**Diversity & inclusion statement**

Individuals with different cultures, perspectives and experiences are at the heart of the way ESO education and training works. We want to recruit, develop, and retain the most talented people, regardless of their background1 and make best use of their talents. At ESO education and training we are guided by our values in everything we do and recognise that being a diverse and inclusive employer helps us fulfil our responsibility to make a difference for staff and customers alike.

We seek to develop a work environment where we treat all employees as individuals, fairly and in a consistent way. We work within the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenging discrimination, should it ever arise.

We will remove unnecessary barriers for our employees’ seeking opportunities through training and development, promotion and career planning. We will continue to support our leaders, managers, and employees to demonstrate the principles of diversity and inclusion in their everyday activities, roles and functions.

**Equality and Diversity Policy**

**1. Purpose**

This policy sets out ESO education and training’s approach to equality and diversity. ESO education and training is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring

valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

ESO education and training aims to be an inclusive organisation, committed to providing equal opportunities throughout employment including in the recruitment, training and development of employees, and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating discrimination.

**2. Equality and diversity at ESO education and training**

At ESO education and training, we consider that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups both in employment, and to goods and services.

We consider diversity to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for ESO education and training too. We acknowledge that equality and diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed.

**3. Scope**

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all employees, whether part time or full time on a substantive or fixed-term contract, and also to associated persons such as secondees, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service.

You have personal responsibility for the application of this policy. As part of your employee induction, you are expected to read and familiarise yourself with this policy, ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully complied with and to complete the declaration below (Page 5).

This policy is also of relevance to directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions which affect others.

**4. ESO education and training's commitment**

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality, and respect for all. ESO education and training will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination.(Including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of a protected characteristic:

• sex.

• gender reassignment.

• marriage and civil partnership.

• pregnancy and maternity.

• race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin);

• disability.

• sexual orientation.

• religion and or belief; and

• age.

Discrimination based on work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working) which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated.

All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development, and progression opportunities in ESO education and training.

Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If you believe that you may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics,

you should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with your line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. You may decide in the alternative to raise the matter through ESO education and training's Harassment Policy or Grievance Policy. For types of discrimination see the Annex to this policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. ESO education and training will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably by ESO education and training as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under ESO education and training's

**Discipline Policy**.

A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under ESO education and training’s **Discipline Policy**. Employees may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

**5. When does this policy apply?**

This policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g., at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues) or which may impact on ESO education and training’s reputation (e.g., the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to ESO education and training).

We set out below some specific areas of application:

**a) Recruitment**

Selection for employment at ESO education and training will be based on aptitude and ability. Further detail is set out in ESO education and training’s Recruitment and Selection Policy. Where possible, ESO education and training will capture applicants’ diversity demographics as part of its recruitment processes to promote the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

**b) Training**

You may also be required to participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of this policy.

**c) Promotion**

All promotion decisions will be made based on merit and will not be influenced by any of the protected characteristics listed above. Promotion opportunities will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers to promotion.

**d) During employment**

The benefits, terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to ESO education and training employees will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means and to provide appropriate conditions to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

**6. ESO education and training's legal duties**

ESO education and training is subject to equality duties under the Equality Act 2010. This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by ESO education and training to assess its effectiveness and may be amended from time to time. This policy is for guidance only and does not form part of your contract of employment.

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY DECLARATION:**

I have read and understood ESO education and training's Equality and Diversity Policy and agree to work to the expected standards. Regardless of my background and circumstances, I agree to treat all colleagues and visitors with respect and dignity while carrying out the duties and responsibilities of my role at ESO education and training.

Signature

A pair of glasses

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Date February 2024

Simon James Owen

PLEASE RETURN ESO education and training