

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Effective Date: 01/11/2020

Last Revised: 01/09/2021

Next Revision Date: 01/09/2022

Policy Owner: METAC

Policy Contact: centremanager@metac.ie

1. Reason for Policy

The policy is in place in order to ensure that all staff and learners should expect to be able to thrive, be respected and have a real opportunity to learn and develop skills so that they can achieve their fullest potential.

2. Policy Statement

METAC is the leading private provider for Energy training in Ireland, our staff and learners are made up of a wide range of people with diverse backgrounds and circumstances, which we value and regard as a great asset.

As part of our continued commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we strive to create an environment in which all our staff and learners should expect to be able to thrive, be respected and have a real opportunity to learn and develop skills so that they can achieve their fullest potential.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, trainers, and learners attending METAC.

This policy applies, but is not limited, to recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, benefits and pay, conduct at work and the staff grievance and disciplinary procedures.

4. Definitions

Equality seeks to advance equality of opportunity in access to employment or a programme of study, training, development and career opportunities without any direct or indirect discrimination, or conscious or unconscious biases.

Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are not treated less favourably, on the basis of the 9 grounds for discrimination, which are:

1. Gender
2. Civil status: single, married, divorced, etc.
3. Family status: if you're the parent or person responsible for a child over 18, or if you're the main carer or parent of a person with a disability
4. Sexual orientation
5. Religion
6. Age
7. Disability
8. Race
9. Being a member of the traveling community

Equity is concerned with promoting fairness so that everyone starts from the same place. This may include positive measures in order to achieve greater equality of outcome.

Diversity means more than just acknowledging and/or tolerating difference. Diversity involves understanding, appreciating and embracing differences and practicing mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from the majority.

Inclusion is a sense of belonging; feeling respected and valued; feeling a level of support and commitment from others so that one can achieve their best at work and study.

Unconscious bias refers to one's background, personal experiences, societal stereotypes and cultural context which can have an impact on decisions or actions without one realising. Implicit or unconscious bias happens by our brains making incredibly quick judgements and assessments of people and situations unconsciously using those biases.

5. **Legislation**

There are different legislative measures in place that protect people from discrimination. METAC will apply this policy in compliance with and in the spirit of the relevant legislation.

The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 outlaw discrimination in a wide range of employment and employment-related areas. These include recruitment and promotion; equal pay; working conditions; training or experience; dismissal and harassment including sexual harassment. The main type of unlawful discrimination involves the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been, or would be treated in a comparable situation on any of the nine grounds.

The Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, the provision of accommodation and access to education, on any of the nine grounds. The Acts outlaw discrimination in all services that are generally available to the public whether provided by the state or the private sector.

The Disability Act 2005 places a statutory obligation on public service providers to support access to services and facilities for people with disabilities.

The Gender Recognition Act 2015 provides a process enabling trans people to achieve full legal recognition of their true gender and allows for the acquisition of a new birth certificate that reflects this change. The Gender Recognition Act will allow all individuals over the age of 18 to self-declare their own gender identity. The Public Sector Duty introduced under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2015 places a duty on public sector bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity in the treatment of its employees and the persons to whom it provides services, and protect the human rights of its members, employees and the persons to whom it provides services.

6. Procedures

Mission: METAC believes in equality, diversity and inclusion and embeds these fairness principles into all aspects of its work.

Vision: METAC's vision is to be a leader in equality, diversity and inclusion. We will continue to take active steps around the following principles:

- Equality of opportunity
- Equity
- Awareness-raising
- Legislative compliance

Raising Awareness and Consultation

METAC will ensure the following:

- All staff undergo appropriate equality training for their role
- Staff are encouraged to discuss equality and diversity issues and raise any concerns they may have with the Board of Management
- Staff are supported in their role if they are supporting a learner with any equality, diversity or inclusion issues they may have

Reporting a Concern

Where a member of staff or learner perceives that they have been unfairly treated in respect of the 9 grounds:

1. Report the concern to Aoife Keenan centremanager@metac.ie (057-87-56540)
2. If Aoife Keenan is involved in the concern, report to Ursula Dunphy (accounts@metac.ie)
3. Document your concerns on METAC Discrimination Report Form (Appendix 24)
4. METAC will investigate the report and, if evidence proves the report to be true, will operate a disciplinary procedure:

Disciplinary Procedure

The following disciplinary procedures, which form part of the contract of employment will apply:

Disciplinary action can result in the issuing of an informal or formal warning, suspension with or without pay. Ultimately, persistent breaches or inadequate work performance can lead, following warnings to dismissal.

Stage 1- Verbal Warning

In the event of the Employer being dissatisfied with your work, conduct, timekeeping, or any other aspect of your employment, you may be given a verbal warning as to the matter causing dissatisfaction.

Stage 2 – Second Verbal Warning

In the event of the Employer still being dissatisfied with your work, conduct, timekeeping, or any other aspect of your employment, you may be given a second verbal warning as to the matter causing dissatisfaction.

Stage 3- Written Warning

If after reasonable period the Employer remains dissatisfied with the matter complained of, you may be given a written warning.

Stage 4- Final Written Warning

If the Employer continues to be dissatisfied with the matter complained a final written warning will be issued.

Stage 5 - Dismissal

If the Employer continues to be dissatisfied with the matter complained suspension or dismissal may take place as per legislation based on length of employment.

The procedure incorporates the right to appeal any disciplinary action taken against Staff or Learners. Any such appeal shall be either verbally or in writing to the Board of Directors within five working days of the decision. METAC Ltd, reserves the right to give pay in lieu of all or any part of the above notice by either party.

Grievance Procedure

It is important that if you have any grievance or problem matter whatsoever relating to your training/work you should have an immediate means by which such a grievance can be aired and resolved.

Any grievance on the part of the Learner or Staff Member should firstly be brought to the attention of the Director of Training.

If the Learner or Staff Member should still feel dissatisfied, the matter shall be raised with the Managing Director.

Should the Learner or Staff Member continue to feel dissatisfied thereafter an appeal shall be either verbally or in writing to the Board of Directors and thereafter as per Legislation.

7. Forms

METAC Discrimination Report Form (Appendix 24)

8. Responsibilities

All members of staff, trainers and learners have a role under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, in that they are responsible for their own behaviour but also responsible for ensuring that they carry out their role in line with this policy. This includes:

- Being aware of the policy
- Attending training
- Treating others with dignity and respect
- Ensuring that during your work, teaching content and resources should demonstrate sensitivity to equality and diversity issues
- Comply with this policy

The Board of Management will ensure that:

- They take a leadership role in equality, diversity and inclusion issues
- They promote the policy
- Equality is promoted
- Discrimination is prevented
- Human Rights of everyone are protected
- Everyone is treated fairly across the 9 Grounds
- Prompt action is taken over alleged discrimination or harassment
- All staff are offered training on equality, diversity and inclusion matters
- External contractors are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion

9. Policy History

Issue No.	Date	Approved by:	Details of Change
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1	01/11/2020	Dominic Dunne MD	New policy

10. References

The Employment Equality Acts, 1998–2015

The Equal Status Acts, 2000-2015

The Disability Act, 2005

The Gender Recognition Act, 2015

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2015

Appendix 24

Discrimination Report Form

Name of referrer: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Details of concern – please include details of who treated you unfairly, where and when the incident(s) occurred, and a full description of the incident, including evidence:

Please tick which of the 9 grounds for discrimination this report falls under:

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civil status	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family status	<input type="checkbox"/>	Race	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Membership of the Traveling Community	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Date concern reported to METAC: _____

Signed (referrer): _____

Date: _____

Signed (METAC): _____

Date: _____