

Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

Policy Statement

YMCA Awards is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion ('ED&I') in everything we do. We believe creating an organisation where everyone feels valued is not only the right thing to do, but also helps drive success and create impact. In recognition of this commitment, we are driven by our core value of Equity, breaking down barriers to ensure everyone can thrive.

We are committed to creating environments in which our people and communities are treated fairly and with respect. This includes our staff, volunteers, members organisations we engage with.

We are committed to a culture that recognises, celebrates and values the differences between individuals. We firmly believe that a diverse and inclusive workforce is integral to both attracting and meeting the needs of the diverse communities we work with. Our ED&I commitments also closely align with our wider charity ambitions to contribute to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Gender Equality and Reduced Inequalities.

We seek to promote equality of opportunity in recruitment, employment, volunteering, governance and the provision of products and services. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation on any grounds, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, including ethnicity and national origin, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.

We pro-actively tackle discrimination or disadvantage, aiming to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to employment or accessing our products and services.

Through the initiatives outlined in this policy and our ED&I strategic priorities we will ensure that we create equal opportunities for all, build a strong inclusive culture, address bias, and equip all our managers with the skills to be truly inclusive leaders.

Scope

This policy applies to all current and potential employees, workers, self-employed contractors, volunteers and Trustees. It also applies to our current and potential centres, learners and apprentices, partners and suppliers.

Policy

1. Principles

- We believe all individuals are of equal value, irrespective of their background. We are committed to going above and beyond our legal duties and embrace diversity in its widest sense. When applying the principles of this policy we also take into consideration the following types of diversity:

Category	Type of diversity
Social category difference	Race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, physical abilities, socioeconomic class
Differences in knowledge and skills	Education, functional knowledge, information or expertise, training, experience, abilities
Differences in values and beliefs	Cultural background, ideological beliefs
Personality differences	Cognitive style, personality type, motivational factors
Organisational / community status differences	Tenure, length of service, Title (work function, seniority, discipline etc), work related ties, friendship ties, community ties, in-group membership

- We believe that representation of our wider communities within the Charity's workforce is both ethically and morally important, but also helps improve performance and decision-making. A diverse workforce helps us to better understand our diverse communities and our ability to meet their needs
- Ensuring equal value and dignity for individuals does not mean treating everybody in the same way. All individuals deserve to thrive, and we are driven by our core value of Equity to provide everyone the same opportunity to succeed. This means where inequalities are identified we will take positive action to address these.
- We recognise, respect and value difference. We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all.
- We strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face and focus on improving outcomes that enhance individuals and help them reach their potential.
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships, promoting positive connections and mutual respect between colleagues, groups, and communities who differ from each other.
- We aim to nurture a shared sense of inclusion and belonging. We want everyone who is connected to YMCA Awards to feel a sense of belonging, that they are respected and are able to participate fully.
- We take positive steps to tackle all forms of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, inequality, and unfairness.

- We ensure that our facilities, products and services are, as far as reasonably possible, welcoming and accessible to all.
- We make sure reasonable adjustments are made to support individuals and take particular account of people with disabilities to overcome barriers in the working with and using YMCA Awards' products and services.

2. Our workforce

- YMCA Awards is an equal opportunities employer. Equal treatment applies to all aspects of employment including recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of work, promotions and career development, reward and recognition, learning and development, and redundancy and redeployment.
- We believe that everyone, regardless of their differences, should have access to the same chances and we therefore actively promote equality of opportunity.
- We value diversity and believe it takes all types of individuals to make a creative and innovative organisation. We look to attract, recruit, develop and retain talented people from all backgrounds at every level of the organisation, to draw on different perspectives and experiences that add value to the way we operate.
- We are an [Opening Doors](#) employer which demonstrates our commitment to reach the most diverse and untapped talent by making changes to the way we recruit. We are also pursuing other best practice through the [Disability Confident Scheme](#), to make the most of the opportunities provided by employing disabled people, removing barriers to disabled people and those with long-term health conditions and ensuring that disabled people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.
- We promote inclusion and encourage different ways of thinking to challenge the status quo. We believe that our organisation is richer when everyone is treated with dignity and valued for their contribution and the unique skills and life experiences they bring.
- We look to create a safe environment for employees to disclose disabilities (visible and non-visible) so that implementation of appropriate workplace adjustments can be tailored to individual needs.
- We have a zero-tolerance approach to instances of bullying or harassment and are committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust, and respect, and one that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation. We provide clear mechanisms for employees to raise concerns and take any accusations extremely seriously.
- We are committed to ensuring our workforce is aware of equality, diversity and inclusion and provide training as part of the induction process, alongside an annual programme of training and awareness building. This includes training to managers to support inclusive, safer and trauma informed recruitment, new to manager training, and wider employee training and discussion on relevant topics.

- As part of our employee induction programme, we ensure individuals are aware of the Charity's values and expected behaviours, including Equity, and the policies and procedures that support our EDI principles.
- We create opportunities to explore issues in more detail and support continuous improvement via forums and networks.
- We acknowledge that employees have commitments outside work (e.g. families and caring responsibilities) and we are committed to helping employees fulfil their potential at work whilst finding the right work/life balance and supporting their general wellbeing.
- We monitor the composition of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender identity and gender reassignment, race, sexual orientation, and disability. We prioritise these areas in the first instance and act accordingly in terms of positive action and reporting.
- We are committed to consistently reviewing our policies and practices to ensure they uphold our EDI principles and take account of changes in law.

3. Our customers, products and services

Supporting diverse communities is core to our charitable objectives, mission, vision and values. Since our formation, we have helped to break down barriers to increase participation and success in the Charity's services and programmes. Core to this, we are committed to:

- Designing products and services with diverse and inclusive content with examples, scenarios and assessments that represent the full range of cultures, backgrounds, perspectives and traditions of the areas in which we operate.
- Creating unbiased assessment criteria that are written in plain English and exclusively target the knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours required for the qualification.
- Providing a reasonable adjustment process to enable learners with disabilities and impairments with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours.
- Increasing feedback and input from existing and potential customers, learners, and service-users to improve our understanding of how we can better support learners and minimise bias.
- Measuring current participation and achievement, to create targets and action plans to identify and address potential bias and improve underrepresentation.
- Regularly reviewing requests submitted under our fair assessment policy to identify and address potential biases in our products and services.
- Treating all individuals who use our products and services and take part in equally, with courtesy and respect.

- Creating environments based on the principles of openness, acceptance and participation, where individuals can feel free to be themselves.
- Valuing each individual for who they are and recognising differences, so individuals feel understood and accepted whatever their ability or background.
- Supporting underrepresented groups and building effective relationships within the wider communities where we operate through networks and partnerships.
- Assessing the impact on ED&I during our product development process and continuously looking to improve our products to ensure learners are not disadvantaged, no matter their background, and provide the support needed to overcome barriers to success.
- Undertaking equality impact assessments to review and improve accessibility of our products, systems and physical sites wherever possible with an aim to create inclusive environments for those with both visible and invisible disabilities.

4. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be supported by annual EDI priorities and performance against these will be monitored by the Board of Trustees against agreed performance indicators.
- We collect and analyse staff monitoring data and report on this annually to the Charity's Resources Committee and wider Board of Trustees to review our workforce and address any improvements that need to be made. As a result of this data, we will identify any requirements to undertake positive action.
- We establish effective monitoring systems on the collection of data for our learners and service users that show where progress is being made, and where improvement is needed. This will contribute to the Charity's annual priorities.
- We undertake annual pay gap reviews for gender, race, disability and sexual orientation. Whilst a statutory requirement for gender, expanding across the four areas referenced helps the Charity to identify other areas for improvement and may result in the development of specific targets and initiatives to reduce any gaps identified. The results of this review are reported to the Charity's Resources Committee and wider Board of Trustees and contributes to strategic priorities for the next financial year. From 2022/23 this will also be reported publicly through the Charity's annual report.

5. Feedback and complaints

- As an organisation, we recognise that we do not always get everything right and we welcome feedback and suggested improvements from our internal people, service users and communities. We hope to create an environment where we can be open and honest and consider feedback carefully when it is given.
- We take a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory treatment. We aim to create an environment where individuals can:

- make a complaint of discrimination, or harassment without victimisation;
 - feel confident and able to challenge discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.
- All complaints relating to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying will be taken seriously, dealt with promptly and investigated as appropriate. High-level data on such complaints will be monitored and reviewed by the Board and the overall effectiveness of the complaints process will be periodically evaluated.

6. Non-Compliance

- Any breach of this policy by an employee will be investigated and dealt with through the Charity's Disciplinary Policy or the Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy, as appropriate. Where an employee is found to have unfairly discriminated, harassed or victimised another individual they may be dismissed.
- Breaches by self-employed contractors or volunteers will be investigated and may result in the use of services being terminated.
- Breaches by a partner organisation, centre or supplier will result in the third party's employer being contacted and a formal complaint being made using their procedure.
- Breaches by a service user or learner will be investigated and may result in participation on the service or programme being terminated.

7. Review arrangements

- YMCA Awards review this policy and its associated procedures annually as part of self-evaluation arrangements and revise it when necessary in response to customer or regulatory feedback. If you would like to comment on the process described in this document please contact us via the details provided below.

8. Understanding this policy

All enquiries relating to this policy should be addressed to:

Quality Improvement Manager
YMCA Awards
112 Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3NQ

Telephone: +44 (0)20 3994 9500

Email: awards.feedback@ymca.co.uk