

Diversity, Equality, Inclusion & Dignity at Work Policy

Business Launchpad/Tooting works

#WalkingtheTalk



#WalkingtheTalk is about establishing mutual respect among everyone in our workplace and creating an inclusive environment for everyone who comes through our doors.

Diversity Equality Inclusion & Dignity at Work Policy

Business Launchpad/Tooting Works is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

Below are some commonly used definitions:

- Equality means ensuring every individual has equal opportunities. By being conscious of and actively challenging bias or prejudice we make sure no-one is treated less favourably because of who they are or what makes them different from other people. This requires a proactive approach to make reasonable adjustments that address the visible and invisible barriers people face.
- Equity means treating people in ways that make sure they are not unfairly prevented from accessing resources and opportunities nor that others have an unfair advantage. Simply providing the same opportunities to everyone is not an effective way to create equality of outcomes. Equality of outcomes highlights rather than giving everyone the same thing, it is about giving people what they need for fair access. This is about removing inequalities to make sure everyone has the chance to realise their ambitions (NCVO).
- Diversity means having differences within an organisation or setting. Diversity recognises we are all different in many ways. People with differing identities, backgrounds and experiences should all have equitable access to resources and decision-making. Some people prefer to use the term 'representation' to focus on how organisations should be reflective of the society we live in and the communities we serve.
- Inclusion means being proactive to make sure people of different backgrounds, experiences and identities feel welcomed, respected and fully able to participate. It is not only about creating a diverse environment but also about ensuring a culture exists where individuals can be their full selves.

Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time

2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Why it Matters to us at BLP



Each person deserves to be treated equally, fairly and with dignity. Inequalities in society makes this harder to be achieved for some people. Society's existing systems and structures have created privileges some and do not work for others.

The sector we exist in reflects these inequalities and the wider barriers and exclusion in society. Our clients, our team, and other stakeholders involved in our work, experience discrimination, prejudice and harassment because of who they are and the groups and communities they are associated with. This results in people's life chances being affected and them being prevented from accessing opportunities, resources and decision-making spaces equitably.

To achieve change, we at BLP intend to #WalktheWalk by recognising and understanding how people are excluded and disadvantaged based on how society thinks about race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability. With the knowledge gained we intend to change our existing ways of working and our behaviours throughout the organisation.

By removing barriers that exclude people, our organisation will be more effective at changing our communities for the better.

#WalkingtheWalk (Our Commitment)

Business Launchpad is committed to fulfilling both the letter and the spirit of our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and any other subsequent legislation relating to equality and to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

We commit to –

Business Launchpad/Tooting Works is commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes 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.

All staff 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, customers, suppliers and the public

3. Take 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.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them

annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The Law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

You should not discriminate against or harass a member of the public or service user in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.



In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and (according to guidance from the Government and ACAS) pregnancy and maternity).

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as service users.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Equal Opportunities in Employment

We are committed to challenging discrimination and prejudice. Business Launchpad will avoid unlawful discrimination and prejudice in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Recruitment

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Working practices

Business Launchpad will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and

will refuse such requests only if Business Launchpad considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. Business Launchpad will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. Business Launchpad will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Business Launchpad will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

All staff will continue to receive comprehensive equality and diversity training.

Business Launchpad treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in Business Launchpad's privacy notices.

Dignity at Work

Business Launchpad has a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

Service users, suppliers and other people not employed by Business Launchpad

Business Launchpad will not discriminate unlawfully against service users using or seeking to use the services provided by Business Launchpad.

You should report any bullying or harassment by service users, suppliers, visitors or others to your manager who will take appropriate action.

Training

Business Launchpad will raise awareness of equal opportunities to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

Business Launchpad will raise awareness of all existing and new employees and others engaged to work at Business Launchpad to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. Business Launchpad will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist Business Launchpad to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, Business Launchpad for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

To ensure that all staff and stakeholder are aware of our Equality and Diversity at Work Policy, our managers or senior managers will ensure that all staff and stakeholder have read and understood this policy before working or providing any service to Business Launchpad.

All staff and stakeholder are responsible in familiarising themselves with this policy.

Actions for all staff

BLP staff are integral to making this vision a reality. This includes:

- Playing an active role in our monthly EDI sessions.

- Taking part in in-house and external training programmes to develop awareness, and skills to better meet everyone's needs.
- Making a commitment to be a diversity champion.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under Business Launchpad's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use Business Launchpad's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work and grievance policy.

Business Launchpad will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored periodically by Business Launchpad to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular, Business Launchpad will monitor the ethnic and gender composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will review its equal opportunities policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, Business Launchpad will implement them. Felicia Mattis-Rome is responsible for equality within BLP as well as updating the policy.

Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

Linked policies and procedures:

- Dignity at Work

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Dignity at Work Policy

Policy

Business Launchpad is committed to having a workplace which is free from harassment and bullying and to ensure that all employees, contractors and, others who come into contact with us in the course of our work, are treated with dignity and respect.

This policy and procedure is intended to assist Business Launchpad to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is also an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

The Position on Bullying and Harassment

We will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether done purposefully or not. Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. You should also be aware that if a court or tribunal finds that you have bullied or harassed someone, in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

We will take appropriate action if any of our employees or contractors are bullied or harassed by our stakeholders or suppliers.

If, after an investigation, we decide that an employee has harassed or bullied another employee or contractor, then the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Retaliation or victimisation will also

constitute a disciplinary offence, which may in appropriate circumstances lead to dismissal.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. False allegations made in bad faith will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

What Type of Treatment amounts to Bullying or Harassment?

'Bullying' or 'harassment' are phrases that apply to treatment from one person (or a group of people) to another that is unwanted and that has the effect of violating that person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person.

Examples of bullying and harassment include:

- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances e.g. promotion, access to training
- Threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Verbal abuse or offensive comments, jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Lewd or suggestive comments
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations, work activities or social activities
- Withholding information, a person needs in order to do their job

- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or inappropriate birthday rituals
- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing or jostling
- Rifling through, hiding or damaging personal property
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, often in front of others
- The use of obscene gestures
- Abusing a position of power

Bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or proper performance management.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable. All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

Victimisation

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e. you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the organisation will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

What you should do if you feel you are being Bullied or Harassed by a Stakeholder or Supplier (as opposed to a colleague)

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact at work, please raise this with your manager in the first instance or, with a Director. We will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

What you should do if you are being Bullied or Harassed by a Colleague

If you are being bullied or harassed by another employee or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal.

Informal Resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed by another employee or contractor, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to our policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask your manager or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

In either case, you can approach your manager for advice and support. Your request for help will be treated confidentially.

If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if you are being bullied by your own manager, you should raise the issue with the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by:

- Telling the alleged perpetrator(s), without prejudging the matter, that there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a fellow employee
- That such behaviour is contrary to our policy
- That the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence

It may be possible for the Chief Executive to have this conversation with the alleged perpetrator without revealing your name, if this is what you want. They will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances we may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The Chief Executive will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as a serious allegation of sexual or racial harassment or in cases where a problem has happened before) we may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. We will consult with you before taking this step.

Raising a Formal Complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint through the Grievance Procedure.

The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be told your name and the details of your grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible.

When carrying out any investigations, Business Launchpad will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with the data protection policy.



Policy Name	Version	Doc ref
Diversity Equality Inclusion Dignity at Work	2	

Policy Owner	Felicia Mattis-Rome
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Approval status

Date adopted by Trustees	02/11/2021		
Date published	27/11/2023	Date for next review	27/11/2024

Document Control

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