

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in Employment Policy Statement

We are committed to providing an inclusive working environment for all current and prospective employees. We believe that having a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture benefits our employees, our organisation and the communities that we serve. We will positively promote equality and diversity as well as ensuring that we meet our legal obligations. Our People Strategy outlines our commitment to ensuring that equality and diversity is welcomed and our workforce is culturally competent and aware. This policy details how we put our commitment into practice.

Equal Opportunities in Employment

We strive to avoid any direct or indirect discrimination in all aspects of recruitment and employment. We ensure that our working practices do not indirectly discriminate against a person with a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief and marital/civil partnership status.

Disability Confident

We are accredited as a Disability Confident Employer and seek to attract, support and retain all employees including those with a long term health condition or impairment. We avoid any measures that could put a job applicant or employee with a disability at a disadvantage. We make reasonable adjustments to our recruitment process, working practices or the physical features of our workplace to support applicants and employees with disabilities.

Recruitment and Selection

Quite simply we want to employ the best person for the job. Our person specifications and job descriptions only include requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. All candidates for external and internal/promotional roles are assessed objectively against these requirements.

We interview all candidates that have declared a disability where they have demonstrated on their job application that they meet the essential criteria of a role. We ask all candidates if they require any reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process and put these in place where requested. When deciding who to appoint we consider a person's suitability for a role with any necessary reasonable adjustments in place.

Respect@Work Policy

Bullying and Harassment is not tolerated and we work hard to ensure that we have a work environment where everyone is treated with respect. Our Respect at Work Policy defines the behaviour that we expect from all our employees and managers. It also details what we consider to be unacceptable behaviours and explains how we will resolve any issues that arise, promptly and constructively.

Code of Conduct

We expect everyone to promote our commitment to equality and diversity. Our code of conduct makes it clear that employees must not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their protected characteristics and that everyone has a responsibility to appropriately challenge any discriminatory behaviour that they witness.

Equality and Diversity Groups

Our Equality and Diversity Members Group is made up of Members and senior officers from across the organisation. The group is responsible for setting our goals for promoting equality and celebrating diversity as detailed in our Single Equality Strategy. The Director of Customer and Digital Services, part of the organisation's joint management team, leads this group and is a champion for equality and diversity at a senior level.

The EDI Leadership Forum includes representatives from each Directorate and acts as the strategic officer group with a remit to provide feedback to Members on equality and diversity issues and activities and progress against our Equalities Strategy.

An EDI Working Group focuses on taking action to implement our Equality and Diversity strategy and making continuous improvements to how we work.

We also have an active Equality and Diversity Network group which meets regularly. This group provides support to employees and Members. It promotes equality and inclusion within our workforce.

Training and Development

Equality and diversity training is available to all employees. Access to training is informed by an individual's development needs which will be identified by our appraisal process and development conversations. Where necessary we will apply a fair selection process to determine who will access a development opportunity. We aim to create a culture that allows all employees to perform to their best, and therefore training and development opportunities are available to all employees and many are delivered in differing formats (e.g. online, face to face, webinars) to ensure they are accessible to everyone. When enrolling on a training course we routinely ask if individuals require any reasonable adjustments to the course arrangements or course materials and make adjustments that are requested. Our online training courses have accessibility settings available.

Workforce Information

We collect monitoring data as part of our recruitment process, information is provided voluntarily. An individual's monitoring data is not considered when making a selection decision. Employees are able to complete monitoring data at a later point if they did not provide complete details on their application form. Monitoring data helps us to understand the characteristics of people that apply for our roles and the demographics of people that work for us.

We proactively monitor the demographics of our workforce. We provide this information to management teams and members on a regular basis. We take action to address any issues that may be identified as a result of our workforce data e.g. to encourage applications from groups that are underrepresented in our workforce.

We moderate the performance ratings that have been given to employees during our appraisal process at an organisation level. This allows us to understand the demographics of people receiving each performance rating.

Pay

We measure and publish our gender pay gap and are actively implementing measures to reduce this in the long term. We undertake an annual review of these measures and the overall pay gap.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored every two years with input from our quality and diversity groups. We will consider whether this policy is effective by looking at feedback from our employees including via the Equality and Diversity Network group and via our employee survey. We will also consider changes in our work force data. The policy will be updated as needed to make further improvements to our approach.