

Equality and Diversity Policy

ESB is committed to making this policy fully effective in relation to its employees, contractors and learners and takes advice, where appropriate, from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and other sources. There is also a framework of legislation within the UK to which ESB adheres, including **The Equality Act 2010**. The Act covers “protected characteristics”, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. The “protected characteristics” are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

ESB recognises its legal and moral responsibility to ensure everybody using its services is treated fairly, with respect and with dignity. All ESB staff and assessors are required to support equality and diversity, both in spirit and in practice. ESB is committed to the prevention of discrimination on any grounds which are not appropriate to good employment or learning practice. ESB actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusivity in access and entitlement to its services. ESB qualifications and employment are open equally and equitably to all the “protected characteristics” above.

ESB qualifications are appropriate for those with learning, reading, seeing, hearing and/or mobility difficulties. The document “Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration” (available on website downloads or by request from the office) and syllabus handbooks describe the procedures for entering candidates with particular assessment requirements. ESB has an appeals procedure which conforms to regulatory requirements, details of which are in all policy documents and on the website.

ESB ensures equality throughout the process of developing qualifications and related products it includes steps to ensure there is no bias in content or language, nor any use of assessment methods, which might place unnecessary barriers to specific groups of learners, subject to maintaining the integrity and credibility of qualifications. ESB will never

reject a request relating to access to our qualifications that we have received, except where acceptance of the request is not logistically possible or where acceptance would undermine the criteria for the assessment. ESB fulfils its obligation to meet the access arrangements requested for our learners in a way that does not disadvantage either them or their peers.

In this respect ESB recognises that the relevant Acts provide only a minimal level of protection, which it will always seek to better.