

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Scope and Context

- 1.1. TTS is a provider of commercial and funded training primarily within the Logistics and Construction Sectors. The following demographics of the sector have been considered when developing this policy: 80% are male in middle age, with this rising to 99% for Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Drivers. Circa 40% of the sector comprises English second language speakers. Provision is blended and includes face-to face delivery, online learning and practical face-to-face delivery, primarily from its Sunderland training site.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all activities and **all training provision** of TTS including both funded and unfunded training programmes.
- 1.3. All references to “apprentices” should be read to pertaining also to “learners” (commercial programmes or funded programmes other than apprenticeships).
- 1.4. The policy relates to all aspects of academic and company life, including but not limited to; recruitment, advertising, marketing, selection, benefits, disciplinary, grievances and curriculum sequencing.
- 1.5. The policy applies to all stakeholders including apprentices, learners, employees, applicants (employment or training programme), contractors, partners and volunteers.
- 1.6. For the avoidance of doubt, “employee” shall include contractors, volunteers, those in paid employment.
- 1.7. Behaviour outside of working time and our premises may also fall within the scope of this policy.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1. Discrimination of any kind is abhorrent and will not be tolerated by any stakeholder of TTS.
- 2.2. TTS is committed to ensuring that no individual is treated less favourably as a result of sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, colour, age, religion or belief, or disability.
- 2.3. TTS is fully committed to developing a culture of fairness, equality, diversity and inclusion; and to ensuring compliance with the terms of the Equality Act 2010, at all times.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- 2.4. Support the development and sustainability of an environment in which the individual differences and contributions of our staff and learners are recognised and valued.

- 2.5. Not unlawfully discriminate in line with the 9 protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010:
- 2.5.1. Age
 - 2.5.2. Disability
 - 2.5.3. Gender Reassignment
 - 2.5.4. Marriage and Civil Partnership
 - 2.5.5. Pregnancy, Maternity and breastfeeding
 - 2.5.6. Race
 - 2.5.7. Religion or belief
 - 2.5.8. Sex (gender)
 - 2.5.9. Sexual orientation
- 2.6. Commit to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- 2.7. Recognise that this policy is an evolving document that will adapt in collaboration with stakeholders of TTS and alongside emerging issues.
- 2.8. Recognise the serious nature of any occurring discriminatory events and the impacts on victims, perpetrators and witnesses.

3. Policy Aims

- 3.1. The overarching aim of this policy is for our workforce and learners to be truly representative of society.
- 3.2. To create an inclusive environment, founded upon mutual respect, within which all stakeholders can be themselves and give their best.
- 3.3. TTS aims to create a culture of fairness, equality, diversity and inclusion, free from bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, that promotes dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- 3.4. This will be achieved by:
- 3.4.1. Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contribution of all staff, learners and visitors are recognized and valued
 - 3.4.2. Ensuring every person is welcomed into an environment which promotes dignity, respect and tolerance; with no form of intimidation, bullying or harassment being acceptable
 - 3.4.3. Ensuring that training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff
 - 3.4.4. Promoting the understanding that equality in the workplace is viewed as good management practice and makes sound business sense.
 - 3.4.5. Training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

- 3.4.6. Educating staff that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
- 3.4.7. Taking seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. This includes engaging apprentice employers to do the same.
- 3.4.8. Embedding principles of equality, diversity, inclusion and acceptance within all curricula.

4. Commitment Statement

- 5. TTS is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity and inclusion amongst our own employees, learners, apprentices, visitors and associates. Our aim is that our staff are truly representative of all sections of society and that each employee, learner, apprentice and visitor feels respected and able to contribute to the best of their ability.
- 6. TTS strongly opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All personnel, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, and learners and visitors to all premises, are treated fairly and with respect.

7. Definitions

Direct Discrimination

- 7.1. Direct discrimination occurs when a person or organisation is treated less favourably than others due to a personal or group characteristic. The following are "protected characteristics" pursuant to the Equality Act 2012:
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marital or civil partnership status
 - Pregnancy,maternity and breastfeeding
 - Race (which includes colour and ethnic/national origin)
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
 - Age
 - Disability
- 7.2. The sorts of actions that would fall into this category of unlawful and prohibited initiatives, include (but aren't limited to) those set out below. These actions need not be intended or directly committed by someone (indirect responsibility may be sufficient for someone to have unlawfully discriminated) and an omission or failure to do something may be just as culpable as a positive action.
- 7.3. We will not tolerate their practice by anyone within or associated within our business

Indirect Discrimination

- 7.4. When a group of people with one of the protected characteristics is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that is applied to all staff (unless the treatment may be justified for a good business reason).
- 7.5. Examples of this would be:
- 7.5.1. Insisting, without good reason, that all staff must work full time, (which indirectly discriminates anyone with child-care responsibilities, women in particular)
 - 7.5.2. Refusing to provide a room for reflection and prayer, which would discriminate against individuals practising certain faiths
 - 7.5.3. Dismissing or not employing a woman because she is pregnant or of childbearing age

Harassment

- 7.6. Covers hostile, humiliating, degrading, intimidating or similarly offensive treatment or conditions to which an individual with one or more protected characteristics is subjected. Any such actions deprive an individual of their dignity and violate them. We draw no distinction between actions that may be labelled as 'joking' and not intended to cause offence, and those that may have been more direct and premeditated in their delivery.
- 7.7. For example, in line with legal definitions, reflecting general standards of decency, we will regard any of the following as falling within the definition of harassment:
- 7.7.1. making lewd comments and/or displaying pornographic material
 - 7.7.2. calling someone unkind, derogatory or otherwise unwelcome names or nicknames
 - 7.7.3. making insensitive jokes, whether about someone directly, or the content of which would be evidently offensive to anyone with a protected characteristic
 - 7.7.4. excluding colleagues and/or making them feel that they have no option but to exclude themselves
- 7.8. You should refer to our Bullying and Harassment Policy for a full list of the matters that we consider to be covered by this definition.

Victimisation

- 7.9. This has a particular meaning under UK employment law and it is narrower than an ordinary dictionary definition, covering the situation only where:
- 7.9.1. a worker has complained of discrimination (or harassment),
 - 7.9.2. or has supported a fellow worker in making a complaint about these concerns and has then suffered reprisals from others, including those responsible for that worker's employment prospects and working conditions.

Other Discriminatory Practices

- 7.10. The UK's employment law also identifies other actions that can be unlawful under the equality and diversity legislation.
- 7.11. Examples of these include:
- 7.12. Failing to make reasonable adjustments to minimise certain disadvantages suffered by a disabled employee (or job applicant)
- 7.13. Instructing another person (or applying pressure on them) to discriminate
- 7.14. Knowingly assisting somebody else when they carry out a discriminatory act

- 7.15. Discriminating against somebody believed to have a protected characteristic, whether or not they actually do, or because they associate with a third party who does.

8. Responsibility of Managers

- 8.1. The Directors shall have overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of this policy. Directors shall ensure that they and their staff operate within the policy and arrangements and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination.
- 8.2. Each manager will ensure that:
- 8.2.1. all their employees are aware of the policy, the arrangements and the reasons for the policy.
 - 8.2.2. grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with fairly and as quickly as possible.
 - 8.2.3. proper records are maintained.

9. Responsibility of Employees and Apprentices

- 9.1. The attitudes of employees and apprentices are crucial to the successful operation of fair practices. In particular, all members of staff and apprentices should:
- 9.1.1. comply with the policy and arrangements.
 - 9.1.2. not discriminate in their day-to-day activities or induce others to do so.
 - 9.1.3. not victimise, harass, or intimidate other staff or apprentices on the grounds specified in the policy.
 - 9.1.4. inform their manager or tutor if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.
 - 9.1.5. understand they act as ambassadors for the organisation and as such should positively promote this policy in their dealings with other employees, apprentices, employers of Apprentices and the public
- 9.2. All employees should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, apprentices, suppliers and the public.
- 9.3. Employees and apprentices not complying with this policy should understand that their actions will be subject to investigation and may result in enforcement of the Staff or Apprentice Disciplinary Procedure.

10. Recruitment, Promotions and Identifying Candidates for vacancies

- 10.1. In any selection process that we use within our business, whether we're selecting interviewees for job opportunities, offering jobs, identifying individuals for promotion or considering other opportunities or necessities (like redundancy situations or apprentice assessment and enrolment), we will apply a rigorous, objective selection process using non-discriminatory criteria, as far as possible.

- 10.2. Some forms of discrimination may be justified, for example both direct and indirect age discrimination may be justified and lawful, if the less favourable treatment, criterion or practice amounts to a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- 10.3. A legitimate aim must relate to a genuine business need on our part that is not related to age discrimination itself. For example, a legitimate aim potentially justifying age discrimination might include:
- 10.3.1. Economic factors such as business needs and efficiency;
 - 10.3.2. The health, welfare and safety of the individual concerned (including the protection of young people or older workers);
 - 10.3.3. The particular training requirements of the job.
- 10.4. All job adverts and opportunity announcements must be:
- 10.4.1. Discussed with and signed off by the HR Manager, one of whose responsibilities is to ensure that any advert is compliant with this policy
 - 10.4.2. Located and/or circulated so as to reach as wide and diverse a pool of interested candidates as possible, and
 - 10.4.3. Worded so as to encourage, as far as possible and reasonable, applications from individuals of all characteristics to apply - or, at the very least, so as not to discourage any individuals with protected characteristics from applying.
- 10.5. There may be circumstances where some indication of required skills (that do discriminate) is justified and where self-deselection is inevitable, for example, where the job vacancy is for a window cleaner who works at height, wearing abseiling harnesses. The job advert might specify that interested candidates must be willing and capable of abseiling to be considered for the job.
- 10.6. If you are involved in interviewing and or any other part of our recruitment process, you must never ask a job applicant about their health, attendance record, or whether they have a disability before making a job offer to them (except in very limited circumstances).
- 10.7. You can ask someone if they have any particular needs or requirements with which you can assist if they are coming to meet you for an interview. In certain limited cases, it may also be permitted to make a job offer conditional on a successful medical examination.
- 10.8. During interviews or other interactions with candidates for a role, you must not ask anything that might infer a bias against any candidate with one or more protected characteristics. So, for example, asking a candidate if they are married, intend to have children (or any more children), or whether their religion permits them to work at weekends, are strictly no-go zones.
- 10.9. If you are ever in doubt about what you can or must not say, or if you believe that a particular job vacancy needs a medical examination as part of the recruitment or onboarding process, you must check the position with the HR Manager.

Data Gathering

- 10.10. During any recruitment and onboarding process, we may ask questions that include some protected characteristics to help us monitor our diversity and how we are succeeding in our commitment to promote equal opportunities. Including health or disability questions in equal opportunities monitoring exercises is acceptable, but the data gathered must not be used for any employment-related decisions, such as whether to offer a role or opportunity to a particular candidate.
- 10.11. We may also record and analyse information about equal opportunities more generally within the workplace. We do this so that we can make sure this policy operates successfully. The data helps us to refine it, review the composition of our workforce, and to promote workplace equality.
- 10.12. When you join the Company, you give us consent to gather and process this data about you.

11. Handling Breaches

- 11.1. Breaches of this policy are taken seriously by TTS.
- 11.2. TTS respects the rights of all stakeholders and accordingly will conduct thorough investigations into any and all allegations.
- 11.3. All stakeholders, including employees and apprentices have a right to raise a complaint or concern by utilising the Grievance, harassment, appeals or complaints procedures. Where complaints relate to an individual's line manager or tutor, the individual has a right to request that the complaint be handled by an independent third party within the business.
- 11.4. Where allegations are proven to have merit, they will be dealt with via the respective disciplinary procedures.
- 11.5. Anyone raising a concern about matters covered by this policy, who does so in good faith, will have our full support and co-operation in getting to the bottom of what has happened and any appropriate action that needs to follow on from that examination. This will be the case regardless of our conclusions and including where we determine that the allegation was mistakenly made. There will never be any reprisals against those who genuinely have, or consider that they have, valid grounds to bring concerns about discrimination to our attention.
- 11.6. However, complaints made in bad faith, for whatever reason (including where this is an attempt to avoid or to deflect disciplinary action), will be treated as misconduct and may lead to a dismissal for gross misconduct.
- 11.7. We will also take prompt disciplinary action against you if we discover that you have harassed or discriminated against anyone else in breach of this policy. If we conclude that your behaviour amounts to gross misconduct, we will be within our rights to dismiss you without notice and with no payment in lieu of that notice.

12. Engaging and Training Employees and Apprentices – Gaining Commitment

- 12.1. Employees and apprentices are provided with a thorough induction that ensure the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours are developed to support the implementation of this policy.
- 12.2. Staff and Apprentices are made aware of the organisation's contacts for expressing any concerns relating to Equality and Diversity, as well as the organisation's Complaints and Harassment Policies. Both staff and apprentices are encouraged to call out discriminatory practices, both in the learning environment and in Apprentices' workplaces.
- 12.3. Where staff are involved in the training and assessment of apprentices, the Quality Processes for observation of teaching, learning and assessment incorporate scrutiny of the promotion of Equality and Diversity to ensure this is being delivered in line with TTS's expectations as set out in this policy.
- 12.4. All apprentices receive workbooks specifically designed to further their learning on Equality and Diversity as part of their personal development during their programmes of learning. Where directly related to the apprenticeship standards being delivered, Equality and Diversity is taught as part of the apprenticeship curriculum.

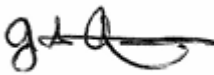
13. Policy Promotion

- 13.1. A thorough induction is completed with all new employees, volunteers and contractors, that includes a review and acceptance of this policy. This induction also includes the completion of a mandatory training programme covering the practical implementation of this policy.
- 13.2. Learners and apprentices also complete a thorough induction which includes the review and acceptance of this policy.
- 13.3. Annual refresher training is completed by employees, in accordance with the TTS CPD Policy.
- 13.4. Equality, diversity and inclusion activities and assessments are embedded into programmes to support learners to build skills, knowledge and behaviours that promote inclusivity and diversity.
- 13.5. Equality and Diversity information of apprentices and employees is regularly provided to the Board of Directors and analysis conducted.
- 13.6. The policy is available to all stakeholders via the TTS website and to employees internally via the intranet.
- 13.7. Information, advice and guidance to signpost staff and learners to appropriate additional support agencies is provided, if required.

14. Review and Monitoring

- 14.1. The Board of Directors will review the policy at least once per annum but also in line with trends identified via the quality assurance process.
- 14.2. Monitoring will include assessing how the Equality Policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.
- 14.3. The organisation's MI and data system (PICS) will be used in this monitoring to provide data on admissions, progression of apprentices and destination data to ensure that equal opportunities are promoted and upheld.
- 14.4. Where there are any legislative changes to UK Government Policy on Equality and Diversity, the review date of this policy will be brought forward accordingly to ensure any changes are reflected within this policy.

15. Version Control

Version:	3.0
Reviewed by:	John Jones
Reviewer's position:	Managing Director
Reviewer's signature:	
Review date:	31 st July 2024
Next review date:	30 th July 2025