

NORTH EAST EQUALITY



## Employers of up to 50 staff 2012 Winner – TRN (train) Ltd

TRN (train) Ltd is a private training provider, using government and commercial funding to deliver work based learning and courses for unemployed learners. They deliver Skills for Life/Functional Skills, NVQs and Apprenticeships in Health and Social Care, Customer Services, Business Administration, Management and Construction Plant Operations as well as training in Health and Safety and First Aid etc.

TRN try to remove barriers to ambition by promoting non-gender stereotypes in workforces and the local community by ensuring that equality is part of the culture of the organisation and introduced a female assessor in Construction Plant Operations as part of their overall strategy to address gender-stereotyping in the workplace.

They promote a culture of openness and acceptance by providing on-going training, flexible working and tolerance of each other's needs and beliefs. For example, a member of staff has recently celebrated Ramadan. TRN proactively encourage the person to work more flexibly and have

implemented lighter hours when fasting. Colleagues supported the individual by avoiding offering/eating food in their presence.

*“The lengths TRN have gone to for both staff and learners should be highly commended. The attention to detail to improve outcome is exceptional” Judge – Short-listing Panel 2012*

The company restructure in 2012 gave them the opportunity to undertake a review of policy and procedures, not only in terms of ensuring that they are up to date fit for purpose to support the business model, but also to ensure that they improve quality for both staff and learners.

TRN introduced new induction procedures in addition to the new female assessor for their construction programmes to enable new staff to be supported more effectively.

Equality and Diversity is part of induction training for every learner – this is followed by a questionnaire to test their knowledge and retention of information – each of the responses, including the nine characteristics are discussed and any area



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that a learner gets an incorrect answer is also identified as a learning outcome on their programme individual learning plan.

The company employs flexible working practices, trusting staff to arrange and manage their own timetables arranging their work around the support that the learners need. This flexible working also enables staff to arrange health appointments that can't be made outside normal working hours and make up time when off sick.

An integral part of the business operations is to provide courses for unemployed

learners and they work closely with businesses to place learners in suitable environments to consolidate their learning. Equality and Diversity is an agenda item on all formal meetings and when they carry out workplace health and safety vetting with employers they ensure that if they don't have an Equality and Diversity policy, that they required to adopt the TRN policy.

The company's culture of openness and acceptance has led to staff being very comfortable and open about their sexuality; abilities, culture and beliefs and other staff members positively accepting these as part of who they are. Feedback on the policy reviews and in particular the enhanced induction procedure has been welcomed by new and existing staff.

TRN has taken a proactive approach to address under-represented groups in the workplace, supporting unemployed individuals and on their learning programmes advertising programmes as widely as possible, using Jobcentre Plus, appropriate press releases and radio. When advertising courses they have utilised facilities in GP surgeries; local community and Sure Start centres; Work Programme providers and local authority Economic Programmes. provide, all of which, we believe, will help us to be more diverse.

As a result of their efforts there has been a steady improvement from 2008 when learner representation of Black and Ethnic Minority Groups was 0.4%. In 2009 this had increased this to 0.9%, 2010 this increased again to 2.38% and in 2012 the figure is 3.33%.

They have increased non gender stereotype within our programmes in 2012. In Plant Operations they had an increase 0.94% representing an additional female learner. In health and Social Care we have had a 1.7% increase.

TRN's approach to developing new programmes and re-thinking teaching and learning delivery approaches in response to feedback from employers and learners ensures that learning fits both the needs of the individual and the market place ensuring achievement of both business and individual goals.

