

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Related Documents

Complaints Policy
Grievance and Discipline Policy
GDPR/Data Protection Policy
Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Statement

The Chartered Institution of Railways Operators (CIRO) is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion within the Institution and wider CIRO community.

There should be no discrimination, harassment or less favourable treatment of any employee, member, apprentice, learner or customer, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender, gender reassignment, marital, or family status, disability, trade union membership or activity, or age.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis at CIROs' Annual QA Review.

Purpose of Policy

CIRO is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in which all employees, learners and customers are treated equitably, and where they can realise their potential whatever their colour, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender, gender reassignment, marital, or family status, disability, trade union membership or activity, or age.

Inclusivity is one of the Institution's core values and CIRO is committed to creating a culture of equality and diversity within the wider CIRO community, where all employees, members, apprentices and learners are encouraged to reach their full potential.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Discrimination: direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Direct Discrimination: Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association below).

Discrimination by Association: It is direct discrimination if an employer treats an employee or service user less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Perception: This is direct discrimination if an employer treats an employee or service user less favourably because the employer mistakenly thinks that the employee or service user has a protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination: Indirect discrimination may occur when rules or arrangements are put in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.

Harassment: Harassment is ‘unwanted behaviour’ related to a protected characteristic that violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation: Victimisation occurs when an someone is treated unfairly because they have done (or because it is suspected that they have done or may do) one of the following things in good faith:

- Make an allegation of discrimination
- Support a complaint of discrimination
- Give evidence relating to a complaint about discrimination
- Raise a grievance concerning equality or discrimination
- Do anything else for the purposes of (or in connection with) the Equality Act, such as bringing an employment tribunal claim of discrimination

Protected Characteristic: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation

Learner: generic term for anyone enrolled on any CIRO apprenticeship, short course or academic programme.

CIRO Apprenticeship: any apprenticeship programme delivered by CIRO.

CIRO course: the generic term for short courses and academic courses offered by CIRO.

Complainant: the person who has made the complaint.

Aims of the Policy

Equality is not about treating everyone the same, it is about ensuring that access to opportunities is available to all by taking account of differing needs and capabilities. Diversity is about recognising and valuing differences through inclusion, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial origin, religion, belief, sexual orientation, perspectives, opinions and personal values. Inclusion is an approach that ensures all learners—regardless of ability, background, or identity—have equal access to CIRO learning programmes. CIRO works with learners and employers to identify barriers to learning as early as possible. We provide tailored support to ensure every learner feels valued, welcomed and able to thrive.

It is the aim of CIRO and this policy to ensure that, throughout their employment, all employees of the company are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. CIRO will make best endeavours to ensure that policies, procedures and practices always comply with current legislative requirements.

It is also the aim of CIRO and this policy to ensure that, throughout their membership and learning journey, all CIRO members and learners are treated fairly and with dignity and respect and are provided with an equality of opportunity to achieve.

Scope of the Policy

CIRO recognises that all CIRO employees, members and learners have a duty to support and uphold the principles contained in its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and supporting policies and that the commitment of all employees, members and learners is required to make the policy a success.

General Principles

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for implementation and overseeing this Policy rests with the CIRO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and management team. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that CIRO complies with equalities legislation and promotes equality of opportunity and diversity throughout the organisation.

Every member of staff carries personal responsibility for their own behaviour at work and for ensuring that this policy is translated into practice in all areas of employment and service provision.

Promoting and implementing the policy

All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy, and they will ensure this policy is promoted by:

- Making all new employees, learners and customers aware of the policy.
- Embedding equality and diversity into learner training.
- Completing training on induction to a training course or employment to the company.
- Completing staff training with regards to equality and diversity as ongoing CPD and as a means of implementing this policy.
- Supplying support materials and resources on company notice boards and in portfolios for employees and learners.
- Covering equality and discrimination issues or concerns with learners through quarterly reviews

Recruitment

When recruiting new employees and apprentices, it is important to adhere to equality, diversity and inclusion procedures so we can promote a society that does not discriminate in relation to anyone that falls within the protective characteristics. We will do this by:

- Ensuring we treat every potential employee and learner with respect.
- Ensuring discrimination and stereotyping play absolutely no part in recruiting/selecting employees or learners.
- Ensuring we value differences from one individual to the next and acknowledge the positive benefits for CIRO to allow us to create a diverse and talented team.
- Selecting the best employee or learner for the role advertised based purely on qualification/experience.
- Support the employer to fully understand the benefits of a diverse workplace rather than stereotypical choices.

Reporting

All employees have a duty to report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or bullying that come to their attention, and to take part in any investigation into such allegations, to support CIRO in the development of a culture in which employees, members and learners feel able and supported to report such concerns and have them fairly and robustly addressed.

CIRO will endeavour to try to resolve problems within the CIRO community at the earliest possible opportunity and usually with the least possible formality. If it is felt the behaviour is

sufficiently serious that it cannot be resolved informally, or unacceptable behaviour continues after it has been discussed informally with the person acting inappropriately, it will be necessary to take a formal approach.

Procedure for making a formal complaint

Formal complaints involving allegations against an CIRO employee or member should be referred in writing to the CIRO Business Support Executive and the complaint will be handled in accordance with the CIRO complaints policy.

CIRO will carry out an investigation collecting evidence and/or taking statements from the complainant, the person being complained about and any witnesses.

The investigation into any complaint will be carried out and concluded as per the timescale set out in the complaints policy. Complex cases may take longer to investigate. Where this is the case the person investigating will keep both parties informed of progress and expected timescales.

Authorisation

Signature:	Phil Sherratt	Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Date:	February 2026		

Document Control

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