

ESF04 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in Relation to Education Provision		Effective date: 01/2026
Authorised Owner: Dan Roe		Last revision: 01/2026
Classification: Public	Issue: 02	Next review: 01/2027



# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in Relation to Education Provision

## 1. Introduction

ESF apprenticeships (the trading name for Sporting Futures Training (UK) Ltd) is committed to promoting equality of opportunity through providing training and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that applicants learners and staff members:

(a) receive no less favourable treatment on the grounds of a characteristic that is protected by The Equality Act (2010). These protected characteristics are:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

(b) are not disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

(c) are not victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

(d) are valued as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances.

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## 2. Scope

This policy sets out our commitment for creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment, where all individuals have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. This policy applies to all applicants and learners.

## 3. Legislative context

3.1 The main pieces of legislation governing equality in the UK is the Equality Act (2010), which replaced nine pieces of legislation and over 100 regulations when it came into force. The Equality Act is the main legal framework protecting the rights of individuals and advancing equality of opportunity.

As an organisation providing education, we are committed to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between different groups.
- (c) foster good relations between different groups.

3.2 Additional legislation covering equality, diversity and inclusion in the UK includes:

- Employment Rights Act (2025)
- Carer's Leave Act (2023)
- Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013)
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006)
- The Work and Families Act (2006)
- Civil Partnerships Act (2004)
- Gender Recognition Act (2004)
- Employment Act (2002)
- Maternity and Parental Leave etc. Regulations (1999)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- Employment Rights Act (1996)
- Protection from Harassment Act (1997)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)

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## 4. Our commitment

All staff at ESF apprenticeships are committed to actively upholding the Public Sector Equality Duty by:

- **Eliminating discrimination and harassment** through our commitment to Dignity and Respect through creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff and learners are recognised and valued; entitling all learners and staff members to an environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated, including unlawful discrimination, victimisation, physical and/or sexual violence, and derogatory language.
- **Advancing Equality of Opportunity** through our Inclusive Vision and pursuit of Social Equity through ensuring strategic priorities are focused on inclusion led by our highly trained staff with qualifications in inclusion and SEND and through fostering an inclusive culture where diversity is celebrated, equality of opportunity is promoted, and social equity is actively pursued.
- **Fostering good relations through the promotion and embedding of fundamental British values.** We are committed to actively promoting and embedding the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs across all aspects of our education provision, ensuring learners understand and confidently apply these values in their studies, workplace, and community engagement.

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## 5. Equal opportunity policy statements

### **Age, Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Marriage, and Civil Partnership**

We will ensure that people of all ages, races, sexes, gender identities, sexual orientations, and marital/civil partnership statuses are treated with respect and dignity, have equal access to our education provision, and that discriminatory assumptions and actions are robustly challenged.

### **Disability**

We will ensure that people of all abilities are treated with respect and dignity, and discriminatory assumptions and actions are robustly challenged. We will provide reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled delegates have full access to learning with us. Learners can disclose a disability at any stage (application, onboarding, or mid-program) without fear of prejudice. Further detail about reasonable adjustments can be found in the ESF Reasonable Adjustment Policy.

### **Religion and Belief**

We will ensure that people of all religions and beliefs are treated with respect and dignity, and discriminatory assumptions and actions are robustly challenged. Wherever possible we will ensure that a delegate's religion or beliefs, and related observances, are respected and accommodated where the expression of these does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others. Further detail about reasonable adjustments can be found in ....

### **Pregnancy, Maternity, Paternity, and Adoption**

We will ensure that people at all stages of pregnancy and maternity are treated with respect and dignity, and discriminatory assumptions and actions are robustly challenged. Delegates will be fully supported to take appropriate breaks from their studies to accommodate pregnancy and maternity.

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We will also ensure that a baby’s father, or a mother’s partner, are treated with respect and dignity, and be fully supported to take appropriate breaks from their studies to accommodate paternity leave or shared maternity leave.

Delegates who are becoming parents through adopting will be treated with respect and dignity, and discriminatory assumptions and actions are robustly challenged. Delegates will be fully supported to take appropriate breaks from their studies to accommodate adoption leave, paternity leave, or shared parental leave.

## 6. Accessibility, identification and support

We strive to proactively remove barriers and ensure our online learning environments and course materials are usable for everyone, regardless of ability. Our aim is to ensure proactive removal of barriers to the goal of ensuring that all learners and apprentices feel highly valued, respected, and that they belong. We will address and enhance the experiences of disadvantaged or under- represented groups who face additional barriers to their learning and/or well-being and additional safeguarding vulnerabilities, including:

- Learners with **SEND** or high needs.
- Those known to **social care** (e.g., care leavers).
- Learners without **Level 2 English and/or mathematics**.
- Those facing other barriers to well-being, such as **young carers**.

### 6.1 Evidence-Based Identification and Support

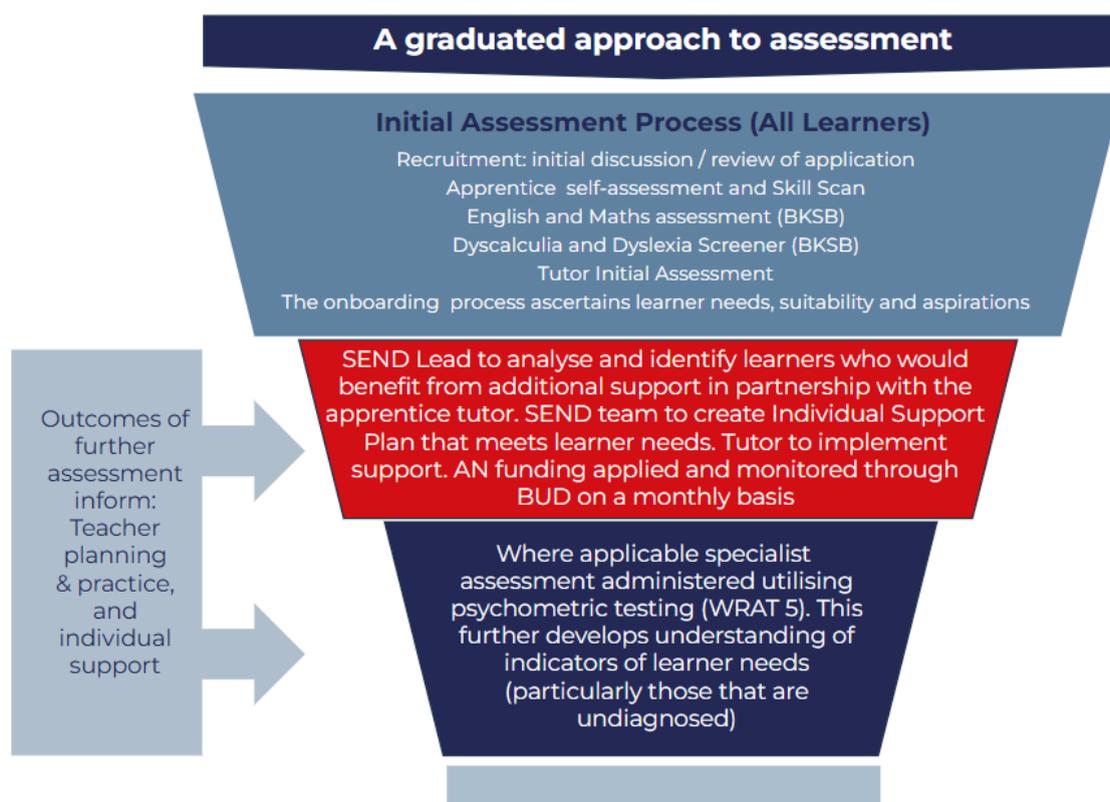
We aim to have a significant positive impact throughout commitment to ensuring the **swift reduction of barriers** to:

- **Accurately identify and understand the specific needs of our learners.** Our ‘assessment funnel’ process evidences our proactive use of data to ensure that those learners who may benefit from further assessment of their learning needs are offered this opportunity. For learners studying with ESF apprenticeships, we

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will provide assessments of literacy needs where appropriate (including optional dyslexia and dyscalculia screening assessment) to ensure that learning materials are accessible and additional support can be arranged, where needed.



- **Provide swift intervention and adaptations to programmes.** Barriers to learning will be reduced "swiftly and consistently". Learners with additional learning needs will have an 'individual support plan' stored digitally, centrally and accessible for all tutors working with the learner to ensure information does not need to be shared on multiple occasions.
- **Independence Planning.** We will identify when additional support is no longer needed, ensuring apprentices are prepared to become independent in their employment.

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- **Focus on outcomes and impact.** We will ensure that teaching and support is always of a consistently high quality to ensure all learners excel and achieve significant positive impact and outcomes.

## 6.2 Inclusive Curriculum and Accessible Training

The ESF apprenticeship curriculums are designed to:

- support the diverse needs of our learners, and also
- to embed the understanding of protected characteristics and cultural diversity, and include activities to support learners to confidently apply their understanding.
- To promote and embed understanding of protected characteristics, cultural diversity and Fundamental British Values (Democracy, The Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, and Mutual Respect and Tolerance) into curriculum content. This ensures learning with ESF achieves a consistently positive impact for our learners and the students that they work with in their schools and settings, and therefore implements our inclusion strategy.

The delivery of ESF apprenticeships are tailored to ensure all learners can achieve successful outcomes through:

- **Tailored Adaptations:** Staff will take proactive, evidence-informed approaches to adapt teaching approaches to ensure personalised support achieves a consistently positive impact for our learners and therefore implement our inclusion strategy.
- **Accessible live sessions.** We ensure that delegate/learner needs collected as part of enrolment processes, or subsequent disclosure, are shared with the tutors/trainers delivering live training sessions to ensure the needs of learners have been pro-actively incorporated into planning for delivery and workshop activities.

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- **Expert Teaching.** Teachers and trainers who are skilled at connecting new ideas with existing knowledge will deliver our programmes, so that learners with diverse needs can grasp complex topics confidently.
- **Seamless Employer Collaboration.** Our tutors will work closely with employers to review on- and off-the-job training "seamlessly," providing high-quality, tailored support that ensures success across the full curriculum

### 6.3 Conformance of digital resources with WCAG 2.1 Standards

We will develop and maintain our online platform and course materials in accordance with the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA standards. These standards outline how to make web content accessible to people with disabilities.

**Accessible Content Formats.** Wherever possible we will provide course materials in accessible formats, including transcripts for audio and video components, alternative text descriptions for images, and keyboard accessibility for all interactive elements.

**Assistive Technologies.** We will strive to ensure our platform is compatible with common assistive technologies used by people with disabilities, such as screen readers and text-to-speech software.

### 6.6 Access to Fair Assessment and Reasonable Adjustments

Please refer to the ESF Reasonable Adjustment Policy for comprehensive guidance on our approach.

### 6.7 User Feedback

We encourage feedback from delegates on accessibility issues. We will provide easy to access methods for delegates to report accessibility barriers and suggest improvements.

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## 7. Roles and responsibilities

**Directors** - The Directorate provides leadership for:

- (a) Vision and values around equality, diversity and inclusivity.
- (b) Overseeing the development of policy frameworks and their application across ESF apprenticeships.
- (c) Ensuring a continuous cycle of review and adaptation of the support offered to ensure it makes a "significant difference" to learner opportunities.
- (d) Providing professional learning opportunities for staff to enable them to implement appropriate strategies and reasonable adjustments for all learners.
- (e) Monitoring, reporting on, and acting upon the progress and outcomes (including achievement, retention, and progression) of learners across all protected characteristics to ensure inclusion practices result in high or significantly improved achievement rates, thereby fulfilling the duty to advance equality of opportunity.

**Members of teaching / tutoring staff** - All members of staff, both employed and freelance, have the responsibility to comply with this policy: treat others with respect at all times; actively discourage, challenge and report discriminatory behaviour/practice; and participate in training and wider learning opportunities to eliminate prejudice and extend good practice.

**Apprentices / Learners** - All learners will have access to this policy and are expected to abide by its principles. In particular they should: treat everyone with respect and dignity, whatever their background; avoid degrading and stereotypical images or such references to minority groups; treat other delegates as individuals and refrain from discriminatory or harassing behaviour. Learners also have a responsibility to commit to engage to the best of their ability with all learning activities and live training. Where additional educational needs are known and shared with ESF apprenticeships, we will work collaboratively to support delegates to access all learning opportunities.

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**Employers** - Work closely with apprentices and ESF tutors to review on- and off-the-job training "seamlessly," and collaborate in providing high-quality, tailored support that ensures success across the full curriculum and job role.

## 8. Breach of policy

Complaints of discrimination on the grounds of the areas covered by this policy should be brought using the appropriate grievance resolution procedures.

Any concerns related to unlawful discrimination, victimisation, physical and/or sexual violence, and derogatory language will be addressed quickly, consistently, and effectively using the appropriate procedures.

## 9. Further information

ESF apprenticeships reserves the right to review, revise, amend or replace the content of this policy, and introduce new policies and procedures from time to time to reflect the changing needs of the organisation and new legislation and regulations.

## 10. Related documents

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Online Accessibility Policy
- Reasonable adjustments Policy

## 11. Document history

- Issue 1 - Initial release
- Issue 2 - Jan 2026