

Equality and Diversity Policy

V26.1

Equality and Diversity Policy	
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Policy/Document Relates to	Corporate
Policy/Document is for the use of	Training Providers, Recognised Centres, VQA Employees, Third Parties, Learners, Apprentices
Should be read in conjunction with	Appeals Policy

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Introduction

This policy is provided for our Recognised Centres and Learners, who are delivering, enrolled on, or have taken a VQA approved regulated qualification or unit, and the Training Providers and Apprentices who are registered with VQA for End-Point Assessment. It sets out our intention to deliver a service and range of qualifications that are fair, accessible and do not include any unnecessary barriers to entry.

VQA Internal Responsibility

The External Quality Assurance team is responsible for the maintenance and compliance of this policy. If the External Quality Assurance Manager is absent, the Responsible Officer will appoint another member of the Executive Team to ensure all of VQA's actions and activities are in line with the content of this policy.

Review arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation process and revise it as and when necessary in response to feedback or requests. We may also update this policy as part of good practice guidance issued by the regulatory authorities (e.g. to align with any complaints processes established by the regulatory authorities such as Ofqual).

The annual review of this policy will be undertaken by the Quality Department approximately four weeks prior to the submission of VQA's Statement of Compliance to regulators. Any amendments or updates to this policy will be approved by VQA's Executive Team.

If you have any points or feedback regarding this policy, please contact us via the details provided at the start of this policy.

Centre's/Training Provider's Responsibility

It is important that any employees involved in the delivery of our qualifications and Learners and Apprentices registering for VQA qualifications or End-Point Assessment, are fully aware of the contents of the policy (e.g. via their induction when first embarking on VQA qualifications).

Areas covered by the policy:

VQA Staff

VQA commits to incorporating specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the Equality and Diversity Policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff.

VQA will provide equality and diversity training and guidance as appropriate to our employees. This training will be included as part of employee induction training, as well as further ongoing courses, as identified via our internal staff performance review arrangements. All VQA full time, permanent staff members will undertake the Level 2 Award in Equality and Diversity (RQF) within six months of the commencement date of their employment with us.

Qualification Development

VQA will ensure that there are no features present in any qualification we have developed 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 units or 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 unit or qualification.

The process of designing of assessments will include identifying and precluding any unjustifiable barriers in the assessment of qualifications and units that might prevent Learners who share protected characteristics from demonstrating their knowledge, understanding or skills. This includes Learners and Apprentices with physical disabilities.

Recognised Centres/Training Providers

VQA expects its Recognised Centres/Training Providers to enable Learners and Apprentices to have equal access to training and assessment, irrespective of their sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion, race, nationality, ethnic origin, or disability. Assessment must similarly be undertaken without discrimination. Recognised 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 assessment sites and there should be arrangements in place to monitor its application and effectiveness.

Monitoring the success and relevance of our arrangements

VQA is committed to complying with all current and relevant legislation. As part of the Learner/Apprentice registration and certification processes for qualifications, units, and End-Point Assessment, VQA may collect information on diversity, requests for special considerations, access arrangements and feedback from Learners, Apprentices, Recognised Centres, Training Providers, and other stakeholders.

All relevant issues identified that suggest that VQA provision or services may have unnecessarily impacted on Learners/Apprentices will be reported back to the Quality and Compliance Department. They are responsible for ensuring that a relevant staff member introduces, as appropriate, amendments to provision and/or services where necessary and in accordance with VQA procedures for developing and reviewing units and qualifications.

Details of ongoing reviews will be made available to the qualification regulators upon request.

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