# **For Everyone - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy For Our Customers & Stakeholders**

## **Purpose**

We are dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture and to ensure that equity, diversity and inclusion is embedded through all aspects of the business. Promoting a culture that actively values individuals and recognises that people from all backgrounds and experiences add value to the communities of Wales.

Embedding the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion into our everyday practice, will help to ensure our actions foster the spirit of inclusion. Developing an environment where the communities of Wales we serve are reflected in everything we do and customers are supported to thrive and develop.

## **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Statement**

Whilst fulfilling our obligations of the aims set out in our Brighter Futures document, the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 we recognise that being a diverse and inclusive organisation helps us make a difference to our customers and the people of Wales, creating a culture of inclusion and belonging.

All of the employees at Careers Wales have a role to play embracing and supporting equity, diversity and inclusion practices and activities, shaping and developing a service that meets the needs of the diverse communities of Wales. Careers Wales will continue to work with our employees, customers, stakeholders and partners to ensure that our services are inclusive and accessible to all communities in Wales and strive to remove any barriers preventing this.

## **Scope**

This policy is for all our customers, stakeholders and employees and sets out Careers Wales’ intention and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion when serving the communities of Wales. It sets out our expectations when working alongside each other and with members of the public. We need to welcome, listen to, value, support and respect each other as individuals with a contribution to make, to ensure that Careers Wales achieves its aims.

This document should be read alongside our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), Welsh Language policy, Dignity and respect Policy which sets out the practical steps we take to implement this policy.

## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Careers Wales**

**Equity** – we believe in ensuring equity by creating a sense of belonging and treating people as individuals, helping people overcome barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring an equitable service for all of our customers.

**Diversity**– we take active steps to ensure those we support through our work are represented, included, respected and have the opportunity to be authentic, develop and progress. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but also for the wider Welsh communities.

**Inclusion** – we are committed to ensuring everyone feels welcome, feels that they belong, no one feels uncomfortable, everyone is heard and represented and everyone is able to thrive and contribute equally.

## **Careers Wales’ Commitment**

Our services support customers to plan their career development and to make decisions on routes through education, training and work that are based on a realistic understanding of their capabilities and the opportunities available to them. Throughout our work the ED&I commitments are applied to the context of all our services, regardless of how they are delivered to the customer and Careers Wales is dedicated to:

* Encouraging a culture that ensures equity, diversity and inclusion is embedded in our everyday practices.
* Providing an environment where our customers and workforce are included and feel valued, whatever their individual circumstances, needs and lived experiences.
* Making our services accessible to everyone, whatever their individual circumstances, needs and lived experiences.
* Treating our customers and employees as individuals, fairly and with respect; giving everyone the opportunity to thrive and develop.
* Giving our employees the knowledge and skills to be able to deliver an equitable, diverse and inclusive service and promote equity, diversity and inclusion understanding.
* Listening to and acting upon our customer and employees equity, diversity and inclusion feedback.
* Eliminating harassment or bullying of any sort; creating an environment in which disrespectful behaviour is not tolerated.
* Reviewing equity, diversity and inclusion practices and policy on a regular basis and staying abreast of equity, diversity and inclusion developments; working with external partners to help us do this.
* Measuring our progress, being transparent about our equity, diversity and inclusion work and publishing relevant documents.

Careers Wales strives to deliver an equitable service to all our customers and recognises the protected characteristic groups outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations as listed below:

* age
* disability
* gender reassignment
* marriage and civil partnership
* pregnancy and maternity
* race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
* religion and or belief
* sex
* sexual orientation

Careers Wales’ commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion goes beyond these protected characteristics and includes everyone, whatever their individual circumstances and lived experiences.

Careers Wales will consider our equity, diversity and inclusion duties throughout all business activity.

Implementation of the Careers Wales Strategic Equality Plan and carrying out Equality Impact Assessments which will help ensure Careers Wales achieve their equity, diversity and inclusion commitments.

## Responsibilities

### Employees’ responsibility

It is important for everyone to recognise and accept individual responsibility for equity, diversity and inclusion within the Company and for challenging all forms of inappropriate actions. There is also individual responsibility for our dealings with others outside Careers Wales, to ensure that our actions and words demonstrate and deliver equity, diversity and inclusion for all.

Employees should:

* understand what these standards of behaviour require of them and always ensure that their conduct does not cause offence.
* adjust behaviour that is challenged as inappropriate.
* be prepared to support colleagues who are being harassed, bullied, victimised or discriminated against.
* speak out against unacceptable behaviour that they may have witnessed.
* be prepared to challenge and when necessary, complain about unacceptable behaviour even if it is not directed at them.
* be prepared to challenge all unacceptable behaviour on the basis of perception.
* participate constructively to assist Careers Wales’ efforts to investigate and eliminate issues arising under this policy.
* Undertake equity, diversity and inclusion training as deemed relevant by the organisation, or self-identified by individuals.
* Understand the process and permission to challenge behaviours.

### Board of Directors’ responsibility

All Board Directors have a responsibility to create an environment where equality, diversity and inclusion can be effectively embedded within the organisation and where people’s differences are genuinely respected.

All Board members will:

* Oversee and provide a direction to Careers Wales on equity, diversity and inclusion.
* Sign off key equity, diversity and inclusion work, such as the Strategic Equality Plan.

### Director with lead responsibility for equity, diversity and inclusion

The Director will:

* Ensure the organisation meets its legal duties as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) regulations as an employer and service provider.
* Report to both the Careers Wales Board of Directors and the Welsh Government highlighting areas of concern and actions taken.
* Instigate investigations of any negative feedback received that suggest a contravention of this policy.
* Maintain the equity, diversity and inclusion strategic narrative for Careers Wales.

### Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committees’ responsibility

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee membership will include internal employees’ representation from across Careers Wales.

The Committee will:

* Agree the Strategic Equality Plan.
* Review and update the Strategic Equality Plan regularly.
* Monitor the performance of the organisation in relation to the targets and actions detailed in the Strategic Equality Plan.
* Report any Strategic Equality Plan shortcomings to the relevant Director.
* Review the For Everyone - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
* Review the equity, diversity and inclusion elements of the Companies Self Evaluation Report.
* Implement actions arising from the equity, diversity and inclusion elements of the Companies Self Evaluation Report.

### Managers’ responsibility

Managers at every level are responsible for ensuring the equity, diversity and inclusion of their employees and for ensuring that they and their team members understand their responsibilities and that equity, diversity and inclusion policies are upheld in their area.

Managers will:

* Ensure fairness and impartiality in all aspects of the work of Careers Wales.
* Set standards and ensure that their own behaviour is of the highest standard (being role models).
* Take appropriate and prompt action if unacceptable or offensive behaviour is identified, challenging and correcting unacceptable behaviour.
* Uphold these standards of behaviour and lead by example in treating all employees and customers fairly and with respect.
* Create an environment where employees feel safe to report any behaviour that is deemed to contravene this policy.

### People Development Teams’ responsibility

The People Development Team will:

* Review the internal Dignity and Respect at Work policy and related guidance.
* Provide learning and development that continuously improves delivery of our services to customers and stakeholders.
* Support managers and employees on equity, diversity and inclusion issues.

## Legal Duties

Careers Wales’ duties are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations which came into force in April 2011. As a public body operating in Wales, we are working towards the well-being goals included in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the obligations under the Public Sector Duty.

## Review, Evaluation and Learning

Careers Wales’ feedback and complaints procedure will enable any customers or stakeholders to raise concerns where they feel our services contravene this policy. Any feedback or complaint relating to equity, diversity and inclusion would be subject to investigation and reported to Welsh Government. More information on the feedback and complaints procedure can be found here. [Feedback and complaints | Careers Wales (gov.wales)](https://careerswales.gov.wales/about-us/feedback-and-complaints)

We will publish our For Everyone - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy along with our Strategic Equality Plan and the Pay Gap report on the Careers Wales website so that it is available for all our customers and stakeholders.

The Public Sector Duty report will be shared with Welsh Government, Careers Wales Board and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and placed on the Careers Wales website for our employees, customers and stakeholders.

Any audit relating to equity, diversity and inclusion or practices highlighting related shortcomings or best practice will be shared with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee and the relevant management team.

Careers Wales’ self-evaluation process will monitor and highlight best practices and shortcomings relating to service delivery around equity, diversity and inclusion. The self-evaluation report will be shared with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee for review and implementation of the relevant equity, diversity and inclusion actions.

## Document Administration

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