

1. Introduction

The Equalities Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination legislation with a single Act. It sets out “*Protected Characteristics*” which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity

The legislation has three main aims:

- **To eliminate unlawful discrimination** harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- **To advance equality of opportunity** between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not share it.
- **To foster good relations** between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not share it.

It aims to ensure that there is equal treatment in access to employment as well as private and public services, regardless of any protected characteristics.

2. Commitment

- **The Outlook** is committed to encouraging equality and diversity amongst our workforce and eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- **The Outlook** is committed to ensuring that students residing in the accommodation suffer no discrimination of any sort, from the staff or fellow students.
- **The Outlook** will ensure that no discrimination of any sort, occurs when selecting and admitting students into the accommodation.
- The services and facilities provided by **The Outlook** will be free from unlawful direct or indirect discrimination against students or members of the public.
- Employment opportunities offered by **The Outlook** shall be open to representatives of all sections of society.

3. Objectives

- To provide equality, fairness and respect for all of our employees, whether temporary, part-time or full-time and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.
- Not to unlawfully discriminate, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, in terms of the 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 (gender) and sexual orientation.
- To 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, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

3. Policy

The Outlook's policy on Equalities and Diversity aims to:

- Encourage equality and diversity in the workplace, as they are aligned with good practice and make business sense.
- 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 employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help **The Outlook** provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation as well as unlawful discrimination.
- All staff should be made aware that the law can hold them personally liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, students, suppliers and the public.
- All complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, students, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of **The Outlook's** work activities will be taken seriously and be fully investigated.
- Following investigation any such acts may be dealt with as misconduct under **The Outlook's** grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate

action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal.

- Some types of harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, e.g. sexual assault allegations.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 is not limited to the “protected characteristics” and can deal with any type of harassment.
- Opportunities for training, development and progress will be made available to all members of staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised within the limitations of the operations.
- Decisions concerning staff will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Employment practices and procedures will be reviewed as necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Although the workforce is small, due regard will be given to information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion in order to encourage equality and diversity, and in meeting the objectives and commitments set out in the equality policy.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality policy, and any action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equality policy is fully supported by **The Outlook** and has been agreed with all members of staff. Details of the organisation’s grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the Site Manager’s office. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance. Use of **The Outlook’s** grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee’s right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination