



Equality Diversity And Inclusion Policy

Most recent update: 15 May 2024

Scope

This policy statement reflects the Cheshire West and Chester Council's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and its links to the Skills and Employment service.

Equality of opportunity, inclusive practice and promoting the value of diversity are central to everything we do within Skills and Employment. This includes the way we commission, who we commission, the services and provision we deliver and the support we give. Everyone is different and has something unique to offer. Cheshire West and Chester Council wants to respect and understand these differences and to make the most of everyone's talents. We are fully focused on creating opportunity and progression pathways for all adults in the borough. Individuals can make effective choices about their learning and work options and achieve their goals through participation in our service offer.

Aims Of This Policy Statement

1. Ensure equality of access to all Cheshire West and Chester's adult learning and employment support services delivered by the Skills and Employment team.
2. Monitor learning outcomes against a background of inclusivity to ensure all learners are reaching their full potential.
3. Implement Cheshire West and Chester Council's Corporate Equality Plan (for the CW&C Skills and Employment service) in order to ensure that the council, its funded partners, stakeholders and communities embed equality and inclusivity within all their services.
4. Ensure we meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
5. Take every opportunity to improve our inclusive practice and embed it within our curriculum and all support and information, advice and guidance.

Definitions

Diversity is about understanding, recognising, respecting and valuing differences.

Equality is about managing differences so that everyone has equality of opportunity through a fair and consistent approach to the application of rules, policies and procedures. We recognise that sometimes this will mean treating people differently.

The Equality Framework is the national standard that assesses a council's progress on equality and diversity. In October 2014 the Council gained the highest Excellent Level of the framework. We are committed to maintaining these standards. This commitment is relevant to all we do, how we manage ourselves and how we deliver our service.



We are committed to:

Equality Of Opportunity

- Everyone should be treated fairly and with respect and should be encouraged to reach their full potential. This will mean using different approaches in different circumstances to ensure that equality of opportunity.
- We aim to actively promote equality and diversity and tackle bullying and discrimination so that both existing and potential learners have equal and fair access to our services.
- We are committed to eliminating unlawful or unfair discrimination in keeping with the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation).
- We recognise that promoting equality and inclusion will improve public services for everyone. Our aim therefore, is to make equality an integral part of the way the council works, by putting it at the centre of everything we do.
- We take proactive steps through targeting our resource to narrow gaps in opportunity and firmly believe a more equal society is better for everyone.

Valuing Diversity

- We value diversity and recognise that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas, views and perceptions. We aim to encourage and promote the value of differences and to ensure that learning is accessible to our whole community and is relevant and appropriate to the widest possible range of views and experiences.

How We Embed Equality Diversity and Inclusion

All provision is delivered in accordance with the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and is monitored both by Skills and Employment staff and Ofsted Inspectors.

All contracted provision and directly delivered services work within this framework, which is constantly seeking to improve services and widen access through a variety of tools and monitoring measures. Some of the ways we aim to ensure that everything we do widens access and that everyone is treated fairly and effectively:

- Carry out extensive consultation and respond appropriately to the changing demographics and needs of the community
- Plan a rich curriculum that meets needs and interests
- Promotion of services is available in accessible formats so that we can encourage those not accessing services currently to take advantage our offer
- Commission specific learning providers who specialise in supporting different target groups
- Design and pilot models of support to develop best practice



What We Will Do To Ensure Inclusivity:

- Implement safer recruitment processes when recruiting tutors and organisations.
- Provide staff with access to Equality Diversity and Inclusion training.
- Encourage self-assessment to focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Share good practice at events.
- Actively promote Continuous Professional Development focused on Equality Diversity and Inclusion through our Quality Assurance and Improvement framework.
- Review the success of embedding inclusivity through all quality monitoring visits.
- As appropriate and on an ongoing basis, review all policies, procedures, strategies and implementation plans, and conduct Equality Impact Assessments to ensure compliance.
- Involve the Council's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Team in Skills and Employment plans.
- Create a safe learning environment underpinned by relevant policies eg safeguarding.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we will support learners at each stage of their learning journey.

Prior to enrolment, we will:

- Ensure that plain English is used in all promotional materials and made accessible to all,
- Take positive steps to encourage potential learners with specific needs to engage in learning,
- Work in partnership with support organisations to share good practice and find solutions for barriers to learning,
- Guarantee an initial assessment that ensures all individual and/or support needs can be met and that learners are signposted to appropriate programmes,

During programme delivery, we will:

- Put the needs of our learners first, using individualised learning plans (ILPs) in all areas of delivery,
- Ensure plain English in all communications,
- Support learners with English and maths needs,
- Offer additional learning support to those who need it,
- Involve learners in understanding inclusivity through their own learning,
- Design promotional materials to reflect a diverse society and make all resources available, where appropriate, in different formats,
- Ensure well-qualified tutors consistently challenge stereotypical and prejudiced views in order to create a positive learning environment for all involved,
- Adhere to fair assessment practices,



- Practise teaching strategies that appeal to all learning styles,
- Implement the Safeguarding Policy when circumstances require,
- Maintain a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and bullying in all forms,
- Undertake activities to raise awareness on the importance of Equality Diversity and Inclusion and the nine protected characteristics.

On completion of programme delivery, we will:

- Work in partnership with other organisations to signpost learners appropriately to the “next step” in their learning journey,
- Provide comprehensive information, advice and guidance about further opportunities,
- Monitor achievements against EDIMS (Equality and Diversity Impact Measures) through data capture and analysis,
- Monitor Equality Diversity and Inclusion in progression surveys.

Conclusion

A successful approach to Equality Diversity and Inclusion as outlined above will support our learners to be happier and healthier, have better jobs, live longer and contribute to their communities.