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Embracing inclusive recruitment

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What is equality?

Equality means “the same as each other” – i.e. everyone is equal.

What is equity?

Equity - acknowledging the challenge that people often have different starting places and is linked to justice and proportional fairness.

What is diversity?

Diversity means difference – i.e. different protected characteristics and different ways of thinking being represented.

What is inclusive recruitment?

Ensuring that all aspects of the recruitment process are fair for all groups of people.

What are inclusive recruitment adjustments?

Making modifications to a part of the recruitment and selection process to ensure that all groups of candidates have equal opportunities to apply for roles or take part in each stage of the recruitment process population.

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As the professional standards body for the insurance and financial planning sectors, we see it as our responsibility to work with you to develop the profession, to meet the needs of today's consumers and businesses and those of the future.

The business case for diversity and inclusion is clear to us all. Forbes reports that diversity and inclusion are essential in business today, a variety of people from different backgrounds and cultures provides us with a balance of voices and thoughts.¹

Yet we have a way to go in our profession to best utilise the diverse thinking and creativity that is out there. There are many ways we can all make a difference as we continue to embrace diversity and value inclusion. One way is to start looking at how we recruit.

I hope you find this booklet a useful source of inspiration to make a difference.

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What is inclusive recruitment and why is it important?

We have an opportunity to harness the talent that is available across society to use an inclusive approach to attract and select candidates.

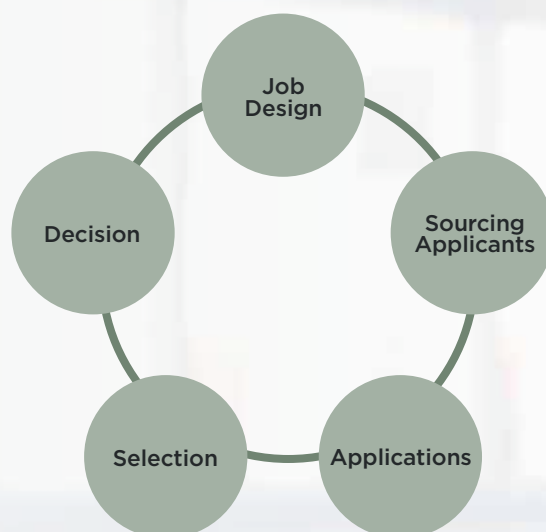
In order for organisations to prosper, gain a competitive edge and flourish in a rapidly changing business and economic environment, employers need to have a diverse workforce with a wide variety of experience, skills, views and ideas. Employers also need to be ahead of the game when it comes to ensuring that they have the next generation of skilled people ready to take their organisations forward. Having a robust and diverse talent pipeline will ensure that organisations stand the best chance of succeeding in the future marketplace.

The first step that employers need to take to make their talent pipeline as wide as possible is to review their recruitment procedures to ensure that each stage is as inclusive as possible.

Inclusive recruitment means ensuring that there are fair, equitable and equal opportunities for all candidates during the whole recruitment and selection process. It includes ensuring that each stage of the recruitment cycle is accessible and relevant to people from a diverse range of backgrounds in order to enhance diversity and ensure that there is no discrimination against any group of people.

While nothing in the Equality Act 2010² prevents an employer from hiring the best person for the job, it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate in any or the arrangements made to fill a vacancy, the terms of employment that are offered, or in any decision to refuse someone a job.

The Recruitment Cycle



It is easy to state that all jobs are full-time, but could I consider a different way of getting the job done equally well e.g.: job share or flexible hours?

Learning statement/outcome:

Have an open mind about how a job might get done. Think about why it needs to be completed by one person or on a full-time basis. Bear in mind that by keeping a rigid view of how the role has to be conducted will limit your choice of suitable candidates and some groups of candidates will be unable to apply, or choose not to apply.

² EHRC, www.equalityhumanrights.com


Is diversity important to employers?

An increasing number of organisations are now considering how they can link their recruitment and selection strategy with their diversity and inclusion strategy.


Aligning recruitment and inclusion		
Q: Are your organisation's recruitment and selection strategy and diversity strategy aligned? ³		
	All sectors	Financial services
Yes – completely	30%	31%
Yes – somewhat	51%	45%

Recruiting more diverse talent		
Q: Is your organisation actively trying to attract and recruit more diverse talent? ³		
	All sectors	Financial services
Yes – increase female hires	58%	76%
Yes – increase minority hires	49%	51%

Is diversity important to employers?⁴



85% of employers stated that increasing diversity in the workplace is a priority.



46% of employers do not have programmes in place to attract diverse candidates.

When employees think their organisation is committed to diversity and they feel included, employees report better business performance in terms of ability to innovate (83% uplift), responsiveness to changing customer needs (31% uplift), and team collaboration (42% uplift).⁵

³ PricewaterhouseCoopers: Gaining an edge in the competition for talent: Inclusive recruitment in financial services survey 2017.
⁴ PricewaterhouseCoopers: FS Inclusive Recruitment Survey 2017
⁵ <https://www.robertwalters.co.uk/content/dam/robert-walters/country/united-kingdom/files/whitepapers/Diversity-In-Recruitment-Whitepaper-web.pdf>
⁶ Kornferry Institute: Behindcloseddoors – Make the Case for the Impact of D&I to Business Strategy





The first stage of any recruitment process should be job design.

This involves describing the role as accurately and clearly as possible in a job description and listing, including the person specification and qualifications, skills and experience that candidates should possess in order to apply. During their preparation, employers need to consider carefully whether any of the contents could be discouraging suitable applicants from applying.

Job Description and Person specification

Job title	Executive Support		
Reports to (Job Title)	Executive Manager		
Directorate	Executive Office	Department	Executive Office
Salary			
Managing people responsibilities	None		
Budget responsibilities	None		


What we are looking for	We are looking for a candidate with:
	Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
	Strong organisational and time-management skills.
	Confidence to interact with stakeholders at all levels.
	Excellent attention to detail.
Experience, knowledge and qualifications in the related area	This role will require flexibility in approach and hours as evening networking is an occasional requirement of the role. Experience, knowledge and qualifications in the related area
	Pitman's/Quest (or equivalent) qualified, or with at least 2 years Team Co-ordinator/PA Experience
	Strong working knowledge of Office 365 products, (Outlook, Word, Excel, Powerpoint).
	Solid experience of arranging complex meetings through Outlook.
	Experienced in event co-ordination.
Managing own workload	Experience of taking actions in meetings.
	Marketing background
	You are highly organised, able to prioritise your own workload and work using your own initiative to meet required deadlines.
	You will work collaboratively within a team and contribute to a positive working environment.
	You will have the ability to manage multiple objectives and have a flexible approach to both the type of work undertaken and working hours are required.
	Time management skills will be key.

If there is only an occasional requirement, do you need to include it here?

It may discourage people with caring responsibilities from applying who could make arrangements for the odd occasion.

Job design

Person Specifications




I think I'd be great in this role but they are looking for someone older than me.

Marketing Manager
Person Specifications: 10 years experience




I have all the skills and experience but won't apply as they must want younger applicants.

Accountant
Person Specifications: Must be dynamic and energetic



It's such a pity I can't apply, but I had maternity leave so I don't have 5 years' continuous service.

IT Project Lead
Person Specifications: Must have 5 years' continuous service



I can't apply for this as I have a disability that affects my mobility, otherwise I meet the criteria.

Office Administrator
Person Specifications: Must be physically fit and active



How do I ensure that the pool of potential candidates is as wide as possible when recruiting for a role?

Learning statement/outcome:

Ensure that your jobs are designed so that you are not excluding, even unintentionally, certain groups of people from applying. Determine whether you have any deficit or underrepresentation in your organisation, e.g. gender, ethnicity, disability, etc.

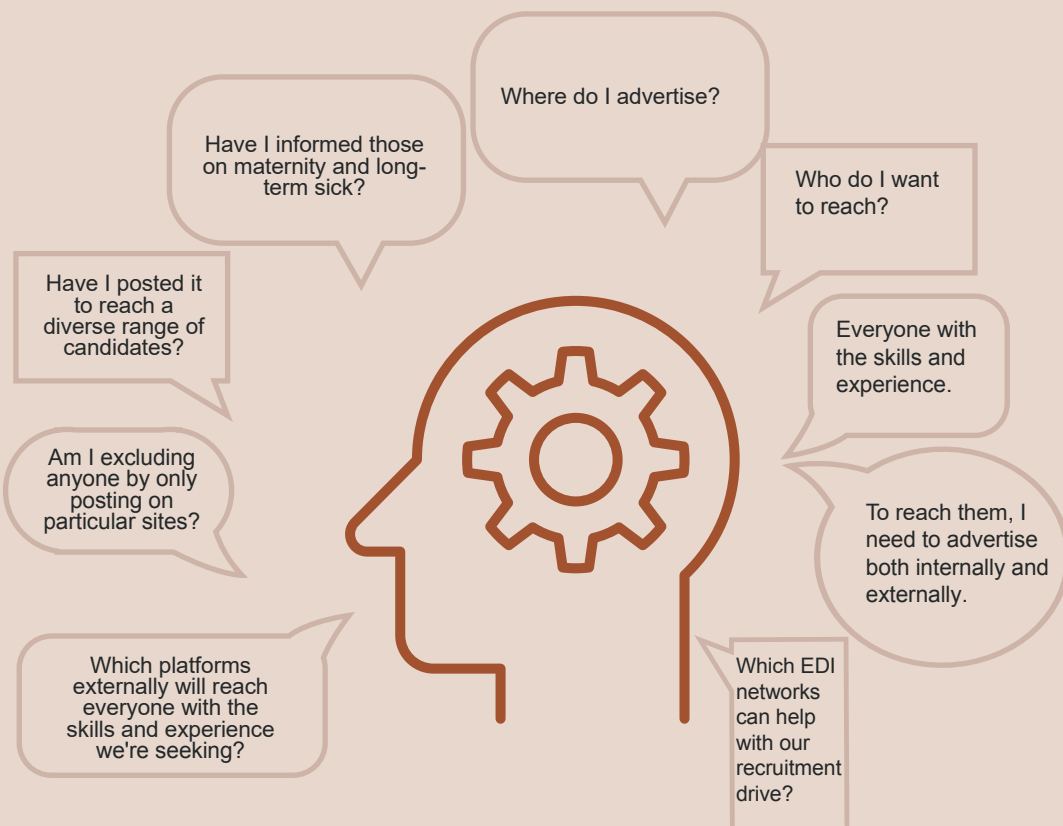
If you don't, then the pool of candidates you are selecting from will be limited.

Sourcing applicants

Employers should consider how they source candidates to ensure that they are reaching and attracting a wide, diverse population of candidates.

Consideration should be given to employer branding and what message is being sent out to potential candidates the organisation is seeking to employ. The same advice applies to drafting recruitment adverts as it does to preparing the job description and person specifications to ensure that the advert content is inclusive and does not deter applicants from a certain group.

Advertising



Recruitment agencies

It is essential that any recruitment agencies that organisations work with understand their Diversity and Inclusion policy and any diversity monitoring processes that are in place.

Positive action

Positive action refers to when an organisation takes action in order to try and address any inequalities, including those caused by previous discriminatory practices. Positive action may consist of actively encouraging a certain group of underrepresented people to apply for a role e.g. non-white candidates or supporting former care givers who are returning to work after a career break through offering returnships (or high level internships). Positive action means that if you have two equally qualified and experienced candidates for a vacancy you may decide to select the candidate who is under represented in the workplace.

Stats:

- 90 percent of Generation X and Millennial marketers believed that diverse representation in marketing materials, including websites, can improve a brand's reputation.⁷
- Forty-nine per cent of employers do not state their interest in hearing from diverse candidates, barely an improvement on the 48% who responded in this way in 2022's survey.⁸
- Sixty per cent have reviewed the wording of their job adverts to improve inclusion, up from 54% last year. Seven per cent do not currently state their interest in hearing from diverse candidates, but plan to do so in future.⁸
-



Do you think your business' brand would be negatively affected if a recruitment agency working on your behalf did not recognise the value of diversity and inclusion practices?

Learning statement/outcome:

Ensure that any sourcing processes are aligned with your business brand and Diversity and Inclusion policies and that the policies and practices of any recruitment agencies you are using are aligned with your organisation.

⁷ <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/behavioral-competencies/global-and-cultural-effectiveness/pages/the-benefits-of-using-inclusive-photos-on-your-website.aspx>

⁸ <https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/diverse-recruitment-survey-rec-2023/>

Applications

Application process and forms

Employers need to ensure that any application process and forms are accessible to all groups of applicants. It is good practice to use blind application forms where the names and any equal opportunities data is removed from the application form prior to pre-selection by the Recruiting Managers. It is only after the pre-selection decisions have been made that the Recruiting Managers receive the names of the successful candidates in order to remove any bias from this stage of the selection process. At no point, however, are the Recruiting Managers given

access to the equal opportunities data. This is recorded and monitored in order to identify any problem areas that might need attention. Employers need to be clear as to the reasons why equality data is being collected and how the data will be stored and used.



How do you ensure that applications are treated in a fair and non-discriminatory way by your recruiting managers?

Learning statement/outcome:

Consider using a blind application process to avoid bias and that you have equality monitoring within your application process to highlight any possible problem areas and to ensure that your application process is aligned with your Diversity and Inclusion policies.

The selection stage comprises shortlisting for interview, the assessment process, interviews and the decision-making around which candidate to appoint.

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Gender – remove
Nationality: Nationality – remove

Remove

Consider non-graduates too!

Remove

Education and training
Dates xx.xx.xx - xx.xx.xx
University of London
St Marks College
Central School

Age: Remove
Gender: Remove

Employment history
Office Administrator at the CII 2022 to date

- Coordinating office activities and operations to secure efficiency and compliance to company policies
- Supervising administrative staff and dividing responsibilities to ensure performance
- Keep stock of office supplies and operations to secure efficiency and compliance to company policies
- Supervise administrative staff and divide responsibilities to ensure performance
- Manage agendas/travel arrangements/appointments etc. for the upper management
- Manage phone calls and correspondence (e-mail, letters, packages etc.)
- Support budgeting and bookkeeping procedures
- Create and update records and databases with personnel, financial and other data
- Track stocks of office supplies and place orders when necessary
- Submit timely reports and prepare presentations/proposals as assigned
- Assist colleagues whenever necessary

Shortlisting for interview

To ensure inclusive shortlisting, employers should try to have more than one person shortlisting candidates to limit any possible bias or discrimination. Shortlisting criteria should be agreed in advance of the shortlisting process and be based on the requirements of the role.

The assessment process

When deciding on what type of assessments to carry out during the selection process, employers need to ensure that they use assessments that are well designed, have high levels of validity and reliability, and are administered by a trained professional. Candidates should be informed about the assessments in advance and given an understanding of what will be involved. Employers should ask candidates if they require any reasonable adjustments to be made to assist them when taking the assessment. If you are holding at an Assessment Centre then ask all attendees if they have any special dietary or other requirements. Also consider if any of the assessments are critical and could potentially exclude individuals as they may not perform well in these situations.

Interviews

Interviews are still the most popular selection method amongst employers. Interviewers need to be careful that they allow candidates to properly demonstrate their skills and suitability for the role and avoid making inappropriate snap judgments on the individual. All applicants also need to be given the same opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the role.

Unconscious bias (where people stereotype about certain groups of people, often without being conscious of doing it) needs to be mitigated against as much as possible during the interview process. Strategies for doing this include having pre-set interview questions designed to assess fit against the requirements of the role. These questions are asked of every candidate and are then methodically, consistently and objectively scored at the end of the interview process. Employers need to concentrate on the specific requirements of the role and ascertain whether they think the candidate meets these requirements. Questions that are not relevant to the role, should not be asked. If certain interview questions are seen as being more important to the role than others then these questions can be weighted so that the candidate with the highest overall score is the most suitable for the role.

Selection

Decision-making

Decisions as to which candidate to appoint must be fair, objective and transparent and not based on:

- First impressions of the candidate.
- Assumptions and stereotypes.
- Prejudice.
- Halo or horns effect (only focusing on the good or the bad parts).
- Mirroring (selecting candidates that are similar to you).
- The candidate's personality rather than skills, abilities and experience.
- Placing excessive weight onto one part of the selection process.

If an employer has two candidates that are very similar in their skills, abilities and experience then they will have to make a judgement as to which candidate to appoint. When making this decision, however, employers need to be aware of possible unconscious bias and try to remain as objective as possible. If none of the candidates meet the requirements of the role then it is better to start the recruitment process again rather than offer the role to a candidate who is not quite right for the role.

STATS:
79 percent of companies in the financial services sector offer unconscious bias training.¹¹

Interview Assessment Form

Competency/Behavioural Questions					
Definition: JUDGEMENT: Decision Making & Problem Solving Make decisions, regardless of your grade, that make a real difference in the work you do. Delivering results in a visionary, excellent & inclusive and authentic way. Able to solve problems using judgement and showing a realistic understanding of issues. Able to reason even when dealing with emotional topics, review facts and weigh up options.					
1. Describe a recent time when you spotted an opportunity to instigate a change/improvement to your work or working processes? What did you do? What was the outcome?					
2. Describe a time when you have had to use facts and data to make recommendations? How did you approach the task? What was the outcome?					
Y/N	Positive indicators				
Y	Is proactive, takes action before being forced by circumstances or others				
Y	When faced with a problem, probes for information, asks questions				
Y	Recognises when decisions are needed and commits to act, acts quickly when needed				
Y	Usually willing to give and opinion and judgement				
Y	Looks at the wider impact of individual actions				
Comments					
Email Marketing Campaign - Review Analytics - A/B Testing Outcome. Revision of email templates					
Ratings	1	2	3	4	5

Selection



Are you confident that your recruiting managers fully understand what interview questions could be perceived as discriminatory or non-inclusive?

Learning statement/outcome:

Ensure that your Recruiting Managers have been trained in equality and recruitment and selection skills and techniques and fully understand what questions might be directly or indirectly discriminatory.

¹¹ McKinsey & Co - <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/financial-services/our-insights/closing-the-gap-leadership-perspectives-on-promoting-women-in-financial-services>



Avoiding discrimination in recruitment



Disability

It is good practice to ask candidates if they need any adjustments or modifications made at any stage of the recruitment and selection process. Be mindful that disabilities may be unseen, e.g. neurodivergent - dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.

Employers must make any adjustments or modifications requested if they are seen as reasonable. After making an offer, employers can ask the candidate if they require any adjustments or modifications made to enable them to do their job.

The proportion of disabled people decreased in every region of England in 2021. The region with the highest proportion of disabled people was the North East (21.2%, 567,000), as it had been in 2011 (22.8%, 562,000). In 2021, the next highest proportions were in the North West (19.8%, 1.4 million) and Yorkshire and The Humber (18.9%, 1.0 million). Meanwhile, London (15.7%, 1.2 million) and the South East (16.1%, 1.5 million) had the lowest proportions of disabled people.¹²



Gender

Employers need to be aware of unconscious thoughts and assumptions that they may make during the recruitment and selection process concerning a candidate's gender.

It may not be obvious at first, but assumptions could result in candidates being indirectly discriminated against.

Women are under-represented in senior business leadership. As of 2022, 21 women held the position of chief executive at FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 companies, with nine at FTSE 100 companies, and 12 at FTSE 250 ones.¹³

An HM Treasury report found that a third (34%) of the 235 signatories analysed had met their targets for female representation in senior management, and a further 47% that have targets with future deadlines said they are on track to meet them.¹⁴

¹² UK Census 2021 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/disabilityenglandandwales/census2021>

¹³ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/685208/number-of-female-ceo-positions-in-ftse-companies-uk/#:~:text=Number%20of%20female%20CEOs%20at%20FTSE%20companies%20in%20the%20UK%202016%2D2022&text=As%20of%202022%2C%2021%20women,12%20at%20FTSE%20250%20ones.>

¹⁴ HM Treasury Women in Finance Charter 2022:- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1142828/HMT_WIFC_Review_2022.pdf

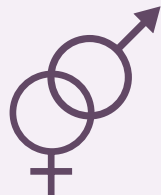
Avoiding discrimination in recruitment



Sexual orientation

Employers need to be careful that they do not make assumptions about a candidate's sexual orientation and that any recruitment and selection decisions are not directly or indirectly discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation.

In total, 43.4 million people (89.4% of the population aged 16 years and over) identified as straight or heterosexual. 748,000 (1.5%), described themselves as gay or lesbian in 2021.¹⁵



Trans people

Employers need to be careful that they do not let recruitment and selection decisions be affected if a candidate has undergone or is undergoing gender reassignment.

'Transgender' is currently a term used as an inclusive, umbrella term describing all those whose gender expression falls outside the typical gender norms.



Age

Employers need to think carefully about whether any part of their recruitment and selection process could be excluding or deterring candidates of certain ages, both young and old.

The UK Census 2021 results show the population of England and Wales has continued to age since 2011. The number of people aged 65 years and over increased from 9.2 million in 2011 to over 11 million in 2021 and the proportion of people aged 65 years and over rose from 16.4% to 18.6%.¹⁵



Marriage/Civil Partnership

Employers need to be careful that they do not let recruitment and selection decisions to be affected by whether the candidate is married or in a civil partnership.

In 2021, there were 6,731 civil partnerships formed in England and Wales, a decrease of 19.4% from 8,351 in 2020.

The majority (5,692) of civil partnership formations in 2021 were between opposite-sex couples; this is a decrease of a quarter (24.8%) from 7,566 in 2020, the first full year that opposite-sex civil partnerships had been possible in England and Wales.¹⁵

There were 1,039 same-sex civil partnerships formed in England and Wales in 2021, an increase of 32.4% from 785 in 2020; of these, the majority of formations were among male couples (56.9%).¹⁵

¹⁵ Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Avoiding discrimination in recruitment



Pregnancy and Maternity

An employer cannot decide not to offer a role to a pregnant woman due to her pregnancy, a pregnancy-related illness or because they are on maternity leave.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission conducted a study that found that around one in nine mothers (11%) reported that they were either: dismissed; made compulsorily redundant - where others in their workplace were not; or, treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job.¹⁶

If scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 54,000 mothers a year.



Race/Ethnicity

Employers need to ensure that their final selection decision is objective and not based on personal views, attitudes, prejudices and bias relating to a candidate's actual or perceived race/ethnicity.

People Management reported in October 2022 that while over half (52 per cent) had witnessed racism at work, only one in five (22 per cent) reported the incident to management or HR.¹⁶



Religion/Belief



Employers need to ensure that their recruitment and selection processes are accessible to people of all religions and beliefs.

When planning interviews/assessment Days, employers should consider:

- Avoiding religious festivals and holidays.
- Allowing candidates to pray during the assessment.
- Checking if any candidates have any specific dietary requirements e.g. halal, kosher, vegan.
- Ensuring that any dress code doesn't discriminate against someone on grounds of their religion or belief.

¹⁶ People Management - <https://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/article/1803096/two-thirds-black-employees-experienced-racism-last-year-research-finds>

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