Aberdeen Blueberry Wellness Ltd **Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy**

**Policy**

**Aberdeen Blueberry Wellness.**We promote a working 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 Aberdeen Blueberry Wellness Ltd selection, recruitment, programme delivery, assessment and quality management/assurance. We recognise that discrimination in the workplace/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 Aberdeen Blueberry Wellness Ltd procedures are not followed by staff members or our learners.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission states:
“that every organisation should have an equality policy to ensure equal opportunities and share it with staff and (as appropriate) with customers, clients or service users and others who may be interested in it, such as organisations considering contracting with them”.

This policy is aimed at our centres and learners who are delivering, are registered on, or have taken Active IQ approved qualifications or end-point assessments.

It sets out our intention to deliver a service and range of qualifications and end-point assessments that are fair, accessible and do not include any unnecessary barriers to entry. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or codes of practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any government departments, and any other statutory bodies to whom Active IQ must have due regard.

Centre’s responsibility

It is important that your staff involved in the delivery of our qualifications and your learners/apprentices are fully aware of the contents of the policy (e.g. via their induction when first embarking on Active IQ qualifications).

Review arrangements

We will review this policy and its associated procedures annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements, revising it as and when necessary, in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback (e.g. to align with any appeals and complaints process established or revised by the regulators), or as a result of any trends that may emerge in relation to specific themes within complaints received. If you would like to feed back with any views, please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

**Definitions and Protected Characteristics**

**Victimisation** is defined in the Act as**:**

Treating someone badly because they have done a ‘protected act’ (or because you believe that a person has done or is going to do a protected act).

**Unfair discrimination**: This occurs when people are denied equal opportunities because of personal characteristics.

**Unlawful discrimination**: To prevent people being discriminated against, we have laws making discrimination on the grounds of ‘protected characteristics’, such as race and gender, unlawful.

**Direct discrimination:** This is when someone is treated less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination:** This occurs when a working condition or rule puts a particular group of people at a disadvantage.

**Discrimination by association:** This occurs when someone is discriminated against on the grounds of their association with others.

**Multiple discrimination:** This occurs when someone is discriminated against with respect to more than one characteristic.

Aberdeen Blueberry Wellness Ltd commits to incorporating specific and appropriate duties when embedding the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and performance objectives of all staff. Active IQ will provide equality training and guidance as appropriate to our staff, including induction training as well as further ongoing courses, where identified via our internal staff performance review arrangements.

No learner, or anyone our organisation deals with, receives less favourable treatment because of their protected characteristics. The protected characteristics 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

 **Aberdeen Blueberry Wellness Ltd** **Stance**

In adhering with this stance Aberdeen Blueberry Wellness Ltd ensures 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 protective 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 of 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 throughout the organisation. 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.

**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. For the majority of 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, Laura Walker 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.
* 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 and you want to appeal then you will need to contact Laura Walker within five working days of receiving the outcome, who will carry out a review these concerns.

Thank you for your contribution and commitment to making our policy work.

\*\*Reviewed March 2025\*\*