

TITLE: Inclusion and Access to learning Policy	REF: HSA0016	VERSION: 1
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Version 1 – 12.3.2025	<i>John Pitchforth</i>	On behalf of the Leadership Team

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1. Purpose

The Heritage Skills Academy is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment in which all learners, staff, tutors, assessors, and visitors are treated with dignity and respect. This policy sets out our commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and fair access, ensuring that no individual is disadvantaged in learning, training, assessment, or examinations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to: -

- All learners, including prospective learners – Apprentices and short-course participants
- Staff, tutors, assessors and volunteers
- Partners, subcontractors, and awarding bodies working with the Academy

It covers HSA activities, including teaching, learning, assessment, examinations and progression.

3. Legal and Regulatory Context

The Heritage Skills Academy operates in line with relevant equality and education legislation, including (but not limited to):

- The Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Awarding body and regulatory authority requirements

4. Our Commitment to Inclusion

The Heritage Skills Academy aims to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for all learners
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Create a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning culture
- Ensure fair, transparent, and accessible assessment and examination processes

We recognise that learners may have differing needs due to disability, health conditions, learning differences, caring responsibilities, socio-economic background, cultural background, age, gender, or prior educational experiences.

5. Protected Characteristics

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we will not discriminate on the basis of: -

- Age

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race, ethnicity, or nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

6. Inclusive Learning and Teaching

The Heritage Skills Academy will:

- Use inclusive teaching methods that recognise different learning styles
- Provide learning materials in accessible formats where reasonably practicable
- Make reasonable adjustments to teaching and assessment activities
- Encourage open communication about individual support needs

Learners are encouraged to disclose any support needs at enrolment or as soon as they arise so appropriate support can be arranged.

7. Fair Access to Exams and Assessment

The Heritage Skills Academy is committed to ensuring fair, valid, and reliable assessment and examination arrangements for all learners.

7.1 Reasonable Adjustments

Where a learner has a disability, learning difference, medical condition, or temporary injury, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure fair access to exams and assessments. These may include: -

- Extra time
- Rest breaks
- Use of assistive technology
- A scribe or reader
- Modified assessment formats
- Alternative assessment methods, where permitted by the awarding body

- Physical access adjustments to exam venues

All adjustments will be in line with awarding body regulations and will not compromise the integrity or standards of the qualification.

7.2 Exam Access Arrangements

- Evidence requirements will be explained sensitively and transparently
- Requests will be processed promptly and confidentially
- No learner will be disadvantaged for disclosing support needs

7.3 Assessment Methods

Where possible and appropriate, HSA will use a range of assessment methods to allow learners to demonstrate competence, including: -

- Practical assessments and observations
- Portfolios of evidence
- Professional discussions

8. Apprentice Recruitment, Selection, and Progression

The Heritage Skills Academy will:

- Use fair and transparent recruitment and selection processes
- Ensure entry requirements are relevant and proportionate
- Provide guidance and support on progression routes
- Avoid unnecessary barriers to participation or achievement

9. Creating an Inclusive Environment

We are committed to providing:

- Accessible training venues where reasonably practicable
- Clear information about facilities and access
- A respectful and professional learning environment - Zero tolerance of bullying, harassment, or discrimination

Any incidents will be addressed promptly and in line with HSA procedures.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

10.1 Management

- Ensure this policy is implemented and reviewed
- Allocate resources to support inclusion

- Monitor outcomes to identify and address barriers

10.2 Staff, Tutors, and Assessors

- Apply inclusive practices in teaching and assessment
- Respect confidentiality and learner dignity
- Provide learners with appropriate support

10.3 Learners

- Treat others with respect
- Engage positively with inclusive practices
- Inform HSA of any support needs as early as possible

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information relating to a learner's support needs or access arrangements will be handled sensitively and in accordance with data protection legislation.

12. Complaints and Appeals

Learners who feel they have been treated unfairly or have not been given appropriate access to learning or exams may raise concerns through the HSA complaints or appeals procedures. All complaints will be taken seriously and investigated fairly.

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually or sooner if required by legislation or regulatory changes
- Monitored through learner feedback, achievement data, and quality assurance processes

The Heritage Skills Academy is committed to continuous improvement in inclusion.