

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.
- 1.2 We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.
- 1.3 Our HR Team has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.
- 1.4 All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of English Speaking Board (International) Ltd. (ESB International).
- 1.5 Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in ESB International as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its

principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the organisation.

- 1.6 This policy sets out ESB's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. 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.

2. ESB International's Responsibilities

ESB International is a registered charity and as such is committed to comply with [Equality Act: guidance for charities](#). The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic in a wide range of areas including employment and the provision of services (full list of protected characteristics is listed in point 6). There are some exceptions to this, including the charities' exception. The charities' exception allows a charity to limit its benefits to people who share a protected characteristic. Although this may exclude (and therefore discriminates against) people with other protected characteristics.

As an awarding organisation, ESB International will comply with Ofqual's Conditions of Recognition, which state:

A1.1 An awarding organisation must not, by means of any act or omission which has or is likely to have an Adverse Effect, render itself unsuitable to continue to be recognised for the award of a relevant qualification.

A1.2 For the purposes of Condition A1.1, an act or omission may include in particular one which results in the awarding organisation –

...(b) being held by a court or any professional, regulatory, or government body to have breached any provision of Competition Law, Equalities Law, or Data Protection Law.

Additionally, ESB International will always comply with Section 53 of The Equality Act 2010 which refers specifically to awarding organisations, requiring them not to discriminate, harass or victimise a person in relation to the conferment or withdrawal of a qualification. This policy should be read in conjunction with ESB International's [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy](#)

3. ESB International's commitment as an employer

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- To create an environment in which individual differences and staff contributions are recognised and valued.
- Every employee, worker or self-employed contractor is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- All ESB International's staff and contractors are required to comply with [The Equality Act 2010](#) and support equality and diversity, both in spirit and in practice. ESB International is committed to the prevention of discrimination on any grounds which are not appropriate to good employment or learning practice. ESB International actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusivity in the access and entitlement to its services.

4. ESB International's commitment as a service provider

- We aim to provide services to which all clients are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities or social class.
- We will make sure that our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with employee representatives
- We have clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated. Please see [ESB International's Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#) for details.
- Breaches of our equality and diversity policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

5. ESB International's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

ESB International's qualifications are suitable for a diverse range of learners. ESB International is committed to removing barriers to learning and accessing its products and ensuring equality of opportunity and inclusion for all its learners. ESB International's '[Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy](#)' and product specifications 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 accessible on the website. Furthermore, if an individual believes that they have been discriminated against, they are asked to follow [ESB International's Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#) which is available to download from the website.

ESB ensures that its qualifications are suitable for as diverse a range of learners as possible. It adheres to regulatory guidance in regards to the development, delivery, assessment and awarding of ESB International's qualifications to ensure there is 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 unit qualifications. If any such feature or barriers are necessary, their nature and the reason or their inclusion are clearly explained.

As part of ESB International product review process and qualification review cycle, we will address feedback from our learners, service users and other internal and external stakeholders. This includes, but is not restricted to allegations of unfair bias, access arrangements and requests for reasonable adjustments.

ESB International will never reject a request relating to accessibility to its qualifications, except where acceptance of the request is not logistically possible or where acceptance would undermine the validity of the assessment or the reliability of the results criteria for the assessment. ESB International fulfils its obligation to meet the access arrangements requested for our learners in a way that does not disadvantage either them or their peers.

6. Policy statements

ESB adheres to the framework of equality, diversity and inclusion legislation within the UK 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

We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity;
- ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities; and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

DISABILITY

We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people; and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation.

RACE INCLUDING COLOUR, NATIONALITY, ETHNIC OR NATIONAL ORIGIN

We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs;
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents; and
- actively promote race equality in ESB International.

GENDER

We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men;
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against women and men;
- offer equal access for women and men to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same; and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

We will:

- ensure that we take account of the needs of the LGBTQ+ community

RELIGION, BELIEF OR LACK OF RELIGION/BELIEF

We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible; and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees; and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees' pregnancy or maternity.

MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees; and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account the needs of our employees' marriage or civil partnership.

EX-OFFENDERS

We will:

- prevent discrimination against our employees regardless of their offending background (except where there is a known risk to children or vulnerable adults).

EQUAL PAY

We will:

- ensure that all employees, male or female, have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

7. Policy review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually, to ensure its procedures and practices continue to meet legislative and regulatory compliance. If required, ESB International reserve the right to make changes to the policy in line with customer and learner feedback, or in response to individual cases. ESB International recognises that the relevant Acts provide minimal level of protection, which we will always see to better.

Revision No.	Change to previous release	Reason for change
4	Introduction, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 added Policy Introduction moved to 6. Policy Statements and extra commentary added Section 53 moved and added to 2. ESB International's Responsibilities and Ofqual conditions A1.1 and A1.2 added 3 ESB International's commitment as an employer added 4 ESB International's commitment as a service provider added ESB International's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion moved to 5. Review details moved to 7. Policy Review	Policy Review
5	Sentence in 1.6 removed and placed in 2. In 5. product specifications replaced with Centre Handbooks	Policy Review