

Equality and Diversity Policy of The Association of Certified Public Accountants

(herein after referred as Institute)

Introduction

Institute aims to ensure that all employees, learners and other stakeholders are treated equally and provided with equality of opportunity.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles, which underpin the provision of equality of opportunity in the Institute. The policy will set out clear guidance on how equal opportunities will be provided and will describe the monitoring arrangements that will exist to ensure equality of opportunity is delivered. The policy will steer the way we work and will be applicable to all employees and learners in the Institute, contractors, business partners, volunteers and visitors.

Principles and Commitment

The Institute believes that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. We aim to create an environment that respects the diversity of individuals and empowers them to attain their full potential. We wish to enable individuals working and learning in the Institute to make a full contribution to the organisation and to derive maximum benefit, satisfaction and enjoyment from their involvement in work of the Institute.

We aim to create an atmosphere which is welcoming for all students, staff and visitors. At Institute individuals will receive the same level and quality of service irrespective of their age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, gender or other distinguishable characteristics. Institute is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

In its employment policies and practices Institute will ensure that:

- individuals are treated with respect and dignity
- no job applicant or employee is unfairly discriminated against on the basis of distinguishing characteristics such as age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender
- no applicant or employee is unfairly disadvantaged by factors that are not directly relevant to the requirements of the post.

However, the Institute understands that there may be some occupational roles and associated requirements that need staff with particular skills. The Institute will therefore undertake positive action, permissible within the law, to deal with these matters.

In its work with learners Institute will ensure that:

- all members of the student body are treated with respect and dignity
- learners will be treated fairly regarding all Institute procedures
- the needs of individual learners are addressed, as far as possible. The Institute will make any reasonable adjustments, as far as practicable and take account of any special considerations
- learners will receive appropriate support, so they can benefit from the opportunities available and can attain their full potential

Delivering Equality of Opportunity

We will:

- make clear our expectations and commitments to equality and diversity during the recruitment and selection process and induction of staff and learners
- provide training so that the principles underpinning equal opportunities are understood, recognised and embedded in the work of the Institute

- provide reasonable adjustments as far as possible for staff and learners who are or who become disabled
- ensure all members of the Institute staff understand how to provide good client care and equality and diversity in teaching and learning
- ensure all our marketing materials and events which inform prospective staff, students and visitors are representative of the Institute community and fully explain the Institute's commitment to equality and diversity
- use Institute marketing material, events and tutorial activities to celebrate equality and diversity as appropriate
- endeavour to provide an environment for teaching and learning, which takes account of individual need and cultural backgrounds
- ensure that we embed equality and diversity within curriculum planning, teaching and learning and assessment materials
- provide reasonable, additional learning provision to meet the individual needs of learners who require support for their learning and progression, in line with current funding streams

The policy will be publicised as widely as possible to include staff, learners, governors and the community and will be available in a number of formats on request

Institute will encourage any individual who wishes to report any instances of discrimination and will provide a confidential process by which these concerns can be dealt with by means of the formal complaints procedure.

Institute will take action against anyone who is in breach of the equality and diversity policy.

Monitoring the Implementation of the Policy

The Institute will ensure effective systems to monitor and evaluate equality and diversity. This will include the following.

- Collecting and analysing data on learner applications, enrolment, retention and achievement in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and disability so that any trends can be identified
- Collecting and analysing data on learner progression in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and disability, including progression within Institute, progression onto higher educational institutions and progression to employment.
- Monitoring and analysing staff recruitment and retention data, staff progression and any issues associated with pay gaps in relation to age, gender, and disability.
- Collecting and analysing data on the use of Institute grievance, complaints policies and disciplinary processes, as they relate to this policy
- Monitoring and analysing the take-up of training and development opportunities for staff
- Ensuring Institute policies in relation to equality and diversity are regularly monitored, reviewed and updated, in line with legal requirements and awarding body recommendations
- Producing an annual equality and diversity report for discussion with senior managers

Responsibility

The overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented effectively belongs with the CEO at the Institute. He will work closely with other key staff such as the Head tutor and the support executives. This will ensure there is a whole organisation approach to implementation of the principles stated in this policy. The CEO will be responsible for preparation of the annual report for members and trustees and updating this policy in accordance with the Institute's policy review processes and any changes in legislation. The CEO will have overall responsibility for managing any complaints with regard to equality and diversity and the implementation of this policy, unless the complaint is made against the CEO. In this case the Governing Council will manage the complaints process.