



Equity Diversity And Inclusion Policy

Most recent update: 08 September 2025

Scope

This policy statement reflects Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) Council's Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy and its links to the Skills and Employment Service.

Equality of opportunity, inclusive practice and promoting the value of Diversity are central to everything we do within Skills and Employment. This includes the way we commission, who we commission, the services and provision we deliver and the support we give. Everyone is different and has something unique to offer. Cheshire West and Chester Council wants to respect and understand these differences and to make the most of everyone's talents. We are fully focused on creating opportunity and progression pathways for all adults in the borough. Through participation in our service all individuals can make effective choices about their learning and work options, and achieve their goals.

Aims Of This Policy Statement

1. Ensure equality of access to all Cheshire West and Chester's adult learning and employment support services delivered by Skills and Employment teams
2. Monitor learning outcomes and programme participation against a background of inclusivity to ensure all learners are reaching their full potential
3. Implement CW&C's Corporate Equality Plan (for the Skills and Employment Service) in order to ensure that the council, its funded partners, stakeholders and communities embed Equity Diversity and Inclusion within all their services
4. Ensure we meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010
5. Take every opportunity to improve our inclusive practice and embed it within our adult learning curriculum, programme support and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Definitions

Diversity is about understanding, recognising, respecting and valuing differences.

Equity is about managing differences so that everyone has equality of opportunity through a fair and consistent approach to the application of rules, policies and procedures. We recognise that sometimes this will mean treating people differently.

Inclusion means valuing everyone's contribution, giving people the opportunity to suggest ideas and raise issues.

The Equality Framework is the national standard that assesses a council's progress on Equity Diversity and Inclusion. In October 2014 the Council gained the highest "excellent" level of the framework. We are committed to maintaining these standards. This commitment is relevant to all we do, how we manage ourselves and how we deliver our service.





We are committed to:

Equality Of Opportunity

- Everyone should be treated fairly and with respect and should be encouraged to reach their full potential. This will mean using different approaches in different circumstances to ensure that equality of opportunity
- We aim to actively promote Equity Diversity and Inclusion, and tackle bullying and discrimination. Fair access to our services is available to both existing and potential learners and programme participants
- We are committed to eliminating unlawful or unfair discrimination in keeping with the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation)
- We recognise that promoting Equity Diversity and Inclusion will improve public services for everyone. Therefore our aim is to make equality an integral part of the way the council works, by putting it at the centre of everything we do
- We take proactive steps through targeting our resource to narrow gaps in opportunity and firmly believe a more equal society is better for everyone

Valuing Diversity

- We value Diversity and recognise that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas, views and perceptions. We aim to encourage and promote the value of differences. We ensure that learning and programme participation is accessible to our whole community and is relevant and appropriate to the widest possible range of views and experiences

How We Embed Equity Diversity and Inclusion

All learning provision is delivered in accordance with the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and is monitored both by Skills and Employment staff and Ofsted Inspectors. Employment support programmes comply with funding requirements and fidelity models.

All direct delivery and contracted provision work within these frameworks, which constantly seek to improve services and widen access through a variety of tools and monitoring measures. Some of the ways we ensure that our services widen access and that everyone is treated fairly and effectively:

- Carry out extensive consultation and respond appropriately to the changing demographics and needs of the community
- Plan a rich curriculum of adult learning and employment support that meets needs and interests
- Promotion of services is available in accessible formats so that we can encourage those not accessing services currently to take advantage our offer
- Commission specific learning providers who specialise in supporting different target groups
- Design and pilot models of support to develop best practice



What We Do To Ensure Inclusivity:

- Implement safer recruitment processes when recruiting tutors and organisations
- Provide staff with access to Equity Diversity and Inclusion training
- Encourage self-assessment to focus on Equity Diversity and Inclusion
- Share good practice at events
- Actively promote Continuous Professional Development focused on Equity Diversity and Inclusion for both Skills and Employment staff and sub-contracted partners (through our Quality Assurance and Improvement framework)
- Review the success of embedding inclusivity through all quality monitoring visits
- As appropriate and on an ongoing basis, review all policies, procedures, strategies and implementation plans, and conduct Equality Impact Assessments to ensure compliance
- Involve the Council's Equity Diversity and Inclusion Team in Skills and Employment plans
- Create a safe learning environment underpinned by relevant policies e.g. safeguarding

Furthermore, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we will assist learners and programme participants at each stage of their learning or programme support journey.

Prior to enrolment or programme start, we will:

- Ensure that plain English is used in all promotional materials and made accessible to all
- Take positive steps to encourage potential learners with specific needs to engage in learning or participate in programmes
- Work in partnership with support organisations to share good practice and find solutions for barriers to learning
- Guarantee an initial assessment that ensures all individual and/or support needs can be met and that learners and programme participants are signposted appropriately

During programme delivery, we will:

- Put the needs of our learners and programme participants first. Adult education identifies learner needs on the individualised learning plans (ILPs) with employment support projects utilising ongoing support meetings
- Ensure plain English in all communications
- Support learners and programme participants with English and maths needs
- Offer additional learning support to those who need it
- Involve learners and programme participants in understanding inclusivity through their own learning and development
- Design promotional materials to reflect a diverse society and make all resources available, where appropriate, in different formats



- Ensure well-qualified tutors and employment mentors consistently challenge stereotypical and prejudiced views in order to create a positive learning environment for all involved
- Adhere to fair assessment practices
- Practise teaching strategies and employment support that appeals to all learning styles
- Implement the Safeguarding Policy when circumstances require
- Maintain a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and bullying in all forms
- Undertake activities to raise awareness on the importance of Equity Diversity and Inclusion and the nine protected characteristics

On completion of programme delivery, we will:

- Work in partnership with other organisations to signpost learners and programme participants appropriately to the “next step” on their journey
- Provide comprehensive information, advice and guidance about further opportunities
- Monitor achievements against EDIMS (Equality and Diversity Impact Measures) through data capture and analysis
- Monitor Equity Diversity and Inclusion in progression surveys

Conclusion

A successful approach to Equity Diversity and Inclusion as outlined above will support our learners and programme participants to be happier and healthier, have better jobs, live longer and contribute to their communities.