

Equal Opportunities Policy

July 2011

1. Statement of policy

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Board of Directors and Senior Management Team to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Axcis Education. It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated in the same way and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination. We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice, but sound business practice. Our equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and the resources of the work force will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

2. To whom does the policy apply?

Our EO policy applies to all those who work for (or apply to work for) the organisation. This covers all job applicants and potential applicants; employees; contract workers; agency workers; trainee workers and students on work experience or placements; volunteer workers and former employees.

3. Equality commitments

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and forms a part of our Induction.

4. Implementation

The Managing Director has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each Director and Manager also takes responsibility and we expect all our employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective. In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and relevant others (such as contract or agency workers)
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate including training on induction and management courses.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates or recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (e.g. intranet)
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our work force
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

5. Monitoring and review

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to ensure the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly (at least annually) and action taken as necessary. For example, if monitoring should identify an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address.

6. Complaints

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures and a copy of these procedures is given to every employee as an addendum to their contract of employment. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an industrial tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal under the appropriate anti-discrimination legislation. However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first. Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.