



Policy on Equality & Diversity

Adopted by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board

At a meeting of the Board on the 23rd March 2017

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- Louth and Meath ETB is committed to equality of opportunity in all its policies, practices and services.
- We shall ensure that no user of any ETB service, employee, job applicant or student will receive less favourable treatment due to gender, civil status, family status, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race and membership of the traveller community, in terms of recruitment, pay and conditions of work, training and work experience and opportunities for career promotion.
- Equality of opportunity is an integral part of Louth and Meath ETB's overall policy and relies on the contribution of management and staff in ensuring the overall effectiveness of the application of the policy. While Equal Opportunities are formally assigned as an integral part of the responsibility of management, all staff are encouraged to promote equality for all in working life.
- All employees will be selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their abilities and merits only, and according to the requirements of the job. All employees will have equal opportunity to show ability and to progress within the ETB and its associated bodies.

2. DISCRIMINATION

The Employment Equality Act, 1998-2015 and the Equality Status Act 2000-2015 prohibits discrimination under 9 headings:

Gender Grounds
Civil Status Grounds
Family Status Grounds
Sexual Orientation Grounds
Religion Grounds
Age Grounds
Disability Grounds
Race Grounds
Traveller Community Membership

Direct discrimination occurs, for example on grounds of gender, where a person of one gender is treated less favourably than a person of another gender (or a person of the same gender but of different civil status) is treated, or would be treated in the same circumstances.

Indirect discrimination occurs for example when a person is obliged to comply with a requirement relating to employment which is not essential to the job but with which a substantially greater proportion of persons of the other gender, a different civil status, age, race etc are able to comply.

Victimisation occurs when a person is penalised or treated less favourably because of pursuing their rights to equal treatment, supporting action or giving notice of intention to take or support action under equality legislation. Victimisation is prohibited under the legislation.

3. SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board's selection procedures provide equal access at all stages to all candidates.

3.1 Advertising:

Applicants for posts will be given clear and accurate information about posts through advertisements, job descriptions, and memoranda of information and interviews, which will assist them in assessing their own suitability.

Advertisements and recruitment literature will reflect Louth and Meath ETB's commitment to equality of opportunity and will indicate that the Board is an equal opportunities employer. Advertisements will be aimed at as wide a group of suitably qualified and experienced people as possible.

3.2 Application Forms:

Application forms will require only information considered necessary for selection for the post. No questions in relation to gender, civil status or personal circumstances will be asked in advance of appointment. Louth and Meath ETB will make this Policy available to all applicants and will direct applicants to a link on its website where a copy of this Equality & Diversity Policy Statement can be downloaded.

3.3 Interviews:

Interviews will be conducted on a reasonable, fair and objective basis. All staff involved in recruitment and selection interviewing will ensure that they are fully aware of their obligations under this policy and the law governing discrimination, and that selection is made on a fair and objective basis. Relevant training and/or guidance will as far as practicable be provided to ETB selection board members.

Both male and female genders will be represented, where possible, on interview panels. Interview panels will as far as possible, consist of two or more people.

Interviews will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the post and ability to fulfil the post requirements. There will be no assumptions that individuals, because of gender, civil status, family status, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race and including membership of the Traveller community, possess characteristics which might put them at a disadvantage/advantage.

4. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Training:

A balanced participation by gender in the training opportunities open to them will be encouraged and assumptions about domestic responsibilities or other extraneous factors will not influence training decisions.

Special training initiatives will be considered to prepare employees for non-traditional roles.

Gender stereotyping will be eliminated from all Louth and Meath ETB's training documentation.

5. PROMOTION

Louth and Meath ETB's promotion procedures will not discriminate on grounds of gender, civil status, family status, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Management will ensure that all staff are aware of career/promotional opportunities by circulating details and posting them at obvious points throughout the organisation.

6. LANGUAGE AND ORGANISATION IMAGE

Louth and Meath ETB will demonstrate its commitment to equal opportunities by using non-discriminatory language and images in all its documents/publications.

7. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Louth and Meath ETB fully supports the right of every staff member to work in an environment which is free from bullying or harassment/sexual harassment of any kind and is committed to provide an environment which is free from such.

Louth and Meath ETB has adopted the Nationally Agreed Bullying Prevention and Harassment/Sexual Harassment Prevention Procedures as agreed between the ETBI and Sectoral Unions, without change. These procedures are available at each school/centre, on the ETB website or, alternatively, from Louth and Meath ETB Administration Centres, Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath and Chapel Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth.

8. GRIEVANCES

The Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts provides protection for individuals who, in good faith, have acted in pursuance of a claim under any of those Acts. Any complaints of discrimination will be pursued through the Nationally Agreed Grievance Procedure as agreed between the ETBI and Sectoral Unions and adopted by Louth and Meath ETB.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEWING THIS POLICY

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by Louth and Meath ETB, in consultation with relevant managers and staff/their representatives. Each Principal/Director/Co-ordinator/APO is responsible for ensuring adherence to this policy with regard to those members of staff under his/her supervision. All staff are requested to familiarise themselves with this policy.

Louth and Meath ETB will especially review and improve existing practices and procedures where inequalities have been found or alleged to exist.

This policy was adopted by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board at a meeting of the Board on the 23rd March 2017.