

ACS-2 C01

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT

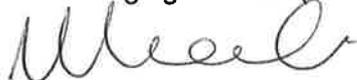
Academy Consulting (Academy) aims to be an Equal Opportunities Employer. The company's policy is to ensure that all job applicants and employees are treated equally, regardless of the race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital/civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, religion or belief, disability or age of themselves or any other person with whom they associate, and that they are not disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

In addition, Academy is committed to carrying the values of equality, diversity and inclusion and acceptance incorporated in this policy into its external relationships with clients, suppliers and other industry contacts.

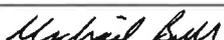
The person with overall responsibility for Academy's Equal Opportunities Policy is:

Name: Mandy Wheeler

Position: Managing Director (Joint)

Signed: 

Date: 3/12/25

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Revision No:	14	Date:	Dec 2025
Created By:	Andrew Jarrett	Approved By:	

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Academy's Equal Opportunities Policy are to ensure that:

- No-one receives less favourable treatment on grounds of the race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital/civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, religion or belief, disability or age of themselves or any other person with whom they associate; or is disadvantaged by any conditions, requirements, provisions, criteria, procedures or practices that cannot be justified on any other grounds; or is victimised for taking action against any form of discrimination, victimisation or harassment, or instructed or put under pressure to discriminate against, or harass, someone on the above grounds.
- Academy is free of unwanted conduct that violates the dignity of workers or creates an intimidating hostile, degrading, offensive or humiliating environment.
- Opportunities for employment, training and promotion are equally open to male and female candidates, candidates from all racial groups, candidates with or without disabilities, and candidates of any age, and of any sexual orientation, religion or belief.
- Selection for employment, promotion, transfer, training, and access to benefits, facilities and services, will be fair and equitable, and based solely on merit.

This policy applies to all aspects of employment, from recruitment to dismissal and former workers' rights.

Ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy's objectives, and for ensuring compliance with the relevant Acts of Parliament as well as the various Codes of Practice, lies with Academy.

However, the cooperation of all employees is essential for the success of this Policy, and we expect all our staff to promote its values. Behaviour or actions against the spirit and/or the letter of the laws on which this Policy is based will be considered serious disciplinary matters and will result in disciplinary action or possible dismissal.

Copies of this policy document will be made available to employees throughout the Company. Further guidance is available in Academy's Staff Handbook which is issued to all employees. Employees are encouraged to raise with management any areas of concern in relation to the Policy.

The policy will be reviewed annually (or more frequently when circumstances dictate) to ensure that all legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other Acts/codes/directives listed at Appendix A to this document are recognised.

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RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The intention of Academy is to recruit the most suitable person for any position in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

Recruitment and selection procedures must be based on objective criteria related to the needs of the job, and such criteria must be applied equally at all stages during the process to all applicants at all levels within Academy.

The following recruitment procedures should apply:

- All recruitment advertisements should carry an appropriate short statement on equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion.
- Vacancies should be publicised appropriately to as wide a range of suitable candidates as possible ensuring no individual or groups with protected characteristics or other characteristic or status are unjustifiably excluded or applicants disproportionately reduced. Personal word of mouth recommendations should not be used as the sole method of recruitment.
- If employment agencies are used, they should be made aware that Academy is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to diversity and inclusion. Monitoring can be used during the process as appropriate to support objectives.
- Advertisements must not indicate or appear to indicate an intention to unjustifiably discriminate on the grounds identified in this policy. (General business imagery should be reviewed for inclusiveness)

The following guidelines should be observed when short-listing and interviewing candidates:

- Short-listing criteria should be objective, based on the skills, experience and knowledge necessary to carry out the job based on diverse and inclusive recruitment practice.
- The interviewers need to be familiar with this policy and should understand diversity in recruitment (a diverse make up of members of interview process team should be used as far as possible)
- Interview questions should be relevant to the job, with care being taken to ensure that no assumptions are made or leading questions asked relating to personal circumstances and future plans. If job requirements are likely to affect a candidate's personal life (e.g. unsociable hours or travel arrangements), then the same questions regarding these should be asked of all applicants.
- Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies should be recorded.
- Selection criteria should be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as well as being essential for the effective performance of the job.
- Skills, knowledge, ability and competence will be the main criteria for selection and promotion.

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- Where job applicants provide information in respect of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability or age, this information will be recorded and monitored to allow annual analysis in terms of numbers of applicants from each group, numbers of interviews arranged in each group, and numbers of appointments made in each group, with a view to identifying any possible areas of bias and implementing appropriate correction measures where possible.
- Checks to ensure job applicants' eligibility to work in the UK should be carried out at the end of the selection process to prevent potential discrimination.
- Recruitment monitoring in terms of diversity and inclusion can be used to support processes. (This could be assisted with use of external HR Resource as appropriate.)

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTION

Terms of employment must not discriminate in terms of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability or age.

Wherever possible, efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary/unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged and/or under-represented groups, including those with disabilities.

Internal training and development opportunities must be available to all employees on the basis of merit and/or job needs alone.

Promotion opportunities must be available to all employees on the basis of merit alone.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND VICTIMISATION

Academy seeks to establish a culture which eliminates bullying and harassment. All employees should treat others with the respect and dignity that they would expect for themselves. Bullying and harassment of others will not be tolerated, in whatever form it occurs.

It is unlawful and contrary to this policy to victimise individuals who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or provided information about such discrimination. Employees found guilty of victimisation or inducing others to discriminate in connection with their employment with Academy, or intentionally failing to comply with this policy, will be subject to Academy's disciplinary procedure.

All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent harassment of Academy's employees by third parties not in its employ.

NOTE : Also See the new Sexual Harassment Policy available as Appendix to Staff Handbook ACS-2 A01 APP1 Rev 0 - Sexual Harassment Policy

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APPENDIX A

Definitions

Equality means fair treatment of all and equality of opportunity ensuring groups or individuals with protected characteristics are not treated less favourably and those disadvantaged get the tools to access same fair opportunities as their peers.

Inclusion is the extent to which everyone at work regardless of their background identity or circumstance feels valued, accepted and supported to succeed at work. This includes giving equal access and opportunities and getting rid of discrimination and tolerance (removal of barriers).

Diversity refers to demographic differences of a group and often diversity references protected characteristics in UK Law i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or partnership status, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion, belief, sex and sexual orientation.

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LEGISLATION & CODES OF PRACTICE

The following legislation, directives and codes of practice give further information and guidance:

- ◆ Equality Act 2010
- ◆ Race Relations Acts 1976, 2000 and 2003
- ◆ Sex Discrimination Acts 1975, 1986 and 1995
- ◆ Disability Discrimination Act 1995/2003/2005
- ◆ Equal Opportunities Commission Code of Practice 1985
- ◆ Commission for Racial Equality Code of Practice 1983
- ◆ National Disability Council Code of Practice 1996
- ◆ Human Rights Act 1998
- ◆ The Sex Discrimination Gender Re-assignment) Regulations 1999
- ◆ Employment Rights Act 1996
- ◆ European Council Equal Treatment Directive 1976
- ◆ Equal Pay Act 1970/1975
- ◆ Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974/1975
- ◆ The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- ◆ The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- ◆ Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- ◆ Employment Act 2002 (Flexible Working Regulations)
- ◆ Part-Time Workers Act 2000
- ◆ Disability Rights Commission Act 1999
- ◆ The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 as Amended
- ◆ Civil Partnership Act 2004
- ◆ Equality Act 2006
- ◆ The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005

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EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY
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SCHEDULE OF REVISIONS

Revision Number	Date	Description of Change
14	December 2025	Reviewed/ Sign off – Amended AJ
13	January 2025	Reviewed/Sign Off
12	January 2024	Amended – Revision number and Sign-off with date added – Amended AJ
11	July 2022	Amended – Title changed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Added Recruitment of Selection section - Diversity and inclusion elements into 2 nd paragraph of Policy statement. Added wording to Recruitment and Selection; Appendix A Added definitions of diversity and inclusion bullet points 1, 2,3,4 - Amendments AJ
10	January 2022	Reviewed – No changes - AJ
9	December 2020	Reviewed – No Changes - AJ
8	September 2019	Added in 'gender reassignment' to Statement of Intent, Recruitment and Selection, Equal Opportunities Policy Objectives, Terms of Employment, Training, Development and Promotion - Amended AJ
7	April 2018	Half-yearly review – no changes Issued by CS
6	October 2017	Half-yearly review – no changes
5	April 2017	Half-yearly review – no changes
4	August 2016	Half-yearly review – no changes
3	February 2016	Half-yearly review – no changes
2	August 2015	Half-yearly review – no changes
1	February 2015	Change of font and logo – Issued by CS

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