# 1st for Awarding Ltd
# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Policy Purpose

1st for Awarding is committed to providing equality of opportunity and demonstrating anti-discriminatory practices throughout all areas of our operations. This policy sets out how we promote equality, diversity and inclusion through the design, delivery and award of assessments.

We are committed to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity.
- Fostering good relations between individuals and groups.

All employees, associates, assessors and contractors working on behalf of 1st for Awarding are responsible for implementing this policy.

## Our Practices

Within the organisation we:

- Provide a secure environment for our staff.
- Promote diversity amongst our workforce.
- Support an inclusive working environment.
- Value the contribution of all staff members and embed an ethos of equality and diversity.
- Support staff who have a disability or specific need.
- Use images that are inclusive and promote diversity.
- Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality and diversity.

Within our assessment operations, we:

- Listen to employers' and training providers' needs.
- Have open conversations about any learner's needs within the assessment process.
- Understand the need to make reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities and other access requirements.
- Demonstrate an awareness of how to conduct assessments for learners with language needs or communication difficulties.
- Seek to remove unnecessary barriers to participation in assessment activities.
- Ensure our assessment materials do not disadvantage learners who share a protected characteristic
- Demonstrate an awareness of protected characteristics and ensure assessment practices are fair, inclusive and free from unnecessary barriers.


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The legal framework for this policy includes:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs and Disability legislation and associated guidance, including requirements relating to reasonable adjustments and accessibility.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine protected characteristics that must be considered when promoting equality, preventing discrimination and ensuring fair access to employment and assessment opportunities:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

## Reporting Concerns

Any individual who believes they have experienced, witnessed or been affected by discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or unfair treatment should report their concerns through the organisation's Complaints Policy, Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Policy, as appropriate.

## Staff Recruitment

When advertising for staff to join our organisation, we aim to:

- Open up opportunities to recruit staff from a diverse range of backgrounds.
- Advertise for job roles that reach a broad audience.
- Encourage applications from those with disabilities and specific needs.
- Not disadvantage applicants by location and ability to access venues.
- Ensure all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- Support new employees in accessing the relevant software and resources to carry out their role effectively.
- Provide opportunities to engage in onboarding training and have one-to-one support where required.
- Ensure there is equal pay for assessors carrying out the same role on the same standard.


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The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and the necessary checks. This ensures fairness in the selection process. We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible. 1st for Awarding is committed to demonstrating inclusive, fair and ethical recruitment practices.

## Accessing our Services

We welcome a range of employers and training providers to access our services. We anticipate learners will be working in an environment that matches the nature of the assessment they are working towards. To ensure we do not limit the ability to access our assessment services, we adopt the following practices:

- We promote our service widely.
- We reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We ensure our assessments do not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of a protected characteristic.
- We ensure that all learners are made aware of this equality and diversity policy.
- We have a Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy, allowing learners with disabilities to participate in assessments and demonstrate their level of competence without disadvantage.

## Assessment Activities

At 1st for Awarding, we make every effort to demonstrate inclusivity in the design, delivery and award of assessments. We set out clearly how assessment activities are assessed and what the basic requirements are for accessing our services (e.g. internet connection).

In order to remove any barriers to participation, we:

- Ensure learners, employers and training providers have equality of access to information and learning materials.
- Avoid stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of materials.
- Work closely with the training provider and employer to accommodate dates and times for assessment.
- Ensure accessibility of our platforms and provide guidance on how to use them.
- Provide messages, updates and guidance in a suitable format.

During the delivery of our assessments we:

- Encourage our assessors to promote an environment of mutual respect.
- Help assessors to understand discriminatory behaviour is unacceptable.
- Ensure any reasonable adjustment offered is inclusive for learners with special educational needs and ensure the assessor understands how to carry out these adjustments.


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- Ensure that learners whose first language is not English are able to undertake assessments without bias.

## Valuing Diversity

We welcome the diversity of our learners, and we acknowledge the range of workplace backgrounds they come from. We encourage learners to introduce themselves and discuss the unique features of their role and organisation. We are mindful of the differences in job roles and take this into account when carrying out the assessment activities and making our assessment decisions. We encourage learners to discuss their experiences without fear of discrimination or judgement. For learners who have a first language other than English, we value the diverse perspectives, experiences, cultures and languages they bring and recognise the positive contribution this diversity makes to the assessment process and wider workplace.

## Monitoring and Review

We monitor equality, diversity and inclusion considerations through our policies, procedures, recruitment activities, assessment practices, quality assurance activities and stakeholder feedback. Findings are reviewed and acted upon as appropriate to support continuous improvement.


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| **V2.0** | **1st October 2025** | Brand, terminology, and links updated |
| **V2.1** | **22nd September 2026** | Minor updates to accountability, legislative references, reporting processes & monitoring arrangements |

**This document will be reviewed annually and updated as required**


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