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#### Equality of opportunity in access to products and services

This document sets out the Mercurius Politicus policy for ensuring equal opportunities and access to products and services.

#### Commitment

We support equal opportunities in education, training and employment and are committed to ensuring that anyone who wants to gain one of our qualifications or awards faces no unnecessary barriers in doing so.

#### Particular characteristics

For the purpose of this policy, we want to ensure we do not discriminate against learners because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and/or political opinion.

#### Aims

To meet our commitment we will:

- develop and offer products and services that are based only on occupational, technical, professional or statutory requirements and do not unnecessarily discriminate against anyone on the basis of the particular characteristics mentioned in this policy
- ensure equality principles are embedded in the development process and training of internal staff and consultants
- consult with relevant individuals and organisations that we consider appropriate to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to prevent access in relation to our products and services

- facilitate access to assessment by having in place clear arrangements for making reasonable adjustments which will reflect the needs of individual learners and ensure the assessment remains valid, reliable and consistent where adjustments are approved
- ensure our centres have their own equal opportunities policy that work together with ours, and that they have systems and procedures in place to implement and monitor policy effectively
- ensure our centres have an appeals and complaints procedure and take steps to ensure that candidates understand this, and how or when to appeal or complain to Mercurius Politicus.

## Regulation and Audit

### Putting this policy into practice

To put this policy into practice successfully we will:

- make it available to all staff, consultants and centres, and anyone who requests it, and publicise it clearly on our website
- organise development activities for all staff and consultants involved in the development and quality assurance of our products and services
- refer explicitly to the aims of this policy when we develop and review our products and services
- maintain a working party to monitor, review and improve the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis.

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## **Working with children and vulnerable adults**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was formed in December 2012 to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. It replaced the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

The Government also changed the requirements for CRB checks to reflect changes brought about by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The impact is that for disclosure and barring purposes a CRB check is only required when working in **regulated activities** with children or with adults.

For children, '**regulated activity**' is (1) working in an unsupervised capacity with children on some premises (such as schools) and (2) providing personal physical or health care.

For adults '**regulated activity**' is primarily concerned with personal physical or health care.

With these changes the previous definitions of frequency and intensity are no longer relevant: the only relevant factor is whether or not the activity is a regulated activity (regardless of frequency or intensity).

Clearly Qualification Consultants activities do not involve them in regulated activities either with children or vulnerable adults. Moreover Mercurius Politicus require that, during their visits, Qualification Consultants should always be accompanied by a member of staff of the centre. Therefore Qualification Consultants are not required to undertake CRB checks and consequently they do not have to agree to centre requests for CRB related checks.

Please refer to the [Disclosure and Barring Service's guide to eligibility for criminal record checks](#) for more information.