

# Career Connect POLICY DOCUMENT Equality and Diversity Policy

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## **VERSION HISTORY**

Ver	Date	Inits	Reason for change
5	02/13	DK	For ISO 9001
6	24/08/15	FSN	Updated to Career Connect

## **POLICY OWNER**

This policy area is the responsibility of the Finance Director.

## **SCOPE**

Career Connect is an organisation that recognises and embraces equality and diversity.

This Equality and Diversity policy sets out its commitment to placing equality and diversity at the centre of every aspect of its work. It applies to all employees, volunteers and those delivering services under the auspices of Career Connect.

This policy provides a framework for ensuring that the principles of equality and diversity are mainstreamed throughout the business and that positive action is taken to ensure their implementation in terms of:

- Employment within the organisation
- Provision of services to young people, their families and adult clients

All other Career Connect policies & procedures will pay due regard to the principles contained in this policy.

## **AUTHORITY**

Career Connect is committed to equality and diversity and is responsive to the framework of relevant legislation, contractual arrangements and direction from the Career Connect Board. Our policies and processes support and embed inclusivity into all that we do. We aspire to maintain our commitment to best practice and surpass the minimum legal requirements which follow:

### ***Framework of Legislation which underpin this policy:***

- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

- Work and Families Act 2006
- Gender Equality Duty Statutory Code of Practice 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998

## **STATEMENT OF POLICY**

### ***As a service provider:***

Career Connect has adopted an inclusive approach to working with the whole family, and is fully committed to making equality and diversity a reality for the communities it serves. We will do everything possible to involve young people and adult clients to ensure that they have access to services wherever they live, and that these services are effective irrespective of race, gender, ethnic origin, disability, age, sexuality, nationality, religion, class or any other individual characteristic that may limit a person's opportunities in life.

We value the diversity of the local area and want services to be fully accessible, relevant and meaningful to all young people, their parents and carers, and our adult clients. Services and information will be available in accessible formats upon request, which includes the provision of interpreters and materials in other formats such as other languages, Braille or large print.

The service will continue to challenge stereotyping and support individuals considering opportunities in non-traditional areas. Our modes of delivery will be accessible so that all services can be understood and used by those with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those less familiar with or able to access web-based technology. Equality and diversity will be integral to the development of the service and we will monitor take-up of services – and the outcomes achieved – by these groups.

### ***Career Connect as an employer***

We believe that equality and diversity should be mainstreamed throughout the organisation, it makes good business sense.

We will ensure that our existing employees and applicants to the organisation are treated fairly and equally. We will strive through the effective implementation of our HR policies and procedures to become an exemplar employer. Every employee is entitled to dignity and respect and procedures are in place to ensure that under no circumstances will any form of discrimination, intimidation, bullying or harassment be tolerated.

Our recruitment processes promote diversity and selection for employment, promotion, training and development will only be on the basis of aptitude and ability. Career Connect strives to attract a diverse range of disabled and BME applicants to ensure a workforce which mirrors the local communities it serves. We also look to these communities for staff recruitment and consultation about how Career Connect can best work for them. This commitment extends to the make up of our Board.

Through an ongoing staff development equality programme, which reaches beyond induction, we will ensure that all our employees are equipped to tackle all forms of discrimination and to promote equality and diversity in all aspects of their work, both internally and across the partnership.

As an approved 'Two Ticks Positive about Disabled People' employer, we are committed to making reasonable adjustments in the workplace so that all staff and potential employees are given every opportunity to enjoy a healthy working life with Career Connect. Flexible working also allows many staff to manage their work life balance, which is of particular value for those with care responsibilities.

Monitoring is an essential aspect of the development of equality and diversity at Career Connect. Monitoring arrangements are in place for applications to jobs, promotion, training and development, grievances, disciplinary actions, performance appraisal, dismissals and other reasons for leaving. We also apply these principles equally in a TUPE situation.

The performance of Career Connect against its key equality performance indicators will be reported annually to the board.

### ***Career Connect working with partner agencies or subcontractors***

Career Connect promotes its values on equality and diversity in its dealings with partner agencies, contractors, suppliers, as part of any contract for services with providers that the company funds (within existing legislation).

In this way Career Connect can extend its impact on eradicating discrimination and promote real equality and diversity for all. Robust monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure that new providers can evidence their equality and diversity practice.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

- A designated member of the Career Connect Leadership Team has overall responsibility for ensuring that all aspects of this policy and underpinning procedures are implemented.
- HR are responsible for developing and reviewing related quality procedures which ensure equality within the workforce.
- Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff implement relevant quality procedures/ work instructions and have access to appropriate learning opportunities which meet their personal development needs.
- Individual contract teams are committed to monitoring performance targets for vulnerable and underachieving clients, with a particular focus on learners with LDD/ SEN and those from BME communities.

All employees, volunteers and those delivering services on behalf of Career Connect are responsible for implementing this equality and diversity policy; any behaviour exhibited by clients or visitors which contravenes this policy will be challenged.