

# Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Recruitment)

## Youth Start Limited

Company Number: 16864238

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB

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## Effective Date

1 January 2026

## Next Review Date

1 January 2027

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## Introduction and Purpose

Youth Start Limited is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work, including recruitment and employment services. This Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Recruitment) sets out our approach to ensuring that our recruitment services are accessible, fair, and inclusive for all young people, regardless of their background or characteristics.

Diversity and inclusion are fundamental to Youth Start's mission. We believe that every young person deserves the opportunity to access employment and to achieve their potential. We are committed to breaking down barriers to employment and to creating opportunities for young people from all backgrounds, including those who face disadvantage or discrimination.

This policy applies to all staff members employed by Youth Start Limited, all volunteers engaged by Youth Start, all contractors and third parties who work with Youth Start, all young people who use Youth Start's services, and all employers who work with Youth Start.

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## Scope

This Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Recruitment) applies to:

- All staff members employed by Youth Start Limited
- All volunteers engaged by Youth Start Limited
- All contractors and third parties who work with Youth Start
- All young people aged 18-24 who use Youth Start's recruitment services
- All employers who work with Youth Start
- All recruitment activities and services delivered by Youth Start



This policy does not apply to:

- Recruitment services delivered by other organisations (unless Youth Start is supervising or partnering with those organisations)
- Youth Start's own internal recruitment and employment practices (which are covered by Youth Start's Equal Opportunities Policy)

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## Legal Framework

Diversity and inclusion in recruitment must comply with the following legislation:

### **Equality Act 2010:**

This Act prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are: - Age - Disability - Gender reassignment - Marriage and civil partnership - Pregnancy and maternity - Race - Religion or belief - Sex - Sexual orientation

The Equality Act 2010 requires that employers and recruitment agencies do not discriminate against candidates on the basis of protected characteristics. The Act also requires that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates.

### **Employment Rights Act 1996:**

This Act regulates employment relationships and provides protections for workers, including protections against unfair dismissal and discrimination.

### **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR):**

These Acts regulate the processing of personal data, including sensitive personal data (such as information about race, religion, health, or sexual orientation). Diversity data must be processed fairly, transparently, and securely.

### **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974:**

This Act requires that employers take steps to protect the health and safety of workers, including making reasonable adjustments for disabled workers.

### **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974:**

This Act provides that certain criminal convictions become "spent" after a period of time and do not need to be disclosed. Youth Start is committed to supporting young people with criminal records and to ensuring that criminal records are not an automatic barrier to employment.

### **Modern Slavery Act 2015:**

This Act requires that organisations take steps to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking. Youth Start is committed to identifying and supporting young people who may be at risk of exploitation.

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## Youth Start's Approach to Diversity and Inclusion

Youth Start is committed to:

### **Equality of Opportunity:**

We are committed to ensuring that all young people have equal access to our recruitment services and to employment opportunities, regardless of their background or characteristics.

### **Breaking Down Barriers:**

We are committed to identifying and addressing barriers to employment that young people face, including barriers related to disadvantage, discrimination, or lack of opportunity.

### **Celebrating Diversity:**

We are committed to celebrating diversity and to recognising the value that young people from different backgrounds bring to the workplace.

### **Creating Inclusive Services:**

We are committed to creating recruitment services that are accessible, welcoming, and inclusive for all young people.

### **Challenging Discrimination:**

We are committed to challenging discrimination, bias, and stereotypes in recruitment and employment.

### **Promoting Inclusive Employers:**

We are committed to working with employers who share our commitment to diversity and inclusion and to encouraging employers to adopt inclusive recruitment and employment practices.

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## Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine protected characteristics. Youth Start is committed to ensuring that our recruitment services do not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic.

### Age

#### **Youth Start's Approach:**

Youth Start specialises in supporting young people aged 18-24. We recognise that young people face specific barriers to employment, including lack of experience, lack of qualifications, and age-based stereotypes. We are committed to challenging age-based discrimination and to promoting the value of young workers.

#### **Reasonable Adjustments:**

We tailor our services to meet the needs of young people, including providing additional support, mentorship, and skills development.



## Disability

### Youth Start's Approach:

Youth Start is committed to supporting young people with disabilities and to ensuring that our services are accessible. We recognise that disabled young people face additional barriers to employment, including physical barriers, attitudinal barriers, and lack of reasonable adjustments.

### Reasonable Adjustments:

We make reasonable adjustments to our services to ensure that disabled young people can access our support. Reasonable adjustments may include: - Providing information in accessible formats (such as large print, audio, or easy read) - Providing support with applications and interviews - Arranging accessible venues for meetings - Providing additional time or flexibility - Liaising with employers to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made in the workplace

### Disability Disclosure:

Young people are not required to disclose a disability. However, we encourage young people to share information about disabilities or additional needs so that we can provide appropriate support. Information about disabilities is treated confidentially and is only shared with employers with the young person's consent.

## Gender Reassignment

### Youth Start's Approach:

Youth Start is committed to supporting transgender and non-binary young people and to ensuring that our services are inclusive and respectful. We recognise that transgender and non-binary young people face discrimination and barriers to employment.

### Respectful Practice:

We respect young people's gender identity and use the name and pronouns that young people prefer. We challenge discrimination and stereotypes related to gender identity.

### Confidentiality:

Information about gender identity is treated confidentially and is only shared with employers with the young person's consent.

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

### Youth Start's Approach:

Youth Start does not discriminate on the basis of marriage or civil partnership status. We recognise that young people may be married or in civil partnerships and that this should not be a barrier to employment.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

### Youth Start's Approach:

Youth Start is committed to supporting young people who are pregnant or who have recently given birth. We recognise that pregnancy and maternity can be a barrier to employment and that young parents face additional challenges.



### **Reasonable Adjustments:**

We make reasonable adjustments to our services to support pregnant young people and young parents. This may include: - Flexible appointment times - Support with childcare arrangements - Liaison with employers to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made in the workplace - Information about maternity rights and benefits

## **Race**

### **Youth Start's Approach:**

Youth Start is committed to supporting young people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds and to challenging racial discrimination and inequality. We recognise that young people from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds face additional barriers to employment, including discrimination, stereotypes, and lack of opportunity.

### **Inclusive Practice:**

We ensure that our services are culturally sensitive and inclusive. We challenge racial stereotypes and discrimination. We work with employers to promote racial equality and to encourage diverse recruitment.

### **Monitoring:**

We monitor the racial and ethnic background of young people who use our services to ensure that our services are accessible to all communities and to identify any barriers or inequalities.

## **Religion or Belief**

### **Youth Start's Approach:**

Youth Start is committed to supporting young people of all religions and beliefs, including those with no religion or belief. We recognise that young people may face discrimination or barriers to employment related to their religion or belief.

### **Respectful Practice:**

We respect young people's religion or belief and do not discriminate on this basis. We make reasonable adjustments to accommodate religious practices, such as prayer times or dietary requirements.

### **Confidentiality:**

Information about religion or belief is treated confidentially and is only shared with employers with the young person's consent.

## **Sex**

### **Youth Start's Approach:**

Youth Start is committed to supporting young people of all genders and to challenging gender-based discrimination and stereotypes. We recognise that the warehouse sector has traditionally been male-dominated and that young women may face barriers to entering the sector.

### **Inclusive Practice:**

We actively encourage young women to consider careers in the warehouse sector. We challenge gender stereotypes and promote the value of gender diversity in the workplace. We work with employers to promote gender equality and to create inclusive workplaces.





## **Monitoring:**

We monitor the gender of young people who use our services to ensure that our services are accessible to all genders and to identify any barriers or inequalities.

## **Sexual Orientation**

### **Youth Start's Approach:**

Youth Start is committed to supporting young people of all sexual orientations, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and other sexual orientations. We recognise that LGBTQ+ young people face discrimination and barriers to employment.

### **Inclusive Practice:**

We create a welcoming and inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ young people. We challenge discrimination and stereotypes related to sexual orientation. We use inclusive language and avoid assumptions about relationships or family structures.

### **Confidentiality:**

Information about sexual orientation is treated confidentially and is only shared with employers with the young person's consent.

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## **Additional Barriers to Employment**

In addition to protected characteristics, Youth Start recognises that young people may face other barriers to employment. We are committed to supporting young people who face these barriers.

## **Socioeconomic Disadvantage**

### **Barriers:**

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds may face barriers such as lack of qualifications, lack of work experience, lack of transport, lack of suitable clothing for work, or lack of financial resources.

### **Youth Start's Approach:**

We provide holistic support to address socioeconomic barriers, including mentorship, skills development, practical support (such as help with transport or work clothing), and liaison with employers to create accessible opportunities.

## **Care Experience**

### **Barriers:**

Young people who have been in care face additional barriers to employment, including lack of family support, lack of stable housing, lack of qualifications, and trauma.

### **Youth Start's Approach:**

We provide tailored support for care-experienced young people, including additional mentorship, practical support, and liaison with local authorities and care-leaving services.



## Criminal Records

### Barriers:

Young people with criminal records face significant barriers to employment, including employer reluctance to hire individuals with criminal records and legal restrictions on certain types of work.

### Youth Start's Approach:

We are committed to supporting young people with criminal records and to challenging the stigma associated with criminal records. We work with employers who are willing to consider candidates with criminal records (where appropriate and safe to do so). We provide guidance to young people about disclosure requirements and about how to discuss criminal records with employers.

## Mental Health

### Barriers:

Young people with mental health conditions may face barriers such as lack of confidence, difficulty with social situations, or need for workplace adjustments.

### Youth Start's Approach:

We provide support for young people with mental health conditions, including mentorship, liaison with mental health services, and support to access workplace adjustments. We work with employers to promote mental health awareness and to create supportive workplaces.

## Substance Abuse

### Barriers:

Young people with substance abuse issues may face barriers such as lack of stability, health issues, or employer concerns about reliability.

### Youth Start's Approach:

We provide support for young people with substance abuse issues, including liaison with substance abuse services, mentorship, and support to access treatment. We work with employers who are willing to support young people in recovery.

## Homelessness or Housing Instability

### Barriers:

Young people who are homeless or in unstable housing may face barriers such as lack of a stable address, difficulty with transport, or lack of suitable clothing for work.

### Youth Start's Approach:

We provide practical support for young people who are homeless or in unstable housing, including liaison with housing services, support with transport, and help with work clothing. We work with employers to create flexible and supportive opportunities.

## Lack of Qualifications or Work Experience

### Barriers:

Young people who lack qualifications or work experience may face barriers such as employer reluctance to hire candidates without experience or lack of confidence.



### **Youth Start's Approach:**

We provide skills development, mentorship, and work placements to help young people gain experience and build confidence. We work with employers who are willing to provide opportunities for young people without experience.

### **English as an Additional Language**

#### **Barriers:**

Young people for whom English is an additional language may face barriers such as difficulty with communication, lack of confidence, or employer concerns about language skills.

#### **Youth Start's Approach:**

We provide support for young people for whom English is an additional language, including language support, mentorship, and liaison with ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) services. We work with employers to promote inclusive communication and to provide workplace language support.

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### **Diversity and Inclusion in Recruitment Practice**

#### **Accessible Recruitment**

**Youth Start is committed to ensuring that our recruitment services are accessible to all young people.**

#### **Accessible Information:**

We provide information about our services in clear, simple language. We provide information in accessible formats (such as large print, audio, or easy read) on request.

#### **Accessible Venues:**

We ensure that our premises and meeting venues are accessible to disabled young people. We arrange accessible venues for meetings on request.

#### **Flexible Appointments:**

We offer flexible appointment times to accommodate young people's needs, including evening or weekend appointments.

#### **Digital Access:**

We provide digital access to our services, including telephone and video call appointments, for young people who cannot attend in person.

#### **Outreach:**

We conduct outreach to reach young people who may not be aware of our services or who face barriers to accessing our services. Outreach includes partnerships with schools, colleges, youth services, care-leaving services, and community organisations.



## Inclusive Application and Selection

**Youth Start is committed to ensuring that our application and selection processes are fair and inclusive.**

### **Application Support:**

We provide support to young people with applications, including help with CV writing, application forms, and interview preparation.

### **Reasonable Adjustments:**

We make reasonable adjustments to the application and selection process for disabled young people or young people with additional needs. This may include: - Providing additional time for applications or interviews - Providing information in accessible formats - Arranging accessible venues for interviews - Allowing a support person to attend interviews - Using alternative assessment methods

### **Bias-Free Selection:**

We train our staff to recognise and overcome bias in selection. We use objective criteria to assess candidates and we focus on potential and transferability of skills rather than formal qualifications or previous experience.

### **Positive Action:**

Where appropriate and lawful, we may take positive action to support underrepresented groups. Positive action may include targeted outreach, additional support, or guaranteed interviews for candidates from underrepresented groups who meet minimum criteria.

## Working with Employers

**Youth Start is committed to working with employers who share our commitment to diversity and inclusion.**

### **Employer Standards:**

We work with employers who: - Comply with equality and employment law - Have inclusive recruitment and employment practices - Are willing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled workers - Are willing to provide opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds - Are willing to support young people with additional needs or who face barriers to employment

### **Employer Guidance:**

We provide guidance to employers about inclusive recruitment and employment practices, including: - How to write inclusive job descriptions - How to conduct bias-free interviews - How to make reasonable adjustments - How to create inclusive and supportive workplaces - How to support young people with additional needs

### **Challenging Discrimination:**

If we become aware that an employer is discriminating against young people or is not complying with equality law, we will: - Raise concerns with the employer - Provide guidance and support to address the issue - Cease working with the employer if discrimination continues

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# Diversity Monitoring

## Purpose of Diversity Monitoring

**Youth Start collects diversity data to:** - Monitor who is using our services - Identify barriers or inequalities in access to our services - Evaluate the effectiveness of our diversity and inclusion initiatives - Report on our performance and impact - Comply with legal and regulatory requirements

## What Data We Collect

**We collect diversity data about:** - Age - Gender - Race and ethnicity - Disability - Sexual orientation - Religion or belief - Care experience - Criminal records - Mental health - Substance abuse - Housing status - Qualifications and work experience - English language proficiency

## How We Collect Data

**Diversity data is collected:** - Through voluntary diversity monitoring forms - During initial assessment and registration - Through ongoing conversations with young people

### Voluntary Disclosure:

Young people are not required to provide diversity data. Disclosure is voluntary. However, we encourage young people to provide diversity data so that we can monitor our services and identify any barriers or inequalities.

## How We Use Data

**Diversity data is used to:** - Monitor who is using our services and identify any underrepresented groups - Identify barriers or inequalities in access to our services - Tailor our services to meet the needs of different groups - Evaluate the effectiveness of our diversity and inclusion initiatives - Report on our performance and impact to funders, stakeholders, and the public

### Confidentiality:

Diversity data is treated confidentially and is stored securely in our CRM system (ZohoCRM). Diversity data is only shared in anonymised and aggregated form (for example, in reports or statistics). Individual diversity data is not shared with employers or external parties without the young person's consent.

## Data Protection

**Diversity data is processed in accordance with data protection law (Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR).**

### Legal Basis:

The legal basis for processing diversity data is: - Consent (for voluntary diversity monitoring) - Legitimate interests (for monitoring and evaluation of our services) - Legal obligation (for compliance with equality law and reporting requirements)



### **Sensitive Personal Data:**

Some diversity data (such as information about race, religion, health, or sexual orientation) is sensitive personal data. Sensitive personal data is processed with additional safeguards, including: - Explicit consent - Secure storage - Restricted access - Anonymisation and aggregation for reporting

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## **Staff Training and Awareness**

### **Diversity and Inclusion Training**

**All staff members and volunteers must complete diversity and inclusion training.**

**Training covers:** - The importance of diversity and inclusion - Protected characteristics and equality law - Unconscious bias and how to overcome it - Inclusive language and communication - Reasonable adjustments for disabled young people - Supporting young people from diverse backgrounds - Challenging discrimination and stereotypes - Youth Start's Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### **Ongoing Training:**

Staff members and volunteers receive ongoing training and professional development on diversity and inclusion topics, including workshops, case study discussions, and access to external training.

### **Inclusive Culture**

**Youth Start is committed to creating an inclusive culture where diversity is celebrated and where all staff members, volunteers, and young people feel valued and respected.**

**Inclusive Practices:** - Using inclusive language and avoiding assumptions - Celebrating diversity through events, communications, and partnerships - Challenging discrimination, bias, and stereotypes - Creating a safe and welcoming environment for all - Listening to and learning from young people and communities

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## **Complaints and Concerns**

### **Raising Concerns About Discrimination**

**Young people, employers, or others who have concerns about discrimination can:** - Speak to a staff member or volunteer - Speak to the Equality and Diversity Lead (Nick Calin, [contact@youthstart.co.uk](mailto:contact@youthstart.co.uk), 07470435603) - Submit a formal complaint under Youth Start's Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy

**Common Concerns:** - Discrimination on the basis of a protected characteristic - Failure to make reasonable adjustments - Discriminatory language or behaviour - Bias in selection or recruitment



## Responding to Concerns

**Youth Start will:** - Take all concerns about discrimination seriously - Investigate concerns thoroughly and impartially - Take appropriate action to address discrimination - Provide feedback to the person who raised the concern - Make changes to our services or practices if needed

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## Responsibilities

### **All Staff Members and Volunteers:**

All staff members and volunteers are responsible for: - Understanding and complying with Youth Start's Diversity and Inclusion Policy - Treating all young people with respect and dignity - Not discriminating on the basis of protected characteristics - Challenging discrimination and stereotypes - Making reasonable adjustments for young people with additional needs - Participating in diversity and inclusion training

### **Equality and Diversity Lead:**

The Equality and Diversity Lead (Nick Calin, [contact@youthstart.co.uk](mailto:contact@youthstart.co.uk), 07470435603) is responsible for: - Overseeing Youth Start's diversity and inclusion strategy - Monitoring diversity data and identifying barriers or inequalities - Coordinating diversity and inclusion training - Responding to concerns about discrimination - Reporting on diversity and inclusion performance - Reviewing and updating the Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### **Senior Management:**

Senior management is responsible for: - Demonstrating leadership and commitment to diversity and inclusion - Ensuring that diversity and inclusion is embedded in all aspects of Youth Start's work - Allocating resources to support diversity and inclusion initiatives - Holding staff members and volunteers accountable for inclusive practice

### **Young People:**

Young people are encouraged to: - Provide diversity data to help us monitor our services - Raise concerns if they experience discrimination - Provide feedback to help us improve our services

### **Employers:**

Employers are expected to: - Comply with equality and employment law - Adopt inclusive recruitment and employment practices - Make reasonable adjustments for disabled workers - Provide opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds - Raise concerns if they have concerns about discrimination

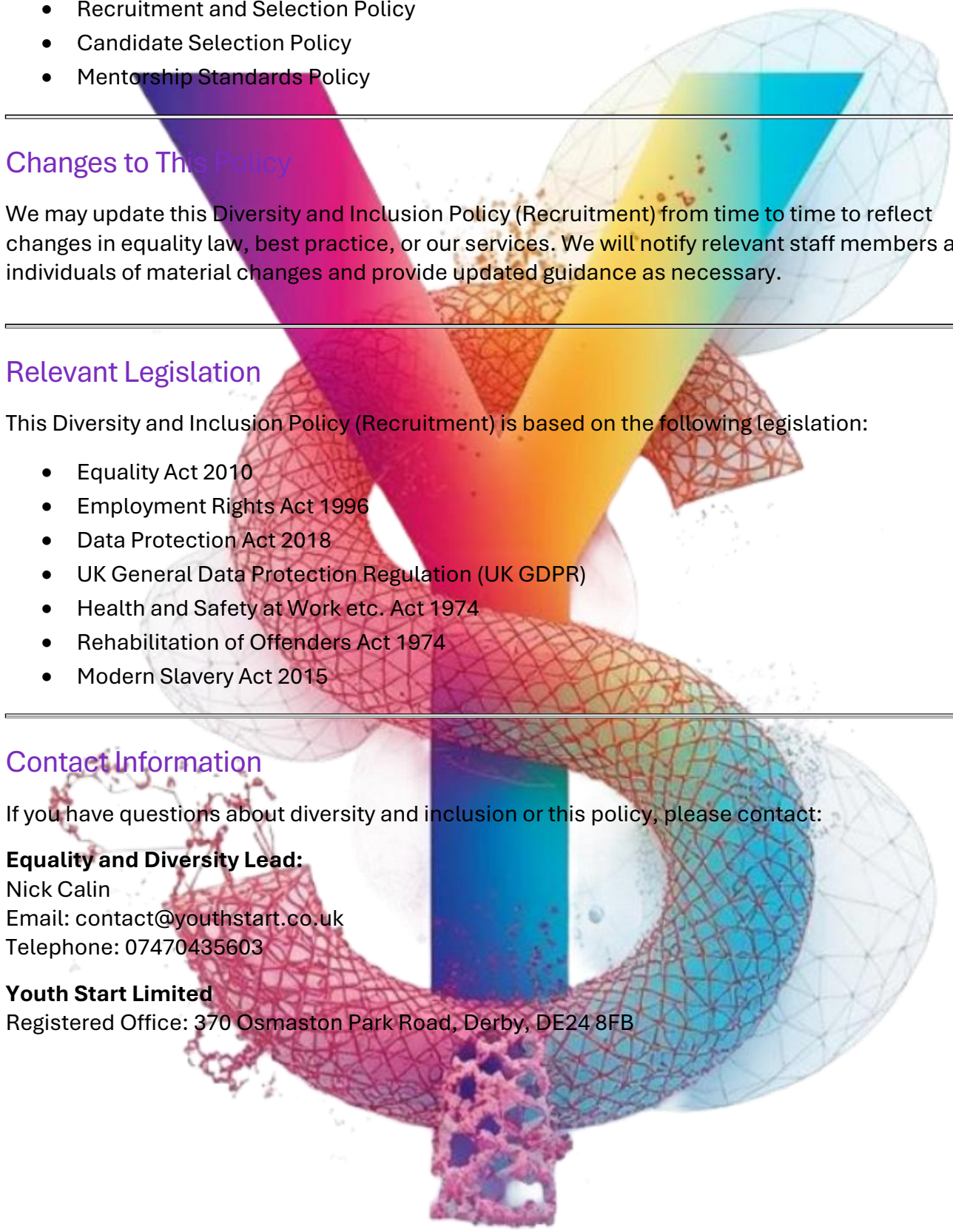
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## Related Policies

This Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Recruitment) should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy



- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
  - Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy
  - Recruitment and Selection Policy
  - Candidate Selection Policy
  - Mentorship Standards Policy
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## Changes to This Policy

We may update this Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Recruitment) from time to time to reflect changes in equality law, best practice, or our services. We will notify relevant staff members and individuals of material changes and provide updated guidance as necessary.

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## Relevant Legislation

This Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Recruitment) is based on the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
  - Employment Rights Act 1996
  - Data Protection Act 2018
  - UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
  - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
  - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
  - Modern Slavery Act 2015
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## Contact Information

If you have questions about diversity and inclusion or this policy, please contact:

**Equality and Diversity Lead:**

Nick Calin

Email: [contact@youthstart.co.uk](mailto:contact@youthstart.co.uk)

Telephone: 07470435603

**Youth Start Limited**

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB