



ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS IN OPHTHALMOLOGY

Diversity and Equality Policy

Introduction

The Association of Health Professions in Ophthalmology (AHPO) is a professional organisation that promotes the practice, education, training and research in the field of ophthalmology and vision science throughout the United Kingdom, by promoting high standards of care and treatment of patients with disease or disability affecting the eyes or vision, advancing public education in ophthalmology and vision science, and representing the needs and interests of ophthalmology and vision science in the provision and advancement of health care.

AHPO is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity and will also take every action possible to avoid discrimination on grounds including gender, marital status, colour, age, racial origin, creed, nationality, disability or social background.

Policy Statement

AHPO believes that all learners should have the same opportunity to access its qualifications and that they should be awarded in a way that is fair to every learner.

Purpose

This policy provides guidance on equality. This policy aims to ensure that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated both in access to and assessment of AHPO's qualifications and that equality of opportunity is promoted. Where it is reasonable and practical to do so, AHPO will take steps to address identified inequalities or barriers that may arise.

Scope

- This policy covers the whole of AHPO and relates to all its qualifications
- This policy applies to all stakeholders and includes: the Trustees of AHPO, AHPO administrative staff, members of AHPO Council, members of the AHPO Examinations and Education Committees, AHPO examiners and external examiners, assessors, tutors, workplace mentors and learners.

Implementation

AHPO aims to ensure that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated both in access to and assessment of its qualifications and that equality of opportunity is promoted. Where it is reasonable and practical to do so, it will take steps to address identified inequalities or barriers that may arise.

AHPO will consult as appropriate with relevant learners and/or their representatives to ensure that there are no barriers to entry to units and qualifications it develops and/or offers. The nature of any barriers will be stated and the inclusion of the requirements that create the barrier justified only and explicitly in terms of the integrity of unit or the qualification. Any details of how the effect of any barriers will be mitigated, including using access arrangements, including reasonable adjustments, will also be recorded, as required.

AHPO has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. AHPO expects all stakeholders associated with the organisation to abide by the policy.

In order to implement this policy AHPO shall:

- Communicate the policy to all stakeholders by providing an information pamphlet
- Endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that we will not consciously, or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants / learners
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into roles and responsibilities of AHPO Committee members, Trustees and administrative staff
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (e.g. announcements, annual report at annual general meeting, notices and newsletters)
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy

Monitoring and Review

Access to and progress in AHPO qualifications shall be connected solely with an individual's merits, abilities and potential.

AHPO may collect data to monitor and review its diversity and equality policy, and evaluate compliance with the requirements set out.

The effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly (at least annually) and action taken as necessary.

Complaints

AHPO stakeholders who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed complaints procedure. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

AHPO will intend to fulfil its requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (UK)

Ofqual Reference

This policy relates to the Ofqual criteria for general conditions of recognition:

A1 Suitability for continuing recognition

D2 Accessibility of Qualifications

E4 Ensuring an assessment is fit for purpose

G2 Language of the assessment

G6 Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustments

G7 Arrangements for Special Consideration