



AFFINITY

Education Solutions

Connecting Providers, Creating Efficiencies,
Nurturing Development.

Equality and Diversity Policy

AFFINITY EDUCATION SOLUTIONS

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Statement of intent

Affinity Education Solutions is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion. This is both right and good business practice.

Affinity will promote and support equality, diversity and inclusion and will support schools on their implementation of good practice in this area.

The company intends that the Affinity adviser panel will be truly representative of all sections of society and of our clients, and that all advisers will not only feel equally valued, but will understand the need, in turn, to value and treat equally all those with whom they work.

Affinity will be vigilant in its commitment to promote equality and diversity and to guard against unlawful discrimination.

2. Policy purposes

By adopting this policy, Affinity aims to ensure that it will:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all partners and advisers, however often they work with the company
- ensure there is no unlawful discrimination on the basis of any of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination in the company's relationships with advisers, partners and clients.
- 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 advisers are recognised and valued.

3. Responsibilities

All directors and advisers have a personal responsibility for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion during their work for Affinity.

The overall responsibility for the ensuring of legal compliance and good practice in the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion lies with the directors of the company.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the managing director.

4. Activity

4.1 Recruitment

Affinity has put in place procedures to ensure that advisers will be chosen for their competence and experience in working with schools and young people. They will, therefore, be expected to have a commitment to, and understanding of, required and good practice in equality, diversity and inclusion. Checking this will be a part of the recruitment process. Any gaps will be filled during induction.

4.2 Induction and training

The Affinity adviser induction process will include a discussion of equality and diversity issues, including the Affinity policy and arrangements, the consideration of a model school policy and a review of how Affinity advisers can promote inclusion.

Training on equality and diversity issues will be conducted as required and will include an annual update on legal and good practice requirements.

The training will remind all advisers about their legal rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, including to conduct themselves to help the organisation promote equal opportunities, and to prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the treatment of clients and the public.

4.3 Commissioning

Advisers will only be commissioned to work on inclusion projects for which they have appropriate expertise and commitment. Decisions concerning deployment will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

When advisers are commissioned to work in particular schools, there will be an expectation that the relevant school policies are read, and issues and concerns discussed and addressed.

4.4 Relationships with clients and activity monitoring

Procedures have been implemented to ensure continual monitoring of adviser activities and whilst working on the firm's behalf.

As part of the Affinity quality assurance process, clients will be asked about the respect that Affinity advisers show for equality, diversity and inclusion and about advisers' awareness, as required, of the school's policy.

Affinity will take seriously all complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination claimed to have occurred in the course of the organisation's activities. Where there is evidence that those involved in Affinity business activities have been involved in discrimination, investigations will be undertaken.

Regular reviews of practice will be carried out.

Affinity will monitor the make-up of the adviser team including the profile of age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability.

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.

Affinity understands that sexual harassment may amount to 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.

Where it is deemed likely, after investigation that an adviser has been involved in discrimination, that adviser will be removed from the Affinity adviser list and will not be eligible for future commissions.

To keep advisers informed of arrangements and good practice in this area, Affinity uses a variety of methods, which includes partner meetings and on-line communications. Advisers will be regularly reminded to raise any concerns they may have.

Affinity uses advisers with significant expertise in equality, diversity and inclusion. We will ensure that their expertise is shared not only with clients, but with other advisers and directors.



5. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

This policy was last reviewed on 28th June 2020

Signed

Stephen Curran, Managing Director