Equality, diversity, and inclusion policy

At the Association of Certified Digital Accounting Professionals (ACDAP), we're committed to fostering an inclusive working and learning environment in which equality, diversity, and inclusion are integral to everything at ACDAP.

This policy reflects our commitment to ensuring fair treatment of all individuals, ensuring dignity and respect, without considering their background or characteristics. We work towards inculcating Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles in every undertaking we perform, starting from recruitment and training to service delivery and stakeholder engagement.

Policy statement

Equality: Under this principle, every individual shall be afforded the same opportunities to access and use services without any form of discrimination. We shall work hard to eliminate bias and promote fairness in all our practices.

Diversity: Valuing and celebrating the differences between people in race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and socio-economic background. That is something we strive to have with our staff, as well as in our representation of the community we serve.

Inclusion: Allowing opportunities for each person to feel they belong and are accepted for who they are and that they are valued contributors. Inclusion is promoted by removing barriers and creating an environment where people are encouraged and respected for their different perspectives.

Legal framework

We work in accordance with many legislative and best practice drivers in EDI, with the Equality Act 2010 being a priority piece of legislation. The Act offers protection from direct discrimination against any of nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage, gender reassignment, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The Equalities Act underpins our commitment to fair treatment for all individuals.

Public sector equality duty: A general duty to advance equality and opportunity, exclude discrimination and promote good relations between people from diverse groups.

The EHRC guidance: Provides detailed advice about the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and promotes equality and human rights.

The Equalities Act 2010 Code of Practice: Provides practical guidance to comply with the Equality Act, with the help of examples and straightforwardly explains scenarios.

Principles

In delivering its commitment to EDI, it breathes life into the following principles:

- **Equity:** Ensuring that all our decisions and actions are just, equitable, and based on merit. Removing barriers that may be discriminatory to people with protected characteristics.

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- **Respect:** We foster a culture of respect in which everyone's contribution matters and is appreciated. We encourage respectful communication and interaction.
- **Accountability:** We will be held accountable for our activities as well as results, ensuring they are in line with our EDI values. We shall hold ourselves and others accountable to high standards of equality and inclusion.

Responsibilities

- **Leadership:** Topmost management shall be responsible for the leadership of the EDI agenda within ACDAP. They make sure the EDI principles are embedded in ACDAP strategic planning and decision-making.
- **Managers:** Managers are to implement EDjsoner I policies within their teams and make sure all the staff members are aware of and follow them. The managers are also in charge of any EDI-related issues and support staff to understand their responsibilities.
- **Staff and Learners:** They are anticipated to contribute favourably to the EDI strategies, maintain an inclusive and diverse environment and furnish themselves in line with the standards set under this policy. It is the responsibility of all staff and learners to promote and implement our EDI initiatives positively by confronting practices and behaviours that may be discriminative.

Recruitment and employment

Fair recruitment: We seek to ensure fair and transparent recruitment. All job advertisements, selection criteria, and processes of assessment are structured in a way that will avoid biases and encourage diversity.

- **Equal opportunities:** At ACDAP, we provide equal opportunities to all candidates and employees without considering their background. We proactively exhibit encouragement and maintenance towards a diverse workforce and strive to deal with underrepresentation by all means necessary.
- **Training and development:** We train and develop all employees to enhance their careers and personal development. This is through, for example, EDI, leadership, and professional skills development.

Learning and development

- **EDI training:** The training regarding unconscious bias, cultural competence, and inclusive practice is periodic, and all employees benefit from it. Such training helps enlighten different employees in understanding their roles in the support of equality and inclusive practice.
- **Continuous development:** We facilitate continuous learning and knowledge development among our employees toward EDI issues, which will better equip them to contribute positively to an inclusive work environment.

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Reporting and addressing concerns

- **Mechanisms to report:** We are committed to the prompt reporting of all instances of discrimination, harassment, or any situation of disadvantage. Reports can be made via structured channels, including a confidential reporting system.
- **Investigation:** All complaints will be treated with respect and processed promptly, and investigation carried out without delay. We will take steps to ensure the correct and necessary action is taken to remedy the issues raised so that the problem experienced is not repeated. We provide a safe environment for all of those who lodge a complaint.

Monitoring and review

- **Measurement:** The EDI policies of the ACDAP and practices are regularly monitored and reviewed to check whether they are effective. For this, data are collected from the process of recruitment and retention, followed by its analysis, and in this process, other DTIs and BIICs are identified.
- **Review and monitoring:** Our EDI policy is reviewed annually or in light of important changes in legislation, organisational structure, or operational practice. Whenever we review the policy, we will ensure that we consult with staff, learners, and other stakeholders on the policy so it remains relevant and effective.

Policy review

This policy will take effect immediately after the approval and shall be reviewed at least annually or more frequently if there are substantial changes in related legislation or organisational practice. We will ensure that any amendment to or update this policy is communicated to all our staff, learners, and stakeholders.

Contact information

For concerns regarding this policy or to report incidents related to equality, diversity, and inclusion, please contact:

- Salman Khan, CEO
- Email: contact@acdap.org
- Phone: 02081469696

Salman Khan
Chief Executive Officer

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