



RUTLAND ADULT LEARNING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY (2023-2025)

STRATEGIC AIMS:

- To meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010
- To meet Rutland County Council E & D Objectives
- To embrace and promote Equality & Diversity within RALSS

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public bodies to comply with detailed legislation. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that RALSS adheres to the Statement approved by the Rutland County Council Cabinet and to meet the requirements of the Act in full, for the benefit and protection of all staff and service users.

Defining Equality and Diversity

Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given equal opportunities to achieve.

Diversity is about recognising and celebrating that everyone is different and respecting and encouraging those differences.

Protecting Learners and Staff

The public sector equality duty, as specified within the Equality Act 2010, relates to nine 'protected characteristics'. RALSS seeks to actively promote this duty in all areas of its practice:

All staff are responsible for complying with this policy.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff understand Equality & Diversity issues and know how to report any perceived discrimination, harassment or inequality of opportunity.

Tutors are responsible for ensuring equality of opportunity amongst learners and celebrating diversity.

Learners are responsible for ensuring that they treat staff and fellow learners with equal respect, regardless of Age; Disability; Gender reassignment; Marriage and civil partnership; Race; Religion or belief; Sex; Sexual Orientation; Pregnancy and maternity.

Following GDPR guidance all issues will be compliant with the Rutland County Council Policy.

Managing and promoting equality and diversity

Managers – have overall responsibility to ensure staff engagement and compliance in all aspects of Equality & Diversity. A statement is available in short form to inform learners. (*Appendix A*)

Tutors– All tutors are provided with a copy of this RALSS Equality & Diversity policy and a copy of the 'Embedding Equality & Diversity in the Classroom' guidance notes. (*Appendix B*) Tutors confirm that Equality and Diversity is covered as part of class induction, recorded in their Scheme of Work and Lesson Plans.

Learners -. Equality & Diversity information is included in the Learner Handbook given to each new learner. All display and promotional materials reflect a diversity of people and cultural backgrounds where possible. Permission to take photographs is confirmed by individual learners and these are used to further enhance awareness of equal opportunities.

Learning Support

Learning Support is offered where individuals have a particular illness, disability or learning difficulty and may include the following: Additional teaching / Specialist support staff / Dyslexia assessment and support /

Specialist equipment / Extra time to complete assessments, where allowed by exam boards. RALSS have produced a disability statement to help learners who need support to achieve their learning goals. (*Appendix C*)

Learner Support Fund

We can also arrange for financial support related to transport, childcare costs, the cost of resources and in some cases, course fees where relevant criteria are met.

Assessing impact

Effective Equality and Diversity is visible in all parts of service delivery and to ensure this 'Learning Walks' or Observations are undertaken by the Lead Tutor, and termly Folder Audits form part of this process. Equality & Diversity is a standard agenda item for all team and management meetings.

Providing effective training

All new staff complete online mandatory awareness training offered by Rutland County Council at the earliest opportunity, in line with Council policy.

The manager responsible for leading on E&D keeps up to date with current developments and disseminates new information as/when it arises.

IN CASE OF CONCERN PLEASE CONTACT:

Dean Papworth – Adult Learning Team Leader

Tel 01572 758122

Email: dpapworth@rutland.gov.uk

Assessing and Achieving equality in outcomes

Quality and Achievement Reports generated from the MIS system are used to identify any gaps in achievement, success and retention. Where achievement gaps are identified, these are monitored to identify any inequalities in our provision.

Resources

It is expected that all tutors will select, develop and evaluate resources to ensure they are inclusive, promote equality and engage with diversity. In addition to the materials they create, there are additional resources available to support the needs of individual learners:

Disabled toilet	Coloured overlays
Adjustable chairs	Reading rulers
Hearing loop	Coloured paper / variety of printing options used.
Large keyboard / Smart Boards	Writing Slope and Foot rests

A large print version of this policy is available on request.

Please ring us on 01572 758122 or email adultlearning@rutland.gov.uk

Date	Reason for Review	Next Scheduled Review
October 2014	Updated as per two year cycle	October 2016
Aug 17	Scheduled Review	Aug 19
April 2018	Review with GDPR compliance	April 2020
March 2020	Scheduled Review	March 2022
July 2022	Scheduled Review	July 2024
Aug 2023	Scheduled Review	Aug 2025

APPENDIX A

RALSS EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Rutland Adult Learning & Skills Service has a commitment to equality and diversity.

Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given equal opportunities to achieve.

Diversity is about recognising and celebrating that everyone is different and respecting and encouraging those differences.

We aim to achieve equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation because of:

- Age
- Gender
- Race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Religious belief, or non-belief
- Marital or civil partnership status, family circumstances, or caring responsibilities
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender identity
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Membership or non-membership of trade unions, or involvement or non-involvement in trade unions
- Any other status identified within the European Convention of Human Rights.

In Case of concern please contact:

Dean Papworth – Adult Learning Team Leader

Tel 01572 758122

Email: dpapworth@rutland.gov.uk

APPENDIX B

Embedding Equality and Promoting Diversity in the Classroom

We are committed to promoting equality, engaging with diversity and providing a safe learning environment where discrimination or harassment does not occur on the basis of age, colour, disability, ethnic origin, gender, marital or family status, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation or economic disadvantage. No learner should be made to feel threatened or excluded from class participation. Tutors should be mindful of equality and diversity and plan their teaching accordingly.

When you are planning your sessions look at embedding the following competencies into your delivery:

- An awareness and appreciation of diversity, including reference to race, culture, religion, gender, age, disability and sexuality.
- Use materials and teaching methods that promote equality of opportunity and diversity.
- Learning resources and accommodation that allow all learners to participate fully.
- Access resources in terms of race or gender bias. For example:
 - Do your resources use the term 'he' or 'man' to include everyone?
 - Does material contain stereotypical images?
 - Does material represent women in a negative way?
 - Are people's names in resources multi-cultural?
 - Are graphics multi-cultural?

What is An Equal Opportunities Curriculum?

- Inclusive teaching, which takes account of the diverse, learning needs, styles and preferences of learners.
- Responsive teaching, which aims to manage the learning experience in a way which empowers and validates the diverse perspectives of learners.
- Anti-discriminatory teaching, which teaches learners about their rights and responsibilities to each other.
- Attitudinal teaching, which fosters understanding of how stereotyped attitudes and prejudiced thinking damage relationships, hinder communication and are therefore bad for education and bad for business.
- Diversity teaching, which acknowledges and celebrates the contributions of people of all backgrounds, ages, cultures and religions to human progress in all fields.

Good Practice in Classroom Management

- Give learners an opportunity to "own" their own learning and to become empowered by negotiating with them, where appropriate.
- Make sure assessment is fair and appropriate for each learner and don't have different expectations of students according to gender/race etc.
- Monitor how much time you give to male/female learners.
- Don't give out tasks on a gender basis and make sure materials and topics represent the diverse range of learners, are sensitive to E & D and can be adapted to meet individual needs.
- Indicate in your session plan if you have learners with particular needs and state your strategies for dealing with them.
- Always ensure that sessions offer a variety of teaching methods to include all learners and learning styles and again indicate this on your session plan.
- Use appropriate, non-discriminatory language and manage discussion and comments to ensure learner language is also appropriate and non-discriminatory.

Learners with Disabilities – Providing Support

When they enrol, learners are requested to identify any disabilities including dyslexia but not all learners will disclose a disability during enrolment, perhaps because they fear that their disability will jeopardise their place on the course. It is the responsibility of everyone to take every opportunity to encourage disclosure in a very supportive manner. If a learner discloses a disability to any member of staff, then the organisation is 'deemed to know'. Unless the learner requests confidentiality, you must inform your Line Manager so appropriate supportive measures can be taken.

Disabled learners often give up on learning because tutors do not appear to be aware of their particular needs. In some cases, it is just simple adjustments needed such as different typefaces (RNIB recommend Arial), or cursor sizes or sometimes all that is needed is a supportive attitude. Tutors often feel unsure about supporting learners with less visible disabilities such as a mental health difficulties or medical conditions that might affect learning. There are times when tutors need specialist guidance so if you feel you need further support, please speak to your Line Manager.

Managing Diversity

- Use your student inductions to promote equality and diversity within the learning environment.
- Make clear your organisation's stance on the equality agenda.
- Ensure that students have clear information about who to go to and the processes involved when needing to discuss any issues e.g. harassment, bullying, unequal treatment etc.
- Use your induction to celebrate the diversity of your group and/or your community and to raise awareness. This can be done using icebreakers, drawing up ground rules or as a simple 'getting to know you' introduction.
- Discuss the diversity of your group in terms of age range, gender, ethnicity and educational needs. Stage any particular issues which you may identify and discuss strategies for these.
- Provide evidence of all the above in your scheme of work and session plans.
- Use initial assessments to identify needs including those that relate to culture/ethnicity as well as educational needs.
- Use individual learning plans to evidence that you have recognised these needs and are celebrating diversity by building on strengths and setting realistic short-term goals which are sensitive to learners' needs.

Promoting Diversity in your Resources

- Select and use materials that promote social and cultural diversity and which challenge stereotypes.
- Revisit and update your resources.
- Use s/he as opposed to single gender references when writing materials.
- Use positive images of people with disabilities.
- Celebrate diversity in your hand-outs, displays and illustrations even if you are teaching a group which is composed of all white 25-55 year old women.
- Don't produce hand-outs in capital letters, odd fonts or small print. Ariel size 14 is recommended.
- Do enlarge print if photocopying from a textbook where the print is small and use taped material if appropriate. (Bear in mind copyright laws)

Promoting Diversity – practical ways in which you can demonstrate that you are managing diversity effectively:

- Be sensitive to the interests and needs of learners who are in the minority in the class, e.g. the only male, a younger person, a disabled person.
- Ensure that the learning environment is accessible, safe and welcoming for all learners.
- Get to know your learners and ensure that you use and pronounce their names correctly.

- Involve individual learners in all decisions that affect them and give ownership of individual learning plans.
- Review learning plans systematically and regularly to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness.
- Be open to discussion and renegotiate learning methods.
- Engage, where appropriate, the personal or cultural experience of learners to inform learning and teaching.
- Display college policies on inclusion, equality and safeguarding.
- Challenge expressions of prejudice (for e.g. ageism, homophobia, racism, religious intolerance and sexism).
- Seek and use feedback from learners to inform planning, sharing and agreeing the aims and desired outcomes of the programme.
- Use interactive, participatory approaches to learning.
- Create opportunities to relate the programme to their own experience.
- Use informal and formal evaluation and feedback session and give learners the opportunities to fully evaluate in an open and anonymous way.

Further Information

RALS is committed to complying with legislation, in particular the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and DDA/SENDA legislation.

The following websites provide updated information on legislation:

Equality and Human Rights commission: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

Disability Rights Commission: <https://www.drc.org.uk/>

Equal Opportunities Commission: www.eoc.org.uk

Relevant Acts:

- Human right Act 1998
- Equality Act 2006
- Disability Equality Duty as contained within the Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- The Gender Equality Duty as contained within the Equality Act 2006
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Useful Websites:

- Equality Challenge Unit also provides very practical resources
- OFSTED Good Practice Database may be accessed via their website and carries some useful examples of good practice.
- <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/328/women-and-equalities-committee/>
<http://www.stonewall.org.uk>

APPENDIX C

Rutland Adult Learning Service Disability Statement

What is this statement for?

We have written this statement to help you decide if we can provide the right sort of support to help you complete your activity or course of study.

We want you to be successful and enjoy your time with us. We welcome adults with disabilities and this statement shows how we can help. We can only help if we know what is best for you, so come and talk to us to find out just how much we can do for you.

Who should I contact to talk about what I need?

adultlearning@rutland.gov.uk or call 01572 758122

Or come and see staff at the Enrolment Office who will be able to help.

What do I have to do to join a course or activity?

We ask that you complete an enrolment form containing your personal details and information on the course you are joining. We may ask you to come in for an interview. This would be a meeting between yourself and a member of the Learner Support Team at which your particular support measures would be discussed and agreed.

What sort of support can I expect?

a) Staff

We have staff that can help you with:

- Literacy and numeracy
- Dyslexia
- Learning difficulties

We have access to specialist agencies which can help with:

- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Physical disability

b) Technology and equipment

We have a range of adapted and specialist equipment. There are items such as trackball mice and wrist/hand rests which are easier to use for those with mobility difficulties, and a hearing loop.

c) Help with tests, exams and assessments

We need to know what you need as soon as possible so we can make arrangements with the examination board. The sort of help you might be able to have is:

- extra time for examinations and assessments
- a person to read/write for you
- a room on your own
- papers in large print

The range of facilities will depend upon the regulations of individual examination boards, so please contact us early so that we can advise you in plenty of time.

The Equality Act 2010 protects disability as one of its protected characteristics. Reasonable adjustments are required where a candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Act if they would be at a 'substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled'. Awarding bodies are required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. Learners will be considered for access arrangements based on having any of the following evidence:

- An Education Health and Care Plan stating or implying these requirements
- Evidence from their previous education setting that these were in place
- Tutor evidence of current normal way of working
- Appropriate medical documentation of requirements
- A 'support notification' document following an assessment eg for dyslexia

Learners who have not already been assessed when they begin their learning with RALSS but suspect they may have a learning disability will be assessed initially by their tutor and a more thorough assessment by qualified staff will be arranged to ascertain future access arrangements.

All exam access arrangements provided by RALSS must follow current JCQ regulations and be processed using RALSS tutor evidence paperwork.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues.

Managers will ensure all tutors and invigilators must attend training in relation to the Equality Act 2010. All tutors and invigilators will be made aware of policies and procedures relating to emergency evacuation and medication, especially where they relate to candidates with a disability. All tutors and invigilators will be made aware of alternative means of communication, especially in the exam room when conveying information to disabled candidates.

Staff will ensure that information supplied to candidates with a disability, such as *JCQ information for candidates* documents, are suitably sized and adapted.

Staff will make sure that seating is available for candidates outside the classroom so those with a disability or are experiencing extreme stress/anxiety can rest before they enter the examination. Staff will make sure that the room is set up in such a way as to allow easy access and exiting for wheelchair users.

Candidates who might become unwell during an exam will be seated near an exit to facilitate easy egress. Seating will be appropriate and comfortable for all learners especially those with a disability.

Candidates requiring access arrangements.

Where candidates require a helper in their exam eg a scribe or oral language modifier we will make sure they are introduced to that person before the exam takes place so they are familiar with each other.

Candidates who are granted supervised rest breaks will be provided with a suitably comfortable area to rest which will not compromise the integrity of the exam. Rest breaks will be provided for those who suffer from fatigue, hyperactivity, obsessive-compulsive disorder or long term health conditions.

Where a candidate has been granted a prompter, the prompter will be made aware of disability etiquette particularly when touching the candidate's desk, as a means of prompting, or tapping the candidate's arm or shoulder. This will apply to those candidates with autism who may have difficulty with time.

For onscreen tests, RALSS will ensure that hardware and software are adapted for those candidates who have a sensory or multi-sensory impairment.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

All staff involved in conducting exams will be made aware of the emergency evacuation procedures in place for those candidates with a disability who may need assistance leaving the building.

When evacuation and emergency procedures are being explained to candidates, attention will be given to those candidates with a disability for whom such procedures may be difficult.

What can I do if I am not happy with my course?

If you are unhappy with your course, please tell us why. We can only help if we know what is wrong. Initially speak to your tutor, and then if the problem is not resolved, speak to the Adult Learning Manager, Dean Papworth). We have a Complaints Policy and Procedure if, after speaking to your tutor and the lead tutor your issues have not been resolved.

If required, we can help you to tell us what is wrong. We can provide a sign language interpreter or an advocate or friend may support you.

How accessible are your facilities?

We have accessible toilets and designated parking spaces reserved for disabled drivers. Our main premises are on the ground floor throughout with no steps or major slopes. Other premises in use will be risk assessed for suitability for all learners.