

# QACA Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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## Introduction

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Quality Austria Central Asia (QACA) is dedicated to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace environment where every employee feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their best. As a leading certification and inspection body in managing quality across various industries, we recognize the critical importance of embracing diversity and promoting inclusion in achieving our organizational goals.

## Purpose

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The purpose of this comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion Policy is to:

1. Establish a robust framework for promoting diversity, equality, equity, and inclusion within QACA.
2. Foster a workplace culture that celebrates and leverages the unique perspectives, talents, and experiences of all individuals.
3. Ensure equal opportunities for professional growth, advancement, and participation in all aspects of employment, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law.
4. Reinforce our commitment to zero tolerance against physical/verbal bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and discrimination in any form within our workplace.

## Scope

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This policy applies to all employees, contractors, vendors, clients, and stakeholders associated with QACA, irrespective of their role or level within the organization.

## Definitions

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**Employee:** Any person who is a probationer, a regular employee, an external resource, or an intern. Individuals employed by QACA on a full-time, part-time, temporary, or contract basis, including executives, managers, supervisors, and all frontline staff (Auditors, Engineers & Inspectors).

**Contractors and Vendors:** Individuals or entities engaged by QACA to provide goods, services, or expertise, including consultants, suppliers, vendors, and subcontractors.

Clients: Organizations or individuals who utilize QACA's certification and inspection services to manage quality across various industries, including manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and service providers.

Stakeholders: Individuals or groups with a vested interest in QACA's operations, reputation, and success, including shareholders, investors, regulatory agencies, industry associations, community organizations, and the general public.

## Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

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Quality Austria Central Asia is fully committed to:

1. Actively recruiting, hiring, and promoting a diverse workforce that reflects the diverse communities we serve and the global marketplace in which we operate.
2. Providing equitable access to professional development opportunities, training, mentorship, and resources to support the growth and success of all employees.
3. Cultivating a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful workplace culture that values and embraces diversity in all its forms – race, religion, colour, language, gender, etc.
4. Prohibiting all/any forms of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, whether based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law.
5. Ensuring prompt and thorough investigation of all reported incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, and taking appropriate disciplinary action against perpetrators in accordance with applicable laws and company policies.
6. Providing reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities to enable their full participation and contribution to the workplace.
7. Encouraging open communication, collaboration, and the sharing of diverse perspectives and ideas among employees to foster innovation, creativity, and mutual understanding.
8. Recognizing and celebrating the unique contributions and achievements of individuals from diverse backgrounds to our organizational success.
9. Promoting a culture of mutual respect, tolerance, and inclusion, and to prevent any form of behavior that undermines the dignity or well-being of our employees, contractors, clients, or stakeholders.
10. Avoiding derogatory, offensive, or disrespectful language, gestures, or behavior in the workplace.
11. Respecting personal boundaries and refraining from behavior that could be perceived as intrusive or harassing.

12. Allocating seats/vacancies (support functions/back office only) up to a maximum of 0.5% of employee base (up to 10 seats), towards physically abled candidates who are technically strong and are capable to execute and complete designated work.

## Implementation

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To effectively implement this policy across all verticals and offices within QACA, we will:

1. Provide comprehensive diversity, equity, and inclusion training and education programs for all employees to raise awareness, build empathy, and foster a culture of respect and inclusion.
2. Establish measurable diversity and inclusion metrics and goals to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and hold leadership and employees accountable for advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives.
3. Conduct regular reviews and assessments of our policies, practices, and workplace culture to ensure alignment with our diversity and inclusion objectives and address any barriers or inequities.
4. Encourage the formation of employee resource groups and affinity networks to support the needs, interests, and professional development of diverse communities within the organization.
5. Foster partnerships and collaborations with external organizations, community groups, and industry associations that share our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion to exchange best practices, leverage resources, and drive positive change.
6. Provide multiple channels for employees to report incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, and ensure confidentiality, impartiality, and timely resolution of complaints.
7. Promote transparency and accountability in all aspects of our diversity and inclusion efforts, including regular communication and updates to employees on progress, challenges, and opportunities for engagement and feedback.

## Do's and Don'ts for Employees

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### Do's:

- We must treat all colleagues, clients, and stakeholders with dignity, respect, and professionalism, regardless of their background or differences.
- We shall embrace diversity and seek to understand and appreciate the perspectives, experiences, and contributions of individuals from different cultures, backgrounds, and identities.

- We shall speak up against bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or any form of disrespectful behavior in the workplace, and report incidents promptly to People Function or Management for appropriate action. All such cases can be reported to [Ombudsman@qacamail.com](mailto:Ombudsman@qacamail.com)
- We must participate actively in diversity and inclusion training, education, and initiatives to enhance awareness, empathy, and cultural competence.
- We shall support and mentor colleagues from underrepresented or marginalized groups to promote their professional growth, advancement, and success.
- We shall engage in open and respectful dialogue, collaboration, and teamwork to leverage the collective strengths and talents of our diverse workforce.

#### **Don'ts:**

- We should never engage in any form of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or retaliation against colleagues, clients, or stakeholders, whether in person, in writing, or online.
- We must not make offensive or derogatory comments, jokes, or gestures based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- We must exclude or marginalize individuals from opportunities for professional growth, development, or participation based on their background or differences.
- We should use social media or other digital platforms to spread rumors, gossip, or malicious content targeting colleagues, clients, or stakeholders.
- We must not retaliate against employees who report incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or retaliation or participate in investigations or legal proceedings related to such complaints.
- We should never ignore or dismiss concerns or complaints raised by colleagues or stakeholders regarding bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or other violations of our diversity and inclusion policy.

## Zero Tolerance Against Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, and Discrimination

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Quality Austria Central Asia maintains a strict zero-tolerance policy against all forms of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace. Such behavior undermines our values, erodes trust and morale, and can have serious consequences for the well-being and productivity of our employees. Any employee found to have engaged in bullying, cyberbullying,

harassment, or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with applicable laws and company policies.

- **Bullying:** Any behavior that seeks to intimidate, belittle, or undermine another person's confidence or self-esteem.
- **Harassment:** Any unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
- **Discrimination:** Any unfair treatment or unequal opportunities based on an individual's protected characteristics, including race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law.

## Conclusion

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At Quality Austria Central Asia, we are committed to building a workplace culture that values and celebrates diversity, equity, and inclusion. By embracing the unique talents, perspectives, and experiences of all individuals, we can create a more vibrant, innovative, and collaborative environment where everyone can thrive and contribute to our shared success. Together, we will continue to uphold the highest standards of respect, fairness, and equality for all.

Revision Number	Date	Revised by	Approved by	Summary of changes
QACA-P-07-Rev00	13 Feb 2024	DGM - People Function	Managing Director	-