ITEC Equality Policy Statement

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ITEC Equality Policy Statement

ITEC Learning Technologies is wholeheartedly committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and to delivering excellent training programmes in which learners' ability to achieve is not limited by prejudice or discrimination. ITEC will treat learners, staff, applicants, employers and members of the wider community with dignity, respect and fairness. We will provide an inclusive learning environment that values individuals and takes account of their merits, abilities and potential.

ITEC recognises the need for equality of opportunity not only with its own employees but also learners, providers and any organisation or company it contracts with. ITEC is determined to make every effort to prevent and eliminate discrimination of an unfair nature against anyone on the grounds of age, disability, gender or marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or racial origins, those with or recovering from mental health issues or offending background that does not create a risk to children and vulnerable persons.

All eligible people will have equality of opportunity for employment and advancement in ITEC on the basis of their ability and suitability for work or training. ITEC will give every consideration to continuing the employment of employees who become disabled or suffer from health issues whilst working for the company and for arranging any training for them, if appropriate, or the provision of work equipment and suitable working arrangements agreed by both parties.

ITEC recognises its responsibility in ensuring that no discrimination is made by condition or requirements which cannot be justified. The policy is designed to be effective in terms of ensuring that everyone is treated equally and: -
- That no job applicant, learner or employee receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of age, disability, sex or marital status, sexual orientation, religious belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or racial origins.
- That no applicant or learner is placed at a disadvantage by conditions which have disproportionately adverse effects on his or her particular group, where these cannot be shown to be necessary to the satisfactory completion of the job.
- Entry into ITEC and progression within it will be determined solely by the application of objective criteria, personal performance and merit.
- Managers are trained in Equal opportunity recruitment

All representatives, staff and learners of ITEC, visitors to our premises, employers and contractors have a responsibility to adhere to this policy at all times during their day to day activities.
The ITEC Single Equality Scheme is made available at ITEC Reception

We recognise that failure to treat others with dignity and respect need not be deliberate and that things such as insensitive comments may be made unconsciously and unintentionally. However, any behaviour or actions contrary to this policy will be treated seriously and action will be taken accordingly.   Through our Single Equality Scheme we are committed to challenging and eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds set out in our Equality Policy.

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Introduction

ITEC is part of the USP college group, it was originally set up in December 1983 and is limited by guarantee with a board of directors.

Mission

Accelerating workforce development

Values

- Getting learners future-fit through quality provision and pace
- Utilising technology in the way we work and deliver
- Creating career pathways
- Focus on businesses where we can add value
- Training diverse people and being inclusive
- Adding value through insight and research

In order to implement and maintain our Equality Policy we will:

a) Provide a Safe, Healthy and Inclusive environment for our staff and learners – via our Health & Safety Policy

b) Ensure that all staff members receive appropriate, relevant and on-going training and development to raise awareness of the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) issues – through our ongoing CPD requirement defined by the USP college group

c) Ensure that all our representatives, employers, staff members and learners are aware, and kept updated, of ITEC's policies and procedures – with copies made available in staff and learner handbooks and copy made available at reception

d) Actively promote and monitor EDI, recognise and reduce barriers to accessing our programmes and identifying and narrowing gaps in achievement between groups of learners to recognise and respond to areas for development and implementation – these are picked up in our EDI reporting and look to how we can improve access through our quarterly review session.

e) Actively promote Fundamental British Values, Prevent and recognise areas for development and implementation – covered in our learner induction and staff CPD

f) Actively protect vulnerable learners under our Safeguarding Policies and ensuring learners stay protected on-line – via our online safeguarding policy and learner induction

g) Hold regular meetings and reviews with staff, learners, employers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure they are involved and consulted and their views are taken into account when monitoring this policy – Quarterly review meetings shared with employes and learners via newsletter

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h) Grow and develop our business by maintaining strong employer links, sharing research and insight, delivering excellent customer service and providing a quality inclusive learning experience – via our insights section and social media activity

i) Treat acts of unlawful discrimination, victimisation and/or harassment as a disciplinary offence – via our disciplinary policy

j) Publicise and communicate our work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) - copies made available in staff and learner handbooks and copy made available at reception

Links with other policies and documents

This policy relates to ITEC's activities and includes an equality impact assessment (EIA) undertaken in relation to new ITEC policies or the updating of existing policies. Some policies and documents have direct relevance to achieving the aims of this policy and include:

- Safeguarding
    - o Online Safeguarding Policy
    - o Prevent & British Values
    - o Child protection and vulnerable person
    - o E-safety policy and agreements
    - o Mental Health

- Equality
    - o Equal Opportunities
    - o Equality & Diversity
    - o Bullying and Harassment policy

- Employer Relations
    - o Record keeping, Data Protection, Confidentiality, GDPR and Privacy policy
    - o Health & Safety policy
    - o Training agreements/Learner Handbooks
    - o Employers' Terms & Conditions Agreement
    - o Apprentices' Commitment Statements
    - o Complaints
    - o Business Continuity

- Staff Policies
    - o Disciplinary and Capability Guidelines
    - o Staff Handbook
        - ▪ Remote Working
        - ▪ Drug & Alcohol
        - ▪ Discipline & Dismissal
        - ▪ Dress policy
        - ▪ Malpractice
        - ▪ Work related social events
        - ▪ Anti-bribery

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Engagement and Involvement

ITEC carries out surveys, reviews and questionnaires, which include areas of equality and diversity, at regular intervals throughout the learning programmes including:-

- Individual progress reviews every 8-12 weeks
- On-line induction surveys
- On-line annual survey as part of programme review
- On-line end of course evaluation surveys
- On-line destination surveys
- Exit reviews

All on-line surveys are available in paper-based format, if required, and progress reviews are interviews carried out by a trained member of ITEC staff.

All apprentices and young learners attending ITEC receive a handbook which includes a comprehensive list of support agencies offering specialist advice and guidance. All staff and learners have regular reviews, meetings and appraisals with their line manager and/or assessor/reviewer. Time is given at these meetings to discuss any issues that an individual person may have and comments and issues are referred to the appropriate person or specialist partner to be dealt with accordingly. Individual development activities are set to extend learners' knowledge and awareness of EDI issues.

ITEC has corporate social media sites, which are used to encourage learners to post feedback, pose questions to learners and give them an opportunity to discuss areas that they would like to see improved at the centre and with their courses. These social media platforms are also used to keep in touch with ex-learners and collect their views, feedback and case studies. Learners are represented at the annual programme review meeting and, as part of this, directly contribute to the ITEC's annual Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement plan, which includes areas of EDI.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) is tasked with regularly reviewing and updating the ITEC's marketing literature and web site. Literature and course information, including our application form, is available in several formats including paper-based and electronic via the ITEC's web site. The marketing policy includes the use of positive images within our brochures and stands.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors, which includes the Managing Director, has overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of ITEC's Equality Policy Statement.

The leadership team has responsibility for carrying out any Equality Audits and for reviewing and amending ITEC's policies and documents over the course of each operational year.

This committee also oversees the building and facilities, which are regularly audited for accessibility. The entire building is on one floor, with full disabled facilities and designated disabled parking spaces. ITEC has attained the 'Positive about Disabled People' Symbol and the committee monitors our progress towards the 5 commitments in the standard.

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The Managing Director and Business Development Manager are tasked with regularly reviewing and updating the ITEC's marketing literature, web site and social media sites, including the use of positive images within our brochures and stands.

All staff members have a responsibility to adhere to ITEC's Equality Policy Statement, ensuring that all learners are treated fairly and with dignity and respect at all times. They have an obligation to report, to the appropriate person, any issues or concerns that they have with any issues arising from this policy or from concerns in EDI or Safeguarding

Learners, employers, contractors and visitors are expected to behave in a manner as laid out in either their handbooks or induction.

Equality Audits

Whenever a new policy is drawn up or an existing policy is updated, members of the leadership team will carry out an EA to ensure the protected characteristics are considered within all of our procedures and to ensure policies reflect the aims of the ITEC's Equality Policy Statement.

EDI monitoring forms part of ITEC's robust self-assessment and continuous improvement cycle. EDI data is used to highlight possible inequalities for investigation into the underlying causes and planning improvement actions with the aim of removing any unfairness and disadvantage where it is found. We will consider all of the information available at least annually to determine how it can be improved and how it can be used to make a positive difference.

Equality Areas and Proposed Activities

Race (including ethnicity and nationality)
- We will continue to use positive images and case studies of learners from diverse backgrounds in our promotional literature.
- We will strive to represent BME groups within our staff.

Age
- We will review our recruitment, retention, promotion and training policies to ensure there is no discrimination on the grounds of age, except where current Government eligibility prohibits.
- We will consider the best way to ensure the recruitment and training of learners is fair and no unlawful discrimination takes place, within the constraints of Government eligibility rules.
- We will continue to use positive images and case studies of a diverse learner population in our promotional material.

Disability
- We will continue our commitment to the 'Positive About Disabled People' scheme and monitor our progress against the 5 commitments.
- We will ensure we appropriately assess learners who may have additional learning needs and ensure learners with disabilities wanting to undertake training are not disadvantaged by providing services in a way that identifies and meets their individual needs.

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- We will work with specialist service partners to provide additional equipment and services to meet individual needs.

Religion and belief (including non-religion and belief)
- We will consider whether to collect data from staff and learners about their beliefs and the best way to use this information to ensure no unlawful discrimination takes place.
- We will ensure there is an awareness of, and sensitivity towards, religious practices and festivals and make adjustments, where needed
- We will promote Fundamental British Values to all learners regardless of their religion and beliefs and promote the UK as an inclusive community

Sex
- We will strive to maintain a balance of gender within our staff, learners and community

Sexual orientation
- We will always consider whether to collect data from staff and learners about their sexual orientation and the best way to use this information to ensure no unlawful discrimination takes place. However, the current policy is that we do not ask for this information.

Gender reassignment
- We will consider whether to collect data from staff and learners about any gender reassignment issues and the best way to use this information to ensure no unlawful discrimination takes place. However, the current policy is that we do not ask for this information.

Pregnancy and maternity
- We will carry out a risk assessment for pregnant learners and nursing mothers to ensure they remain safe while protecting their equality of opportunity.

Marriage and civil partnerships
- *N.B. Marriage and civil partnerships is NOT a protected characteristic for further education providers.*

If things go wrong

ITEC Learning Technologies takes any allegation of discrimination, bullying or harassment very seriously. There is a separate policy covering Bullying and Harassment, which gives advice to staff and learners on what to do in the event any bullying or harassment occurs. Investigation into incidents and any disciplinary action needed will be taken following ITEC's Disciplinary and Capability Guidelines and/or Complaints Policy, which may include exit from a training programme or dismissal from the business.

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Action Plan

No:	Equality Area	Action Required & QIP No.	Target date	Completed date
1	All	Add Policy Statement to Operational Manual	1st March	
2	All	Start Review of documented policies	1st March	
3	All	TR to send EDI reports to BT on a monthly basis	1st March	
4	All	Quarterly EDI reporting meeting (Management team)	1st March	
5	All	Add EDI section to newsletter on quarterly basis	1st March	

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