**Equality and Diversity Policy**

**SCOPE**

This policy is applicable to all employees of Axia Solutions.

The policy is also applicable to job applicants, casual workers and sub-contractors.

**AIMS**

To set Axia’s commitment and approach to equality in respect of its role as an employer and training provider.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Axia Solutions believes firmly in equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment including recruitment, pay, terms and conditions of service, development and training. The company is committed to developing employment policies, procedures and practices that do not discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against anyone and that promote equality of opportunity for all.

No employee, job applicant or learner will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of their gender or transgender, marital status or civil partnership, racial group, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, pregnancy or maternity.

The purpose of the SES is to not only to comply with legislation but to incorporate the principles of equality into all our policies and procedures; to make our training programmes fully inclusive by eliminating discrimination, promoting equality and embracing diversity. This will raise the aspirations of our learners and their chances of progression and employment will be improved. By incorporating our policies for race, disability and gender into one comprehensive scheme we will create a framework for the promotion of equality and diversity which is integral to our mission and corporate objectives.

**Our Role and Commitment to Equality and Diversity**

Axia Solutions is a training provider offering Apprenticeship and Adult training programmes across a variety of occupational areas. We operate from modern offices in Stoke on Trent, delivering mainly work-based training solutions to a range of sectors and are a lead provider for the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Our mission is to be recognised for the effective implementation and delivery of quality work-based learning programmes in a safe and protective environment to satisfy the needs of employers, learners and stakeholders. We take responsibility for safeguarding all learners and are committed to providing safe learning environments that embrace equality and diversity.

In addition to complying with the legal requirements of equality, we take our commitment further by promoting learning to individuals with low skills levels, who may not be engaged in learning and who would benefit from participating in some form of training. We encourage our learners to reach their potential and to progress as far as their talents and abilities will take them. All learning programmes are fully inclusive and we do not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment. Staff promotion and commitment to equality and diversity forms part of Axia’s teaching, learning and assessment observations and is a regular whole team meeting agenda.

The Managing Director of Axia is accountable for the fulfilment of our equality duties but every member of staff is responsible for the day to day execution of our strategy.

**Race Relations Amendment Act 2000: Duties**

Axia Solutions will not treat any individual less favourably on grounds of colour, race, nationality, religious belief and ethnic or national origin.

We make every effort to make appropriate arrangements to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups.

We provide services fairly and without discrimination, direct or indirect, and ensure that all employment-related practices – recruitment, selection and access to training and support are fair.

We actively monitor and promote training services to different groups and are happy to consult with different groups on the provision of those services.

**Disability Discrimination – Equality Act 2010: Duties**

Axia Solutions is committed to ensuring that disabled people, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities are treated fairly and have the same opportunities as others.

We will take account of peoples’ disabilities even where that involves treating disabled more favourably than others. All reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure that disabled learners are not substantially disadvantaged.

All efforts will be made to promote a positive attitude towards disabled people with a view to the elimination of unlawful disability discrimination and disability-related harassment.

**Equality and Diversity – Equality Act 2010: Duties**

Axia will ensure that all programmes are inclusive and that all participants are treated fairly irrespective of their race, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion and belief and age.

We will work to protect marginalised or under-represented groups from discrimination, including bullying and harassment and take action to prevent them from being disadvantaged.

All policies will reflect diversity; the differences in the values, attitude, cultural perspective, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, ability or disability, skills, knowledge, age and life experiences of individuals.

All learners are valued for their diversity and we will take account of their varying needs and preferences.

**Consultation**

Employers, learners and partners have been consulted with regard to this policy and it will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

**Staff Training**

Staff have received the following Equality and Diversity training:

Understanding the impact of legislation

Equality Impact Assessments

Developing and implementing a SES

ACAS Equality and Diversity online learning

**Impact Assessment Statement**

All policies and procedures are examined for any negative impact which could disadvantage an individual or group with a view to eliminating or minimising that impact. The objective is to improve the quality of the service offered by Axia and will be used to review current and new policies.

**Paula Rowland**

**Managing Director**