



European Union
European Social Fund
Investing in jobs and skills

1. **COMMITMENT**

NITAL is committed to making full use of the expertise and resources of its employees and to ensuring that all participants of the services the organisation delivers directly, or indirectly through employers and suppliers, are guaranteed the same opportunity.

NITAL is an equality employer and a provider of training, which is committed to the development and use of employment procedures and practices which do not discriminate regardless of diversity. The exception to this are applicants whose DBS checks are unsatisfactory. NITAL will comply with current legislation and guidelines.

The equality policy has the full commitment of the NITAL Board of Directors.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the NITAL Equality Committee.

2. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

NITAL recognises its moral responsibilities and its legal obligations in relation to current legislation. It will review this annually to ensure the capture of new legislation

The responsibility of equality for NITAL is vested within the whole organisation as a provider of training services.

It is the responsibility of all employees and learners of NITAL, and, through its quality contract process, its suppliers, employers and work-placement providers staff to eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of the equality and diversity policy and reporting incidents of discrimination to an appropriate person.

3. **EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

3.1 **Recruitment and Selection**

NITAL will ensure that its recruitment procedures are fair and non-discriminatory.

Staff

All vacancies will be advertised appropriately to ensure that all potential applicants are informed of available opportunities. Equality statements will be present in all job advertisements.

All recruitment publicity will be designed to positively encourage applications from suitably qualified and experienced people and will avoid any stereotyping of roles.

Recruitment monitoring information will be obtained from job applicants on forms that are separate from the application form and not used as part of the selection process. This will be analysed at application, short-listing and appointment stages. Monitoring will also take place on returned applications in relation to those on finally sent out.

NITAL will select the most suitable person for the job in respect of skills, experience, and qualifications only.

All those involved in recruitment processes will receive appropriate training.

Learners

All recruitment promotion material will be monitored to ensure that it is free from bias and all groups are reflected in a positive manner. An equality statement will be present on all promotional literature. NITAL will ensure that such material is widely circulated and easily accessible to all groups.

Recruitment monitoring information will be obtained from applicants.

The recruitment practices of employers will be closely monitored using the 'Equality Monitoring Form'.

3.2 Training and Development

Training is recognised as an integral part of promoting an equality ethos and ensuring that individuals have a clearly developed understanding of relevant issues.

All staff and learners will receive equality awareness training as part of their induction. Refresher training will be given to all staff yearly.

All staff and learners will receive equal access to training and development.

NITAL will work with its employers to ensure that equal access is given to training and development, that materials are free from bias and that teaching styles give attention to all groups.

3.3 Promotions and Transfers

All staff vacancies will be advertised to internal and external candidates. All internal promotions and transfers will be monitored accordingly.

3.4 Terms and Conditions

All employees who are undertaking equal jobs will be treated equally with respect to pay and other conditions of their Contracts of Employment.

3.5 Part-time, Job Share and Flexible Working Arrangements

Wherever possible, in line with the requirements of the business, consideration will be given to whether a position could be filled by job share applicants instead of one full-timer and / or flexible working arrangements.

NITAL will endeavour to be flexible in the provision of work-based training to accommodate those learners with child / family responsibilities.

4. EMPLOYERS

NITAL will ensure that all its employers are made aware of its equality policy.

Any employer which does not have its own equality policy will be required to sign an undertaking that it will adopt the policy and procedures of NITAL.

5. BREACHES OF POLICY

Any employee or learner who feels that they have been a victim of unlawful discrimination or suffered victimisation has the right to have their complaints investigated through NITAL's grievance procedure. In the case of harassment or bullying these will be investigated under NITAL's bullying and harassment procedure.

Learners who are on an employed status contract with an employer, who have a grievance in relation to equal opportunities which is connected to their training, e.g. they feel that they have been discriminated against or harassed by their assessor, should follow the procedures of NITAL. Where it is an equal opportunities issue but not related to training, e.g. they are being bullied by work colleagues they should in the first instance, be encouraged and supported in using their own employer's grievance procedures, followed by those of NITAL if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

All proven incidents of discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying will be regarded as a disciplinary offence and dealt with through NITAL's disciplinary procedure.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

In order to assess the effectiveness of its equality and diversity policy NITAL will:

Monitor the composition of its workforce and learners in relation to, gender, ethnic background, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, and report on this on a 6-month basis to the Equality Committee. This information will be compared against comparative local information.

Monitor the composition of its learners in relation to gender, ethnic background, religion and belief, disability as a minimum and report on this for each occupational area and type of programme on a 6-month basis. This information will be compared against comparative local information for the appropriate Skills Funding Agency area.

Review staff recruitment and selection / transfer information on a 6-month basis in relation to gender, ethnic background, disability, religion, belief and age.

Review learner recruitment monitoring information on a 6-month basis in relation to gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, belief and age.

Monitor the gender, ethnicity and disability of those learners who leave training prior to completion and report on this for each occupational area and type of programme on a 6-month basis.

Monitor the gender, ethnicity and disability of those learners who leave training with a qualification and report on this for each qualification level, occupational area and type of programme on a 6-month basis.

Review and monitor the incidence and nature of complaints reported under the grievance, discipline and harassment procedures in relation to equal opportunities and report on this on a 6-month basis.

Monitor the promotion, implementation and effectiveness of equality and diversity policies of employers and report on this on a 6-month basis.

NITAL will produce an annual plan which sets out clear targets for achievement for the forthcoming year in relation to equality and diversity and specific initiatives which it wishes to undertake in relation to addressing imbalances and raising awareness of equal opportunities issues. This will be shared with its partners and reviewed on an annual basis.

Reports from monitoring and review activities will be reviewed by NITAL's Equality Committee and presented to NITAL's management and board meetings on a twice yearly basis.

Alan Smith

Chief Executive/Company Secretary

ANNEX ONE

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY / FURTHER ADVICE

Training providers are responsible for ensuring that no unlawful discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age, ex-offender background, sexual orientation and marital status, takes place in the provision of its services to local people, or against applicants for jobs.

The Equality Act 2010

The act replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act to make the law simpler and to remove inconsistencies. This makes the law easier for people to understand and comply with. The act also strengthened protection in some situations.

The act covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations (such as private clubs).

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Gives all publicly funded post-16 providers new responsibilities. It is unlawful to treat a disabled student (as defined under the DDA) less favourably than non-disabled people. Part of not discriminating is to make reasonable adjustments (for example to policies and practices, accommodation, support and course provision) so that the person is not placed at 'a substantial disadvantage'.

Human Rights Act, 1998

The Human Rights Act came into force in October 2000 and incorporates most of the articles of the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law. It will enable any individual who considers they have been a victim of a human rights violation to challenge a public authority in the courts or tribunals.

Common Inspection Framework

Equality runs through the requirements of the common inspection framework. The role of management in leading on equality is stressed. Providers will be inspected and Ofsted will report on Equality across the provision.