



Equal Opportunities

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Institute is committed to promoting equality for staff in all activities.
- 1.2. The Institute is committed to promoting an environment that is free of harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying and within which all members of the Institute will be treated with dignity. It is recognised that harassment and bullying can seriously damage working and social conditions, and it will not be tolerated during the course of work, study or any other activity of the Institute. The Institute has published a separate policy on preventing and dealing with harassment and bullying and this can be found at: <http://www.dit.ie/hr/hrpoliciesproceduresguidelinesatoz/> or by contacting a member of the Human Resources Department. **Staff members are requested to familiarise themselves with this policy.**
- 1.3. This Policy has been written with reference to the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2011. The Dublin Institute of Technology Act 1992 (as amended) places an obligation of the Institute to promote equality, including gender balance, and access.

2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1. The Dublin Institute of Technology is an equal opportunities employer. As such it is committed to equality of opportunity for existing and potential employees, and to promoting a work environment free from discrimination on grounds of **gender, civil status, family status, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, age or membership of the traveller community**, in accordance with the relevant legislation. In relation to discrimination on the basis of nationality, nothing in the relevant legislation shall render unlawful any action taken in accordance with the **Employment Permits Act, 2003-2006**.
- 2.2. Employment decisions will accordingly be based on merit, qualifications, abilities, skills, knowledge and attitude required to perform the job effectively and efficiently, to the standards required both in the present and in the future. Recruitment and selection policies, promotion policies, and training and development policies, and all associated documentation, will reflect the Institute's commitment to this Policy.
- 2.3. It is the responsibility of every manager to support and promote equal opportunities and a harmonious working environment and for ensuring that this Policy is effectively implemented.
- 2.4. All staff should recognise and respect the rights of other member of the Institute and should contribute to the development of a harmonious working environment and are expected to comply with this Policy. Staff are assured by the Institute that any individual who wishes to raise concerns or make a complaint in relation to the operation of the Policy may do so without fear of reprisal or victimisation.
- 2.5. Any staff member who is found to have engaged in any form of discrimination in contravention of this Equal Opportunities Policy, will be liable for disciplinary action.

3. DISCRIMINATION

- 3.1. The Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2011 outlaw discrimination on nine distinct grounds: **gender, civil status, family status, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age or membership of the traveller community**.

3.2. **Direct discrimination** is taken to occur where a person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated, in a comparable situation, on any of the nine grounds specified due to a fact or circumstance which:

- exists,
- existed but no longer exists,
- may exist in the future,
- or is imputed to the person concerned.

3.3. Discrimination also occurs where a person is, has been or would be, treated less favourably than another, in a comparable situation, due to an association with another person, on any of the grounds listed in the scope of the legislation.

3.4. **Indirect Discrimination** occurs where an employer sets down an apparently neutral provision which operates to the disadvantage of one of the nine categories. It occurs when the provision cannot be objectively justified by a legitimate, reasonable aim and the means of achieving the aim are not appropriate and necessary.

3.5. Staff should not directly or indirectly discriminate unfairly against colleagues, students or applicants for employment or admission. Staff should not prevail upon management, trade unions, colleagues or students to practise unfair discrimination or to act in a way which is contrary to the spirit of this Policy.

4. **RECRUITMENT & SELECTION**

4.1. The Institute is committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and selects those suitable for employment solely on the basis of merit. Job advertisements, job descriptions, job specifications, application forms and publicity material will encourage applications from all qualified suitable candidates and will not discriminate on any of the nine grounds prohibited under the Acts.

4.2. Recruitment documentation and publicity material will indicate that the Institute is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in employment. Application forms will be simple and clear and will not require the provision of unnecessary or irrelevant information.

4.3. This Policy does not apply to any matter connected with, or related to, the employment of a person where the gender or characteristic of the person, constitutes a genuine and determining occupational requirement for the post. This exception is in accordance with the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011.

5. **SELECTION**

5.1. There will be no bias against candidates at interview on any of the nine grounds. Interviewers will not make assumptions about the suitability of individuals for certain types of work based on any of these grounds. Interview boards will not be comprised of persons of one gender only.

5.2. Questions at interview will be related to the requirements of the job. Where it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect performance (e.g. where the job involves unsocial hours or extensive travel) the same relevant questions, where deemed absolutely necessary, will be asked of all candidates.

5.3. The Institute will ensure that persons involved in making employment-related decisions are aware of their responsibilities, the Institute's policies, and the legal requirements.

6. CAREER DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTION

6.1. Opportunities for promotion and career development will be given without regard to any of the nine grounds. Promotional procedures will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on any of these grounds. It will not be assumed that family commitments lead to limited career aspirations.

7. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

7.1. *"DIT values all staff and recognises that their expertise, skills and personal commitment underpin the continuing success of the Institute and the accomplishment of strategic goals." The Institute is committed to facilitating all staff in their ongoing career focused learning, and discovery, as appropriate to the needs of the Institute and their own development."* (Staff Development Charter)

In this regard, opportunities for access to education in DIT will be given without regard to any of the nine grounds.

8. DOCUMENTATION

8.1. The Institute is committed to the use of non-discriminatory language in all documents both internal and external, in recognition of the fact that language used can play an important role in conditioning attitudes. Words which have no gender (e.g. person and applicant) and text that specifically refers to both genders will be used as far as possible.

9. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

9.1. The Institute will not discriminate unfairly in relation to working conditions, or access to overtime, shift work or transfers, where the circumstances in which staff are employed are not materially different.

10. IRISH LANGUAGE

10.1. In July 2012, DIT launched DIT's Official Languages Act Scheme 2012-2015. Schools, Departments and Services across the Institute have agreed commitments regarding the development of service provision through the medium of Irish over the next three years. The process of ensuring a comprehensive customer service provision through the medium of Irish in DIT will begin during the lifetime of this first scheme but will not be completed until subsequent schemes are in place. This process will be progressed through the provision of appropriate training for staff who wish to avail of it. Bilingual services and publications available from DIT will be actively offered to encourage demand for and use of services in Irish. All information on Irish language services available from DIT will be updated regularly on www.dit.ie/gaeilge.

I mí Iúil 2012, seoladh Scéim Teanga ITBÁC 2012-2015. Tá scoileanna, ranna agus seirbhísí ar fud na hInstitiúide tar éis gealltanais a aontú maidir le forbairt soláthair seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge go ceann trí bliana. Cuirfear tús leis an bpróiseas chun soláthar cuimsitheach seirbhísí don phobal trí Ghaeilge a chinntiú in ITBÁC i rith shaolré na chéad scéime seo ach ní chuirfear i gcrích é go dtí go mbeidh scéimeanna ina dhiaidh sin i bhfeidhm. Cuirfear ITBÁC seirbhísí agus foilseacháin dátheangacha ar fáil go gníomhach chun an t-éileamh atá ar sheirbhísí Gaeilge agus an úsáid a bhaintear astu a spreagadh. Tabharfar an t-eolas is deireanaí maidir leis na seirbhísí Gaeilge a sholáthraíonn ITBÁC ar fáil ar www.dit.ie/gaeilge.

11. REDRESS

11.1. Any person who wishes to raise issues concerning alleged discrimination should do so, in the first instance by writing in confidence to the Head of Human Resources. Alternatively, the issues can be raised through a recognised Trade Union. Advice and information on equality issues is also available from the **Equality Authority**. Please see the following link for their website address: <http://www.equality.ie>

11.2. The Institute is committed to ensuring that all issues concerning alleged breaches of this policy will be dealt with seriously, promptly and with appropriate regard for confidentiality.

12. QUERIES ON THIS POLICY

Contact: Human Resources Department

E-Mail: hr@dit.ie