

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Overview

The Equality and Diversity policy has been developed to ensure that Professional Assessment Ltd, (PAL) meets its responsibilities in regards to an open and fair endpoint assessment.

PAL recognises that a commitment to Equality and Diversity is a commitment to an on-going review of policies, practice and performance which is predicated on the principles of fair, accessible and reliable assessment.

PAL aims to monitor, review and evaluate its performance against the policy through its review of endpoint assessment management and administration and assessment evaluations.

The Policy draws on guidance provided for regulatory qualifications, as the principles enshrined in this guidance is equally valid for EPAOs and independent assessment activities. To this end, regarding endpoint assessment design we have endeavoured to guarantee the assessment instruments are fair and equal to ensure that wherever possible all apprentices with the relevant skills, knowledge and behaviours can have their achievement recognised.

## Aim

The aim of the policy is that the endpoint assessment systems and our code of conduct for all PAL personnel demonstrate a fair and equitable assessment offer, which provides every opportunity for an apprentice to be successful in their endpoint assessment and thereby achieve their apprenticeship certificate.

All PAL employees are committed to the enactment of this policy.

## Responsibilities

This policy is intended for all

- PAL employees (across all divisions)
- PAL associates
- EPAO partners
- PAL clients (training organisations/ colleges/employer providers)

This policy applies to:

- All EPA work across all standards
- All audit and compliance activities
- All observation and consultancy work

PAL is committed to being an open and inclusive organisation that values and respects diversity and looks to aid the PAL and our wider community to reach their fullest potential. PAL is opposed to discrimination on any grounds, including those of race, language, colour, nationality, ethnicity, regional or national origin, gender, rurality, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religious belief, disability or social background.

PAL works with organisations to develop good practice in the creation of apprenticeship assessment opportunities for groups currently under-represented. Positive action strategies will include the promotion of good practice in assessment provision.

## *Process*

PAL will ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted in access to our products and services and that unfair or unlawful discrimination, whether direct or indirect is eliminated.

PAL will ensure that:

- the broadest possible diversity of apprentices, employers and training organisations can access the content and assessment of our products and services
- representatives of training organisations, employers and apprentices will be involved in the design of the assessment materials
- access to equality of opportunity in assessment is expressed within the assessment administration and development of resources information
- PAL's appeals and disputes policy and complaints policy is accessible and available to all relevant stakeholders, and no individual or a particular group is restricted from challenging an assessment decision or making a justified complaint against the company
- information regarding the application of reasonable adjustments will be recorded, monitored and used to inform future developments •
- the language used in all materials will be clear, free from bias and appropriate to the target group

All PAL personnel and associates are trained to identify issues relating to equality and diversity especially in the application of assessment. All products and services are reviewed against this policy.

As an EPAO, PAL has service level agreements with training organisations and employers. However, the relationship with clients and EPAOs is not the same as the relationship between an approved centre and EPAO. PAL will where reasonably practical and within the confines of our service level agreements, ensure that all parties we offer an EPA service for have in place the following:

- an effective equality and diversity policy, with which apprentices and associated personnel of training organisations and employers are familiar and which is applied to the entirety of the apprenticeship programme
- a commitment and policy that ensures they adhere to relevant legislation regarding equality and diversity
- a programme delivery model that supports accessible provision and provides fair and reliable training and formative assessment
- an appeals and disputes procedure that allows apprentices to challenge lack of progression or outcomes of gateway meetings

*Date Created: 6th January 2018*

*Next Review: 6th January 2019*

*Person Responsible for review: Quality Development Director*

*This Policy has been agreed by Linda Martin, Managing Director*