



Gender Equality & Equal Opportunities Policy for the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth Project

1. Policy Statement – Context

The Economy and Jobs Service of Coventry City Council has lead responsibility for delivering the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth Project.

This policy sets out the principles and processes which will be applied to the management and implementation of the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth Project. It reflects our duties under the Equality Act 2010, and the related Public Sector Equality Duty and supports the implementation of the [City Council's Equality Strategy](#) and reflects Managing Authority guidance included in the European Social Fund Operational Programme.

Coventry City Councils Equality Strategy is endorsed by senior portfolio holders from the Councils political ruling party reflecting commitment at the highest level and is regularly reviewed.

We recognise:

- our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination against anyone because of age, being or becoming a transsexual person; being married or in a civil partnership; being pregnant or having a child; disability; race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, belief or lack of religion/belief; sex, or sexual orientation.
- that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.
- that it is a priority for the European Social Fund programme to specifically consider gender alongside other protected characteristics, as reflected in The European Social Fund Gender Equality and Equal opportunities Mainstreaming Plan (2011-2013) Revised March 2014.

This Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities policy and implementation plan is subject to further development prior to the Project commencing delivery. There will be regular reviews as the Project is implemented, in the context of any areas for development identified through our monitoring processes and further information and guidance such as from the Management Authority. Both the Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities policy and implementation plan are working documents and as such will be subject to continuous improvement.

2. Guiding principles

In implementing the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth Project in the context of our duties under the Equality Act 2010 we are guided by the eight principles as set out in Annex 1

3. Key Policy Objectives

Coventry City Councils' Economy and Jobs Service, will undertake lead responsibility for ensuring that this Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy and Implementation Plan is delivered.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination.

In relation to Compliance we will:

- commit to compliance with all Equality and Diversity legislation and requirements and secure compliance from partners, e.g. through our agreed protocol with partners, through the procurement process, through contract management and monitoring which will require that all those contracted with Coventry City Council to deliver provision for the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth project have a Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities policy which complies with the Equality Act 2010.
- lead by example and challenge discrimination, harassment and victimisation; promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in our day to day work.
- attend relevant City Council Equality and Diversity training programmes and those organised by the Managing Authority to ensure that the most appropriate and effective practices are undertaken in the management and delivery of the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth provision.
- ensure that all staff involved in implementation of the project have up-to-date training and opportunities for professional development.

In relation to Project Design, Planning and recruitment of participants, we will:

- design provision which promotes gender equality (along with other quality needs)
- ensure that training programmes are developed and implemented to reflect the aspirations of participants and their employers and which meet the needs of both the individual and the employer.

In relation to the delivery of training, we will:

- Provide all Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth training participants with a copy of the Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy and Implementation Plan ensuring that we are communicating our commitments with participants.
- Deliver Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth provision in accessible, flexible, sensitive ways which are appropriate to participants needs and, wherever possible, removing barriers which prevent participation, e.g. identified training is accessible to disabled participants; arranging training to fit in with child-care for part time workers.
- Ensure that learning and support for the project participants takes place in environments where they are free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation and where positive attitudes and relationship are fostered.
- Where appropriate encourage and support women to aspire to careers which are highly paid but remain male-dominated, e.g. science, engineering, technology, in addition to aspiring to well-paid roles in which females traditionally dominate e.g. Health & Social Care.
- Provide opportunities and encourage men and women to gain qualifications, particularly vocational qualifications and improved basic skills to enable them to develop and up-skill in the workforce.

In relation to our role as an employer, we will:

- Demonstrate our commitment to equality in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, career development, pay, training, promotion and welfare, thus contributing to the City Council's objective that its workforce at all levels reflects the communities it serves.
- Provide opportunities for flexible part-time working to better meet the needs of women with family responsibilities.
- Through our staff appraisal processes review performance in relation to equality objectives and address any areas for development through staff training.

In relation to communications, we will:

- Ensure that this Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy and Implementation Plan for the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth Project is circulated and promoted to all Partners, and all involved in implementation of the project, to inform the development and implementation of their plans and to contribute to a vision for the City and region that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute to and benefit from society.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Operational Group for the Project will monitor the effectiveness of the actions to implement this Gender Equality and Equal opportunities policy.
- A report of progress in implementing the Policy will be a standing agenda item at the bi-monthly meetings of the Operational Group. Reports of progress will encompass all project partners.
- Audit visits to each Partner as part of the Quality Assurance process will provide additional evidence of the effectiveness of implementation.
- Surveys of the views of participants and those involved in delivering provision will inform evaluation.
- We will collect data on a quarterly basis in line with claim periods in relation to the number of beneficiaries starting training, and completing training. We will monitor progress and achievement to identify the performance of different groups e.g. by age, disability, ethnicity, and gender and by vulnerable groups, e.g. single adult households with dependent children. This analysis will be considered at the regular Operational meetings to inform future action to address any emerging issues.
- We will continue to improve our effectiveness in implementing the Policy by setting equality outcomes and reviewing our progress towards these goals.
- We will report progress in implementing the policy to meet Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth and ESF requirements and we will develop and share case studies of good practice.
- An annual report of progress and areas for further development will be compiled and the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities will be updated through the Cabinet Member reporting process.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy for the Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth Project

Guiding principles

Principle 1: All participants and potential participants in the Skills 4 Growth Project are of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their age
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender, gender identity or whether they are currently going through the process of gender reassignment.
- Whether or not they are pregnant
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity or orientation

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference:

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating everyone the same. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but will nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability; so that reasonable adjustments are made.
- Ethnicity; so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised.
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of women and men, are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging:

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people.
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between participants regardless of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and promote an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development:

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist:

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- women and men

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely;

We engage with a range of groups and individuals with protected characteristics to ensure that those who are affected by our policies or activities are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit:

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of all groups and individuals with protected characteristics.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence:

We maintain and analyse quantitative and qualitative information to inform our actions and we draw on published guidance of good practice, e.g. from the Government, Coventry City Council and the European Social Fund, e.g. European Social Fund in England – Gender Equality Good Practice Guide.

