



Equality and Diversity Policy

Definition of the policy

At AAXAcademy measures are taken to create an inclusive culture to ensure equal learning and educational opportunities for all our learners and staff at all times. We do not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristics, namely: age (for employees, not for service provision), disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (and issues of transgender) and sexual orientation, in admission or employment and in access to our educational and professional programmes and activities. We take positive action to provide equal opportunity to all learners and staff and others using AAXAcademy facilities.

Purpose of the policy

This policy sets out **AAXAcademy** commitment to meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and to the principles of equality and diversity both as an employer and in the development, delivery and awarding of qualifications.

It should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Appeals policy and procedures;
- Reasonable Adjustments policy.

Legal framework

- We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations among all members of the AAXAcademy community and particularly with respect to protected characteristics.
- We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
- We recognise these duties are essential for achieving the outcomes framework, and that they reflect the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by six principles:

Principle 1:

All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents/ carers, as of equal value, whether or not they have a protected characteristic.

Principle 2:

We recognise and respect diversity.

Principle 3:

We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

Principle 4:

We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.

Principle 5:

We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that may already exist.

Principle 6:

We aim to consult and involve the AAXAcademy community.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but nevertheless do take account of differences.

Definitions of discrimination

- Unlawful direct discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances, because of a special characteristic such as age, gender, disability, or race.
- Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all, but has a different impact on members of one or more protected groups, of which the complainant is one, and is placed at a disadvantage as a result.
- Victimisation is unlawful, which is treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination e.g. by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague.
- Harassment is also unlawful and is when there is unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on the grounds of one of the relevant characteristics, e.g. race or gender etc.

Aims and Objectives of the Policy

The Equality Act 2010 combined more than 116 pieces of equality legislation into one Act, providing a legal framework which tackles discrimination in respect of the following personal characteristics, which are protected by the law:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- race
- religion or belief (there are some education exceptions where there is valid segregation)
- sex (there are some education exceptions where there is valid segregation)
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity.

It defines the behaviour that is unlawful under the Act as:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- discrimination arising from disability
- victimisation
- harassment

At AAXAcademy

- We expect that all learners will have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and be motivated to succeed, secure in the knowledge of their own worth.
- we expect learners and staff to treat each other with complete respect and dignity at all times.
- We recognise the need to prepare our learners for working life in a diverse society where they exercise respect and understanding for everyone.

Gender equality

- we will work towards improving standards of attainment and achievement for all our learner
- We will actively promote equality of opportunity between men and women (and girls and boys) and report annually on gender equality in our academy.

Race equality

- We will actively promote race equality and good race relations across AAXA and will report annually on race equality in our academy.

Disability equality

- We will promote equality of opportunity between disabled and other people and take steps to meet disabled people's needs.
- We will report annually on the disability equality scheme in our academy.

Implementation

In order to translate the above policy into action, we will:

General

- ensure that we comply with all relevant legislation
- communicate our commitment to equality and diversity to all members of AAXA community, for example through our website
- inform all staff, and learners of their responsibilities in promoting and maintaining equality
- set up mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and review.

Curriculum

- the curriculum will display a discriminatory free approach to teaching and learning throughout the academy
- departments will present opportunities for promoting cultural diversity within classes and across the academy.

Environment

- all reasonable measures will be taken not to discriminate against learners with protected characteristics
- staff will be informed at the beginning, and throughout the academic year of any particular needs of the learners
- we will maintain a strategic approach to ensuring that AAXA is a welcoming and an accessible environment for all

Employment

- AAXAcademy will comply with the law regarding equal opportunities and employment
- new staff will be made aware of the policy and be welcome to contribute to its development
- advertising will state that we are an equal opportunities employer and we will appoint the best candidate for the job

Specific duties

In order to meet our general duties, outlined above, the law requires us to do some specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are:

- To publish equality information, in order to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions (we will not publish any information that specifically identify individual students or members of staff)
- To prepare and publish equality objectives.

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics listed above and analyse this data to determine the focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provision as a school, namely:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Withdrawals
- Prejudice –related incidents
- Employment processes and patterns (staff)

Responsibilities

AAXAcademy is responsible for ensuring that its staff, learners and contractors are aware of this policy, current equality legislation and regulatory requirements in relation to equality and diversity.

The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring that its staff and learners are aware of this policy, current equality legislation and regulatory requirements in relation to equality and diversity.

Monitoring and evaluation

The impact of this policy will be reviewed annually through Centre Management annual self-evaluations. The impact of our policies on race, gender and disability equality will be reported annually to staff, learners and parents/ carers.

This policy will be supported by appropriate training where required.

Review arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually as part of AAXA's self-evaluation activity, which includes consideration of customer and regulatory feedback and good practice guidance. A policy review may also be triggered as an action resulting from the outcome of the investigation of a complaint.

Equality Objectives 2018 - 2022

1. Eliminate discrimination – Learner outcomes

To continue our focus on promoting positive outcomes for our priority learners who are vulnerable to underachievement, in particular those who have lower prior attainment or who are in receipt of support, so they fulfil their potential.

2. Foster good relations among all members of AAXAcademy community - Learner experiences

To aim to eliminate completely all incidents involving prejudice against people with protected characteristics, within our increasingly diverse community.

3. Advance equality of opportunity - Staff employment

To continue to monitor the diversity of our workforce and the effectiveness of our approach to providing for the needs of those with protected characteristics

Policy Statement

AAXAcademy:

- is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in employment & learners and access to services for all who work for or with it
- values and celebrates differences in age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity
- believes that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable, and will strive vigorously to tackle these and to remove conditions which place people at a disadvantage
- works to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination
- provides equality of opportunity as an integral part of good practice
- is committed to a working environment in which the contribution and needs of everyone are fully recognised and valued
- supports staff, learners and contractors in challenging any inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour from colleagues, other individuals, organisations and customers.

Staff and contractors

AAXAcademy is committed to ensuring that staff and contractors are recruited, selected, monitored and can progress within the organisation in a fair and equitable manner, based on their relevant attributes, skills, experience and performance only.

AAXAcademy provides equality and diversity guidance to all staff and external contractors at induction and on an ongoing basis.

Qualifications

AAXAcademy ensures that:

- its qualification offer are suitable for as diverse a range of learners as possible
- it adheres to regulatory conditions relating to the development, delivery and assessment in line with VTCT, to ensure that qualifications contain no bias in content which might discriminate against or disadvantage any groups of learners sharing a particular characteristic, in terms of language, content or means of assessment, other than those directly related to the purpose of the units or qualifications

- If any such features or barriers of this type are necessary, their nature and the reason for their inclusion in the particular unit or qualification are clearly set out. Staff responsible for inducting learners on to qualifications must be fully briefed of such features.

Centres

AAXAcademy ensures equality of opportunity for learners registered on qualifications by adhering to VTCT's approval process that:

- current equality legislation is adhered to
- there is an up-to-date equality and diversity policy in place
- staff and learners are aware of and have access to the equality and diversity policy
- assessment processes are carried out in a fair and objective manner
- an effective appeals policy and procedure is in place
- staff and learners are aware of and have access to the appeals policy and procedure
- candidates' results are monitored in line with the centre's equality and diversity policy
- equipment and accommodation used for learning and assessment create no barriers to access for any candidate
- reasonable adjustments and special consideration are made in line with VTCT's policy and procedures.

Action plan

This policy has been approved & authorised by:

Name : Olivia Long

Position : Academy Owner, Director & Trainer

Date : 10/04/2025

Review : 10/04/2026

Signature : O.Long