

## 1 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

- 1.1 APS QA1 requires that Organisations maintain and apply appropriate policies and procedures in relation to Organisational Culture. Those policies and procedures must be designed to achieve the following outcome:

***QAS Accredited Organisations*** foster a positive culture and working environment.

- 1.2 Sub-outcomes relating to the Relationship with Users and Speaking Up Outcomes are covered elsewhere in the QAS Handbook. This addendum relates to the Sub-outcome which states that that QAS Accredited Organisations should be “Proactive about the promotion of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)”.
- 1.3 Diversity, generally means recognising differences and variety in people and their skills and experience, and appreciating these variations. Equity means that individuals have access to the support and resources they need (as opposed to the same support and resources as each other) to succeed in their roles. Inclusion means that all individuals will be valued in the workplace, that they will be encouraged and listened to and that their individual contributions will be appreciated.
- 1.4 Promoting DEI in the workplace will contribute to success in business for QAS Accredited Organisations. These Organisations will foster a culture of engagement and productivity and encourage a working environment where diversity of thought leads to the generation of ideas and fresh approaches to problem solving. Organisations will also be able to serve and understand their customers better and together this will contribute to the attraction and retention of staff.
- 1.5 There are four positive indicators relating to DEI referred to in APS QA1. They are:
- 1.5.1 Appreciation and understanding of how DEI will impact on member’s experience at work
- 1.5.2 A respectful working environment will be fostered
- 1.5.3 All colleagues are valued
- 1.5.4 Members feel able raise DEI matters without fear of retaliation
- 1.6 Principle 1 of the Actuaries’ Code<sup>1</sup> sets out specific obligations in relation to Integrity. There is a clear link between this and the QAS Outcome relating to Organisational Culture, and DEI in particular. Principle 1 of the Actuaries’ Code states that:

*“Members must show respect for others in the way they conduct themselves.”*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.actuaries.org.uk/upholding-standards/standards-and-guidance/actuaries-code/actuaries-code-principle-1-integrity>

- 1.7 Showing respect for others is at the heart of Organisational Culture, and an awareness of DEI's meaning (see 1.3 above) will assist QAS Accredited Organisations in supporting their employees to meet this obligation set out in the Actuaries' Code.
- 1.8 As with section 6 of the QAS Handbook' relating to Speaking up, it is anticipated that QAS Accredited Organisations will take steps to help employees feel empowered and encouraged to raise concerns relating to DEI, and there is an expectation that any issues raised will be treated seriously, confidentially and fairly.
- 1.9 It is likely that there are DEI considerations in relation to a number of the QAS Outcomes and a holistic approach to DEI generally is encouraged.
- 1.10 Organisations should consider whether there are any DEI training needs to be addressed or whether a survey of employee understanding of and attitudes towards DEI could assist with measuring the impact of DEI on their employees.
- 1.11 While it is for individual organisations to determine the specifics of their own Diversity, Equity and Inclusion activities, it is an expectation of QAS accreditation that DEI generally is a consideration in relation to establishing and fostering Organisational Culture.
- 1.12 Without being prescriptive, there are a number of good practice examples which organisations may wish to consider. Please note that this is not prescriptive, it is a short list of potential suggestions for QAS Accredited Organisations to consider:
- Maintaining a work culture of mutual respect
  - Exit interviews include a question on DEI experiences at work
  - Induction will include a section on DEI
  - DEI Training and regular discussions to ensure understanding for all staff
  - Management buy in to DEI principles
  - A DEI focus group made up of staff volunteers at all levels
  - Putting in place a non retaliation policy
  - Revisiting speaking up policies to ensure DEI aspects of speaking up are considered
  - Including DEI questions in employee surveys
  - Encouraging employees to be comfortable being their whole selves at work
  - Encouraging a culture of openness

**NOTE: The IFoA will publish its DEI strategy during Q3 2021, so this addendum may require updating to bring it in line with that overarching strategy.**