

## **Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy**

### **Introduction**

Equality of opportunity is an integral part of Crossfields Institute's vision. Crossfields Institute aims to be a truly open, accessible and diverse organisation and is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment and education regardless of a person's gender, race, sexual orientation, age, disability or religious belief, or any other specific factors that result in discrimination.

To achieve this we need to ensure that our policies and procedures provide access for everyone and do not place any unnecessary barriers to entry.

This policy covers all aspects of Crossfields Institute's operation, relating to both internal and external customers, staff and centres delivering Crossfields Institute qualifications. Crossfields Institute will apply policies and procedures that are fair, equitable and consistent to all staff, learners, centres and external contacts. Crossfields Institute will ensure that all prospective Crossfields Institute employees, staff and learners are accorded equal opportunity in matters relating to enrolment, recruitment, selection, the learning experience, training, promotion and terms and conditions of employment for jobs of equal value.

Crossfields Institute strives to be an equal opportunities provider. Every Crossfields Institute manager, employee and learner has personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

### **Centre's responsibility**

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all staff and learners involved in Crossfields Institute qualifications at the centre are fully aware of the contents of this policy.

### **Review arrangements**

The Responsible Officer will make a report to the Quality Committee to review relevant performance indicators where the relevant data has been provided by centres/learners.

Crossfields Institute will review the effectiveness of procedures so that staff, learners or clients feel confident to raise issues of concern about equal opportunities, and to make complaints about discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Crossfields Institute will also monitor and review the curriculum, and the learning resources used to deliver the curriculum, to ensure that they reflect and promote equal opportunities.

All staff within Crossfields Institute are responsible for ensuring that effective monitoring and review systems are in place.

## Areas covered by the policy

- **Crossfields Institute staff**

Crossfields Institute is committed to incorporating specific and appropriate duties in respect to the implementation of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy into job descriptions for all staff.

Crossfields Institute will provide equality training and guidance as appropriate to our staff.

- **Qualification Development**

Crossfields Institute will ensure that there are no features that could disadvantage any groups of learners that share a particular characteristic or barriers to entry other than those directly related to the purpose of the qualifications. The nature of any such features or barriers will be stated and the inclusion of the requirements that create the barrier justified in terms of why they are required for the particular unit or qualification.

- **Centres**

The Institute expects its centres to enable learners to have equal access to training and assessment for qualifications irrespective of their sex, marital status, age, religion, colour, race, nationality or ethnic origin or disability. Assessment must similarly be undertaken without discrimination. Centres are required to have in place a policy to ensure that such discrimination does not occur either directly, indirectly or as a result of pressure from other bodies. This policy should apply to all sites/associated venues and there should be arrangements in place to monitor its application and effectiveness.

Where complaints relating to issues of inequality cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the centre, learners must be made aware of their right to appeal to Crossfields Institute via the arrangements outlined in our Complaints Policy and Appeals Policy. This information should be outlined in both the staff and learner handbooks (where available) or on centre websites to ensure all staff and learners at the centre are aware of and understand the policy and its implications.

## Monitoring the success and relevance of our policies and procedures

Crossfields Institute is committed to complying with all current and relevant legislation, which at the time of writing includes, but is not limited to the Equality Act 2010 and Northern Ireland Equality law.

As part of the learner registration and certification processes for qualifications, Crossfields Institute may collect information on diversity, requests for special considerations, access arrangements and feedback from learners, centres and other stakeholders. All such information will be stored and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR, as outlined in our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice. The data collected will be used to identify any issues with our current provision that learners and/or centres may have highlighted. The results will be reported to the Responsible Officer who will be responsible for ensuring that relevant staff introduce, as appropriate, amendments to provision and/or services where necessary and in accordance with our documented procedures for developing and reviewing qualifications.

Details of our ongoing review procedures will be made available to the qualification regulators upon request.

### **Policy Review**

In updating the policy, the Head of Quality will take into account notification and advice received on recent changes to legislation, regulation and good practice in the area of employment and equality and diversity legislation from a specialist consultancy engaged for this purpose.

In addition, this policy may be updated in light of operational feedback to ensure our arrangements for dealing equality of opportunity and diversity remain effective.

If you would like to feedback any views please contact the Head of Quality by email at [qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com](mailto:qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com) or write to:

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**Policy Last Reviewed September 2019**

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**Reviewed by: Head of Quality, Alison Richards**