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IOB Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Public

Version	March 2023	Effective Date	March 2023
Author	HR	Last Reviewed Date	March 2023
Approved by	IOB Management	Next Review Date	Via HR

Introduction

IOB is committed to providing an equal, diverse and inclusive environment for our team, our students and our members. We operate in an increasingly diverse community, and we understand that the people who provide and use our services have diverse characteristics and different experiences, needs and aspirations. IOB's culture is one that prioritises equality, diversity and inclusion where individual differences are valued and respected, in which each employee is able to fulfil their potential and maximise their contribution.

Building a diverse and inclusive workplace where all colleagues can thrive is a priority for IOB. It is the responsibility of all colleagues to contribute to an inclusive culture. IOB Leadership are fully committed to the policy and will ensure its full implementation.

Policy Statement

IOB has a strong and clear commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. We value diverse and inclusive teams that deliver, and support the delivery of, high quality programmes, services and Customer Experience (CX) for our students and our members.

Bringing together people from diverse backgrounds, who think creatively and unconventionally, and giving each person the opportunity to contribute their skills and experience will help us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a positive and harmonious working environment where they are treated with dignity and respect. All colleagues have a responsibility to contribute to a positive working environment.

We all want to work in a harmonious workplace where we feel valued, respected and included, irrespective of gender, civil or family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or being a member of the travelling community. The Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2015 is the relevant legislation, which detail the grounds upon which discrimination can occur.

Our approach is based on three key principles: -

- (i) Equality – we promote equality of opportunity by seeking to remove barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups of people.
- (ii) Diversity – Diversity is about more than gender. We accept each person as an individual. Our success is built on our ability to embrace diversity – and we believe that everyone should feel valued for their contributions. By working together, we will deliver the best possible service for our people, learners, members, partners and stakeholders.
- (iii) Inclusion – we create a working culture where differences are not merely accepted but valued; where everyone has the opportunity to develop in a way that is consistent with, and adheres to, IOB values of integrity, excellence, continuous improvement, learner and member focused, our people and collaboration.

Our aim is to be an organisation where people feel involved, respected and connected to our success. These principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are considered when human

resources policies are being developed and reviewed.

Policy Application

IOB is committed to a policy of promoting equality of opportunity, providing an inclusive workplace and eliminating any unfair treatment or unlawful discrimination. This applies to all employment policies and practices including those relating to:

- Recruitment and selection, including promotion and career progression;
- Terms and conditions of employment;
- Working environment; and
- Training and development.

Our goal is to ensure that these commitments, reinforced by our values of integrity, excellence, continuous improvement, learner and member focused, our people and collaboration are embedded in our day-to-day working practices with all our colleagues, members, customers and partners.

A range of policies and procedures are in place to ensure that we have a workforce that reflects the community it serves and that colleagues are valued and respected. Examples include:

(i) Dignity at Work – IOB aims to provide a working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, free from any form of inappropriate behaviour and one in which all employees can give of their best. IOB's Dignity at Work policy is about creating and sustaining a productive working environment for all colleagues, where discrimination or harassment does not occur and is known to be unacceptable. This policy provides information on what to do should you feel your dignity at work has been affected, and also if you have been accused of offensive behaviour. The policy also highlights the sources of information and assistance which are available for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. There are separate informal and formal procedures for resolving complaints under this policy.

(ii) Implementing reasonable adjustments in the workplace – in conjunction with the team member, Line Manager, and Facilities we will endeavour to identify and meet different work-related needs such as providing physical adaptations or equipment and reviewing working arrangements for people with disabilities.

(iii) Wellbeing and work/life balance supports – including a range of flexible/alternative working patterns, parental leave, parents leave and career breaks. While every effort will be made to accommodate requests for flexible/alternative working arrangements, consideration must also be given to business need and maintaining service delivery.

(iv) Recruitment and selection, including promotion – the principles of equality and diversity are central to making sure that IOB attracts the best candidates for our posts. We must ensure that all methods used to attract and select candidates are justifiable and free from bias and/or prejudice. We will require all colleagues involved in recruitment to be trained in applying equality and diversity principles in the recruitment process.

(v) Monitoring – we will monitor the composition of IOB in line with statutory requirements and best practice. We will also monitor our recruitment process, from application to employment, to identify barriers. Roles and Responsibilities Operational responsibility for implementing the policy and procedures lies with everyone in IOB. Managers also have a duty to implement this policy, and to promote a positive and inclusive workplace, and to work with colleagues on actions or behaviours that may run counter to IOB's policy. Every person working for IOB has a personal responsibility for

implementing and promoting the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in their day-to-day dealings with everyone – including work colleagues, members, students, stakeholders, partners and job applicants.

Inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable. Behaviours, actions or words that breach policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with IOB's disciplinary procedure. It is essential that:

- everyone is aware of the policy, understands what it means and puts it into practice.
- our employment policies and practices avoid any kind of unfair treatment or unlawful discrimination.
- individual differences are valued and respected.

Breach of Policy

This policy is supported by the IOB Dignity at Work/Bullying & Harassment policies and the disciplinary and grievance procedures. Employees who feel they have suffered discrimination, harassment or victimisation should raise the matters through the appropriate IOB grievance procedures in the Dignity at Work / Anti Bullying & Harassment policy in this handbook.

Complaints will be taken extremely seriously and will be dealt with in as far as is practicable as fast as possible and with the utmost confidentiality. No person in IOB who makes a complaint will be victimised for doing so. Victimisation, if proven to have occurred, may result in disciplinary action.

Further Information

To find out more about our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, please contact the Director of HR