

DSWA Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

The Dry Stone Walling Association (DSWA) is committed to equality of opportunity and celebrating diversity and makes every effort to ensure that its recruitment, examination and training processes, and the products and services offered by the Association do not directly or indirectly discriminate against any individual or group.

The Equality Act (2010) seeks to tackle discrimination in respect of 'protected characteristics'. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity.

Direct discrimination arises where a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination arises where something is applied in the same way for everyone which then has the effect of putting persons with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

Policy Implementation

In the implementation of this policy, DSWA takes account of key current legislation relating to equality and diversity across the four home nations. The execution of this policy is monitored by the DSWA Craft Skills Group, which meets quarterly reporting to the DSWA Trustee Board.

- All staff and persons appointed by DSWA, responsible for recruitment and selection, do so under the terms of this policy.
- All staff and persons appointed by DSWA are individually and collectively responsible for operating within this Policy when dealing with both internal and external customers.
- All staff and persons appointed by DSWA are treated equally under the terms of DSWA Policy.
- Appointments will be made subject to an individual's skills, knowledge and qualifications and for no reason which could be construed as practising discrimination of any nature.
- All staff and persons appointed by DSWA will be made aware of all aspects relating to Equal Opportunities and any action deemed to be of a discriminatory nature will be a disciplinary issue and dealt with under the terms of DSWA Policy.
- DSWA printed and electronic materials reflect diversity in the community and are non-discriminatory in style and content. Where this needs addressing and changing, it will be reviewed and done so to a schedule, for example the reprinting of resources will be reviewed under the terms of this policy.
- Approved centres, instructors and examiners apply equality of opportunity to the selection, training and assessment of learners.
- During the development of new DSWA products and services there are checks throughout to ensure that they are non-discriminatory, promote equality and recognise diversity.
- Assessment must be undertaken without discrimination and should be monitored to ensure that they do not demand literacy, numeracy and verbal skills beyond those required to demonstrate occupational competence and that all assessment decisions are free from discrimination and made purely on the grounds of competence.



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Equality of opportunity in access to qualifications and assessment

Qualifications and Assessment

This document sets out the DSWA policy for ensuring equal opportunities in terms of access to qualifications and assessment.

Commitment

DSWA support equal opportunities in education, training and employment and are committed to ensuring that anyone who wants to gain one of our qualifications faces no unnecessary barriers in doing so.

Particular characteristics

For the purpose of this policy, DSWA does not discriminate against learners because of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and/or political opinion.

Aims

To meet our commitment DSWA will:

1. Develop and offer qualifications and assessments that are based only on occupational, technical, professional or statutory requirements and do not unnecessarily discriminate against anyone on the basis of the particular characteristics mentioned in this policy.
2. Ensure equality principles are embedded in the development process and training of internal staff, appointed persons and consultants and will consult with relevant individuals and organisations to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to our qualifications and awards.
3. Review all units, qualifications and assessments to ensure that they comply with our equality policy.
4. Facilitate access to assessment by having in place clear arrangements for making reasonable adjustments in relation to our qualifications and awards. These will reflect the needs of individual learners and ensure the assessment remains valid, reliable and consistent where adjustments are approved.
5. Ensure DSWA branches and test centres are familiar with this policy and their own obligations to equality law, and that they have systems and procedures in place to implement policy effectively.
6. Ensure DSWA branches and test centres maintain an effective appeals and complaints procedure and tell candidates how to find and use this, and how or when to appeal or complain to DSWA.

Putting this policy into practice

To put this policy into practice successfully, DSWA will:

- Make it available to all staff, persons appointed by DSWA, consultants, DSWA branches and test centres, or anyone who requests it, and publicise it clearly on our website.
- Organise development activities for all staff, persons appointed by DSWA and consultants involved in the development and quality assurance of our qualifications and assessments.
- Refer explicitly to the aims of this policy when developing and reviewing DSWA qualifications, awards and assessment guidance.
- Maintain a working party to monitor, review and improve the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis.
- Ensure products and services are accessible and non-discriminatory to all individuals and groups.

This policy is published and freely available via the Dry Stone Walling Association website.

Linda Clarkson, DSWA Training & Education Coordinator
Agreed by DSWA Trustee Board June 2013
Reviewed: EY 20/7/21