

# Equality & Diversity

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## Policy

Last Modified: January 2021

Reviewed: Annually

### What is the policy about?

Equality and Diversity rights and responsibilities are enshrined in law (the Equality Act 2010) and are clearly important in the creation and maintenance of a harmonious society and working environment. Novlr is committed to treating everyone fairly, we respect and value the diversity of our learners, clients, employees, partners, employers and all other people we work with.

### Why is it important?

Novlr has a positive, outcome based view of equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I). The legal and moral drivers for ED&I are clear. Yet, there are also very positive business benefit drivers for ED&I. ED&I are essential conditions for effective business innovation and change. We see the real benefits that multiple perspectives bring to problem solving and the creation of ideas.

Advanced organisations actively design teams to feature ED&I so that they function effectively through the innovation lifecycle – and are far better than teams that do not. We understand the role of ED&I in the development and sustaining of a vibrant and high potential culture of innovation.

Effective 21st Century leadership is defined by openness, collaboration and engagement, with organisational forms emerging to suit this less hierarchical, control-focussed way of working. ED&I, is again a feature of today's open, future- & change-focussed leaders.

The lack of ED&I is now more widely recognised as a serious detriment to organisational health. Novlr's own experience in this field is positive. From the beginning, the enterprise's founders have actively recruited people from diverse backgrounds to create an international, inclusive and diverse organisation that holds innovation as a core value.

## Protected Characteristics:

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

You are protected under the Equality Act 2010 from these types of discrimination. Novlr also considers other factors such as neurodiversity and socioeconomic background when supporting the different needs of our learners and employees.

## Novlr Application

This policy applies to:

- **actual and prospective users** ('user' is used as a common term to also denote client and customer where appropriate)
- **employees** (individuals who work for the company either on a permanent, temporary, contractual or voluntary basis)

We will:

1. Provide learning and working environments that respect difference and protect the diversity of those working within them
2. Raise individual awareness of the importance of equality and diversity and good relations between people of different groups
3. Develop the awareness and skills of individuals to promote fairness, inclusivity and good relations
4. Ensure that everyone is enabled to achieve positive outcomes, whatever their background
5. Ensure fair and equal access to learning and recruitment and take action to promote equality
6. Make reasonable and practicable adjustments to enable individuals to participate in learning or work

## What I need to do?

All Novlr people are expected to:

1. Communicate and behave with courtesy, kindness and respect and in accordance with our policies and procedures
2. Inform their manager if they have any additional needs or are experiencing difficulties in learning or working with us
3. Value and respect individual differences and the contributions of others
4. Maintain a safe and secure learning and working environment
5. Let the management team know immediately if they are unhappy with any aspect of working with Novlr or have witnessed anything of concern

### 1. Complaints/ grievances

We will make all individuals aware of the steps to follow should they wish to raise a concern, grievance or make a complaint. We will aim to resolve any concerns or problems as quickly as possible and if we cannot resolve it, we will explain why and say what we can do.

- For users: The quickest and easiest way for a user to raise a concern or make a complaint is to do so via the intercom bubble, or by email. If you feel your complaints around equality and diversity have been resolved unsatisfactorily, please do address your concerns to our Managing Director, and they will be passed to them.
- For employees: Novlr will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance which it upholds. Novlr won't penalise employees for raising a grievance, unless the complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith. Any employee (found to be) breaching this policy will be regarded as behaving in a manner that constitutes an act of misconduct and will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

### 2. Outcomes

- For users. We will strive to ensure that our products and services are available to all. No individual will be excluded on the grounds of their age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief.
- For employees. Selection criteria (role profile) will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable and non-discriminatory. All applicants invited to participate in the selection process will be asked if any assistance / adjustment is required to enable them to fully participate.

### **3. Disclosure and additional support provisions**

Before starting and during employment, individuals will be given an opportunity (in confidence) to disclose any disability or learning difficulty they may have. This is to ensure we put in place additional or alternative support. We will explain why this information is being sought and how it will be used.

Additionally:

For employees: Where an employee declares a disability, steps will be taken to accommodate this by making reasonable adjustments.

### **4. Induction and Equality Training**

All individuals will receive an induction into their employment and working environment. We will make everyone aware of our commitment to equality and diversity, and how to make us aware of any dissatisfaction or concern. Novlr also runs initiatives such as unconscious bias training and has a commitment to flexible working practices and accessible recruitment.

### **5. Learning and Working Environment**

We are committed to creating an open and conducive learning and working environments where everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We are opposed to and will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or unacceptable behaviour. We will ensure all individuals have clear routes to report incidents and/or concerns and for these to be managed fairly and fully.

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## Policy Links

Equality Act 2010:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/2260/contents/made>

### **References and further reading:**

Employee Engagement ISO Accreditation files Equality and Human Rights Commission

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>