

Financial Skills Partnership

Equality and Diversity

Statement of Aims and Objectives

This statement outlines the FSP's aims and objectives in the sphere of diversity. It is intended in due course to develop a more detailed Equality and Diversity strategy.

The FSP's equality and diversity aim

The FSP is committed to supporting employers in the finance, accountancy and financial services sectors to achieve a workforce that reflects, at all levels, the diversity of the UK's population.

Our emphasis throughout is upon equality and diversity both for both new entrants to the sector and opportunities for progression for the existing workforce.

Scope of Equality and Diversity

The following equality groups may suffer either from direct or indirect discrimination, or be under-represented either in the industry as a whole or in certain roles or functions, or at certain levels of seniority:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Prior learning status
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender

There are also wider issues within financial services and accountancy, such as recruitment in some cases taking place from a narrow pool of people. This may result in under-representation of recruits, for example, from less traditional or socially disadvantaged backgrounds. These issues do not always fall directly into one of the Equality Groups identified above.

FSP - Diversity goals

1. Work with employers to increase opportunities for entry into and progression within the finance, accountancy and financial services industries based on skills and talent
2. Work with training providers, where appropriate, to promote an understanding of equality and diversity issues and how these can be addressed

3. Increase understanding within the finance, accountancy and financial services industries of the diversity agenda by promoting relevant information and studies
4. Promote the business benefits of diversity
5. Ensure that the FSP supports and values equality and diversity across all its own functions and activities

Delivering the Objectives

Work with employers to increase opportunities for entry into and progression within the finance, accountancy and financial services industries based on skills and talent

- We will provide current and accurate careers information through our “*Directions*” online careers guide
- We will signpost users of “*Directions*” to other non-discriminatory careers services for advice and guidance
- We will work with employers on equality and diversity issues. Where appropriate we will lead on cross-sector initiatives that encourage recruitment from as wide a talent pool as possible, including people from non-traditional backgrounds. We will work with employers to ensure that under-represented groups are encouraged to apply for employment opportunities, including promotion, within the company.
- We will develop and promote standards, where funding is available, as the objective measures for identifying job requirements and benchmarking an individual’s proficiency
- We will stimulate the development of qualifications in response to industry need, such as apprenticeship frameworks, that encourage the recruitment of non-graduates into our industry.
- We will encourage the provision of training opportunities on a flexible basis, to promote take-up from groups who may not be able to complete courses at standard hours etc.
- We will work with employers to encourage them to equality training for staff, especially those involved in recruitment and selection
- We will work with employers to provide training, mentoring schemes, open days or other events to encourage under-represented groups to consider careers in financial services

- We will identify public funding opportunities that can be used by employers to promote equality and diversity in their workforce
- We will provide opportunities to employers for sharing good practice and new approaches on equality and diversity
- We will appoint a named Board member as diversity champion

Work with training providers to promote an understanding of equality and diversity issues and how these can be addressed

- We will work with higher and further education institutions, other public and private training providers and individual trainers to promote equality and diversity issues in the training opportunities they provide
- We will provide opportunities, where possible, to our training provider partners for sharing good practice and new approaches on equality and diversity
- We will work with training providers, where appropriate, to target events at under-represented groups, to encourage them to consider careers in financial services

Develop a social partnership approach to working with trade unions and other stakeholders to promote diversity issues in the workplace

- We will continue to develop our work with trade unions representing employees in our sector, and work with them to develop further our equality and diversity strategy
- We will work with all relevant stakeholders to promote diversity issues in the workplace

Increase understanding within the finance, accountancy and financial services industries of the diversity agenda by promoting relevant information and studies

- We will undertake relevant research, where funding is available, to provide supporting data for the determination of the FSP's equality and diversity priorities, and include diversity data in our own Labour Market Intelligence work
- We will work with employers to encourage them to monitor and review recruitment and selection procedures, training for employees, appraisals and promotion and take action where necessary. We will also encourage the monitoring and review of those involved in these processes.
- We will monitor reports published by a wide range of stakeholders and the media that cover equality and diversity issues in our sector and publicise these in our work with employers and through our newsletters and other communications

Promote the business benefits of diversity

- We will promote the business benefits of diversity and celebrate the sector's achievements within our industry and to public sector partners
- We will seek to influence our strategic partners to give greater priority to equality and diversity in the design, implementation and review of relevant policies and programmes

Ensure that the FSP supports and values equality and diversity across all its own functions and activities

- Draw up and implement a Diversity and Equal Opportunities policy to cover all our internal procedures, including our own employees
- Develop and implement a Welsh Language scheme, where funding is available
- Ensure our communications materials are accessible and inclusive
- Audit our offices to ensure access for people with disabilities, subject to our landlord's constraints, and ensure disabled access to venues for events we arrange on external premises