



End Point Assessment Service

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Discrimination Policy

Version 3

Updated 11 November 2020

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1. OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY

Scope of the policy

The policy forms part of a suite PIABC Limited End Point Assessment (EPA) policies, all of which are designed to:

- Protect apprentices who are registered with PIABC Limited
- Minimise the risk of an Adverse Effect occurring
- Help support PIABC Limited and all other customers involved in risk management and risk minimisation
- Help ensure PIABC Limited and all customers comply with all relevant legislation and guidance
- Help improve and refine PIABC Limited's products and services

This policy describes the policy for Equality and Diversity in line with:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Mental Health Act 1983 and 2007 (amended Act)
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

For our customers, this policy supports the compliance with the Contract. It does not replace any of the requirements contained within that Contract. Non-adherence to our PIABC Limited EPA policies may constitute Maladministration, Malpractice and/or a breach of the Contract. Please ensure all End Point Assessment Service policies are read and implemented carefully.

This End Point Assessment Service Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Contract
- Enquiries & Appeals Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out PIABC Limited commitment to ensuring we adhere to legislation and regulatory requirements. PIABC Limited fully support the principle of equal opportunities and oppose all unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of ability, age, colour, culture, disability, domestic circumstances, employment status, gender, marital/civil partnership status, nationality, political orientation, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, social background or any other grounds or status.

Please speak to the EPA team for more information and guidance in regard to Equality and Diversity.

Who needs to know about the policy?

Customers must make the apprentices and staff (including, site, sub-site or contractual staff) who are involved in the design, delivery, management, assessment and quality assurance of PIABC Limited EPA products aware of, and familiar with, the contents of the policy.

Reviewing the policy

PIABC Limited will review this policy regularly and where otherwise necessary and may revise it as required in response to the findings of any review.

Complaint

You have the right to express your dissatisfaction regarding our actions, products, or services. Our *End Point Assessment Service – Complaints Handling Policy* outlines when we will and will not accept a complaint, and when our decisions are final. Please see our Complaints Handling Policy for more information.

2. DEFINITIONS AND COMMITMENTS

Equality

Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are not treated differently or less favorably, based on their specific protected characteristic, including areas of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and age.

Promoting equality should remove discrimination in all of the aforementioned areas. Bullying, harassment or victimisation are also considered as equality and diversity issues

Diversity

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture for all staff and students

Discrimination

Discrimination is treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing is perceived to belong to rather than on individual merit

Inclusion

Inclusion is the practice of someone being accepted for whom they are, and changes are made accordingly. Inclusion promotes equality of opportunity and ensures that everyone's needs are met.

Commitments

EPA team are committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are promoted in the development of our products and in access to our products and services, and that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated. As an End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), PIABC Limited will ensure that:

- this policy is made freely available to our customers, including apprentices
- the widest possible diversity of apprentices can access the content and assessment of our products and services
- the entry requirements, content and assessment demands of our products and services are appropriate to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified and do not act as unnecessary barriers to achievement
- all our products and services will ensure fair assessment for all apprentices
- the language we use in our materials is clear, free from bias and appropriate to the target group
- we aim to produce and endorse material that does not cause offence
- all our products are reviewed against this policy
- we will always act fairly when working with customers and apprentices
- we will always support and demonstrate the principles of equality and diversity
- we will always adopt a zero-tolerance approach for bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination aimed at our customers or apprentices

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

All customers have a responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy.

As a customer you must ensure that:

- all your processes concerned with EPA are carried out in a fair and objective manner
- you continue to adhere to current equal opportunities legislation
- you continue to operate an effective equality and diversity policy, with which apprentices are familiar and which applies to all learners using our products and services
- you continue to operate an effective appeals procedure, with which apprentices are familiar and which applies to all learners using our products and services
- ensure that all customers are fully aware of their responsibilities via training, access to policies and communicating changes
- ensure that all customers have full and ongoing training and are aware of their responsibilities
- provide guidance on any areas that need clarification; and
- ensure that all customers are aware of their responsibilities regarding equality and diversity
- read, understand, and comply with policies
- attend all relevant training
- report instances against the policy to line manager

Leaders and Management

- ensure that all customers are fully aware of their responsibilities via training, access to policies and communicating changes
- ensure that all customers have full and ongoing training and are aware of their responsibilities
- provide guidance on any areas that need clarification
- ensure that all customers are aware of their responsibilities regarding equality and diversity
- coordinate and implement policy through departments

4. REPORTING AND MONITORING

Reporting

If you have a concern regarding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, please contact the EPA team.

Monitoring

PIABC Limited will ensure that we regularly monitor Equality, Diversity and Inclusion practices including:

- recruitment practices
- references applied for new customers where applicable
- training
- checking that policies are up to date and relevant
- reviewing the current procedures in place

5. MANDATORY DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Mandatory disclosures

It is imperative that the integrity of our assessments is maintained. PIABC Limited are aware that customer organisations often work with more than one EPAO and that, therefore, more than one EPAO may be at risk when things go wrong.

Our regulators have outlined some specific conditions that we must meet to protect the integrity across the sector. This includes the requirement that where certain things are identified (such as a safeguarding concern), or certain actions taken (such as those that may put a vulnerable person at risk) the regulators and other relevant EPAOs who may be affected must be informed.

Depending on the seriousness of the matter, we may be required to declare to our regulators that we are no longer compliant due to an act or omission by customers, which has put us in breach. In this event, we may have regulatory action directed against us, such as Monetary Penalties. We reserve the right to direct financial penalties against customers, should they be because of the act or omission.

Confidentiality

PIABC Limited may need to access confidential information. PIABC Limited will ensure that such information is kept secure and only used for the purposes of the investigation and in line with relevant data protection legislation. PIABC Limited will not normally disclose the information to third parties unless required to do so (e.g. to our regulators and/or the Police or other relevant and/or Statutory Bodies).

6. TERMINATION FOR CONVENIENCE

PIABC Limited actions under this Policy and any actions imposed in line with our Safeguarding Policy will be proportionate. Where possible, PIABC Limited will always try to work with customers in resolving issues. However, nothing within this policy precludes PIABC Limited from invoking our right to terminate our relationship with customers.

7. CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact the EPA team at:

Email: piabc@iom3.org

Telephone: +44 (0)1476 513884

Post:
PIABC Limited
The Boilerhouse
Caunt Road
Grantham
NG31 7FZ

Website: www.piabc.org.uk

8. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abbreviation or Term	Meaning
Contract	The contract will be a service level agreement (SLA) with our customers.
Customer	This can be apprentices, employees, employers, external quality assessors, training providers and workers.
EPA	End Point Assessment: An EPA is a collection of assessments that offers confirmation of knowledge, skills and behaviours (known as KSBs) for a role. It takes place once the apprenticeship training has been completed, and the apprentice is deemed ready to enter the Gateway for EPA. The EPA must be achieved before an apprenticeship certificate can be issued. The structure of an EPA is designed to ensure that those deciding on the competency of an apprentice are totally unbiased. This means that an assessment must either be conducted by an independent third party, or in a way that ensures no party involved in the management or training of the apprentice can make the sole decision on competence and passing the EPA – via a panel of experts, for example.
EPAO	End Point Assessment Organisation: an organisation providing EPA.
Gateway	When an apprentice reaches the end of their training, the employer (supported by the training provider) will make the decision on whether or not the apprentice is ready to take the EPA – this decision process or stage is known as the “Gateway”.
IEPA	Independent End Point Assessor: a person who facilitates an unbiased assessment of an apprentice’s competencies against the KSBs of the standard.
LIEPA	Lead Independent End Point Assessor: a person responsible for internal quality assurance and standardisation of all assessment practice within EPA and is the sector expert.