

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY
AT MARK BETTS HAIR
EDUCATION

Effective from May 18

Equality of Opportunity

Purpose

We have created this Equality of Opportunity policy so that we can identify, prevent and correct unfair discrimination especially against any Learner on our programmes, but also against any employee or representative of Mark Betts Hair Education or any of the employees or representatives of the salons and academies we work with.

Other reasons are:

a) Organisational, so that we:

- Show commitment to equality to all existing and potential Learners
- Show commitment to equality to existing and potential employees and representatives
- Improve the motivation of Learners and employees and representatives
- Ensure our services are more responsive to a diverse customer base
- Ensure that the talents of all those involved are developed to their full potential

b) Social responsibility, so that we:

- As an influential training provider, give leadership to others
- Ensure, wherever possible that the make-up of our Learners and employees and representatives reflects their local community

c) Legal, so that we:

- Combat direct and indirect discrimination in accordance with legislation

Scope of the Policy

This policy aims to embrace equality of opportunity as a means of affecting the make-up of our Learners and our team and representatives, and enhance the service we provide to our customers. Specifically the policy aims to ensure that no Learner, employee or representative (or any other person who comes into contact with Mark Betts Hair Education) is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, age, size, trade union activity, expired offences (where legally applicable) political or religious belief.

Objectives of the Policy

This Equality of Opportunity policy works towards the implementation of four principles:

- Quality - working for the highest possible standards in the services we provide
- Equality - endeavouring to remove disadvantage, discrimination and deprivation
- Empowerment - creating commitment and giving people responsibility and influence
- Equity - being impartial, rational and fair in all activities and dealings

The main objectives of the Equality of Opportunity policy are:

- To contribute to a more just society
- To use positive action to overcome discrimination and disadvantage
- To create a culture of continuous improvement with equality at the core
- To eliminate victimisation, harassment and discrimination, either direct or indirect

The Need for Further Improvement

This policy is necessary for the following reasons:

- To reflect our determination to embrace the changing equality agenda
- The development of a policy framework and strategy to help meet our objectives
- The pursuit of objectives to underline our determination to maintain our reputation and standing within the training industry

Respecting Diversity

Our policy of respecting diversity is an approach that endeavours to place a positive value on all aspects of diversity, both to the Learners on our programmes and to our employees and representatives, rather than simply allowing for it.

Implementing the Policy

Mark Betts Hair Education has a commitment to equality of opportunity. We place this at the centre of what we do. We will strive to achieve equality both within our own organisation and within the organisations that we consider as our partners in training. This Equality of Opportunity policy is an indication of our determination against which we can be held accountable. Our long term aim is for Mark Betts Hair Education to act as a benchmark against which the performance of other similar training organisations can be compared.

All of our employees and all representatives acting on behalf of Mark Betts Hair Education are individually responsible for complying with this policy and working towards the removal of discriminatory attitudes and practices.

Communication

Communication can influence people's perceptions and attitudes. Mark Betts Hair Education is committed to ensuring that all our communications and literature will promote words and images that reflect the diversity of society.

Mark Betts Hair Education's Values

Valuing Our Learners

Our approach is based upon respect for all and a total commitment to safety, fairness and equality of opportunity, especially for the young people involved in our programmes. We exist to help young people to become the best that they can be.

Valuing Our Team

We realise we cannot exist without the efforts of our team. We aim to create an atmosphere which encourages positive and innovative attitudes in everyone involved with Mark Betts Hair Education and which allows people to develop their talents to the full.

Valuing Our Partners

Mark Betts Hair Education cannot survive in business without attracting and engaging highly committed partners with whom we work. We exist in order to help these highly committed companies grow their people through NVQ education and we are totally committed to achieving this aim.

Valuing Our Services

We are proud of the services we provide. We know that to gain the success we seek we must offer our customers a far higher level of innovation, service and support than any other organisation. To do this, we need to position ourselves at the leading edge of NVQ education, allowing ours to aim to be acknowledged as the programmes by which others are judged.

Consultation and Participation

Consultation and participation enables Mark Betts Hair Education to better understand and serve the needs of all those involved with us. A consistent approach to consultation and participation will result in a better partnership with team members, Learners, and partner organisations, service users and others who come into contact with Mark Betts Hair Education. We will consult in many ways including providing 'anonymous' annual questionnaires to:

- Learners involved in our training programmes
- Our employees and representatives
- Employees and representatives from the salons and academies we work with

The results of these surveys will be published and copies sent out to all those involved.

Obligations on Our Team

Employees and representatives need to be aware of their own obligations as well as Mark Betts Hair Education's commitment to equal opportunities. These obligations include:

- The need to co-operate with measures introduced to ensure there is no discrimination in any aspect of the learning services we provide
- Ensuring that as persons responsible for learning delivery arrangements we do not discriminate
- Not persuading or seeking to persuade other employees or representatives to practice unlawful discrimination in employment or service delivery
- Drawing the attention of more senior colleagues to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices in employment or in the delivery of services
- Not victimising individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information about instances of discrimination or harassment
- Acting in accordance with Mark Betts Hair Education's commitment to follow the principles of equality in its dealings with other employees; i.e. to reflect those principles in all we do and say whilst at work.

Obligations on Partner Organisations

Partner organisations, including the salons and academies we work with, need to be aware of their own obligations as well as Mark Betts Hair Education's commitment to equal opportunities. These obligations include:

- The need to co-operate with measures introduced to ensure there is no discrimination in employment or in training and service delivery within their operations
- Ensuring that as persons responsible for service delivery arrangements or for selection decisions in recruitment, promotion, transfer and training, they do not discriminate
- Not persuading or seeking to persuade any of their own employees to practice unlawful discrimination in employment or service delivery
- Drawing the attention of Mark Betts Hair Education any suspected discriminatory acts or practices in the service delivery on behalf of Mark Betts Hair Education
- Not victimising individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information about instances of discrimination or harassment
- Acting in accordance with Mark Betts Hair Education's commitment to follow the principles of equality at all times

The Legislative Framework

We will strive to ensure everyone involved with Mark Betts Hair Education is fully aware of their legal responsibilities at all times.

The Law does three things that affect Mark Betts Hair Education. Firstly, it makes discrimination on the grounds of race, sex or disability illegal, except in certain specific cases. Secondly, it places a legal obligation upon us to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different backgrounds and cultures. Thirdly, it allows us, in relation to race and sex, to take positive action to promote equality of opportunity.

Discrimination

Discrimination: Discriminating on the grounds of race, sex or disability is illegal and totally unacceptable on any of the other grounds specified in this policy document. There are two ways in which discrimination may occur.

- **Direct Discrimination:** This means treating someone less favourably than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.
- **Indirect Discrimination:** This means applying a requirement or condition that cannot be justified and which may disadvantage certain individuals.

Victimisation: This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done something in reference to the Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended) or Race Relations Act 1976, by, for example, bringing forward proceedings or giving evidence or information.

Harassment: Mark Betts Hair Education will not condone harassment on the grounds of sex, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation,

nationality, age, size, trade union activity, expired offences (where legally applicable), political or religious belief.

Any Learner or employee or representative of Mark Betts Hair Education who feels they have been harassed or who witnesses harassment at work may use Mark Betts Hair Education's anti-harassment procedure.

Racist Incident: A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or by any other person. This means that if anyone perceives an incident as racist, it should be regarded as such, regardless of any dissenting views.

Positive Action

Definition of Positive Action: The term 'positive action' refers to a variety of measures designed to counteract the effects of past discrimination and to help eliminate sex and race stereotyping.

Mark Betts Hair Education may use positive action initiatives, including:

- Directing recruitment initiatives towards under-represented groups
- Publishing advertisements for vacancies which specifically encourage applications from under-represented groups

Positive action can:

- Enable under-represented groups to obtain the skills required to enter a wider range of jobs
- Enable employers to encourage under-represented groups to seek promotion and contribute fully to the organisation for which they work

Recruitment and Selection

Mark Betts Hair Education recognises that fair and equitable recruitment and selection practices are crucial in delivering equality of opportunity. All employees involved in the recruitment and selection process will be required to abide by the provisions of our Equality of Opportunity policy. Specifically Mark Betts Hair Education will ensure that:

- A positive statement about Equality of Opportunity appears in all job advertisements
- Job vacancies are advertised widely
- Job criteria are determined solely on the essential requirements of the job, and that people are selected and appointed purely on merit and on the basis of their ability to do the job

Employment Patterns

Mark Betts Hair Education aims to develop initiatives to support our employees and representatives in combining work and other responsibilities. In doing so we recognise that many of our team fulfil demanding roles outside work which often inhibit their ability to commit themselves to full-time involvement.

People with Disabilities

Mark Betts Hair Education's vision is for a society where all disabled people can participate fully on equal terms. We will challenge discrimination against disabled people and develop policy, procedures and practices to deal with discrimination.

To achieve this, Mark Betts Hair Education is committed to a Charter for disabled people: Every disabled person has the right to be treated in the same way as any other person, without pre-judgement about disability or the quality of life of disabled people and to make use of all Mark Betts Hair Education services and facilities without avoidable hindrance.

Recruitment and Selection

Historically the recruitment and selection process has often discriminated against disabled job applicants. The introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 helps to reverse these traditional patterns of discrimination by requiring organisations to think positively and pro-actively about the employment of people with a disability. To this end any job applicant who has a disability and meets the minimum essential criteria for the job, will be interviewed.

Training and Development

Any learner with disabilities will be afforded equal access to training and development opportunities on the basis of their training needs. Special requirements arising from their disability will be met subject to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Access to Goods, Facilities and Training Services

Mark Betts Hair Education will make every effort to eliminate barriers facing disabled people when using our services.

HIV/AIDS

Mark Betts Hair Education recognises that people with HIV/AIDS experience not only purely medical

effects but may also experience prejudice and misunderstanding leading to discrimination and victimisation. Mark Betts Hair Education, therefore, will ensure that people with HIV/AIDS do not experience unfair treatment in relation to employment prospects or as receivers of our services.

In this regard Mark Betts Hair Education therefore will ensure that job applicants who are deemed to be 'medically fit' to perform the job or training for which they have applied, are not denied an offer of work solely because they are HIV positive.

Race Equality

Discrimination has often taken place on the grounds of nationality, colour, religion race, national origin, leading to racist attitudes and practices. Mark Betts Hair Education acknowledges that ethnic minority people have historically faced discrimination in all areas of their life.

Mark Betts Hair Education is committed to do all we can to eradicate racism and racial discrimination, either direct or indirect, in every area of our work. Prejudice is commonly addressed as unreasonable feelings, opinions or attitudes, especially of a hostile nature, directed against a racial, religious or national group.

Gender Equality

The majority of Mark Betts Hair Education's employees, representatives and Learners are female and when planning and delivering services we must observe that many females have particular concerns about safety. Mark Betts Hair Education will ensure that, whenever identified, these safety concerns are acknowledged and action is taken to address their fears.

Mark Betts Hair Education will continue to initiate and develop family friendly employment policies and provisions and when dealing with partner organisations, Mark Betts Hair Education will challenge any sexist attitudes, structures and practices.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Equality

Lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals may face discrimination and because of changing social attitudes, discrimination could occur when they are accessing training or attempting to access training or job opportunities.

Mark Betts Hair Education realises that policies, procedures and practices should take account of the fact that not everyone is heterosexual and that everyone has the right to define their own sexual identity. Discrimination against lesbians, gay men and bisexuals can be decreased by offering support, help, recognising need and encouraging participation.

Issues Relating to Age and Equality

Ageism leads to discrimination against people based on assumptions and stereotypes about their age. The stereotypes are based on perceived notions of an individual's ability and potential. Young people under the age of 18 and older people are the groups most likely to suffer from ageism.

Mark Betts Hair Education recognises that the requirements of all people need to be understood and met, but especially those of younger people given the majority of those involved in our training programmes fall into this category.

Religion and Belief

Religion plays an important role in society. The Race Relations Act 1976 has defined members of two religions, Judaism and Sikhism, as ethnic groups. As a result Jews and Sikhs have legal protection from discrimination in employment and the provision of services.

Training and Development

The success of this Policy and therefore the effective delivery of service will rely heavily upon the provision of quality training and development programmes that are designed to meet a variety of needs and circumstances related to equality of opportunity.

Training will be provided for the following purposes:

- To enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing team members to realise their full potential irrespective of background or employment status

- To enable team members to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of the wider communities so that they can deliver even better services.
- To equip team members with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions to discriminatory practice and behaviour and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour
- To promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution that team members at all levels can make
- To gain commitment to the pursuit of equal opportunities

Complaints Procedures

Mark Betts Hair Education will regard any breach of this Equality of Opportunity policy as a serious matter and has drawn up procedures to deal with complaints of discrimination/harassment.

It should be noted that the use of internal procedures does not prevent an employee from bringing a case based on race or sex to an Employment Tribunal.

If you wish to make a complaint please do so in writing to the Managing Director of Mark Betts Hair Education or, if appropriate, to the General Manager of Mark Betts Hair Education.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a crucial aspect of our Equality of Opportunity policy, as it can provide important information by which we can measure our performance against our aims and objectives. More important, certain statistical information can enable Mark Betts Hair Education to detect where potential or actual imbalances exist and to take steps to correct them.

Monitoring will be undertaken in the following areas on an annual basis:

- The composition of the workforce by sex, race, disability and age
- Learner recruitment trends by sex, race, disability and age
- The take up of employees and our training partners of training opportunities
- The use of complaints procedures currently in force

In addition, to enable continuous feedback Mark Betts Hair Education will 'monitor' the workforce through the following processes:

- Surveys of Learners on our programmes
- Surveys of employees and representatives of Mark Betts Hair Education
- Surveys of employers and their employees and representatives
- Generally encouraging on-going dialogue between colleagues
- Exit interviews where applicable

We will monitor the use and impact of services to:

- Improve take-up
- Identify gaps in services
- Identify where changes can be made
- Better target resources
- Highlight possible inequality
- Investigate causes of any discrimination

- Remove any unfairness or disadvantage