



Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedure

1 Scope

This policy covers the principles of diversity and equality for all products and services provided by The Society of Forensic Interviewers (SoFI) including:

- ◆ course design and development
- ◆ assessment design and development
- ◆ monitoring of course and assessment practices
- ◆ reasonable adjustments
- ◆ Accredited Trainers requirements.

2 Definitions

Learner - a member of SoFI who has enrolled on a SoFI course accredited by the OfQual Awarding Body (SFJ Awards) or by SoFI.

Accredited Trainer - a member of SoFI who has met the Accredited Trainer Approval Criteria to provide online and/or practical tuition for a SoFI course accredited by the OfQual Awarding Body (SFJ Awards, or by SoFI.

3 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out SoFI's commitment to providing accreditations, certifications and assessments that give everyone, who wishes to enrol, an opportunity to do so.

Within the meaning and scope of Equality Law, SoFI will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no activities unlawfully discriminate.

The nine protected characteristics within Equality Law cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the Law

protects everyone against unfair treatment by setting out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The protected characteristics are:

SoFI Equality of Opportunity Policy

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marital status (including marriage and civil partnerships)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

4 Review

The policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary in response to customer feedback, changes in legislation and guidance from the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards).

5 Putting the policy into practice

SoFI will:

- ◆ apply the Fair Access by Design guidelines created by QCDA and now maintained by Ofqual
- ◆ not discriminate, victimise, or harass any individual or groups identified within the Equality Law
- ◆ monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy and look for ways of improving it

- ◆ make this policy freely available to our staff, external contractors and Accreditation or Certification Users and publicise it clearly on the SoFI website
- ◆ arrange regular development events for our staff and external contractors involved in the development and quality assurance of our accreditations, certifications and assessments
- ◆ conduct Equality Impact Assessments on accreditations, certifications and assessment methods during development
- ◆ produce materials that do not cause offence
- ◆ use language in our materials that is clear, free from bias and appropriate to the target group
- ◆ collect and monitor all available data relating to candidate achievement to detect accidental bias
- ◆ make any reasonable adjustments for Learners and Accredited Trainers as necessary to ensure that no individual is disadvantaged on the grounds of the protected characteristics as outlined above.
- ◆ Accredited Trainers will adhere to this policy in respect of their students.

6 What to do to discuss Equality issues

If you are a Learner and you want to discuss an equality issue, please contact the appropriate person e.g., the Accredited Trainer providing your course. If there is a problem in being assessed by your Accredited Trainer which you believe your Accredited Trainer has not dealt with properly, write to the SoFI Managing Director at the address below.

If you represent one of our Accredited Trainers and want to discuss an equality issue, write to the SoFI Managing Director at the address below:

Managing Director

Society of Forensic Interviewers

42 Anglesea Road

Ipswich

Suffolk IP1 3PP

Or by email to jeffshiplee@so-fi.org

7 Useful Contacts

A copy of the Equality Act 2010 can be found on the HMSO website (www.hmso.gov.uk)

March 2016

Advice on equality can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website (www.equalityhumanrights.com) or in Northern Ireland, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (www.equalityni.org)