

## Equality and Diversity Action Plan

Floorcovering Occupations are considered to fall almost entirely within the Construction Sector. As such it has traditionally been a male dominated area.

Floorskills is attempting to address this bias in several ways:

A/ Promoting access to training across a wider spectrum of the public via:

- 1) Social media marketing – This is already proving successful, with several enquiries and enrollment on training courses from female learners.
- 2) Promotion within the retail sector and training options suitable for more than basic installation – Our first sales and estimating course benefitted from having female learners attending. More such courses are planned

B/ Delivering skills training to more than standard flooring installers:

- 1) Providing standard and bespoke training to organisations such as NHS Trusts and Facilities Management companies, allows attendance to reflect the composition of their existing teams.
- 2) Plans to recruit at least one female trainer during 2016 will allow delivery of training which is non-installation, but more after care, and demonstrate the practical aspects of gender diversity. This is already supported by having female company representatives present products and materials to learners within the centre.

Within Apprenticeship Programmes we have already demonstrated that gender is not a prime factor in occupational suitability and will continue to promote recruitment in such a way that it is not entrenched within the standard stereotype of 16–18 year old males. Most companies within the flooring trade normally think of an apprentice as being of school leaving age, or slightly older. Employers have become more aware of the training and assessment and time to be invested

During the apprentice application process (where Floorskills Limited play an active part in recruitment) we stress to prospective employers that suitability and aptitude is much more important than age. Our enrolment figures demonstrate that we recruit across a wide range of ages and will continue to do so in the future.

Our training is open to all and we will continue to actively encourage a mix of age and experience within groups, as diversity within a group usually results in a much more positive learning experience. Floorskills has had a large increase in females attending training courses which have been adapted to technical and demonstration, rather than physical hands on training courses to suit.

Since opening the centre in 2012, the make-up of learners accessing both private and funded courses at Floorskills, has been seen to have shifted slightly from

virtually 100% white British males in their 20s and 30s, to a mixture of gender, age and ethnicity.

Floorskills will continue to develop this trend, as it reflects the community we operate within. Our advertising is aimed at all, but our best recruitment to learning methods are word of mouth and direct referral. It is word of mouth and direct referral which is being reflected in a more diverse uptake on courses.

Floorskills will actively encourage this and take every possible opportunity to demonstrate the wide range of learners who access our courses. Floorskills gives feedback to the employer on a regular basis but in particular the first block training session where the learner experience is discussed. Floorskills is on call evenings when block release takes place so that all learners have a contact should they need assistance at the accommodation or in resolving any issues although Floorskills does not book and arrange the accommodation, this is arranged by the employer.

During the initial stages of signing up an Apprentice and in discussions with the employer any learning needs would be identified and discussed to identify and support and implement this as needed. All Tutors involved in the learning would be updated with any additional needs of the learner. Where a learner may be feeling isolated staff and Tutors will buddy up the learner with another student and actively encourage greater participation within the group.

As we also provide food and refreshments to learners, we will continue to ensure that all dietary needs are identified and catered for, while also monitoring for any changing trends and accommodating these.

As of December 2021, Floorskills has partnered with Tapi flooring who are one of the UK's largest floorcoverings retailers where Floorskills is offering tailored courses to suit not only their floor layers but to concentrate on shop retail staff technical training. Tapi has a wide mixture of gender, age and ethnicity which will see a large increase in all receiving training in floorcoverings that has traditionally been male dominated.