

Equality & Diversity Policy

Policy Statement

This Equality and Diversity Policy seeks to ensure that Gym Free is fully committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and fairness in all areas of employment and education.

All members of Gym Free are required to promote equality of opportunity and will receive equality and diversity training to achieve this aim.

The Board believes its employees and apprentices are the key to its effectiveness. To be successful, Gym Free aims to appoint, develop and motivate employees of quality and create a working environment which encourages high performance, trust and co-operation between individuals and teams. Equality & diversity is fundamental to the achievement of this aim.

The Equality and Diversity Policy applies to all members of the Gym Free community including:

- Shareholders/Board members
- Potential apprentice employers
- All Gym Free employees
- Potential apprentices
- All apprentices
- Suppliers
- Visitors to Gym Free

Gym Free will, through its commitment to Equality and Diversity ensure that all individuals are able to achieve their full potential and realise their personal goals irrespective of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender / Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Gym Free will, both as an employer and as a provider of education and training, work towards eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of each of the nine 'protected characteristics' outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and will work towards eliminating discrimination on the grounds of a perceived or

associative protective characteristic; thereby promoting an environment where all individuals feel valued, safe, included and respected.

Gym Free recruitment and selection process, policies and practice are designed to ensure when employment decisions are made that they are based solely on the skills and qualities required for the position and comply with all relevant employment legislation and best practice standards.

Gym Free will continually strive to enhance its 'positive environment' by valuing difference and recognising that people with different backgrounds, experience, skills and attitudes introduce new ideas and develop increased awareness, understanding and harmony within Gym Free.

All apprentices will be encouraged to participate in learning programmes which reflect and value people regardless of marital and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, family responsibilities, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, disability, age, socioeconomic /geographic factors so as to:

- foster harmony, understanding and support
- enable apprentices to recognise and counter all forms of prejudice and
- enable apprentices from across the learning community to take part in learning programmes

Gym Free's apprenticeship curriculum will allow for a wide range of teaching methods and resources to promote inclusivity and sensitivity to issues of equality and diversity and the opportunity for staff and apprentices to have equality of opportunity to achieve their potential whilst setting deliberate goals that look beyond apprenticeship experience into the post-apprenticeship world.

Gym Free will, through regular monitoring and review, identify strategies to reduce any identified achievement shortfalls thereby ensuring all staff and apprentices attain maximum benefit

Gym Free will seek the opinions of staff, apprentices and apprentice employers and suppliers to inform of potential opportunities to improve practices.

Gym Free will look to develop new ways in which it can promote its ongoing commitment to inclusivity where all individuals are treated fairly and with respect

Gym Free will require all apprenticeship employers, suppliers etc. to be aware of the importance placed on equality and diversity by Gym Free and the need to comply with the duties of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Corporate and Individual Responsibilities

Corporate Responsibility

Gym Free corporate responsibilities, together with the responsibilities of individual members of the company, are explained below:

- All employees of Gym Free have a responsibility to comply with the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- The Policy forms part of the formal contract of employment for staff, failure to comply could result in disciplinary proceedings. In certain circumstances, a breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy may constitute a criminal offence and Gym Free may be required to report the matter to the police.

Staff Responsibilities

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. Staff:

- Must treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect
- Must comply with all Gym Free policies, best practice standards and promote an environment where everyone feels safe, supportive and included
- Must report all incidents where a breach of equality and diversity has occurred
- Must comply with all equality and diversity initiatives

Manager/Supervisory Responsibilities

Managers will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Managers:

- Must foster an environment free of bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Must take appropriate action in accordance with Gym Free policies and procedures in circumstances where a breach of equality and diversity has occurred
- Must not discriminate unfairly in the way a service on behalf of Gym Free is provided or services procured
- Must not discriminate unfairly if involved in the recruitment, promotion and management of staff, or in the selection and supervision of apprentices

Apprentice's Responsibilities

- Must treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect
- Must comply with all Gym Free policies, best practice standards and promote an environment where everyone feels safe, supportive and included
- Must report all incidents where a breach of equality and diversity has occurred
- Must comply with all equality and diversity initiatives

Third Parties

- All apprenticeship employers, suppliers etc. are expected to comply with the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- It is a requirement of staff to bring to the attention of all apprenticeship employers, suppliers etc. Gym Free's Equality and Diversity Policy and seek assurance regarding the third party organisation's approach to equality and diversity in the workplace.

Equality & Diversity Training

Staff

Employees will receive equality and diversity training as part of their induction when joining Gym Free; This training will be delivered in the form of recorded webinars which have been delivered by external compliance consultants and which will provide employees with an overview of the key obligations and best practice impacting day-to-day work.

In addition, employees will receive annual refresher training on equality issues. Again, this will be delivered in webinar format and can be accessed by employees on demand.

Managers / Supervisors

In addition to the training detailed above, managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process will receive more comprehensive equality and diversity training. This will predominately be delivered in the form of recorded webinars, however if the employee requires interactive training, Gym Free will arrange for external experts to attend the Gym Free offices.

Apprentices

The Equality and Diversity Policy is at the core of how Gym Free operates as an employer and an education and training provider and as such the principles of equality and diversity are integrated into all aspects of our apprenticeship delivery.

Apprentices will receive equality and diversity training as part of their induction when joining Gym Free; This training will be delivered in the form of recorded webinars which have been delivered by external compliance consultants and which will provide apprentices with an overview of what equality and diversity is and will ensure that they understand their equality and diversity rights and responsibilities.

The principles of equality and diversity also form a key component of the apprenticeship curriculum, the concepts and application of which may be addressed in workbooks, recorded webinars or face-to-face sessions.

Grievance / Discipline

Gym Free employees, apprentices and employers of apprentices have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the relevant Complaints Policy.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Gym Free Disciplinary Procedure.

Monitoring and Review

The Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed annually. On occasion an earlier amendment may be required to reflect a legislative change, best practice standard or Gym Free procedural amendment.

The Policy should not be read in isolation, but cross referenced with all relevant Gym Free employment and student policies. All Gym Free policies will be reviewed regularly, and any identified discriminatory elements removed.

The effectiveness of this policy in terms of both content and implementation, will be judged through continued monitoring and evaluation.

Data, conclusions and recommendations arising from monitoring exercises, will be reported to the Board annually.

Where appropriate equality impact assessments will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect of Gym Free policies and our services / products may have on those who experience them.

The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.

If monitoring shows that Gym Free, or areas within it, are not representative, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, Gym Free policies and practices.

The Managing Director is responsible for the operation and implementation of the policy. The management of these obligations lies with the Apprenticeship Management Team who have the responsibility to ensure that the terms of the policy are wholly observed as far as their areas of responsibility are concerned.

The Commercial Director will also ensure that recruitment advertising and the preparation of job specifications do not offer any grounds for action under the Equality Act 2010 legislation.