b>Does the policy require Governor approval?</b>	Yes

Version Control

Version	Date	Revision	Review Date
1	01/09/2020	First issue	31/8/2021
2	01/09/2021	Policy Reviewed	31/08/2022
3	10/11/2022	Policy reviewed	09/10/2024
4	22/10/2024	Policy reviewed and updated	22/10/2026
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## Appendix 1 - Types of discrimination

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There are various types of discrimination prohibited by this policy.

The main types are:

### A. Direct discrimination

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Direct discrimination occurs where one person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic set out in this policy. By way of example, refusing to promote a pregnant employee on the basis that she is shortly due to go on maternity leave would be direct discrimination on the protected characteristic of the employee's sex.

Other types of direct discrimination are:

- Associative discrimination - this is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. For example, an employee is discriminated against because his/her son is disabled.
- Perceptive discrimination - this is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. For example, where co-workers believe the individual is gay. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

### B. Indirect discrimination

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Indirect discrimination occurs when an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied, which appears to be the same for all, but which has a disproportionate, adverse effect on one group of people. This is discrimination even though there was no intention to discriminate. For example, a requirement for UK based qualifications could disadvantage applicants who have obtained their qualifications outside of the UK; this could amount to indirect discrimination on the grounds of race.

### C. Victimisation

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Victimisation is where an employee is treated less favourably than others because they have asserted legal rights against Expanse Learning or assisted a colleague in doing so. For example, victimisation may occur where an employee has raised a genuine grievance against Expanse Learning and is demoted as a result.

### D. Harassment

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Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.” It is important to remember that it is not the intention of the harasser but how the recipient perceives their behaviour, which determines whether harassment has occurred. Please see Expanse Learning's Harassment Policy, for further details of how Expanse Learning will deal with bullying and harassment.

## Appendix 2 – Equality and Diversity Declaration

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By accepting this policy through National Online Safety staff are declaring that they have read and understood Expanse Learning's Equality and Diversity Policy and agree to work to the expected standards. Regardless of their background and circumstances, they agree to treat all colleagues and visitors with respect and dignity while carrying out the duties and responsibilities of their role at Expanse Learning.

## Equality Objectives

**Our vision is to be a leader in the field of inclusive education driven by our culture and values**

