

GLC EMPLOYMENT AND ENGAGEMENT OF DISABLED PERSONS GUIDANCE

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Directors on :	Summer 2025
This Policy will be reviewed on :	Summer 2028

GLC Mission Statement

The GLC’s mission is to develop active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community.

This will be achieved through:

- High quality teaching that deliberately develops competencies of curiosity, creativity, communication and critical-thinking;
- An inspiring and meaningful curriculum;
- The development of productive relationships by instilling the values of compassion, resilience, responsibility and aspiration to prepare our young people for learning and life;
- A commitment to the wellbeing of our staff;
- A culture of professional generosity, collaboration, challenge and support throughout the GLC;
- The development of effective external partnerships for the benefit and wellbeing of our community.

Equalities Statement

The GLC’s commitment to equality is enshrined in our mission statement to develop ‘active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community’.

We are a vibrant, innovative and successful organisation: we work hard to be the place of choice to work and to learn. Across the 5 academies of the GLC, we pledge that everyone enjoys an equality of opportunity. We work tirelessly to ensure that individual characteristics including age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, academic ability, disability, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation are not discriminated against in any way. We create inclusive environments characterised by mutual respect where difference is celebrated.

GLC Employment and Engagement of Disabled Persons Guidance

The GLC is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, and are provided with equal opportunities to thrive. This policy outlines our commitment to the employment and engagement of disabled persons, ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and promoting best practices for creating an accessible and supportive environment.

We recognise that a diverse workforce, including disabled people, brings a wealth of skills, experiences, and perspectives that enhance innovation, productivity, and overall business success. We believe in removing barriers and proactively supporting disabled individuals throughout their entire employment journey, from recruitment to career development and retention.

1. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, workers, contractors, self-employed individuals, and job applicants of The GLC. It covers all aspects of employment, including:

- Recruitment and selection;
- Terms and conditions of employment;
- Training and development;
- Promotion and career progression;
- Performance management;
- Discipline and grievances;
- Redundancy and dismissal;
- Workplace culture and environment.

2. Definition of Disability [as per Equality Act 2010]

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

- Substantial: more than minor or trivial;
- Long-term: lasting or likely to last for 12 months or more.

This definition includes a wide range of conditions, both visible and non-visible, and can include progressive conditions from the point of diagnosis [e.g. cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV].

3. Principles

The GLC is committed to the following principles:

- Equality of Opportunity: Ensuring that disabled people have equal access to employment opportunities and are not treated less favourably than non-disabled people;
- Reasonable Adjustments: Proactively making reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled people from being put at a substantial disadvantage;
- Non-Discrimination: Prohibiting all forms of disability discrimination, including direct, indirect, discrimination arising from disability, harassment, and victimisation;
- Inclusive Culture: Fostering a workplace culture where disabled individuals feel valued, supported, and confident to discuss their needs;
- Confidentiality: Handling all personal and medical information related to disability with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity.

4. Recruitment and Selection

We will ensure our recruitment and selection processes are fair, accessible, and inclusive:

- Accessible Advertisements: Job advertisements will be clear, accessible, and published on platforms that reach a diverse audience. They will explicitly state our commitment to reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process;
- Pre-Employment Health Questions: Health or disability-related questions will only be asked at the pre-employment stage in limited circumstances, such as to determine if reasonable adjustments are needed for the interview process or to ascertain if an applicant can carry out a task essential to the role;
- Reasonable Adjustments for Interviews: We will ask all candidates if they require any reasonable adjustments to participate fully in the interview and selection process [e.g., accessible interview rooms, extra time for tests, communication support, alternative formats for materials];
- Focus on Ability: Recruitment decisions will be based on the candidate's skills, qualifications, and ability to perform the essential functions of the role, with reasonable adjustments taken into account;
- Positive Action: Where appropriate and lawful, we may utilise positive action measures to encourage applications from disabled people and address underrepresentation.

5. Reasonable Adjustments in Employment

We are legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled employees are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled employees. This duty applies to all aspects of employment.

- Identifying Needs: We encourage employees to openly communicate any disability or health condition that may require adjustments. Managers will also be proactive in considering if a reasonable adjustment may be needed if they become aware of a potential disadvantage;
- Interactive Process: We will engage in a collaborative and interactive process with the employee to understand their specific needs and identify effective adjustments. This may involve seeking advice from occupational health professionals, disability organisations, or the Access to Work scheme;
- Examples of Reasonable Adjustments [non-exhaustive]:
 - Physical Environment: Modifying premises [e.g., ramps, accessible restrooms, adjusted lighting/layout];
 - Working Arrangements: Flexible working hours, adjusted break times, phased return to work after absence, re-allocating minor duties;
 - Equipment and Technology: Providing specialist equipment [e.g., ergonomic chairs, assistive software, screen readers, hearing aids];
 - Support: Providing a support worker, sign language interpreter, or one-to-one assistance;
 - Training and Development: Providing information in accessible formats, adapting training methods, offering additional training or mentoring;
 - Policies and Procedures: Adjusting performance targets, sickness absence policies, or disciplinary procedures to account for disability-related impacts.
- Cost and Practicality: While adjustments must be reasonable, we will consider effectiveness in overcoming the disadvantage, practicality, affordability, and impact on health and safety. The Access to Work scheme [a government program] can provide financial assistance for certain adjustments;
- Review: Reasonable adjustments will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective and meet the evolving needs of the employee.

6. Managing Disability in the Workplace

- Supportive Management: Managers play a crucial role in creating an inclusive environment. They will be trained to:
 - Understand their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010;
 - Initiate sensitive conversations about disability;
 - Recognise potential signs that an employee may need support;
 - Collaborate with employees to implement and review reasonable adjustments;
 - Promote an open and respectful culture.
- Performance and Attendance: Performance and attendance issues will be managed fairly and consistently, taking into account any disability and the reasonable adjustments in place. Disability-related absences will be managed sensitively, and consideration will be given to reasonable adjustments to support an employee's return to work;
- Confidentiality: All discussions and information related to an employee's disability will be kept confidential and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know, in accordance with data protection regulations.

7. Training and Awareness

The GLC is committed to raising awareness and understanding of disability within the workplace:

- Disability Awareness Training: All employees, particularly managers and those involved in recruitment, will receive training on disability awareness, inclusive language, reasonable adjustments, and their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010;
- Promoting Inclusivity: We will actively promote a culture of respect and understanding, challenging stereotypes and fostering positive attitudes towards disability.

8. Grievances and Complaints

Any employee who believes they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment on the grounds of disability should raise this concern through the GLC Grievance Procedure. All complaints will be investigated promptly, fairly, and confidentially. Retaliation against anyone who raises a concern or supports a complaint related to disability will not be tolerated.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly [at least annually] to ensure its effectiveness, compliance with legislation, and alignment with best practices. We will consider feedback from employees, relevant organisations, and legal developments to continually improve our approach to the employment and engagement of disabled persons.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

- Senior Leadership: Accountable for the overall commitment to and implementation of this policy;
- Human Resources Department: Responsible for advising on policy interpretation, supporting managers, coordinating reasonable adjustments, and ensuring legal compliance;
- Managers: Responsible for implementing this policy within their teams, fostering an inclusive environment, engaging in proactive discussions with employees, and collaborating on reasonable adjustments;
- All Employees: Responsible for treating colleagues with dignity and respect, adhering to this policy, and supporting a diverse and inclusive workplace.

11. Further Information and Support

For further information or support, please contact:

- The GLC HR Manager;

- External Resources:
 - Acas: Provides free, impartial advice on workplace rights, rules, and best practice [www.acas.org.uk];
 - Equality Advisory and Support Service [EASS]: Offers advice and assistance on discrimination and human rights issues [www.equalityadvisoryservice.com];
 - Access to Work: A government scheme that can provide grants to help disabled people start or stay in work [www.gov.uk/access-to-work];
 - Business Disability Forum: An employer organisation that provides information, support, and advice on disability as it affects business [www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk].