



Skillsfirst Awards Ltd

Equality and Accessibility Policy

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Skillsfirst Awards
Suite 416
Fort Dunlop
Fort Parkway
Birmingham
B24 9FD

0121 270 5100
www.skillsfirst.co.uk

Equality and accessibility policy

Introduction

This policy is aimed at our centres delivering Skillsfirst qualifications and learners who are registered on a Skillsfirst qualification.

Skillsfirst is committed to complying with all current and relevant equalities legislation. We aim to deliver a service and range of qualifications that are fair, accessible and do not include any unnecessary barriers to entry. Where there are features of a qualification that could disadvantage a group of learners, they will be listed in the qualification handbook in the learner entry requirements section and the justification provided.

The Equality Act protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The Equality Act protects people against discrimination because of the protected characteristics that we all have, there are nine protected characteristics; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

Review arrangements

Skillsfirst shall review this policy annually and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulators¹ or changes in legislation.

If you would like to feed back any views, please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

Areas covered by this policy

Qualification development

Skillsfirst will provide appropriate equality training and guidance to our staff. We will ensure that we comply with the requirements of equalities law in relation to each of the qualifications we make available. We will ensure that none of our qualifications have any feature that would disadvantage learners because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

If we have to specify a requirement that could disadvantage a particular group (for example a legal requirement around the age of learners, or health and safety issues around learners with particular disabilities), we will include it in the qualification handbook and explain why it is there. The justification will relate only to the specific requirements of the qualification.

Centre's responsibility

It is important that your staff involved in the delivery of our qualifications and your learners, are fully aware of the content of this policy (e.g. via their induction when first embarking on Skillsfirst qualifications).

Skillsfirst expects its centres to deliver its qualifications in accordance with equalities law, enabling learners to have equal access to training and assessment for qualifications, irrespective of the characteristics noted above. Assessment must similarly be undertaken without discrimination. Centres (including sub-centres and assessment sites) are required to have in place a policy to ensure that such discrimination does not occur, either directly, or indirectly.

Where complaints relating to issues of inequality cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the centre, learners must be made aware of their right to appeal using the arrangements outlined in our Appeals Policy on the Skillsfirst website www.skillsfirst.co.uk

It is important centre staff notify Skillsfirst if they have a concern that a Skillsfirst qualification contains any feature which could disadvantage a group of learners who share a particular characteristic. The Product Development Team will review feedback in line with our qualification review process.

Monitoring the success and relevance of our arrangements

As part of the learner registration and certification processes for qualifications, Skillsfirst will collect and retain requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration and access arrangements. We also seek feedback from learners, centres and other stakeholders using a variety of methods. Any relevant issues identified which suggest our provision or services may have unnecessarily impacted on learners, will be reported back to our Managing Director who will be responsible for ensuring a review takes place. If necessary following this review, we will make amendments to provision and/or services in accordance with our documented procedures.

If reviews highlight equality or accessibility issues with qualifications, we will inform all relevant stakeholders. Details of our ongoing reviews will be made available to the qualification regulator¹ upon request.

Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of this policy, or wish to give feedback, please contact our Customer Service Team on 0121 270 5100 or email them at customerservices@skillsfirst.co.uk