

Equality of Opportunity and Diversity Policy Statement

TST (South West) CIC welcomes the richness and diversity of its community and believes in the equal value of all its participants and staff. TST (South West) CIC is committed to taking positive action to provide equality of opportunity to all participants, staff or partners. In carrying out this commitment we recognise that inequalities exist and that there are people who are disadvantaged as a result. The aim of this policy is therefore to ensure that all participants or employees are treated as described within the protected characteristics of the Equality Act (2010) regardless of such factors as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The policy and its application will be monitored to ensure its effectiveness.

The Equality and Diversity Policy Statement is a written commitment by TST (South West) CIC to provide equality of opportunity to all those employers, outside partners, all participants and employees plus the community who come into contact with TST (South West) CIC, through the development and use of procedures, practices and guidelines which do not discriminate. TST (South West) CIC is committed not only in meeting the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) but also to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all educational and employment fields.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and TST Senior Management team (SMT) will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of the policy. It is, however, the responsibility of all staff and participants to promote equality of opportunity. Our aim is to embed equality in every aspect of TST (South West) CIC life.

We aim for all our participants to achieve their educational and social goals and to become lifelong participants. We will also work to remove barriers and to enable participant and staff experiences at TST (South West) CIC to be enjoyable and a time of personal development. We aim to ensure that all members of the community have full access to education and training, in order to avoid wasted potential, in line with the national priorities of widening participation and social inclusion.

TST (South West) CIC aims to:

- Develop an atmosphere in which the needs, interests and concerns of all participants, staff and partners are equally valued
- Enable all participants and staff to develop and reach their full potential
- Deliver services to participants, staff or partners in a way that is sensitive to differing cultures and backgrounds and which respects all participants, staff and partners as individuals
- Ensure that course provision and curriculum content reflect the varied needs of all our participants.
- Promote styles of teaching and learning which support the individual needs of all our participants, and evaluate teaching and learning through classroom observation and participant feedback.
- Regularly review forms of assessment and accreditation to ensure that they do not discriminate against any group of participants
- Provide appropriate support to help all participants to achieve their learning potential. This takes the form of tutorial support and additional learning support, counselling and advice, specialist equipment, access to well-resourced libraries and learning centres, appropriate scheduling of courses and appropriate modes of study.

- Ensure that all TST (South West) CIC learning resources and communications are free of inappropriate bias
- Ensure that work placement providers and sub-contractors are cognisant of TST (South West) CIC's stance on equal opportunity issues.
- Seek to widen participation by ensuring that marketing and admissions materials promote access for all potential participants to TST (South West) CIC courses.
- Actively seek to close the equality gap in relation to access, participation, retention and achievement, particularly in terms of gender, ethnicity, age and disability.
- Identify groups that may be under-represented, and reveal equality gaps in attainment of qualifications or employment that leave particular groups at a disadvantage in the labour market, via monitoring of participant data in relation to community/labour market information.
- Where possible improve access for those with disabilities (physical as well as format of learning materials)
- Increase awareness in TST (South West) CIC and among its partners and employers, of the negative consequences of stereotyping and discrimination and promote equal opportunity issues in general.
- Provide participants, staff and partners with opportunities to explore and understand issues relating to equality and diversity.
- Ensure that TST (South West) CIC's ethos promotes equality and diversity and that this image is projected to the community.

Through its employment and staff development policies and practices, TST (South West) CIC will:

- Ensure that the standards laid down in the relevant legislation and Codes of Practice are met and complied with and, when possible, surpassed.
- Regularly review recruitment, selection and promotion of staff, and also restructuring and redundancy procedures to ensure that these are not unfairly discriminatory.
- Regularly monitor the staff profile and data on applications and appointments, and develop strategies to enable TST (South West) CIC to achieve a workforce which more closely reflects the composition of the local community.
- Ensure assessment criteria at interview and in employment thereafter will be objective at all times; based upon individual performance, abilities and potential and are free from stereotyping and bias.
- Arrange staff development to promote the implementation and evaluation of the Equality and Diversity Policy Statement and ensure that staff development programmes within TST (South West) CIC address equality issues.
- Encourage under-represented groups to apply for posts in grades or areas of work where they are under-represented.
- Recognise the differing needs of part-time staff to enable them to participate as fully as possible in staff development.
- Regularly review advertisements and promotional material to avoid discrimination and prevent discouragement of potential applicants from minority groups.

Discrimination and Harassment

TST (South West) CIC does not tolerate any form of unfair discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment or bullying; including racism, sexism, homophobia or discrimination on grounds of disability or age. This also covers hate crimes, which are crimes targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice. These crimes relate to race, religion, sexual orientation and transgender identity.

TST (South West) CIC deals with complaints of discrimination or harassment through the Grievance Procedure and guidelines which link into the Staff and Participant Disciplinary and Complaints Procedures. All complaints are centrally monitored and followed up.

Monitoring and Review

The DSL is responsible for equality of opportunity and will monitor developments in TST (South West) CIC policies and practices concerning equality and diversity.

The development and implementation of TST (South West) CIC policy is monitored by the DSL. The strategic responsibility for equality lies also lies with the TST (SMT).

TST (South West) CIC uses systems of monitoring to assess the composition of the workforce and the learner body. This helps to assess the effectiveness of TST (South West) CIC's policies aimed at eliminating unfair discrimination from its procedures. All staff are required to co-operate, when requested, in the process of gathering appropriate information.

Equality issues are addressed in staff and participant induction, participant review meetings, staff development events and informed by a checklist of staff responsibilities in respect of equality and diversity.

Participant's views of the implementation of the policy are identified by means of sample surveys.

Participant's enrolment, retention and achievements are annually monitored by ethnic group, gender, age and disability. The findings inform the operational planning and target settings of Departments and outreach centres, which are in turn evaluated against national and local benchmark data.

The Policy Statement is distributed to members of staff and to learner representatives and is included in staff and participant induction programmes. It is circulated to outside bodies and organisations with which TST (South West) CIC has a working relationship.

Implementation

Responsibilities of TST (South West) CIC

TST (South West) CIC shall:-

- 1 identify areas of inequality and recommends remedial action, including an annual action plan
- 2 review TST (South West) CIC policies and practices to ensure an anti-discriminatory stance is maintained and recommend amendments and modifications appropriately
- 3 advise on the achievability and appropriateness of targets set by TST (South West) CIC management to redress under-representation
- 4 prepare and review guidance on the implementation of statutory requirements
- 5 advise on statistical compilation

6 monitor and review TST (South West) CIC procedures, practices and publications to ensure compliance with the objectives established in this statement. With respect to this role, members of staff will have an advisory function in the following areas:

- training and development for under-represented groups
- positive employment practices in career management systems
- staff welfare and counselling services.

It is recognised that these functions are part of the specialist roles of individual TST (South West) CIC staff and work with each other appropriately.

Advertising, appointment and interview procedures.

Procedures for the recruitment and retention of staff are contained in TST (South West) CIC's quality procedures. The procedures are subject to regular audit to ensure continued compliance.

The (SMT), subject to the above responsibilities, shall advise the DSL and staff on the effectiveness of procedures and make recommendations for change where it has a view.

Complaints

Staff and participants may make a complaint if they believe they have been subjected to unfair treatment, harassment or discrimination. Complaints may be made through TST (South West) CIC's Complaints Procedure. Participants and staff may wish to discuss this first with their Tutor, Line Manager or Trade Union Representative, as appropriate. Complaints will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Responsibilities of employees and participants:

It is the responsibility of all staff and participants to:

- Ensure that TST (South West) CIC's policies and procedures relevant to equality and diversity are followed
- Ensure that they themselves do not discriminate in any way against colleagues or peers
- Be aware that acts of deliberate discrimination and wilful disregard of equality and diversity will be treated as disciplinary offences.

Appendix to Policy

Implementation Guide

Staff Responsibilities

Teaching Staff/Support Staff (as appropriate)

- Have equally high expectations of all participants/staff irrespective of race, social background, gender and age.
- Relate the learning programme to the different cultural / ethnic backgrounds and gender and age mix of the class
- Reflect the participants ethnic and cultural backgrounds and the gender mix of the class in all teaching materials
- Adopt a range of teaching methods which facilitate participation by all participants in the class
- Adapt teaching methods and styles to support participants with disabilities, learning difficulties and different learning styles.
- Create a classroom ethos and learning environment which is inclusive and enables all participants to feel comfortable and is conducive to participants realising their potential
- Provide guidance and referrals of participants to additional learning support sessions and workshops
- Take appropriate and immediate action in the event of incidents of harassment or discrimination and if necessary, alert or involve more senior staff.

Tutors/Instructors (This refers to course tutors and personal tutors, among whom the responsibilities should be allocated. It includes liaison officers in College Training.)

- Provide that admissions criteria for the course (including entry tests) do not discriminate against or unnecessarily exclude, any group of participants
- Using data from Information Systems address any issues of under-representation in respect of ethnic group, gender, first language, age, SLDD.
- Introduce participants to the Equality and Diversity Policies and procedures in induction and in a designated tutorial. Ensure that participants are aware of their entitlements and responsibilities in respect of TST (South West) CIC's commitment to equality.
- Enable participants, staff or partners to be aware of their responsibilities and rights in respect of discrimination, harassment and bullying and of the procedures for making complaints.
- Be aware of the variety of participants personal circumstances and difficulties which may impede study
- Provide guidance and referrals to additional learning support sessions and to counselling and participant advice facilities
- Follow up participants who leave the course and identify the reasons and possible strategies to deal with these.
- Facilitate the carrying out of participant surveys to ascertain views on equality issues (findings to be acted on by Centres/Faculties and by staff)
- Address equality issues in participants review meetings, action plans and other documentation

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Business Manager

- Ensure that all staff have the opportunity to be aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy and of their specific equal opportunities responsibilities and are carrying these out (as specified above).
- Enable plans for new courses and curriculum development take account of the needs of all groups in the community and in the Centre/Faculty/Unit, e.g. course provision, levels of course
- Keep informed of TST (South West) CIC developments through representation on the Equality and Diversity Committee and disseminate these to staff
- Inform and consult staff on TST (South West) CIC equal opportunities developments (e.g. policy review) via staff meetings and newsletters
- Highlight equality issues in programme reviews
- Address equality issues in self-assessments and produce appropriate action plans
- Use the enrolment data reports to review TST (South West) CIC's profile and produce plans and targets to recruit under-represented groups
- Monitor outcomes and progression by ethnic group, gender, first language, age and SLDD and produce targets and strategies to address any imbalances
- Disseminate good practice
- Address equality issues in classroom observation and in feed-back to staff
- Address equality issues in staff appraisal
- Incorporate equality issues in staff development
- Reflect the variety of participants, staff or partners ethnic backgrounds / cultures in site ethos
- Time-table classes as far as possible to meet participants needs, e.g. child-care responsibilities, need for part-time employment
- As far as possible provide rooming and provision of facilities such as computer rooms, to facilitate access by all participants, e.g. classrooms on lower floors to enable access by those with mobility problems
- Display and provide equal opportunities leaflets, copies of policies etc. and provide notices and information on display boards that cater for the needs and interests of the whole range of participants, staff or partners.
- At induction, ensure participants/staff have an "Equal Opportunities awareness" session to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of TST (South West) CIC Policy and procedures, counselling and welfare support which would be followed in any Equal Opportunities situation.
- Promote equality of opportunity, challenge discrimination with employers involved in work-based training and encourage them to take positive steps to widen participation.
- Ensure that clear and robust arrangements are put in place for working with the Connexions service to ensure that people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have access to suitable provision which meets their needs and, where appropriate, the additional support they require while participating in work-based training.

Management

- In recruitment of staff (FT and PT) ensure that equal opportunities criteria are adhered to in interview procedures etc., and adopt strategies for seeking over time to achieve a staff profile which reflects the make-up of the community.
- At induction ensure all staff have an "Equal Opportunities awareness" session to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of TST (South West) CIC Policy and procedures,

counselling and welfare support which would be followed in any Equal Opportunities situation.

- Use participant / staff / employer questionnaires that include quality and diversity stimuli responses.

Note. The staff responsibilities have been allocated to staff groups such as teachers, tutors, programme managers etc but it is recognised that in some settings, a number of responsibilities are covered by all staff.

REVIEWED

October 2017

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NEXT REVIEW

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