



INCLUSIVITY CHARTER



Inclusivity Charter Guide

About the Inclusivity Charter



INCLUSIVITY CHARTER

LCL Awards' Inclusivity Charter was launched in 2022 to help approved centres ensure their training facilities are welcoming places, with flexible course options to suit people from all walks of life.

HATTIE HASAN MBE

The Charter was developed with Hattie Hasan MBE, founder of the all-women plumbing business, Stopcocks Women Plumbers and the Register of Tradeswomen; a not-for-profit organisation that connects householders with tradeswomen and helps survivors of domestic abuse to get into skilled trades.



“ Having experienced first-hand sexism and ignorance when it comes to being a ‘female plumber’, making a difference at this grassroots level should have real impact. If women and other underrepresented groups have a good experience in the training centre, they will start their careers with more confidence. An inclusive environment increases diversity in training centres. LCL Awards centres can attract more learners from more different backgrounds and help to dispel myths that trainees may have too.”

HATTIE HASAN MBE



Why is the Charter important?

Apart from the fact that being decent and accommodating is the right thing to do, the Charter contributes to wider issues in the building services engineering sector – a massive skills shortage, an ageing workforce and continued dominance of white men. According to the latest data, women make up only 15% of the UK construction workforce, with just 1-2% in on-site trades*.

There is an untapped pool of talent that our industry desperately needs. Centres that take steps to encourage women and other underrepresented groups through their doors are ultimately increasing their customer base and opportunities for growth and success.

Being 'inclusive' is good for everyone; improving outcomes through flexible course delivery and making things easier to understand for neurodiverse candidates, or those for whom English isn't a first language, for example, will improve the learning experience for all trainees, regardless of their background.

“We've held the Inclusivity Charter for a few years now, and it's definitely become more meaningful over time. Everyone is different and may be dealing with their own challenges - whether that's mental health, discrimination, or working in a male-dominated environment - it makes you more aware, and that awareness helps us approach things in the right way.”

**LAUREN CHASE, OFFICE MANAGER
HAMPSHIRE TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT (HTAA)**



Women make up **only 15%** of the UK construction workforce, with **just 1-2%** in on-site trades.*

* Source: www.ciob.org/industry/policy-research/policy-positions/equality-diversity-inclusion

What does 'inclusivity' mean in the context of your centre?



Being inclusive means that all students are given equal opportunities to succeed, regardless of their background or demographic characteristics. There is no 'one-size fits all' solution; inclusivity is a shared responsibility, requiring trainers, centre leadership, and learners to collaborate, creating an environment conducive to learning, where everyone feels welcome and safe.

Being inclusive is an ongoing process; our understanding of best practices and learner needs will continue to grow and evolve. The Charter is designed to help every member of the LCL Awards community broaden their perspective on inclusion and take meaningful steps to achieve it, for the good of learners, staff and the wider building services engineering sector.



“ I think a lot of people misunderstand the word inclusivity. They think of it in terms of male and female, they don't realise it's everything - confidence, learning needs, language barriers, mental health and medical conditions, everything. It's about making sure everybody gets treated fairly and equally.”

**JOANNE KELLY, TRAINING AND CENTRE MANAGER,
GAS CERTIFICATION COMPANY**

Meeting the Charter

LCL Awards centres interested in achieving Charter status must meet a set of criteria that demonstrate what a centre is doing now and what it plans to do in the future to meet the Charter's core values.

Charter Values

1. LCL Awards centres are committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive environment where both learners and centre staff feel safe, heard and supported.
2. We do not tolerate offensive language, such as sexist or racist comments – from trainers or trainees.
3. We consider the needs of all learners, in order to enhance learning experiences and increase opportunity.
4. We are actively exploring a range of training options, using creativity and innovation to improve engagement.
5. Our ambition is to help as many people as possible access the building services engineering sector; to improve lives, improve the sector and combat skills shortages.
6. We believe that inclusion creates an environment where everyone is valued, feels valued and are therefore able to achieve their highest potential.



**INCLUSIVITY
CHARTER**

For each value, centres are asked to outline how they meet the statement.

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WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS

LCL Awards centres are committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive environment where both learners and centre staff feel safe, heard and supported.

THIS COULD LOOK LIKE:

- » Encouraging an open-door policy where staff and learners are made to feel like they can speak their mind and chat through concerns.
- » Ensuring suitable washroom facilities, including non-gendered toilets.
- » Prioritising mental health, with dedicated support.
- » Creating quiet spaces for faith, reflection and/or time away from the classroom.
- » Considering the demographic of the area your centre operates in and acknowledging different cultural celebrations that might be important to your learners.



EXAMPLES FROM THE LCL AWARDS NETWORK

UNIVERSAL SKILLS: Learners at Universal Skills are given the opportunity to highlight any extra support they may need through a structured onboarding process before they start training.

Taking the form of a one-to-one interview with a trainer, the interaction puts learners at ease, giving Universal Skills the chance to communicate behavioural expectations, core values, and support systems that have been set up to ensure everyone feels comfortable.

Its Future Skills programme encourages staff to come forward with good ideas, ensuring they are involved in the development of the business.

NETA: At NETA's training centre there are safe spaces and multi-faith rooms where learners can express their identities and experiences without fear of discrimination or judgement. Partnerships have been made with local organisations and community groups to support educational opportunities for underrepresented groups.

GTEC TRAINING

“ We have built a residential area where college students can be housed for the duration of their course. They have access to a large kitchen and there are responsible adults on hand to facilitate and ensure everyone is safe. We can also help our learners access funding through government support schemes, which makes up-skilling more affordable.”

GTEC TRAINING: SAM GRAHAM, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

We do not tolerate offensive language, such as sexist or racist comments – from trainers or trainees.



THIS COULD LOOK LIKE:

- » Having a clearly defined Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) policy.
- » Creating learner agreements, which outline acceptable/unacceptable behaviours and the overall values of your centre.
- » Formal EDI training for staff, to ensure offensive language is avoided, while giving guidance on how to deal with any issues in the classroom.

EXAMPLES FROM THE LCL AWARDS NETWORK

UNIVERSAL SKILLS: Staff are trained in core topics such as unconscious bias and discrimination, reflecting Universal Skills' commitment to safety and respect for all. The company upholds an open-door policy to ensure both learners and staff can comfortably voice concerns, and there are dedicated support channels through HR, as well as quarterly one-on-one meetings, to support this.

E.ON

“Not only do we want to ensure all the staff here are supported, we also have the responsibility of instilling the values of diversity in our wider workforce. After all, they are the people who will be representing the company and its ethics out in the real world, when they work in homes.

“We have policies in place to ensure safe working environments, zero tolerance of discriminatory behaviour, and facilities such as multi-faith prayer rooms, as well as set-ups to cater for a wide range of learners.”

LEE MILES, TECHNICAL TRAINER & DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

We consider the needs of all learners in order to enhance learning experiences and increase opportunities.

THIS COULD LOOK LIKE:

- » Speaking to learners before they start training to find out if they have any additional needs, such as neurodivergence, English as an additional language or family commitments that take priority.
- » Offering flexible delivery - evening and weekend courses, online learning and 'reasonable adjustments' for learners that might need more time, for example.
- » Simplifying language, using bigger fonts and making use of audio-visual tools for learners who find engaging with text more difficult.

EXAMPLES FROM THE LCL AWARDS NETWORK:

HTAA: Additional support, such as extra days in the centre, is available to learners who need it. A learner with AuDHD said: “(HTAA) go out of their way to help and make you feel included...I found with my AuDHD, they've been really proactive in helping with additional needs, including applying for extra time on exams.”

FARADAY CENTRE

“We do all we can to accommodate our learners, many of whom are multinationals flying in from overseas. Inevitably, there are challenges relating to language, so we're careful to prepare well in advance and ensure we have what we need to deliver our courses effectively – to accommodate the needs of each group. They may bring, or we provide, an interpreter but more often than not, we simply slow things down and use more easily understandable terms when English isn't a group's first language.

ALEX BREWIS, ACCOUNT MANAGER

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INNOVATIVE TRAINING APPROACHES

We are actively exploring a range of training options, using creativity and innovation to improve engagement.

THIS COULD LOOK LIKE:

- » Using technology, such as Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), to bring learning to life.
- » Making use of a broad range of learning and revision tools, such as centre-created online resource hubs, TikTok and YouTube.
- » Working with local councils and other funded organisations to help learners access discounted training.
- » Offering financial support/options to spread the cost.

EXAMPLES FROM THE LCL AWARDS NETWORK:

NETA: Courses are offered in multiple languages, and non-native speakers are supported through language assistance programs. All learning materials and facilities are accessible to students with disabilities. This includes providing online content that adheres to accessibility standards.

HAMPSHIRE TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT (HTAA):

'Hard Hats, Soft Hearts' is a men's mental health charity created by HTAA founder, John Razzell, to support tradesmen experiencing mental health challenges. Run from the centre one evening a week, it offers a safe and non-judgemental space where people can come in for a coffee and a chat about work and personal challenges.

The charity has already supported individuals facing difficult personal circumstances, including providing practical and financial help where needed. More broadly, it reflects HTAA's belief that inclusivity is not limited to training delivery, but extends to understanding and supporting the wider pressures people may be facing.

Our ambition is to help as many people as possible access the building services engineering sector; to improve lives, improve the sector and combat skills shortages.



THIS COULD LOOK LIKE:

- » Community outreach, working with local schools and colleges to offer scholarships and apprenticeships.
- » Partnering with businesses to offer bespoke courses and/or job opportunities for trained candidates.
- » Using centre facilities as a showcase for net zero homes, for example.

EXAMPLE FROM THE LCL AWARDS NETWORK:

GAS CERTIFICATION COMPANY (GCC): GCC regularly attends school and college careers events, supporting local initiatives that help young people understand the opportunities and routes available in building services engineering. GCC has also developed the Ignite Scholarship Scheme to help bridge the gap between school and skilled careers, addressing the lack of visible pathways many young people face when considering the sector.



“We’ve launched the new scholarship scheme to encourage more young people into the sector. With over 50% of the UK’s gas engineers currently over the age of 55, at least half of them will reach retirement age within the next 12 years*. At the same time, there is a critical shortage of young people entering the industry. We need to wake up to this challenge and put measures in place to rectify falling numbers to protect our energy sector in the future.”

MANAGING DIRECTOR, ANDREW MCNAB

UNIVERSAL SKILLS

“We want to inspire as many people as we can to consider an engineering career, and our efforts to break down the preconception that apprenticeships are just for school leavers are paying off. We have apprentices of all ages now - and even some of our staff have become apprentices!”

KATE GARSIDE, TRAINING DELIVERY MANAGER

NETA: Local schools are invited to the centre for taster days to encourage more girls, in particular, into STEM training. NETA has a strong Alumni network which connects its learners with alumni from similar backgrounds to offer career advice and networking opportunities.



We believe that inclusion creates an environment where everyone is valued, feels valued and are therefore able to achieve their highest potential.

THIS COULD LOOK LIKE:

- » Positive feedback from learners and staff.
- » Improved pass rates and/or customer satisfaction.
- » Recognition of the impact inclusivity has on centre operations and the wider building services sector.



EXAMPLES FROM THE LCL AWARDS NETWORK:

NETA

“Every quarter we run learner surveys with 100% of students feeling safe, able to ask for help if their safety or wellbeing is at risk and respected and treated fairly by our trainers. We run quarterly staff surveys too. In 2017 the satisfaction rate amongst staff was only 70%, but we’ve worked hard to improve on this, and I’m delighted that it’s now 96%. That’s much better!”

CAROL RICHARDSON, COMPLIANCE MANAGER

HTAA

“We believe an inclusive environment is a productive one. At the end of the day, it’s about people - if you take the time to understand them and support them properly, you’ll get the best out of them.”

LAUREN CHASE, OFFICE MANAGER

* Source: www.gassaferegister.co.uk/media/2490/decade-review.pdf

Next steps...

Many LCL Awards centres are already doing a fantastic job of creating inclusive learning environments that attract a diverse range of learners.

Gaining LCL Awards Inclusivity Charter status clearly communicates your values to both trainees and staff.

BEFORE YOU START THE PROCESS, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- » **CULTURE & BEHAVIOUR STANDARDS** – do you have specific policies? How are these upheld?
- » **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT** – does your centre have suitable washroom facilities? Is it accessible for disabled learners?
- » **LEARNER ONBOARDING & SUPPORT** – are there any processes in place to find out the needs of your learners? How do you help candidates succeed?
- » **FLEXIBLE DELIVERY OPTIONS** – do you offer evening/ weekend courses, block release and/or a mix of online and offline training?
- » **STAFF AWARENESS/TRAINING** – are staff formally trained in EDI?
- » **COMMUNICATION & MARKETING** – is your marketing material reflective of a broad cross-section of learners? How do you communicate your values? (Gaining Inclusivity Charter status will help with this!)
- » **FEEDBACK & COMPLAINTS HANDLING** – do you have feedback mechanisms in place? How do you deal with any issues raised?



Don't just take our word for it; signing up to the Inclusivity Charter could be hugely beneficial to your business:

“ It (meeting the Charter) has been such a worthwhile process, as it's given us the opportunity to enhance our EDI policies and really think about how we bring diversity to the training centre. Our drive to offer renewables training to our workforce has been hugely successful, with a greater take-up than anticipated. Focusing on the Inclusivity Charter has helped us shape the way forward.”

LEE MILES, TECHNICAL TRAINER & DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST, E.ON



If you are interested in achieving Inclusivity Charter status, then contact LCL Awards via email inclusivity@lclawards.co.uk or call 020 8839 2439



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