



Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

We promote an environment in which diversity is recognised, valued and encouraged. We acknowledge the multi-cultural and diverse nature of the UK workforce and society in general. We are committed to principles of fairness and mutual respect where everyone accepts the concept of individual responsibility. These principles are embedded into Vista Education's operational procedures.

We recognise that discrimination in the workplace or during the provision of training in any form is unacceptable and, in most cases, unlawful. We view any breach seriously. We **will** investigate and potentially take appropriate action where necessary when Vista Education's procedures are not followed by staff or learners.

Definitions and Protected Characteristics

Vista Education is committed to the equal and fair treatment of everyone, No learner, or anyone our organisation deals with, will receive less favourable treatment because of any protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are:-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity

- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Please note that to despatch our duty of care, some learners may be asked to withdraw temporarily or permanently from a programme of learning **under exceptional circumstances only**. An example of this might be an illness, injury or medical condition which makes it unsafe for the learner to continue.

Vista Education's Stance

Vista Education strives for equality of treatment for all by aiming to:

- raise awareness of equality and diversity
- ensure that you are never discriminated against or receive less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic
- acknowledge any issues that could be defined as discrimination, victimisation or harassment with an appropriately sensitive and prompt investigation
- comply with Active IQ in making suitable reasonable adjustments (<https://www.activeiq.co.uk/for-centres/policies-and-procedures>) which can apply to all the listed protected characteristics.

Your Responsibilities

Each and every one of us is a stakeholder in the success of this policy. We expect you to make a positive contribution towards maintaining an environment of equal opportunity. Please make sure you observe this policy at all times. In particular, you have individual responsibility to adopt the following:

- Do not take unlawful discriminatory actions or decisions contrary to the spirit of this policy
- Do not discriminate against, harass, abuse or intimidate anyone on account of their protected characteristics
- Do not place pressure on any other learners to act in a discriminatory manner
- Resist pressure to discriminate placed on you by others and report such approaches to an appropriate member of staff
- Co-operate when we investigate, including providing evidence of conduct which may amount to discrimination
- Co-operate with any measures introduced to develop or monitor equal opportunity

Discrimination is not just treating one person less favourably than another. It can take place because:

- someone associates with a person with a protected characteristic;
- someone is believed to possess a protected characteristic (even though they do not);

We expect you to treat, and be treated by, other learners and the people our organisation deals with considerately and with respect.

If you breach this policy then we may ask you to withdraw from the course and under these circumstances we reserve the right to not issue an refund of fees.

Where You Encounter Discrimination

- If you feel subject to discrimination of any kind as identified within this policy, make clear to the individual concerned that you find it unacceptable. Person-to-person discussion at an early stage may be enough to resolve your concern without involving anyone else. Alternatively, seek the help of a trusted colleague (e.g. a fellow learner or a trusted member of staff) and ask them to approach whoever has caused you offence.
- If discrimination continues, or you consider an instance to be particularly serious, you should consider who to highlight the issue with. In most cases this will likely to be the tutor or assessor. However, we appreciate that this staff member may be implicated in your concern and therefore when this happens they should approach the tutor/assessors line manager or the designated internal verifier.
- The staff member approached will carry out a suitable documented investigation or where more appropriate will refer the issue to an appropriate individual responsible for this area within the company (for example, the Centre Manager, Lead Internal Verifier or Vista Director).
- The result of the investigation into alleged discrimination will be communicated to you with information including the action taken and outcome highlighted if applicable or appropriate.
- If you feel dissatisfied about the outcome of the investigation then you will need to contact The Vista Education Centre Manager within five working days of receiving the outcome, who will review these concerns.