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Carnew Training and Consultancy

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# Equality and Diversity Policy



**Version 2 reviewed 06/06/2018**

**Version 3 reviewed 25/02/2020**

**Version 4 reviewed 20/02/2025**

- Carnew Training & Consultancy Centre (Carnew TDC) is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, respecting and celebrating difference, eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and fostering good relations
- We strive to create and maintain a working and learning environment in which everyone has the opportunity to participate fully, give of their best and achieve their full potential in a climate culture free from discrimination or harassment.
- The policy establishes the expectation that all have a right to equality of opportunity irrespective of race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, age, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, or socio-economic status, background or class.
- Carnew TDC will actively challenge and tackle all forms of prejudice, discrimination and stereotypical attitudes. Any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out by an individual will be treated as a matter for possible disciplinary action

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy provides the commitment of the Carnew TDC in relation to equality and diversity. It has been updated to reflect changes in equality legislation including the Equal Status Act 2000 – 2008 and the Equality Act

It is the policy of Carnew TDC to recognise and encourage the valuable and enriching contribution from all who work and learn here and the rights of all individuals who come into contact with the Centre such as prospective students and job applicants. We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity, respecting and celebrating difference, eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and fostering good relations between all who work or learn at, or use the services of the centre.

We will treat all students, staff and others associated with the Centre, with fairness, respect and sensitivity. We aim to create and maintain a working and learning environment in which all people have the opportunity to participate fully, give of their best and achieve their full potential in a climate free from discrimination or harassment. We recognise that all have a right to equality of opportunity irrespective of race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, age, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, or socio-economic status, background or class. Equality and diversity is central to all that we do, and fundamental to our mission and values.

**The Equality Legislation in Ireland comprises of the following Legal Acts:**

- 1. The Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2015**
- 2. The Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2015**
- 3. The National Disability Authority Act 1999**

**The Equal Status Acts 2000–2015 prohibit discrimination on the following nine grounds:**

- Gender ground: A man, a woman or a transsexual person;
- Marital status ground: Single, married, separated, divorced or widowed;

- Family status ground: Pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability;
- Sexual orientation ground: Gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual;
- Religion ground: Different religious belief, background, outlook or none;
- Age ground: This only applies to people over 18 except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under that age;
- Race ground: A particular race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin;
- The Traveller community ground: People who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified both by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland;
- Disability ground: This is broadly defined including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.

### **The Acts Allow Different Treatment in Certain Circumstances**

**Disability** – presumption of mainstreaming The Acts allow educational establishments to treat students with disabilities differently (apart from making reasonable accommodation subject to nominal cost exemption) only if the disability is making the provisions of educational services impossible to other students or having a seriously detrimental effect on that provision.

Other aspects of a person's identity, background or circumstance can cause them to experience discrimination, for example a person's socio-economic status, class or background. Carnew Training & Consultancy Centre is committed to advancing equality and eliminating discrimination on these and other grounds

### **Our commitment to staff**

We will

- Strive to employ a diverse workforce which reflects the local community and the learner population
- Make clear our expectations and commitments to equality and diversity during the recruitment and selection process and again during induction
- Provide ongoing continuous professional development in equality and diversity, to equip staff to recognise and embed diversity and to challenge any form of discrimination
- Provide reasonable adjustments for staff who are or who become disabled
- Embed equality and diversity throughout workforce practice, for example providing good customer care, embedding equality and diversity in teaching and learning and providing a high quality service for all

### **Our commitment to learners**

We will

- Make clear our expectations and commitments to equality and diversity in our marketing and recruitment materials and events, during the learner and staff admissions processes and again during induction. Strive to provide an inclusive teaching and learning environment that is personalised to the individual and which takes account of individual need and cultural backgrounds

- Embed equality and diversity within curriculum planning and teaching and learning
- Strive to provide additional learning support tailored to individual needs for learners who require support for their learning and progression.
- If reasonable adjustments or compassionate considerations are required, Carnew Training & Consultancy Centre will notify the Awarding Organisation and retain a copy of paperwork in relation to same.

#### **Our commitment to service users**

We will

- Ensure our services are accessible
- Provide clear and meaningful information about our services

#### **Tackling discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

We will

- Actively challenge and tackle all forms of prejudice, discrimination and stereotypical attitudes
- Ensure that all Printed and electronic materials reflect diversity in the community and are non-discriminatory in style and content.
- Deal with all allegations of discrimination, harassment and victimization sensitively and investigate fairly and thoroughly
- Treat any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out by an individual as a matter for possible disciplinary action

**Appendix 1:** provides information on roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of this policy

#### **Monitoring performance**

We will actively monitor our performance to ensure we are meeting our commitments. For example, we will gather and use the following information, disaggregated by equality and diversity parameters, to monitor and improve practice.

#### **For employment:**

- Staff profile
- Grievance records
- Disciplinary records
- Complaints
- Staff progression

- Access to and satisfaction with, staff development opportunities

#### **For learners:**

- Recruitment, retention, achievement and success
- Attendance and punctuality
- Enrichment
- Progression
- Learner satisfaction
- Complaints
- Disciplinary records

Outcomes from analysis of the above information will inform self-assessment processes and the Centre's improvement plans. Regular reports assessing our progress in meeting our commitments and improving practice will be submitted to senior managers and the board together with equality improvement targets.

Where sensitive data is used, Carnew Training & Consultancy Centre will always comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 - 2003 and the Centre's GDPR Policy.

#### **Adaptation of Assessments to Meet the Needs of Learners with Disabilities**

Learners with disabilities must make their course instructor aware of their impairment and the need for reasonable accommodation at the beginning of their course. The learner will complete the Learner Request for Assessment Support Form for processing, with supporting evidence (where required). This form must be completed as early as possible, but no later than four weeks prior to the commencement of assessment. This is to allow for the reasonable accommodation to be facilitated.

#### **Individualisation**

As a general rule, an adaptation to the form of delivery, which makes learning possible, will also assist in making assessment possible. The learner is usually the best authority on what form of delivery is the most effective and the same method(s) may then be possible during any assessment. However, it is important that the standard of the assessment is not diminished. Only the method(s) by which the learner demonstrates his/her attainment of the standard can be adjusted.

#### **Rest Breaks**

Supervised rest breaks either inside or outside the assessment area should be allowed as is appropriate. A rest break can be flexible according to individual needs, e.g. 15 minutes every hour as opposed to one 30-minute period during a three-hour assessment. The time so used should not be deducted from the time allowed (where specified) to complete the assessment.

#### **Split Sessions**

Splitting the assessment into two or more sessions may be an appropriate alternative for some students.

#### **Extra Time**

In the case of assessments that are based on time, additional time of up to 25% is the usual rule of thumb.

#### **Reader**

A reader is a person provided to assist a disabled student by reading assessment questions aloud

without suggesting the answer. A reader is a person who, on request, will read to the learner:  
The entire or any part of the assessment;  
Any part of the learner's answers (exactly, as they are 'spoken').

Readers are typically used by people with visual impairments, people who tire easily, people who have extreme muscle weakness and people with learning difficulties.

Only one reader per learner is permissible and the assessment should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra Assessment Supervision personnel.

### **Writers/scribes**

A writer is a person who will, on request, write the answers exactly as given or dictated by a learner. A writer may also act as a reader and is often used in similar circumstances to a reader. As in the case of a reader, only one writer per learner is permissible and the assessment should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel.

### **Sign language Interpreters**

Sign language Interpreters must be qualified to interpret sign or other similar types of language. Only one Sign Language Interpreter per learner should be used. The assessment for learners (usually those who are deaf or hard of hearing) should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel.

For extra transparency it may be necessary to video-tape the assessment for translation later. Similarly, some learners may prefer to sign their answers directly to video. A signed response should be transcribed to print by someone proficient in sign language. Any words or phrases re-interpreted for the learner should be underlined and noted in the question paper.

### **Overwriting**

Overwriting involves rewriting a question on an examination paper in such a way as to make it as explicit as possible. It is a technique primarily used with learners who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have a learning difficulty. Overwriting should be **in pen** on the answer paper. This is done by assessment supervision personnel in situ. Where extensive modifications are necessary, a separate sheet of paper with the questions written in full should be attached by staple to the original answer paper. Technical terminology should not be overwritten. In case of doubt about technical terminology a subject matter expert can be consulted. **Care must be taken to retain the original emphasis of the question.**

### **Computers**

The use of computers by disabled learners may be necessary as their primary means of communication, for example, for learners with physical impairments for whom writing is difficult, for learners with visual impairments/blindness and for learners with learning disabilities such as dyslexia.

The definition of a 'computer' generally refers to hardware and/or software which facilitate effective communication for people for whom this may not otherwise be possible. It may be standard equipment, e.g. the use of word processing software by someone with motor difficulties which impede handwriting or may be specially adapted, e.g. speech synthesisers and text enlargement software/hardware for people with visual impairments.

Where voice activated software is used, the assessment should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel. It is the responsibility of the assessment/training location to supply the appropriate hardware/software.

### **Audio-tapes**

Audio-taped assessments and responses are useful in some cases, e.g. visual impairment, motor difficulties. The centre should supply the assessment tape and a blank tape to learners at the same time

as other learners. However, in order to minimise disruption to other learners, the person should either use headphones or complete their assessment in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel.

#### **Braille, braille-mate, braille 'n speak, braille 'n print, etc.**

Braille is generally, though not extensively, used by learners who are blind or visually impaired. It is generally advised that the Braille machine is attached and adapted to a printer which will produce a printed text. The responses of the learner should not be printed until after the end of the assessment time, as the noise levels may be too high for other learners. The assessment/training location should supply the printer, braille paper and/or the computer print-out paper.

#### **Enlarged print to A3 size**

Some learners, usually those with visual impairments, may simply require their assessment papers in enlarged print, i.e. A3 size paper.

#### **Examination papers in colour**

Some learners, especially those who have dyslexia, may require their assessment paper in a colour other than black and white - for example, black on yellow, or black on grey. A gloss/highly sheen coated paper may also be unsuitable. The learners themselves should be consulted.

#### **Other technologies**

The whole area of new technologies and access to information is rapidly changing. The opportunities for learners to demonstrate their abilities are increasing with the advent of assistive devices like the 'true-type talking microphone' a device which with practice can type onto a computer screen a person's spoken word. Such technologies are also becoming more accessible in terms of general availability and price.

#### **Compassionate Consideration**

##### **How to apply**

Please read **Requirements of Compassionate Consideration for Assessment** (Your application cannot be approved if you do not meet the requirements for Compassionate Consideration.)

#### **Requirements for Compassionate Consideration for Assessments.**

##### **To Apply:**

##### **You must**

Have been prevented from sitting the examination due to exceptional circumstances beyond your control, affecting you at the time of the assessment.

##### **Or**

Consider that your performance in the assessment has been seriously impaired by exceptional circumstances, affecting you at the time of the assessment.

##### **Or**

Consider that your preparation for the assessment during the fortnight before the examination has been seriously impaired by exceptional circumstances beyond your control, affecting you during that time.

You must attempt the assessment if at all possible.

You must provide a statement of the circumstances in **section 1 of the Compassionate Consideration form** together with appropriate evidence to support the statement. This form can be downloaded from our website or alternatively provided by reception at Carnew Training and Development Centre. You must consult your GP, counsellor or other health professional who can certify to how you were affected by the exceptional circumstances. If this is not done, the evidence will not be in order, and you will not be eligible for consideration.

You must make sure that your application reaches the Carnew Training & Consultancy Centre/WIN within one week of the assessment (or, where more than one assessment has been affected, within one week of the last such assessment).

Do not wait for provisional examination results before submitting your form.

Make a detailed statement in Section 1 describing the exceptional circumstances and how they have affected you. Your statement must include the dates or period to time when the circumstances occurred. If you prefer to make your statement on a separate sheet you may do so. All information is treated confidentially.

Provide confirmation of your statement from an independent person who knows the circumstances. If this is not possible you should discuss suitable corroborative evidence with your coordinator.

You must discuss your application with a counsellor

You should contact a counsellor or other health professional on the day of the examination, either before the assessment starts if you consider you are unable to sit, or as soon as possible after the examination if you consider your performance was seriously impaired.

Your completed application must be submitted **no later than one week** after the assessment, or if more than one assessment has been affected, then no later than one week after the last examination. You will need to submit to Carnew Training & Consultancy Centre/ WIN

- Your completed application form – accessed online on [www.carnewtdc.ie](http://www.carnewtdc.ie) or provided for by reception administration in Carnew Training & Development Centre.
- Written evidence confirming your circumstances and the date that you were affected
- A copy of your examination timetable

#### **Evidence of exceptional circumstances**

**If you are unable to sit the assessment**, the evidence must be sufficient to make it clear that on the day of the assessment you were physically or mentally incapable on attempting it. It is therefore important that you see a GP counsellor on the day of your assessment.

**If you consider your assessment performance was seriously impaired**, the evidence must be sufficient to make it clear that on the day of the assessment you were affected by the circumstances and that your performance was therefore likely to have been seriously impaired

**If you consider your preparation for your assessment was seriously impaired**, the evidence must be sufficient to make it clear that you were affected by the circumstances within the fortnight before the assessment, and that your preparation was therefore likely to have been seriously impaired.

The circumstances must be exceptional and beyond your control, and they must be confirmed by suitable corroborative evidence.

### **Academic Performance**

- Your general coursework must be well above the minimum pass standard (usually Merit)
- Your performance in assessments is of particular importance when coursework is being considered.
- If you sat the assessment, your Tutor must be able to certify that your mark in the assessment was lower than expected taking your coursework into account.

### **A compassionate grade may be approved if:**

- The evidence of exceptional circumstances is in order.  
and
- You meet the academic requirements. (Where necessary, performance in other courses may be taken into account).

### **Notification of Result**

You will be notified of the result of your application in all cases, whether or not a compassionate consideration is approved.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The **management team** will:

- take an active and visible lead in driving forward equality and diversity
- oversee implementation of this policy
- ensure equality and diversity data is embedded within self-assessment reports and development plans
- agree equality targets with Board
- review the policy annually
- monitor its effectiveness and measure its impact

**All staff will:**

- attend regular training opportunities to ensure they understand the principles of this policy and the implications for their job role and responsibilities

**All staff, learners and users of the Centre, including contractors** are expected to adhere to this

policy. Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary proceedings.