

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### Introduction

Birmingham Electrical Training (BET) is committed to respecting and valuing the diversity of everyone associated with the company. BET will endeavour to cultivate a positive working environment to support learning and improve employment opportunities where everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect. BET will strive to challenge inequality and will aim to foresee and respond to individual needs so that everyone can achieve their full potential. BET expresses its opposition to all inequality and any discrimination.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and adds to the implementation and embedding of the BET ethos and culture.

BET will always aim to challenge any direct or indirect discrimination including harassment, bullying, or victimisation on the grounds of but limited to the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The nine protected characteristics are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender.
- Race.
- Gender reassignment (people undergoing gender reassignment or who are trans-gender).
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual orientation).

We will comply fully with the letter and intention of all laws and directives. We are committed to the fulfilment of all agreements, regulations and Acts which may have implications for our role in training, principally but not exclusively:

- The Equality Act 2010.
- The NVQ code of Conduct.
- The QCF Regulations.
- The Data Protection Act.

This policy will continue to be widely promoted and embedded throughout the company and be reviewed annually, or in the following circumstances:

- If there are any changes in government guidance and/or legislation.
- Any other significant changes or events.

The policy will be accessible via SharePoint for staff, detailed in all learners, staff and employer handbooks, and on the BET website. It is mandatory that all new staff members complete the Equality and Diversity training module to ensure that they have fully understood the policy.

### Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to all staff employed by BET, including permanent and temporary staff, contractors, and agency personnel.

BET works with apprentices aged from 16 and over and the policy covers all aspects of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The responsibility for compliance and for the positive attitude required to ensure success is laid upon all individuals within the organisation. All external persons connected with BET are encouraged to hold the same responsibility and commitment.

We understand people cannot always be treated equally but they can be treated fairly. By treating people in a fair way, this can mean treating some people more favourably than others on occasion, for example, people with disabilities. Our commitment also involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from diverse groups and backgrounds.

### Purpose and Aims

The purpose of this policy is to illustrate how BET put our mission statement, ethos, and values into practice and how we will aim to meet our statutory duties in promoting equality, valuing diversity, and challenging discrimination so that all parties associated with BET can achieve to their best potential.

BET aims to ensure that:

- Everyone has equal opportunities to access learning and/or employment.
- A zero-tolerance stance is adopted regarding inequality and/or acts that limit a person's opportunity to succeed.
- Positive relations will be promoted between those who share a protected characteristic.
- Any discrimination, victimisation, harassment, or other misconduct by apprentices, staff or employers will be dealt with accordingly.
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion is celebrated at BET, and we will actively promote equality and British values and the requirements of the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural learning agenda.
- The needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people are supported effectively.
- Apprentices and staff feel respected, listened to, and kept safe regardless of their background or personal characteristics.

- Barriers that put an apprentice or staff member at a disadvantage are eliminated or minimised.
- Individuals from protected groups engage within their communities where engagement is disproportionately low.
- Staff are trained to appropriately challenge and report all forms of bullying, discrimination, harassment or hate crime.
- Any allegations of discrimination will be supported and sensitively investigated by trained BET staff.
- Teaching, learning, and assessment is monitored to ensure they are free from discrimination and reflect the needs of the wider BET community.
- Policies and procedures will be monitored to ensure they are free from discrimination and respond to the needs of the BET community.
- BET continues to review and improve in all aspects of equality, diversity, and inclusion by listening to and valuing apprentice, staff, and employer feedback.
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion is everyone's priority.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Compliance and Engagement

Everyone associated with BET has a duty to engage and comply with any measures implemented to improve or to sustain equality, diversity, and inclusion. Any concerns regarding equality, diversity and inclusion must be reported in accordance with BET procedure as below. No individual or group should encourage or allow others by omission to carry out any actions in contravention of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

### Roles

Any concerns or queries in respect of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion can/ should be referred to the BET Designated Safeguarding Officer or a Director by face-to-face discussion, email, or phone. BET encourages all individuals to speak up about anything they would like to discuss without fear and to promote awareness and inclusion for all. BET also seek apprentice feedback through the information and awareness provided at Induction and within all ongoing reviews.

#### Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Name: Jack Sims

Email: [Jack.sims@betltd.co.uk](mailto:Jack.sims@betltd.co.uk)

Contact Number: 0121 280 2073

#### Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO)

Name: Francesca Wilson

Email: [Francesca.Wilson@betltd.co.uk](mailto:Francesca.Wilson@betltd.co.uk)

Contact Number: 0121 661 6925

## Responsibilities

BET's will:

- Ensure fair and equal access to learning and recruitment/ employment.
- Make reasonable and practicable adjustments or identify alternative options/ solutions to enable individuals to participate in learning or employment.
- Promote awareness of the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Promote positive relationships between people of diverse groups or backgrounds.
- Educate everyone associated with BET through the implementation and embedding of our BET Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Calendar.
- Develop awareness and skills that promote fairness and inclusivity for all.
- Provide respectful and inclusive learning and working environments for all.
- Promote high expectations of achievement and progression and value individuals for their achievements.
- Ensure that everyone is enabled to achieve positive outcomes, whatever their background.
- Embed an Equality Impact Evaluation into key business projects, critical policies and procedures and business improvement processes.
- Create and maintain effective partnerships with employers and ensure that they support our commitment to equality and diversity.
- Consult, include and evaluate feedback from apprentices, staff, and employers regarding their experience of learning or working with BET.

All apprentices, staff and employers are expected to:

- Adhere to the BET Code of Conducts, all BET policies, and procedures, and behave in a kind and respectful way towards one-another.
- Discuss any additional needs or difficulties in learning or collaborating with us at the earliest opportunity so that the appropriate support can be accessed.
- Raise any concerns regarding learning or working with BET.
- Value and respect individual differences and to celebrate diversity.
- Always maintain a safe learning and working environment.
- Take responsibility for their own learning, personal development, and performance related KPIs.
- Always give their personal best and support others wherever possible.

All staff and learners will receive regular update briefings at appropriate intervals throughout the learner/ employee journey. This information will cover all relevant aspects for equality, diversity, and inclusion within BET. Everyone associated with BET has a commitment to work within the ethos set out in this policy at all times, including out in the community. BET advocates that everyone should feel free to offer suggestions for the improvement of equality, diversity, and inclusion at BET. Any suggestions should be passed on via a best placed staff member and then onto the BET Designated Safeguarding Officer.

## Training and Employment

### Access

In relation to BET apprentices we aim to:

- Adhere to all BET procedures for recruitment of apprentices that meet and if possible, exceed the requirements for equality and diversity.
- Ensure that no apprentice shall be forced to amend any of their application information for which they could be concerned might lead to an infringement of their human rights.
- Support all apprentices subject to funding rules and health and safety requirements to access the programme of their choice and make all reasonable efforts to ensure any physical access to the learning environment/ workplace.
- Identify alternative options or provisions if an apprentice is unable to access the preferred programme/ learning environment.
- Ensure that any learning or work-based environments used by apprentices will be regularly reviewed for continuous improvement.
- Encourage apprentices to discuss any formal or informal concerns throughout their learner journey and ensure they are appropriately dealt with in a supportive and confidential manner.

In relation to BET staff we will:

- Ensure that no candidate shall be coerced in recording any detail within their application that can cause concern or lead to an infringement of their human rights.
- Advertise all BET recruitment opportunities internally and externally.
- Adhere to the BET procedures for the recruitment of staff including quality controlling any public advertising and including a short statement on BET's stance for equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Consistently review any selection criteria to ensure that they are non-discriminatory and justifiable.
- Ensure that candidates are asked to participate in a selection process and if assistance/adjustments are required to enable their participation.
- Ensure that any BET staff involved in the recruitment, selection or promotion process receive training and support in non-discriminatory recruitment and selection techniques.
- Ensure that more than one staff member is always involved in short listing and interview processes.
- Provide access to all appropriate training and development to equip staff with the knowledge, skills, and qualifications to carry out their roles.
- Assess each training and development need of individual merit and in within the business needs.

In relation to Employers, we will:

- Only work in partnership with employers who support the BET ethos and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and comply with any related requirements.
- Expect all employers to implement and embed fair access to the BET apprenticeship programmes and work-based opportunities that strive to encourage learner/ staff participation and monitor performance.

### **Additional Needs and Personal Issue Disclosures**

At the beginning of the BET learner/ staff journey, everyone will be provided with the opportunity to disclose any disabilities, learning difficulties, or personal issues in a confidential and safe manner for additional or alternative support. This also includes any requests for reasonable adjustments or adaptations to the workplace/ learning environment. Any BET staff that have recruitment responsibilities will be explicit in why this information is being sought, how it will be used and how it is then stored.

Information will also be requested with regards to any barriers or personal commitments that may affect commitment or time in learning or employment and offer any support or alternative solutions that may minimise the impact.

If a disability or learning difficulty is disclosed, the appropriate staff will discuss this with the individual in a collaborative way and then identify what additional support or alternative provisions may be required. If it is not reasonably possible to provide required specialist support, BET will then speak with the referral agency and/ or signpost to more suitable or specialist provision. Please refer to the BET SEND Policy and Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for further information.

BET will be proactive and explicit with regards to apprentices who are eligible for government funding to ensure they receive the appropriate additional or alternative support required. All apprentices are assessed regarding their learning and access needs to ensure they can achieve to their full potential when learning with BET.

When a staff member declares a disability, BET will always take all reasonable steps to make any adjustments or adaptations if required. Redeployment can also be considered alongside any appropriate re-training to enable any staff members to remain in employment if possible.

BET will share any relevant information on any disabilities, learning difficulties and/ or barriers to learning where appropriate and requirements regarding support from the employer with permission of the apprentice to ensure these needs are then met within the learning or employment environment.

## Redundancy and Redeployment

Any direct or indirect discrimination will be eliminated within the selection processes for any redundancies or for redeployment. Staff expecting a child, nursing mothers, or on staff on maternity leave will all be protected according to law.

## Training and Induction

BET ensure that Induction into learning or employment and working environment is of the upmost priority. BET will ensure that everyone is aware of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and any related policies and procedures to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly and equally, the BET code of conduct is always adhered to, and how suggestions or complaints can be raised.

In relation to apprentices BET will:

- Ensure apprentices are aware of all BET equality, diversity and inclusion policies and procedures via their Learner Handbook and induction sessions to ensure equality of opportunity, the promotion of diversity and easy access to disclose any disability or learning difficulty or adjust additional support provisions.
- Strive to support apprentices to develop their awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout the learner journey.
- Share and embed the BET equality, diversity, and inclusion calendar with a golden thread approach to the learner journey.
- Conduct Progress Review discussions and reinforce the above.

In relation to staff BET will:

- Ensure all new employees complete the mandatory equality and diversity e-learning modules. All staff will be required to refresh their knowledge by completing additional training on an annual basis to improve their knowledge and skills regarding supportive equality, diversity, and inclusion guidance.
- Promote a positive learning and working environment.

In relation to employers BET will:

- Expect that employers provide appropriate and robust staff induction, training, and information on equality, diversity, and inclusion systems within their business and how an apprentice can access any additional support or to raise a suggestion or a complaint.
- Promoting the good practice of Employer's having and EDI Policies for their employees.

## The Learning Environment and The Workplace

BET is committed to cultivating supportive, vigilant, and conducive learning and working environments whereby everyone is treated with dignity and respect. BET has a zero tolerate stance on any form of bullying, harassment or unacceptable behaviour that may cause an individual to feel offended or intimidated. There are distinct procedures in place to report any incidents, allegations, or concerns.

BET will strive to:

- Ensure that all individuals feel comfortable in expressing their experiences, own needs, and views when in learning or at work.
- Challenge and support any form of prejudice, discrimination, or stereotypical attitudes and individuals will be supported in accessing appropriate training to develop if this is a requirement.
- Ensure that all BET learning materials and external and internal communications reflect the diverse society in which we live and enable individual access to be working or learning with us.
- Widely promote our Anti-Bullying Policy and Anti-Harassment Policy including Peer-on-peer abuse.
- Ensure that apprentices are aware that they will also be subject to their employer's disciplinary procedures.
- Expect that employers widely promote and communicate their own policies that deal with staff bullying, harassment, unacceptable behaviour, and disciplinary procedures.

Please ensure that you read the BET Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Grievance Policy in conjunction with this policy.

### Teaching and learning materials

In relation to BET teaching and learning materials we will:

- Continuously review and quality check to ensure contents do not offend any individual or group.
- Monitor the use of electronic communication to ensure that no offensive materials are introduced into the training or working environment and that personal privacy of data is protected.
- Implement and embed effective management strategies and techniques. These strategies and techniques will also be regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure fairness of conduct.
- Evaluate the structure of any training content to ensure it does not offend or infringe upon any individuals' rights.
- Examine the workplace or work placement contract procedures periodically to ensure equity and fairness.
- Ensure the wording of contracts or service level agreements include a statement that refers to the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy.
- Ensure that the wording of contracts for full and part-time staff including temporary and agency personnel and contracted consultants will also contain details of the policy. A copy of the policy will be set out in the learner, staff, and employer handbooks.



- Ensure EDI data is collated, analysed, and applied by Senior Leadership for continuous improvement, policy embedding and to take a proactive approach to EDI within monthly meetings.

### **Initial assessments**

BET staff will conduct initial assessments for literacy, numeracy, or current ability. All results will always be provided to the apprentice concerned on a one-to-one basis in a confidential manner. BET is clear that no unnecessary testing will take place. Apprentices or staff who demonstrate that they already possess a skill or ability should not be tested for it initially however if this ability or skill requires upgrading or refreshing then testing can take place with the agreement of the staff member or apprentice.

### **Accreditation of Prior Learning and Time Off-Work for Learning**

Prior experience and qualifications must be formally considered for the purposes of accreditation of prior learning for any aspect of the qualification's framework. Staff will be entitled to any training required to fulfil their job role and also for any continuous personal development (CPD). Apprentices and staff are entitled to take time to study and BET staff will be required to negotiate any time off-the-job for apprentices to carry out personal study for their programme or for formal training sessions at work, college, or in BET centres.

### **Cultural Needs and Dress Code**

At BET we believe in order and social discipline both in society and in the organisation of work-based training and maintain the right to request a standard of dress appropriate with circumstance and safety at work.

The BET dress code will always consider any religious or ethnic customs that may require a particular type of dress. BET recognise fasting periods and other periodic religious or ethnic requirements including time and location and privacy for prayer and will always consider requests or concerns on a case-by-case basis.

BET always ensures that a room is available in centre for any prayer/ worship and makes apprentices aware of signposting to local places of worship.

Apprentices and staff who wish to discuss issues they consider important in connection with religious festivals and celebrations are encouraged to discuss this with a Manager or the DSO.

### **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Monitoring**

Information upon the commencement of learning or employment will be gathered the following:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Ethnicity.
- Disabilities.
- Learning difficulties.

This information will be used for monitoring purposes only and is confidential to BET and any relevant funding agencies. Individuals may decline to provide this information however if they so wish. BET will undertake regular analysis of both apprentice and staff group data to ensure any variations can be addressed and reductions can be made for any participation and/ or performance. All individuals will be encouraged to provide feedback on their experience of learning or working with BET throughout the learner or working journey at various intervals. This information will then be analysed to assess levels of satisfaction and to identify any improvements.

In relation to apprentices, staff and employers, BET will:

- Encourage employee promotions when specific abilities, skills and knowledge are assessed and met.
- Ensure equal access to opportunities will be advertised on the basis that they are accessible to all employees including those that work full time, part time, from home and those that are office based.
- Acknowledge that specialist posts would be suitable for people with particular skills, but consideration will still be provided to all staff as they may have skills that BET may be unaware of.
- Encourage employers to also measure the participation, performance, and satisfaction of their staff.
- Encourage employers to support BET in any improvement projects or plans to further promote and/ or address any underrepresentation.

## Complaints and Grievances

BET have policies and procedures in place to ensure that any individual has a redress against bullying or harassment at work or during any part of their programme or employment.

A record of complaints is maintained, regularly reviewed and the causes of complaints are then analysed and evaluated to prevent reoccurrence and to promote any lessons learnt.

All individuals are made aware of the BET procedures regarding raising a concern, grievance or making a complaint. BET aim to fully resolve any concerns or issues at the earliest opportunity and if a situation cannot be resolved or concluded within a short timescale then staff will explain the reasoning for this and what will happen next.

Apprentices are advised that they can raise a concern or make a complaint is to do via their tutor, assessor, or any BET Manager.

If an individual does not feel able to follow this process, the following option is available:

- Contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer by face-to-face conversation, email, or phone.

If a staff member wishes to make a complaint or raise a concern, they should adhere to the BET Grievance Procedure.

Any complaint will be taken seriously, and BET will always aim to resolve any grievances. Apprentices and staff members will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if the grievance is not upheld, unless the complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith. Any employee that is found to be within breach of this policy will be regarded as behaving in a manner that constitutes an act of misconduct and will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. Please note that Whistleblowing Policies and Procedures are also in place and can be accessed for any staff members.

If any employers wish to make a complaint or raise a concern regarding a BET staff member, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

### **False or Malicious Accusations**

It is an offence and a matter of disciplinary action if any person gives a false accusation against another apprentice or member of staff. Accusations of a false nature can be regarded as legally defamatory. All parties involved in the investigation process of any such complaints must keep the matter strictly confidential.

### **Bullying and Harassment**

BET have a zero tolerance towards any form of bullying or harassment and are deemed as completely unacceptable forms of behaviour. All apprentices and staff are fully protected via the BET Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment policy. The policy applies to everyone associated with this BET even when they are on or off-duty.

Any occurrences of bullying or harassment must be reported to BET, without fear. As apprentices are in receipt of government funding for their training they are to be separately always protected by BET. BET will politely question or formally review an apprentice's or staff member's contentment with their workplace or work placement. Records of discussions will be recorded, kept confidential and stored separately from the documentation connected with individual training plans.

Staff complaints regarding bullying or harassment will be treated in confidence and wherever possible concerns will be investigated by a person not involved with apprentices or staff members on a day-to-day basis. Specific confidential aspects of complaints will be noted and filed in a sealed confidential envelope and deposited within the individual's personal file.

### **Victimisation**

BET have a zero- tolerance stance in relation to any victimisation of apprentices or staff who have raised a concern. Individuals who raise an allegation proved to be false will be dealt with in accordance with the BET procedures for dismissal. Any staff member that bullies or harasses another staff member or an apprentice who they believe has made an accusation against them, whether it be proved or not, can be

subject to dismissal procedures. All staff will be able to report matters detailed in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 without fear.

### **Advice, Support, and Counselling Services**

BET acknowledge and support an individual's right to access advice and legal protection. The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for providing any advice and guidance within a confidential manner to any apprentice or member of staff, or to make referrals to external agencies such as a solicitor, specialist support services, or counselling organisations.

### **Positive Discrimination against Gender Stereotyping**

Vocational training providers are permitted by law to be proactive in trying to introduce males and females into areas of work that may not 'considered normal' activity for a particular sex. BET understands that mostly males will apply for Electrical Training programmes given that is the only current offer for learning. We acknowledge that stereotyping can also occur within working environments, for example, expecting men always to handle heavy objects or for women to deal with emotional scenarios or issues. At BET we take pride in educating all apprentices and staff around such issues and scenarios.

### **Health and Safety**

Everyone working with or learning with BET will be protected from any hazards in their working environments subject to the Health and Safety at Work Act. It is the duty of any staff member or apprentice to immediately raise any issues regarding unsafe equipment or practices. With regards to any dangerous circumstances staff and apprentices are empowered to immediately warn others to keep clear of any area. In respect of any suspicious packages or bomb scares, advice and evacuation procedures will be made available to all via the BET Lock Down and Emergency Procedures. First Aider trained staff will be trained and appointed, and all details displayed throughout BET centres. Accident Books are to be updated and stored in accordance with procedure and policy. Apprentices and staff will be required to practice fire evacuation and assembly at designated points throughout their journey of learning and employment.

BET Public Liability Insurance certificates will be displayed in all centres and maintained current and up to date.

### **Management Responsibility and Vicarious Liability**

The BET Managing Director and the Senior Leadership Team accept full responsibility for the discharge of the associated laws and Acts of Parliament and fully understand the implications for them of vicarious liability.