

Professional Accountancy Tutors

Policy Documents

PAT

- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- ICT
- Complaints
- Malpractice

Reviewed December 23

Equal Opportunities Policy

The main criteria for recruitment on a particular course of study strictly remains on the basis of merit of a particular candidate.

PAT Equal Opportunity Policy Statement

The only consideration in the education and assessment of students is based on the fact that the individual meets, or is likely to meet the requirements of the programme/course.

Subject to the rules and regulations and other relevant criteria being met, no student will be discriminated against on the basis of their sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, disability, marital status, caring or parental responsibilities, age, or beliefs on matters such as religion and politics.

PAT is committed to the provision of a congenial academic environment in which the rights and dignity of all its members are highly valued. The social and working environment will be free from intimidation, discrimination and all forms of harassment including bullying.

The Equal Opportunity Policy of the organisation will ensure that all students and staff have a right to study or work in an environment free from all bias, prejudice and any form of discrimination.

Professional Accountancy Tutors is fully committed to providing a broader plan of action, thus ensuring that its policy is implemented and monitored at an organisational as well as the individual level.

Equality and Diversity

As an accredited training centre, Professional Accountancy Tutors has a duty to ensure that that the rights of individual students to access qualification and assessment, in a way most appropriate for their individual needs are upheld.

Under the Equality Act 2010, and as per AAT Code of Practice, reasonable adjustments are required where students experience substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments may include the following:

- Allowing a student extra time to complete the assessment activity.
- Providing assistance during an assessment, such as a reader.

If you have not already discussed any special needs during your interview, please get in contact with a member of staff.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is the policy of PAT to ensure that all reasonable and practicable steps are being taken to safeguard the health and safety of all employees and students while at work and to protect other persons from hazards to health and safety arising out of the institution's activities.

The following principles are fundamental to the management of health and safety at PAT:

The effective management of health and safety can make a significant contribution to the performance of PAT by reducing the risk of injuries and ill health, thus minimising losses and liabilities. The maintenance and continuing development of health and safety management systems is therefore a top priority for the organisation.

Health and safety matters are the responsibility of Management. Nevertheless members of the academic staff too, are required to take responsibility for health and safety in all activities under their control.

The requirements of health and safety legislation set the minimum standards of health and safety performance:

The development of a culture supportive of health and safety is essential for the achievement of adequate control over undue risks. Staff must set high standards by personal example and by ensuring that safe practice is routine. Students at PAT must be encouraged to have an attitude of mind which reflects health and safety procedures to be a norm.

All partners will make arrangements for the implementation of this Policy which are appropriate to the size and structure of the organization and the nature of its activities. To ensure the Policy is kept up to date it will be reviewed at least once each year and more frequently if circumstances demand.

COVID 19

The following measures were introduced in 2020 and remain in place to make the centre covid secure:

- The use of hand sanitisers when accessing the centre.
- All laptops and work stations are sanitised after use.
- Screen guards between work stations.
- A maximum of 8 visitors allowed in a room at any time.
- The provision of face masks if a visitor does not have one.

ICT Policy

Information technology forms an integral part of our activities as a training centre. IT offers opportunities to support student learning, staff development and communication, but raises challenges in terms of our ability to curtail abuse.

All staff and students are therefore bound by our IT policy at Professional Accountancy Tutors.

- IT facilities, including laptops, printers, email, internet, software and databases must be used for work directly linked to your learning or other authorised use only.
- All files created or stored on our systems can be subject to inspection and where evidence is found of misuse or illegal use of material, they will be deleted and disciplinary action taken, which may include notification to the police.
- Any communication of an extreme, abusive or offensive nature or any communication which attempts to persuade or encourage others to take actions which are inappropriate must be brought to the attention of a member of staff or Head of Centre immediately.

In addition to the above, users of IT facilities must not:

- Disclose their passwords to others
- Attempt to access computers for which permission has not been granted- office computers and server.
- Use materials causing corruptions, changes or malfunctions to the our IT facilities
- Display, store, print or transmit images or text which could be considered offensive such as material of a racist, pornographic, defamatory, libellous nature or material linked to terrorism.
- Send or receive materials likely to bring disrepute to the centre.
- Use the IT facilities to deliberately upset another person.
- Forge email signatures and/or headers.
- Initiate and/or forward “chain” or “junk” mail.

Professional Accountancy Tutors are compliant with the the Data Protection Act.

- Whilst the centre takes appropriate security measures against unauthorised access to, or alteration/disclosure/loss of personal and other data, it does not give any warranties or undertakings to the users of IT facilities about security, confidentiality or integrity of data, personal or otherwise.
- As files are deleted on a regular basis, users must ensure that they keep copies of their work, files and messages that they wish to retain.
- Any violation of the centre’s ICT policy is a serious misconduct and will lead to disciplinary procedures being invoked. Serious cases may lead to expulsion from the centre and may involve civil or criminal action being taken against the user

Complaints Procedure

If you are not completely satisfied with the service you have received from PAT and feel there is something that should be investigated, please let us know as soon as possible.

The following procedure will allow us to investigate and resolve complaints about our service.

We aim to respond within the timescales given at each step of the procedure.

Step 1:

If you have an issue connected with your course, we suggest that you speak to one of the following:

- The person directly involved
- Your lecturer
- The course leader
- PAT partner.

If the issue is not course related, we suggest that you speak to one of the following:

- The person directly involved
- PAT partner.

Step 2:

If the matter is not dealt with to your satisfaction in step 1, or if you prefer not to speak to any of the people mentioned above, you may decide to make a formal complaint. This must be done in writing.

On receipt of a formal complaint PAT will acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days and arrange for an investigation to be carried out.

You will receive a written response informing you of the outcome of the investigation at step 2 within 7 working days of the written acknowledgement.

Step 3:

If you are not satisfied with the response at stage 2 you may request the complaint to be progressed to stage 3 of the Complaints procedure. To do this you must contact the college within 7 working days of the date of our response at stage 2.

We will acknowledge your dissatisfaction within 3 working days and arrange for your complaint to be reviewed by a Complaint Review Panel made up of a student representative, a PAT Senior Partner, and the AAT course Leader within 7 working days from the date of our acknowledgement. You may be accompanied by anybody of your choice to the Review Panel.

You will normally receive a written response from the panel notifying you of the outcome of the review within 3 working days.

If your complaint concerns AAT assessments, and you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review, you must notify us in writing within 5 working days.

We will then refer the matter to an AAT External Verifier whose decision will be final.

Malpractice

As an accredited AAT training provider, Professional accountancy Tutors has a responsibility to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to prevent malpractice or maladministration in the delivery or award of the AAT qualification.

What is malpractice?

Malpractice refers to any deliberate action that could compromise:

- the assessment process,
- the integrity of the AAT qualification,
- The validity of a result or certificate
- The reputation and credibility of AAT
- The qualification or the wider qualifications community.

Examples of malpractice:

Students may be guilty of malpractice if they:

- Copy from other candidates
- Plagiarise material
- Take unauthorised material into an examination room
- Breach invigilator instructions for the conduct of assessments
- Impersonate other candidates or allow themselves to be impersonated, for the taking of controlled assessments or examinations.

Any suspicion of malpractice will be investigated by the Head of Centre and reported to the AAT.

The AAT may then decide to:

- Take no further action
- Make a decision on the case in accordance with AAT regulations
- Investigate the matter further.

All investigations will be undertaken in a fair, reasonable and legal manner ensuring that all evidence is considered without bias. Where malpractice is proven against an individual, this may result in the withdrawal of student membership.