

Apprenticeship Policies

Equality and Diversity



 academy

Classification	Public
Date Created	08/09/2018
Review Period	Annual
Last Updated	Oct 2025
Next Review Date	September 2026
Version	1.5
Author	Tom Robinson
Owner	Tom Robinson

1. Scope

At ANS Academy, we recognise the advantages of having a diverse workforce and are dedicated to creating an inclusive learning environment that is devoid of discrimination. Our commitment extends to all interactions involving apprentices, employees, workers, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors, recruitment agencies, educational partners, and the general public. Every employee and representative acting on behalf of ANS Academy is expected to abide by this policy while performing their duties or representing the organisation in any capacity.

Our policy aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and outlines our approach to supporting induction programs related to the nine major protected characteristics:

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

2. Promotion of Equality and Diversity

ANS Academy is committed to promoting equality and diversity throughout the organisation by implementing the following measures:

- During the induction process, all learners and new employees will receive training on Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Our employees will actively advocate for equal opportunities and diversity when collaborating with external employers and other relevant parties working alongside our learners.
- We ensure that this policy is easily accessible to Academy employees and learners.
- Annual refresher courses will be conducted for employees to maintain awareness and facilitate informed discussions on equality and diversity with all stakeholders.
- Periodic coaching sessions will be held with small groups of learners, specifically addressing topics related to Equality and Diversity which will be done in the Quarterly Apprentice meeting.
- Our team structure includes managers who are available to support and address any discrimination-related concerns raised by learners, ensuring a safe environment for all. This support structure is communicated to all learners, providing them with access to any necessary assistance.
- From the onset of their induction, learners will be informed of our zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination.
- Learners will be encouraged to learn from one another and actively participate in activities that promote equality and diversity, both within the learning environment and the wider business context.
- We will actively celebrate and endorse diversity by recognising significant events and religious observances.
- An appropriate, secure, and anonymous reporting process will be in place to address any concerns where inclusive practices are not being followed.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The following sets out the roles and responsibilities for all parties associated with the ANS Academy:

3.1 Head of Apprenticeships:

- Regularly updates and reviews this policy, at least once a year or as necessary to align with changes in the Equality Act 2010.
- Establishes effective arrangements to ensure that both Academy employees and other employees working closely with learners are aware of and implement this policy.
- Monitors the effectiveness of this policy and provides reports to the board and governors of the organisation.
- Ensures there is a well-known and accessible process for handling complaints related to discrimination.
- Fosters a safe environment for learners and instils confidence that they can raise any concerns they may have.

3.2 Managers:

- Promotes Equality and Diversity among employees'.
- Maintains regular communication with the Head of Apprenticeships to discuss any Equality and Diversity issues.
- Supports learners in feeling confident and secure when raising issues or concerns regarding equality and diversity.
- Collaborates with employees and learners to identify and address training needs, including filling knowledge gaps, and providing necessary refreshers.
- Utilises data, reviews, and complaints to inform policy improvements.
- Coordinates with teaching staff to ensure that the curriculum integrates equality and diversity.

Employee Responsibilities:

- Academy employees adhere to and actively promote the policy by incorporating topics of equality and diversity into the curriculum.
- Promotes awareness of key principles such as respect, friendship, and understanding of religions and cultures among all learners.
- Reports any issues or concerns raised by specific learners or groups of learners to their manager.
- Records any incidents related to equality according to the complaints process.
- Challenges unsupportive attitudes towards the equality and diversity policy.
- Contributes to cultivating a tolerant and supportive ethos.
- Schedules and plans assessments or reviews that focus on meeting individual learners' needs.
- Informs all learners about available facilities aligned with this policy, such as prayer rooms, building access, and desk assessments.

4. Areas of focus

4.1 Recruitment

Our goal is to ensure an inclusive recruitment process for both employees and apprentices. We prioritise thorough planning to ensure accessibility and equal opportunities for all candidates to succeed. Here are the steps we take:

We actively engage in outreach initiatives within the local community, providing access to our office and organising career sessions to enhance understanding of available career options.

- We collaborate with local schools, colleges, charities, and consortiums to create opportunities for learners within our local community. We are committed to hosting events that support underrepresented groups, such as *Women in Tech*. Apprentices are encouraged to take part and support the events.

- We continue to play an active role in the 'Northwest Tech Talent Consortium', leading initiatives alongside other prominent technology organisations across Greater Manchester. Together, we aim to support students, parents/carers, and schools by providing careers advice, guidance, and access to opportunities.
- Our recruitment process is designed to be accessible. We have a dedicated recruitment team that assesses our methods to ensure fairness and equal access for all candidates.
- We collaborate with employers HR teams to accommodate workplace adaptations when necessary to meet the needs of candidates.
- We utilise a standardised scorecard system that enables us to assess candidates based on their skills and ability to fulfil the role requirements.
- We provide unconscious bias training to individuals involved in conducting interviews, ensuring a fair and impartial evaluation process.

4.2 Unlawful discrimination

ANS Academy has a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of unlawful discrimination within the workplace. We are committed to taking all necessary measures to prevent and address such occurrences. Specifically, we strive to ensure that no apprentice, employee, or job applicant is subjected to unlawful discrimination, whether directly or indirectly, based on the following grounds: gender, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, caste, and ethnic origin), disability, sexual orientation, marital status, part-time status, pregnancy or maternity, age, religion or belief, political belief, or affiliation.

This commitment applies to all aspects of employment, including:

- Recruitment and selection processes, encompassing job advertisements, job descriptions, interviews, and selection procedures.
- Training and educational opportunities.
- Delivery of apprenticeships.
- Promotion and career development prospects.
- Terms and conditions of employment, as well as access to employment-related benefits and facilities.

- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures.
- Selection for redundancy.

As societal attitudes and legislation evolve, equal opportunities practices continue to develop. ANS Academy regularly reviews all policies and is dedicated to implementing necessary changes that enhance equality of opportunity.

4.3 Recruitment of ex-offenders

ANS Academy is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all candidates, including those with criminal records when appropriate.

As part of the application process, ANS Academy requires candidates to disclose any criminal record at an early stage. A disclosure barred service (DBS) check will be conducted prior to the start date. Candidates should provide this information in a separate confidential letter to the designated recruitment person. Only those individuals involved in the formal recruitment process and who require access to this information will have permission to review it.

Having a criminal record will not automatically disqualify a candidate from being appointed. However, in certain situations where safeguarding is a concern, offers may be declined. The decision regarding recruitment will depend on the nature of the position and the specific circumstances and background of the offense(s). ANS Academy will engage in discussions with the candidate to assess the relevance of any offense to the job in question.

Failure to disclose relevant information regarding criminal records to ANS Academy may result in the withdrawal of an offer of employment.

4.4 Career development

ANS Academy ensures that employment opportunities, recruitment, and promotions to all jobs are determined solely based on merit, regardless of any factors related to under-representation. While positive measures may be implemented to encourage under-represented groups to apply for apprenticeship roles, the ultimate decision will be based on individual merit.

At ANS Academy, equal access to apprenticeship programs, training, and career-development opportunities is provided to all employees based on their experience,

abilities, and the needs of the organisation. We strive to create an inclusive environment where everyone has equal opportunities to grow and excel.

Additionally, in accordance with equal opportunities legislation, ANS Academy may adopt positive action measures. These measures aim to address the under-representation of specific groups within the workforce by providing specialised training, apprenticeships, and support. Our goal is to encourage individuals from these under-represented groups to seize training and career-development opportunities'.

5. Procedure for complaints

5.1 Complaints of discrimination

ANS Academy will treat seriously all complaints of discrimination made by apprentices, employees, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors or other third parties and will act where appropriate.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against, you are encouraged to raise the matter as soon as possible with your manager or other senior employee using ANS Academy's 'Malpractice, Maladministration & Raising a Concern' Policy. From this the correct procedures will be followed to ensure the complaint is heard.

The use of the Raising a Concern form to give both learners and employees a confidential and potentially anonymous way to report incidents. Please see the Raising a Concern policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated thoroughly. If you make an allegation of discrimination, ANS Academy is committed to ensuring that you are protected from victimisation, harassment, or less favourable treatment. Any such incidents will be dealt with under ANS Group's disciplinary procedures.

5.2 Investigating accusations of unlawful discrimination by employees and students.

If you are accused of unlawful discrimination, ANS Academy will investigate the matter fully.

During the investigation, you will be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations and provide an explanation of your actions.

If the investigation concludes that your actions amount to unlawful discrimination, you will be subject to disciplinary proceedings, up to and including dismissal without notice for gross misconduct.

5.3 Equal Opportunities Monitoring

ANS Academy & ANS Group may carry out monitoring for the purposes of measuring the effectiveness of its equal opportunities and diversity policy. This will be reported to the Board and any concerns raised and discussed. The success of the policy will also be monitored and reported.