



Irish Colleges Training Centre Equality Policy

Introduction

Irish Colleges Training Centre is fully committed to equality of opportunity, which is an integral part of its overall policy. This Equal Opportunities Policy is our way of stating our commitment to equality of opportunity in relation to employment for all employees and potential employees. It sets out ways in which equality of opportunity will be actively promoted. There is therefore an obligation on all staff to respect and observe this policy.

The Law

Employment equality law places heavy responsibilities on employers. Application of an Equal Opportunities Policy will help us to

- Ensure compliance with the requirements of equality legislation, and
- Identify and eliminate hidden bias in employment practices and procedures.

The Employment Equality Act, 1998

This Act, outlaws discrimination (basically, the treatment of one person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated) on any of nine discriminatory grounds in all areas relevant to employment. It prohibits direct and indirect discrimination and victimisation in employment on any of the following grounds:

- Gender
- Marital Status
- Family Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of a Traveller Community

The terms of the legislation apply to employers and to employment agencies, vocational training bodies, trade unions and professional bodies and to the publication of advertisements. The Act allows an employer to put in place positive action measures to remove existing inequalities, which affect women's opportunities in access to employment, vocational training and promotion.

The Act establishes the Equality Authority and the Office of Director of Equality Investigations to implement the provisions of the legislation, to promote equality, to make available advice and to support the drive towards equal opportunities.

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Under the terms of the legislation unlawful discrimination is defined as either direct or indirect or it may take the form of victimisation.

- Direct Discrimination is less favourable treatment for people, which are explicitly related to any of the nine grounds. It occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been, or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.
- Indirect Discrimination arises where an unjustifiable or unessential requirement or condition is applied but which has a disproportionate adverse effect on a particular group or class of persons who are protected under the legislation. There need not be any intention to discriminate.
- Victimisation is any form of retaliation by an employer or arising from circumstances where a person takes any action to pursue their rights, to support action or giving notice of intention to take support action under equality legislation.

Declaration of Commitment by Management

Irish Colleges Training Centre is committed, as an equal opportunity employer, to implement equal opportunities in all its employment policies, practices and procedures. To this end it will ensure that the principles of employment equality are applied to recruitment, promotion, training, career development and to all terms and conditions of employment.

Our objective is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment, directly or indirectly, on any of the grounds set out in the Employment Equality Act, 1998 as outlined above.

We will ensure that management at all levels actively support, encourage and implement equality in the workplace. It will implement a positive and continuing programme of action to make this policy fully effective. All personnel procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are appointed, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. All employees will have equal opportunity to show ability and progress within the College.

Recruitment and Selection

This is the most important area to monitor, as it is the area in which many organisations prove vulnerable to allegations of discriminatory practices. To avoid this we will review each step of the selection process with the aim of eliminating any possibly discriminatory aspects. A well thought out selection process can prove an effective tool to an organisation genuinely pursuing equality of opportunity. The following policy will therefore apply:

1. Recruitment positions in Irish Colleges Training Centre are open to all suitably qualified candidates subject to educational and experience criterion relevant to each specific post being met.
2. The College's selection process will provide equal access at all stages to all candidates. A record of all decisions made throughout the selection process will be retained for at least 12 months after the appointments have been made.
3. Irish Colleges Training Centre will prepare written job specifications based on the requirements of the job at the time. Requirements and qualifications considered essential will relate strictly to the proper performance of the job.
4. Advertisements will contain nothing of a discriminatory nature and will encourage applications from the broadest possible base. This does not preclude local advertising of positions where appropriate.
5. All advertisements will contain a positive statement of the College's commitment to its equal

opportunities policy.

6. Selection tests, where used will relate only to the genuine requirements of the job and will be designed in a way that affords all candidates an equal opportunity for success.

7. Short listing will be carried out by matching details of all applicants to the job specification. To guard against the possibility of bias more than one person will be involved in this procedure if at all possible.

8. All selection interviews will be conducted impartially. Interviewers will not make assumptions about the suitability of candidates for certain type of work based on gender, marital status or any other personal factor not relevant to the requirements of the job.

9. To avoid the possibility of bias interview boards if at all possible will include members of both sexes.

10. Questions at interviews will be directed towards assessing the suitability of candidates for the job in question. Where it is essential to assess whether personal circumstances will affect performance of the job, relevant questions will be asked equally of all applicants and the answers evaluated on the same basis for all.

Training

Irish Colleges Training Centre is committed to the provision of excellence in its service. It is an integral part of this commitment that all staff are given equal access to appropriate training.

Therefore:

- Training will be available equally to all relevant staff with no category excluded.
- Selection for training will be made without regard to sex, (this will not preclude the College from selecting a mixture of males and females to attend particular courses), marital status or any other non-relevant factor.

Promotion

The College is committed to providing a promotion system, which gives equal access to all suitably qualified staff.

- The College's promotion practices will not discriminate on grounds of sex, marital status or any other factors set out in the Employment Equality Act, 1998.
- Management will ensure that all staff is aware of career/promotional opportunities.
- Promotion will be determined solely from objective criteria based on the person's performance and ability to do the job

Career Development

- Employees will be informed of and encouraged to pursue personal and career development opportunities open to them without assumptions being made about their mobility or possible length of future service

Working Arrangements

Efforts will be made to enable staff to combine their work and family responsibilities.

Language and Corporate Image

The College will demonstrate its commitment to equal opportunities by using non-discriminatory, non-sexist language.