



**etbi**

Education and Training  
Boards Ireland  
*Boird Oideachais agus  
Oiliúna Éireann*

# EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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## POLICY

*For all staff in  
Education and  
Training Boards  
Ireland*



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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of this policy is to set out the Education and Training Boards Ireland's (ETBI) commitment to the principles and promotion of equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of the organisation's activity and to detail how this policy will be implemented.

ETBI seeks to provide an inclusive environment which promotes equality and values diversity and inclusion. It is committed to maintaining an environment of dignity and respect where all staff can develop to their full potential. The concept of equality is central to our ethos of academic and service excellence.

ETBI is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to the continued development of employment policies, procedures and practices which prevent discrimination on the specified statutory grounds of gender, civil status, family status, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or membership of the Travelling community.

This policy also outlines procedures to identify and remove any additional barriers to staff members or service users.

## 2. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

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This policy is informed by the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011 (as amended) and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2012 (as amended) which prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, and victimisation in relation to nine specified equality grounds: gender, family status, civil status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity, and membership of the Traveler community.

The Employment Equality Act prohibits discrimination in employment, including recruitment, promotion, pay and other conditions of employment. The Equal Status Acts prohibits

discrimination in access to and provision of services, accommodation, and educational establishments.

The Disability Act 2005 (as amended) places significant obligations on organisations in terms of providing integrated access to services and information to people with disabilities, as well as promoting the employment of people with disabilities.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 requires that in the performance of their functions public bodies shall have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment and protect the human rights of staff and service users.

The policy reflects ETBI's commitment to honour its obligations under these Acts.

### **3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

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This policy applies to:

- All applicants for employment, employees and all those who work for ETBI and relates to all decisions in relation to recruitment and selection, promotion, access to training and terms and conditions of employment.
- All service users, visitors, customers, service providers and clients of ETBI and relates to all services provided by ETBI in its diverse activities both internal and external.

Note: 'service user' will be used throughout this document to denote ETBs, customers, members of the public, visitors, and clients.

## 4. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

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Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI):

- Is committed to non-discrimination (direct or indirect) in access and participation in employment in relation to any of the nine specified equality grounds of gender, family status, civil status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity, and membership of the Traveler community.
- Seeks to ensure that the provision of all services shall be free from any discrimination and harassment.
- Supports an inclusive and supportive environment of dignity and respect where all staff can develop their full potential.
- Will not tolerate harassment or bullying of staff, or other members of the community. Failure to comply can result in disciplinary action.
- Is committed to identifying barriers to equality, diversity, inclusion and full participation and any identified imbalances in practice will be redressed.
- Is committed to providing integrated accessible services and information to all users and will seek to ensure that information is produced in accessible information formats.
- Will seek to provide reasonable accommodation to staff and service users with disabilities.
- Will support the employment of staff with disabilities.

## 5. OTHER POLICIES

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Education and Training Boards Ireland policies and procedures:

- Time & Attendance Policies
- Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure

ETBI has several specific policies in place to provide for flexible working and leave arrangements, including:

- Maternity Leave Policy & Procedures
- Parental Leave Policy & Procedures
- Adoptive Leave Policy & Procedures
- Career Break Policies and Procedures
- Parents Leave & Procedures
- Paternity Leave Policy & Procedures
- Carer's Leave Policy & Procedures

## 6. EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN EMPLOYMENT

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ETBI is committed to the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) as an integral part of its planning processes so as to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is incorporated into all strategic planning and decision-making activities and policies.

This section outlines how ETBI's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, non-discrimination, equal access, and participation apply to employment practices and procedures.

The policy affects all areas of employment practice including recruitment and selection, training and development, progression, pay, employment conditions and retention.

## 7. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

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In relation to the recruitment and selection of staff ETBI shall:

- Not discriminate directly or indirectly against any applicant or candidate seeking employment on the basis of any of the nine equality grounds.
- Select candidates on the basis of merit and ensure that candidates with the demonstrable skills, competencies, talent and experience most suited to the advertised post are selected.
- Identify and remove barriers that might impede the application or selection of an eligible candidate, across all nine specified equality grounds.
- Ensure that application processes are open to any eligible candidate who may wish to apply.
- Provide reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities throughout the selection process.
- Develop inclusive recruitment practices that acknowledge the diversity of applicants and candidates for employment.
- Provide a flexible service and facilitate communication between applicants and recruitment staff in order to facilitate the recruitment process.
- Provide materials in accessible or alternative formats.
- Seek information on the diversity profile of employment applicants to monitor how the success of recruitment campaigns in attracting a diversity of applicants. Seek feedback from and consult with applicants or other interest groups to ensure quality of service.
- Ensure transparency of recruitment procedures.

## 8. RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING

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- Provide job specifications that set out both mandatory, essential, and desirable requirements, skills, knowledge, experience, and competencies for each position.



- Ensure that the drafting of job descriptions and advertisements does not directly or indirectly exclude any potential applicant.
- Ensure that the drafting of job descriptions does not include unnecessary requirements that would unfairly exclude or dissuade potential applicants.
- Direct and target recruitment to ensure that advertisements reach a broad and diverse candidate pool.

## 9. INTERVIEW PANELS

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- Provide EDI training (in addition to recruitment, shortlisting, and interviewing skills) to all ETBI members who participate on selection panels.
- Commit to a standard agreed and objective schemes for rating candidates on the basis of experience, skill, qualifications and matching specified requirements.
- Any medical test required will be assessed in relation to the specific duties of the job.
- Employees who disclose a disability will be provided with reasonable accommodation.

## 10. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

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ETBI will:

- Ensure that every employee has equal access to training and development opportunities regardless of disability or any other equality ground.
- Seek to ensure that programmes provided are inclusive and accommodate the diversity of staff.
- Mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion issues in training programmes as appropriate.

## 11. PROGRESSION

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ETBI shall:

- Ensure that all staff enjoy equal access to progression and promotional opportunities.
- Monitor promotional processes in order to ensure equality of opportunity in career progression in ETBI.
- Identify barriers to progression for staff with particular reference to the nine specified grounds and, where appropriate, implement measures to redress imbalances.

## 12. RETENTION AND WELL-BEING

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Seek to retain and develop the potential and talents of all staff.

- Make every effort to retain employees who may develop a disability.
- Provide equal access to work life balance policies and benefits as appropriate.
- Provide access to the Employee Assistance Programme as widely as possible.
- Provide regular updates and information to staff regarding benefits and entitlements through the Human Resources web page/SharePoint.
- Give due consideration to the accommodation of diversity throughout all industrial relations matters (grievances, disciplinary matters etc.).
- All employment practices and procedures shall be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with current legislation and with this policy and that they address and support equality, diversity, the inclusion of access, opportunity and participation.

## 13. COMMUNICATIONS

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Information materials produced by ETBI are provided in a relevant and accessible manner to staff and service users.

Information in paper, electronic and web formats is made accessible following best practice guidelines on clear print and alternative formats.

Advertising and marketing strategies are non-discriminatory and communicate the commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Direct contact with staff and service users shall be conducted in a courteous and professional manner consistent with an environment of dignity and respect.

ETBI shall communicate this policy widely so as to reach all staff, managers, service users, business contractors via a broad range of channels including (but not limited to): website, e-mail, information materials, provision of in-service and induction training, publication and dissemination.

## 14. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION AWARENESS

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ETBI shall implement equality and diversity training and awareness programmes in order to ensure the implementation throughout ETBI of this policy with regard to employment and service delivery. Equality, diversity and inclusion shall be mainstreamed in training programmes relevant to employment, teaching or service provision.

## 15. BUSINESS CONTRACTORS

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ETBI seeks to ensure that other companies from whom it has contracted to receive goods and services are aware that this policy is in place and that such companies are expected to comply with it. Any breach of this policy or the ETBI Dignity at Work policy may constitute grounds for suspension or cancellation of such a contract.

## 16. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

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Any employee who has a complaint concerning a breach of this policy may bring such a complaint to their line manager or Human Resources. Complaints under this policy will be managed under the ETBI Dignity at Work Policy.

## 17. ABOUT EQUALITY

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The principle of equality is enshrined in the Irish Constitution and in many international and EU treaties and declarations.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sees equality as a fundamental principle in terms of a person's human rights – 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights', Art. 1.

Key pieces of equality legislation in Ireland are the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011 and Equal Status Acts 2000-2012.

## 18. EQUALITY GROUNDS

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Discrimination is prohibited by legislation on the basis of any of the following grounds:

- gender: a man, a woman, or a transgender person
- civil status: single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, civil partner, former civil partner. family status: pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 years, or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability;
- age: this only applies to people over 16 except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under this age.
- race and ethnicity: a particular race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin;
- religion: different religious belief, background, outlook or none;
- disability: this is broadly defined as including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions;
- sexual orientation: Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or heterosexual;
- membership of the Traveler community: people who are commonly called Travelers, who are identified both by Travelers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

## 19. DISCRIMINATION

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Discrimination is prohibited and has a specific meaning in the Employment Equality Acts and Equal Status Acts. Discrimination is defined as the treatment of a person in a less favorable way than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on any of the nine equality grounds. Discrimination can be direct, indirect, by association or imputation.

## 20. INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

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Indirect discrimination happens when there is less favourable treatment in effect or by impact. It happens when people are, for example, refused employment or training not explicitly on account of a discriminatory reason but because of a provision, practice or requirement which they find hard to satisfy. If the provision, practice or requirement puts people who belong to one of the grounds covered by the Acts at a particular disadvantage then the employer is deemed to have indirectly discriminated, unless the provision is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

## 21 HARRASSMENT

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Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

In both cases the unwanted conduct may include acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

The emphasis is on the effect of the unwanted conduct on the recipient, not on the intention of the perpetrator.

There are other forms of bullying and harassment which are not included in the Acts but covered by other legislation such as the Employment Equality Acts, the Unfair Dismissals Acts, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, Civil Law, and Criminal Law.

## **22. REVIEW OF POLICY**

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There will be a review of this policy following two full years after its introduction or earlier if deemed necessary by ETBI management.

