

Construction Helpline

03– Equality and Diversity Policy

Version 5

Purpose of this Policy

This policy outlines how Construction Helpline Ltd will work to ensure and promote equal opportunities and support equality and diversity in all its work, with the aim of eliminating discrimination and promoting good relations between people of different groups. It also sets out the responsibilities that apply to our staff, apprentices, learners, contactors, visitors, and volunteers working on behalf of or in conjunction with CHL.

The Policy covers the nine “Protected Characteristics” from The Public Sector Equality Duties, including:

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

Construction Helpline will actively promote British Values across its apprenticeship and commercial training programmes.

'Fundamental British Values' are classified as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Construction Helpline recognise the following definitions of unlawful discrimination as applied to this equality policy

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as clients or customers. For an employer to be liable:

- the harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment);
- it must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place; and
- it must have failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he or she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he or she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare his or her treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments, and is then systematically excluded from all meetings, such behaviour could amount to victimisation.

Disability Related Discrimination Previous equality legislation recognised disability-related discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 replaces this with two new causes of action in relation to disability – indirect discrimination (see above) and **discrimination arising from a disability**. The latter occurs when a disabled person is treated less favourably because of something connected to their impairment.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments happens when an organisation fails to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled person, to avoid the disabled person being placed at a substantial disadvantage when compared to a non-disabled person.

In the majority of cases, the CHL will be legally liable if a court found that discrimination, harassment, or victimisation had occurred. However, it is also important to realise that individuals can also be held responsible for their own actions.

As part of our ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive and respectful workplace, we recognise and incorporate recent changes in UK equality legislation. In line with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, effective from 26 October 2024, we are legally required to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. This duty reinforces our proactive approach to creating a safe and supportive environment for all employees.

We also acknowledge the UK government's intention to strengthen equality measures further, including the proposed implementation of the Socioeconomic Duty under the Equality Act 2010 and consultations on mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting. We will continue to monitor these developments and update our practices accordingly to ensure compliance and promote fairness across all areas of our organisation.

Policy Statements

Construction Helpline Ltd has diversity, equality, and inclusion as one of its core values. These govern the way we work with each other and our approach to all our learners

Construction Helpline Ltd aims to promote equal opportunities for potential and current staff, learners, and visitors, and will actively implement its policy in order to combat discrimination and to promote good relations between different groups.

We value the diversity of all the communities we serve. We acknowledge and celebrate the different backgrounds, cultures, languages, abilities and beliefs of our learners and staff. Construction Helpline Ltd aims to promote community cohesions and provide a safe and harmonious learning environment where everyone feels that they belong.

We are opposed to, and will tackle, any harassment and all other discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, particularly in relation to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act i.e. age, disability, ethnicity, (including race, colour, nationality), gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief and sexual orientation, but also in relation to social background, class, and trade union affiliation.

We will continue to take positive action to address any under-representation in the learner or staff profile, and to tackle any gaps in the success, retention, or achievement rates for any equality group. We will also work to eliminate any barriers that might inhibit the success or progression of any groups of learners or staff.

Construction Helpline Ltd will meet its specific duties. It will continue to implement and assess the impact of its policies, procedures and practices on present and potential learners, staff, and visitors, to ensure that no equality group is disadvantaged.

Construction Helpline Ltd believes that high quality education is a right for all and will encourage all learners and staff to reach their potential.

All learners and staff will be made aware that they have a legal and moral responsibility to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people from different backgrounds and communities, and between different equality groups.

Construction Helpline Ltd will take active steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination (whether direct or indirect). Bullying, harassment, or any other discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated.

Construction Helpline Ltd will work to ensure that there is no discrimination of any kind in relation to the recruitment and admission of learners to courses. A link to this policy will be included on all learner email communications for online review and for learners on courses longer than 2 days e.g. NVQs, this policy will be both reviewed and signed on completion of review by learner.

Construction Helpline Ltd will constantly review its provision to ensure that is appropriate for and attractive to learners from all backgrounds e.g. physical access, location and timing of courses and interviews.

Recruitment for all positions within Construction Helpline Ltd will be carried out in a manner which accords with good equal opportunities practice. A link to this policy will be included on all recruitment adverts.

The criteria for the promotion and progression of existing employees will be determined solely on the basis of the requirements of the job.

It is the responsibility of all staff to conduct their teaching and learning activities in a non-discriminatory manner.

All learners will be provided with an effective induction programme that familiarises them with Construction Helpline Ltd Equality and Diversity Policy and helps them to recognise the rights and responsibilities of themselves and others in relation to these issues.

Teaching and learning will be informed by equality and diversity principles, and an awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity. Teaching styles should take account of learners' varied backgrounds, abilities and learning styles.

All teaching will use materials, resources and learning activities that are free from discriminatory assumptions, images and language, challenge stereotypes, are sensitive to diversity and promote equal opportunities. Construction Helpline Ltd will take swift action if it is made aware of any inappropriate materials that are discriminatory, or work against community cohesion.

Construction Helpline Ltd will offer learning support in literacy and numeracy for all learners who are identified as requiring it, support for learners whose first language is not English, and appropriate additional support for any disabled learners.

Construction Helpline Ltd will seek to create an environment in which all learners, staff and visitors feel comfortable, irrespective of their background.

Construction Helpline Ltd will respond positively and courteously to all its learners, staff, and visitors from the first point of contact.

Construction Helpline will ensure that this policy is available via promotional platforms including our website, social media and promotional advertisements.

Construction Helpline will ensure that an equal opportunities monitoring form is included with learner registration forms and on staff recruitment applications and data will be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

Construction Helpline Ltd will ensure that all learners and staff are aware of the policies and processes for reporting harassment and bullying through induction and tutorials, and this information will be available electronically via our website, email signatures, intranet, company one drive, learner CHL Core Values Intro Guide (PDF) and Staff Induction Guide (ppt).

Aims of the Policy

- To comply with the general and specific duties of all Equal Opportunity Legislation.
- To fulfil CHL statutory obligation to raise awareness of the policy in all staff, clients, and learners.
- To ensure that all potential, new and existing staff, clients, and learners are informed of the policy and its implication.

Publishing Arrangements

The Construction Helpline Ltd is commitment to equal opportunities and the Equality and Diversity policy will be communicated widely to staff, learners, contactors, visitors, and volunteers working on behalf of or in conjunction with CHL:

- Marketing prospectuses and annual Equality and Diversity Report
- Employee and learner induction programmes
- Copies available through learner CHL Intro Guide (PDF)
- Through the CHL web site and Quals direct E portfolio
- Copies of the policy provided to work placement providers, with a requirement for them to adopt the Policy if they do not already have one in place.

Equal Opportunities: Functional Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for:

- Ensuring Compliance with Equality Legislation
- Personnel related policies and strategies.
- Equality and diversity training will be provided to all staff as part of the induction process.
- Developing and delivering a programme of specific training will also be provided for throughout the year on different aspects of equality and diversity as appropriate
- Advising and supporting staff to identify and disseminate good equal opportunity practice, particularly in relation to equal treatment in all aspects of the staff and client and student experience.
- Ensuring that all HR policies and procedures meet legal and ethical standards in relation to equal opportunity.
- Advising staff on procedures in relation to the CHL Equal Opportunity Policy.
- All Managers are responsible for ensuring proactive dialogue about equality opportunities issues and practices with partner organisations, contractors, customers, learners, and employers providing work experience to learners.

Staff and Students

It is unlawful to discriminate, victimise or harass on the grounds of Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marital status, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation. Under legislation and this policy, every member of staff and every student has a responsibility to:

- Listen to what others have to say and respect their point of view.
- Speak out, or report it, if they witness or are aware of bullying, vindictiveness, verbal, or physical aggression – and not assume that it is someone else's responsibility.
- Question their own prejudices and assumptions.
- Familiarise themselves with the responsibilities that equalities legislation places on them and ensure that they are sensitive to issues of age, disability, gender reassignment. pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Construction Helpline Ltd will work to ensure equality of access and resources for:

Learners by:

- Researching and responding to the educational needs of the local community including any isolated sections of the community.
- Ensuring entry criteria and interview procedures do not discriminate unfairly.
- Providing impartial guidance to all student applicants so that they are placed on the best courses to help them succeed.
- Identifying learners' individual learning styles and needs at the start of a course and giving them opportunities to try different ways of learning.
- Ensuring content and language of all written course information is clear and presents positive images.
- Ensuring access, where needed, to additional learning support after assessment of individual need.

Staff by:

- Ensuring no employee or job applicant is treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.
- Using published, objective, and job-related criteria when making decisions on recruitment, pay, training, progression, and termination of employment.
- Supporting or training staff appropriately to help them progress within or outside the Provider.
- Ensuring that managers apportion development opportunities objectively and as fairly as possible.

Learners and staff by:

- Ensuring as far as possible, that they have access to the full range of CHL services.
- Consulting learners and staff with disabilities or learning difficulties about reasonable adjustments to CHL arrangements and premises so as to minimise any disadvantages they may face.
- Providing counselling and advice for learners and staff when necessary.

Making an Equal Opportunities Complaint

An employee or service user who feels they have not been fairly treated within the scope of this policy should raise the matter through CHL's complaints procedure as follows.

Complaints Procedure and how to make a complaint

Any learner/employer accessing our services wishing to make a complaint can do so in person, by phone, by e-mail, or by letter. For written complaints, please write to

Jules Arnold-Bryant - Director of Delivery - Funded Programmes at CHL

Construction Helpline Ltd
Unit 1,
Batsworth Road
Mitcham
London,
CR4 3BX

Email complaints: jules.ab@constructionhelpline.com

Telephone complaints 0207 199 9800