

Equality and accessibility policy



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Version 2

Further Training TA
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Introduction

This policy is aimed at employers, training providers and apprentices where Further EPAO are providing End-point assessment services.

Further EPAO is committed to complying with all current and relevant equalities legislation. We aim to deliver a service that is comparable, valid, fair, accessible and does not include any unnecessary barriers to assessment or bias. We have taken care to ensure that our assessments are free from bias and do not disadvantage apprentices in any way. Where there are features of an assessment that could potentially disadvantage a group of apprentices, they will be listed in the appropriate support materials and the justification given. Further EPAO has adopted a Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy for individuals with specific disabilities and or difficulties, to be able to access assessments required for the Standard and be judged fairly and consistently.

This policy is reviewed annually unless the need arises for it to be completed sooner.

End-point assessment method delivery

Further EPAO 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 end-point assessment methods we develop and make available

Methods used to assess knowledge, skills, and behaviours:

- Knowledge tests (multiple choice)
- Presentations and Questions and Answer Sessions
- Professional Discussions (including being underpinned by a portfolio)
- Competency-based interviews

We have ensured that none of our assessment methods has any feature that would disadvantage apprentices because of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender or reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

If we have to specify a requirement that could disadvantage a particular group (for example a legal requirement around the age of apprentices, or health and safety issues for apprentices with particular disabilities), we will include it in the relevant support materials and explain why it is there. The justification will relate only to the specific requirements of the delivery of end-point assessment.

Further EPAO acknowledges the importance of its legal obligations relating to compliance of the Equality Act 2010. We have ensured the methods used for conducting assessments are remotely delivered so that they can be accessed by all. For example, those with physical or mobility disabilities, pregnant or on maternity, paternity or adoption leave can undertake their assessments in a safe environment without the need to travel outside of their usual

parameters or be away from their dependants for extended periods of time. We have created some information factsheets for all users of any description to be able to use the technology required for remote assessments, and check that the instructions are understood by the apprentice at the booking stage. Should an apprentice require a face-to-face assessment due to not being able to use the remote method or other, Further EPAO is also able to provide this service.

Our IEPA toolkits contain scripts to guide IEPAs through assessments for standardisation purposes. These do not contain any prompts to ask the apprentice any personal questions other than their name and to present their identification to confirm who they are. Any questions asked as part of an assessment relate to the apprentice being able to demonstrate either a knowledge, skill, or behaviour from the Standard by giving examples of things that they have experienced in their working career.

We aim to be as flexible as possible and provide the option of early morning, daytime or evening assessments to accommodate working patterns suited to individuals who are operating within their usual employment hours or lifestyle commitments.

Completed assessments are moderated and double marked to not only agree the apprentices gradings are correct, but to also ensure they have been given the marks deserved for hitting criteria for higher grades. Any bias or disadvantaging apprentices who have one or more of the protected characteristics would be identified and become apparent through moderation practices. In addition, any instances of apprentices being disadvantaged during assessments would be identifiable through our monthly reporting process where we look at trends in achievements. Any instances of bias or disadvantaging apprentices found through moderation process and monthly reports will be thoroughly investigated using the Malpractice and maladministration policy. In all instances Further EPAO will refer to the Equality and transparency through all of their assessments.

Employers and Training Providers:

Further EPAO expects its Employers and Training Providers to manage their own apprentices in accordance with equalities law, enabling apprentices to have equal access to training and end-point assessment. Assessment must similarly be undertaken without discrimination. Employers and Training Providers are required to have a policy in place to ensure that such discrimination does not occur either directly or indirectly.

Monitoring the success and relevance of our arrangements

As part of the service, Further EPAO will collect information on diversity through Sepa, and requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations. We will also seek feedback from apprentices, employers, and training providers periodically. Any relevant issues identified which suggest our services may have negatively impacted on apprentices will be reported and reviewed by the Directors. If necessary, we will make amendments to our services in accordance with our documented procedures.

Where complaints relating to issues of inequality cannot be satisfactorily resolved, apprentices must be made aware of their right to appeal using the arrangements outlined in our Appeals Procedure.