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Matt Service - 07052024

Blue Lights Digital Ltd. Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

Blue Lights Digital Ltd. ("the Company" also referred to as BLD) is committed to creating an inclusive and respectful environment that values diversity and promotes equality for all employees, apprentices, contractors, and visitors. We recognise that our diverse workforce is a significant asset, and we strive to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Outline the Company's commitment to equality and diversity.
2. Provide a framework for identifying and preventing discrimination.
3. Establish responsibilities for promoting an inclusive environment.

Scope

This policy applies to all Blue Lights Digital staff, apprentices, contractors, visitors, and any individual affected by our operations or training activities.

Principles

The following principles guide this policy:

1. **Equality**: All individuals will be treated equitably and without discrimination.
2. **Diversity**: Differences will be valued, and diversity will be promoted as a strength.
3. **Respect**: Every individual has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
4. **Inclusivity**: Create a supportive environment that enables everyone to reach their full potential.

Legal Framework

This policy is guided by the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Definitions

- **Direct Discrimination**: Treating someone less favourably due to a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect Discrimination**: Policies or practices that disproportionately disadvantage individuals with a protected characteristic.
- **Harassment**: Unwanted conduct that violates an individual's dignity or creates a hostile environment.
- **Victimisation**: Treating someone unfavourably due to their involvement in a discrimination complaint.

Protected Characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Responsibilities

Chief Operating Officer

- Overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Ensure that resources are available to promote equality and diversity.
- Review and update the policy regularly.

Equality and Diversity Officer – in absence of EDO refer to COO

- Develop and implement equality and diversity initiatives.
- Provide training and advice to staff and apprentices.
- Monitor compliance with the policy and report findings to senior management.
- Investigate complaints related to discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

Supervisors and Managers

- Foster an inclusive working environment.
- Ensure that staff and apprentices understand and adhere to the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Identify and address any discriminatory practices.
- Support staff and apprentices in raising concerns about discrimination.

Staff and Apprentices

- Treat others with respect and promote an inclusive environment.

- Report any concerns or instances of discrimination to the Equality and Diversity Officer.
- Participate in equality and diversity training provided by the Company.

Contractors and Visitors

- Comply with Blue Lights Digital's Equality and Diversity Policy while on Company premises.
- Treat staff, apprentices, and other visitors with respect.

Recruitment and Selection

- Ensure recruitment processes are fair and free from bias.
- Encourage applications from underrepresented groups.
- Provide reasonable adjustments for candidates with disabilities during the recruitment process.

Training and Development

- Provide equality and diversity training to all new staff and apprentices as part of their induction.
- Offer regular refresher training for all staff and apprentices.
- Identify and support career development opportunities for underrepresented groups.

Reporting and Handling Complaints

Reporting Concerns

- Staff and apprentices are encouraged to report concerns to the Equality and Diversity Officer.
- Complaints can also be raised with a supervisor.

Investigation Process

1. **Initial Assessment**: The Equality and Diversity Officer will assess the complaint and determine the appropriate course of action.
2. **Investigation**:
    - Conduct a thorough and impartial investigation.
    - Interview relevant parties and review evidence.
3. **Outcome**:
    - Provide a written response to the complainant within 20 working days.
    - Recommend corrective actions if the complaint is upheld.

Appeals

- If dissatisfied with the outcome, the complainant can appeal to the COO.
- The CCO will review the complaint and the investigation process.
- A final decision will be communicated within 15 working days.

Monitoring and Review

- The Equality and Diversity Officer will monitor compliance with this policy and report findings to senior management.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if significant changes are required.
- Feedback from staff, apprentices, and partners will be considered for continuous improvement.

Contact Information

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