



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Last updated October 2021. Next Review Date: September 2022

Contents

Pro Business EDGE Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.....	3
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Scope of the Policy	3
3. Purpose.....	3
4. Policy Statement	4
5. Definition of Terms.....	4
6. Our Commitment	5
6.1 Race	5
6.2 Disability	5
6.3 Gender and Gender Reassignment	6
6.4 Sexual Orientation.....	6
6.5 Religion or Belief.....	6
6.6 Age	7
6.7 Pregnancy and Maternity.....	7
6.8 Marriage and Civil Partnership	7
7. Our Standards.....	7
7.1 Students.....	7
7.2 Curriculum.....	8
7.3 Staff	8
8. Confidentiality and Monitoring	9
9. Implementation and Review	10
9.1 Senior Leadership.....	10
9.2 Diversity and Inclusion Committee.....	10
10. Equality Impact Assessment.....	10
11. Other Policies.....	10
12. Breach of the Policy.....	10
12. Complaints.....	11
12.1 Complaints Made by Students.....	11
12.2 Complaints Made by Staff.....	11
13. Additional Support	

14. Legislation

Pro Business EDGE - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

Pro Business EDGE believes firmly that equality, diversity and inclusion are essential factors which contribute to the academic and economic strengths of the PBE and the wellbeing of all students and staff. This policy deals with the promotion of equality of opportunity for all at Pro Business EDGE in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Pro Business EDGE will treat all members and potential members of the PBE community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a safe and positive working and learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The PBE is committed to providing a learning and working environment that values all forms of diversity. By embracing the diversity of our local community we aim to not only meet, but also exceed in our obligations under current and future equality legislation.

2. Scope of the Policy

This Policy relates to diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity, and applies to all members of staff and students, visitors, contractors, service providers, applicants for jobs and courses and work placement providers and any other persons associated with the functions of the PBE. This Policy covers all sites on which the PBE carries out its activities. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy forms an integral part of Learning and Development Bureau 's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and should be read together with this and other relevant Pro Business EDGE policies, in particular the Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy, the PREVENT policy, the Whistleblowing Policy, the Safeguarding Policy.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the PBE's commitment to upholding and valuing the principles of diversity, inclusion, fair treatment and equality of opportunity. Pro Business EDGE unequivocally opposes discrimination in all its forms and is committed to preventing acts of exclusion and unfair treatment as defined by legislation and PBE policy. Pro Business EDGE also recognises its legal responsibility to the Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure that in carrying out its activities the PBE will have due regard to:

- Foster good relations between different people
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Eliminate discrimination.

4. Policy Statement

It is the policy of Pro Business EDGE that individuals are not treated less favourably on the grounds of race (including ethnic or national origin), gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity or paternity, socio-economic status or any other factor. Pro Business EDGE recognises that members of staff and students may have a range of aspirations and goals and wishes to provide a positive working and learning environment where diverse skills and experiences are applied across all sections of the PBE including teaching, learning, and management. Pro Business EDGE seeks to create an ethos of positive inclusion, in which issues of racism, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly with a shared commitment to challenging prejudice. We aim to become an institution that empowers the disadvantaged through promoting good relations between members of all groups and having a student and staff profile representative of our local community. A part of this commitment ensures an independent biennial audit of Pro Business EDGE 's commitment toward advancing equality, diversity and inclusion within our operations. Equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to the day to day running of the PBE and to the formulation of policy and strategy. An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy cannot succeed without the active support of the entire PBE community and must be the priority and responsibility of the Senior Leadership Teams. To assess our progress and fulfil our public sector duties, Impact Assessments and monitoring will be undertaken.

5. Definition of Terms

Discrimination is defined as an act which has the effect of treating a person less favourably because of factors related to their personal characteristics such as disability or sexual orientation, and unrelated to their merit. There are different types of discrimination. Further information can be found from the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Diversity encompasses all forms of difference in individuals even if they are not covered by legislative acts, such as height and weight. Harassment is unwanted conduct which may create the effect (intentionally or unintentionally) of affecting an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment which interferes with an individual's learning or working environment. Harassment may be persistent or an isolated incident and may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people. Stereotyping is defined as a standardised mental picture that one person or group of people holds in common about another person or group of people and can be either positive or negative. Positive Action is the deliberate introduction of measures to eliminate or reduce discrimination, or its effects. It is not about special treatment for any one particular group, but the fair treatment of all people. It is distinct from positive discrimination which is unlawful.

6. Our Commitment

6.1 Race

Pro Business EDGE does not accept any form of racial discrimination or harassment against any student, member of staff, visitor, prospective student or prospective member of staff based on their actual or perceived race, colour, or ethnic or national origin. All members of the PBE community have a duty to make sure that their working and learning environment is free from prejudice and provides a framework for promoting race awareness in line with Pro Business EDGE 's Diversity and Inclusion

Strategy. As part of our Public Sector Equality Duty, Pro Business EDGE monitor staff and student profiles regarding race and address any imbalances through the implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and, where deemed necessary, the use of positive action.

6.2 Disability

Pro Business EDGE will not discriminate against or tolerate the harassment of members of staff, students, job applicants, prospective students, or visitors because of a disability or perceived disability. Pro Business EDGE recognises disability to include someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities, including people with; physical and sensory impairment, learning difficulties, mental health problems, hidden impairments and people living with HIV/AIDS.

The PBE welcomes applications from people with disabilities, values the contribution of existing staff and students with disabilities, and will treat staff and students fairly should they become disabled. Pro Business EDGE incorporates the Disability Equality Duty within the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, providing a framework for proactively monitoring and raising awareness of disability in work and study. The PBE has made the commitment to the following:

- To interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities
- To ask disabled employees at least once a year through the appraisal scheme what we can do to make sure they can develop and use their abilities at work
- To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment
- To take action to ensure that key employees (e.g. managers, heads of service, reception staff, etc.) develop the awareness needed of disability to make our commitments work
- Each year, to review the commitments and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let all employees know about progress and future plans

6.3 Gender and Gender Reassignment

Pro Business EDGE will not treat any staff member, job applicant, student, or prospective student less favourably because of their gender, whether they are male, female or undergoing any stage of gender reassignment. Discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender, including sexual harassment, is not acceptable and will be dealt with in line with the PBE's disciplinary procedures.

Pro Business EDGE monitor staff and student profiles regarding gender and address any imbalances through the implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and, where deemed necessary, the use of positive action.

6.4 Sexual Orientation

Pro Business EDGE does not accept any form of discrimination or harassment against any student, member of staff, job applicant or prospective student because of their sexual orientation or their perceived sexual orientation. The PBE is committed to working towards an environment where all people feel able to be open about their sexuality, and has begun working proactively to promote awareness and tackle negative stereotypes through the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

6.5 Religion or Belief

Pro Business EDGE does not accept any form of discrimination or harassment against any staff member, job applicant, student, or prospective student because of cultural, philosophical, or religious beliefs or perceived beliefs. Pro Business EDGE is a secular organisation. The PBE respects the diverse cultural and religious traditions of all its students and staff and accepts the rights of individuals and groups peaceably to worship and to fulfil their cultural obligations. Accordingly, the PBE will neither promote, nor permit to be promoted, any one religious faith or culture. Whilst PBE facilities exist primarily for the delivery of educational activities, arrangements will be made, where practicable, for students and staff to carry out essential religious observance. Dedicated facilities cannot be provided for particular faith groups but are provided for all.

Where cultural or religious needs conflict with existing working or learning requirements, the PBE will adjust, where practicable, to meet those needs. This may include adaptations for prayer times, dress codes, dietary requirements, or religious holidays.

6.6 Age

Pro Business EDGE recognises that education is a life-long pursuit and subject to formal funding arrangements, works to support learners of all ages to achieve the qualifications they desire. The PBE endeavours to provide appropriate support for all learners within these boundaries. Pro Business EDGE will not use age-related criteria for staff recruitment purposes unless it is to take positive action. All staff members have equal rights to training, promotion and other aspects of career development.

6.7 Pregnancy and Maternity

Pro Business EDGE works to support all learners to achieve the qualifications they desire including those who are pregnant, become pregnant or have recently been pregnant. Where the needs of the student conflicts with existing working or learning requirements, the PBE will make adjustments, where practicable, to meet those needs. This may include adaptations for dress code or flexible timetabling.

Pro Business EDGE will not discriminate against any member of staff or job applicant because of pregnancy or maternity. All staff members have equal rights to training, promotion and other aspects of career development.

6.8 Marriage and Civil Partnership

Pro Business EDGE does not accept any form of discrimination or harassment against any staff member, job applicant, student, or prospective student because they are single, married, or in a civil partnership.

7. Our Standards

7.1 Students

Pro Business EDGE admits students solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, and will not refuse admission to any applicant applying to an appropriate course based on any other factor.

A rigorous benchmarking and monitoring system is in place whereby the PBE monitors student admissions, achievement, retention, and complaints through the PBE Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

The PBE is committed to widening participation and our PBE marketing campaigns will aim to positively reflect and recruit the communities we serve. Where particular courses traditionally attract specific groups, the PBE will actively encourage participation by members of under-represented groups and will develop student assistance programmes that facilitate the admission of students irrespective of their background.

All students at Pro Business EDGE have the right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect. They also have a responsibility to abide by this Policy in their dealings with others and are expected to follow all Pro Business EDGE policies regarding behaviour.

Pro Business EDGE will use the student handbook and induction process to inform students of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the promotion of this Policy, and our staff will challenge student behaviour which does not meet these standards.

Any allegations of discrimination will be taken seriously and will be investigated in line with the PBE disciplinary procedures. Depending on the outcome, training and/or guidance may be offered to both staff and students to ensure future compliance.

7.2 Curriculum

Pro Business EDGE aims to provide an inclusive teaching and learning environment through individualised support plans, and professional, interactive delivery. Our courses are designed with equality, diversity and inclusion in mind, and we strive to have high quality resources free from bias or stereotyping, which promote positive images. The PBE promotes British Values as defined in the Government's 2011 PREVENT Strategy: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We endeavour to value and nurture an increasing diversity among students and be able to meet the needs of a wide variety of social and cultural requirements, including students with caring responsibilities, religious requirements, physical or mental impairments and students for whom English is an additional language.

7.3 Staff

All employees, 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 recruitment advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications will emphasise the PBE's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and they will be drawn up in such a way as to prevent discrimination against suitably qualified or experienced applicants.

We will ensure that all staff members who are involved in shortlisting, interviewing, or other selection processes are trained in line with current equality legislation and the PBE's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Pro Business EDGE supports and abides by all Equal Pay legislation and endeavours to provide a transparent reward system based on objective criteria and free from any bias.

All newly appointed staff will participate in an induction programme that reflects and reinforces our commitment to equal opportunities. As a part of the induction programme all new members of staff are required to participate in equality and diversity training, including information covering the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. General and specialist equality and diversity training will be provided to staff on an ongoing and regular basis. Subject to available resources and relevance to our PBE priorities, all staff, including parttime and hourly paid staff, will have an entitlement to undertake staff development to enhance their skills, effectiveness and opportunities. Pro Business EDGE recognises and values staff members' different needs including childcare, eldercare and personal development. Our staff timetables will, where reasonably feasible, be arranged in such a way as to facilitate work/life balance. Further information regarding flexible working can be found in our Flexible Working Policy.

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. All Pro Business EDGE staff have a responsibility to abide by this Policy and no form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. Breaches of this Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias refers to a bias that we are unaware of, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences. We aim to be aware of our own conscious and unconscious biases, prejudices and stereotypes, and to mitigate the effect of unconscious or implicit bias on our decision making. All staff have a duty to contribute constructively to equality, diversity and inclusion.

8. Confidentiality and Monitoring

Pro Business EDGE will ensure that any equal opportunities monitoring data on staff or students is used exclusively for monitoring purposes and that it is treated with confidentiality and sensitivity. The information we gather through monitoring will be used to inform planning, target setting and future action. Where monitoring reveals any gaps in our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy or our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, we will take prompt action through the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Pro Business EDGE will protect the confidentiality of any equal opportunities monitoring data in relation to staff or students, and will safeguard any information disclosed voluntarily within the regulations set by the Data Protection Act 1998.

9. Implementation and Review

9.1 Senior Leadership

Each member of the Management Team has the responsibility to ensure that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and the overall promotion of inclusion are put into practice in the areas for which he or she has responsibility.

9.2 Diversity and Inclusion Team

The Diversity and Inclusion Team is chaired by our Training and Compliance Manager and includes cross-PBE staff and student representatives. It exists to:

- Set PBE level impact measures for equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion
- Monitor the implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Monitor progress toward the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and equality targets, and report back to the Management Team.
- Monitor student, staff and curriculum data for equality and diversity trends, taking action as appropriate
- Review this Policy at least every three years.

10. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been Impact Assessed and generates no concerns about differential impact.

11. Other Policies

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is underpinned by the following PBE policies and practices:

Anti-bullying (student) Policy

Health and Safety policy

Safeguarding (young people and vulnerable adults)

12. Breach of the Policy

Pro Business EDGE will take seriously any instances of breach to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy by students, staff or visitors. Any breach will be investigated and where appropriate will be considered under the relevant disciplinary procedure for staff or students. With regard to any breach of the policy by visitors, Learning and Development Bureau will take appropriate action in relation to the nature of the incident.

12. Complaints

12.1 Complaints Made by Students

Pro Business EDGE is committed to providing all students with a high quality service. We want to know if our support service has not met with students' expectations so that we can do something about it. Whenever possible students should firstly talk with a member of staff or a tutor and tell them what has gone wrong. If the response is unsatisfactory, the Compliance Office will look into the complaint. They can be contacted by emailing patrick@learninganddevelopmentbureau.org.uk.

We will explain what course of action will be taken and in what time frame.

12.2 Complaints Made by Staff

Complaints made by staff can be made via the Grievance Procedure or the Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure. Support for staff is available through the Human Resources Team, Diversity Champions, Staff Representatives and line management.

13. Additional Support

We will offer additional support to learners to ensure equality of provision (Equality Act 2010). This includes offering additional learner support (including one to ones), adaptive equipment (such as adapted keyboards, mice, and magnifiers) and other specialist support deemed necessary for the learner to access their learning without discrimination.

Senior management are responsible for monitoring and developing the processes and procedures for additional support and providing clear information to staff so that they can access this support for learners in their Centres.

14. Legislation

This policy will be implemented within the framework of all relevant legislation, which includes:

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (Equal Value Amendment 1984)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999)
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006