



**Diversity Works
for London**

Equality and diversity tend to be used in conjunction with each other or interchangeably and it can be hard to clarify what is meant by these terms. Diversity differs from equality in the following ways:

Equality	Diversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises and values the similar experiences that particular workers may have in the workplace • Uses a collective approach, which may mean treating particular groups of workers e.g. women or disabled people, the same or very similarly • Operates within the law – UK legislation is firmly rooted in equality rather than diversity • Identifies and removes discriminating practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises and values people’s differences • Takes an individual approach rather than a collective one • Goes beyond the law • Allows an organisation to consider how to manage the opportunities and challenges a diverse workforce can present

An organisation with a focus on equality will be concerned with ensuring that it has an equal opportunities policy which its workforce is made aware of and that it is acting within the law. An organisation which focuses on diversity will still have to act within the law and will still need an active equal opportunities policy but it may also look at ‘best practice’ i.e. look at what other, similar, organisations are doing well and emulate this. Organisations with a focus on equality and diversity will be able to harness the framework of the law to positive workplace practices and policies. In essence, an organisation may be very diverse but with an over-representation of minority ethnic staff employed in lower grade jobs; or an organisation may be very equal, but most of the employees are male.

Equality and diversity will flourish in an organisation if they are considered a business imperative and accountability for them applies to everyone – from the board of directors to the CEO, to managers and leaders – including employees. The important messages are:

- Is there commitment from the top that equality and diversity are important?
- Is the organisation clear what it is prepared to invest to make it happen (e.g. outreach, mentoring)?
- Is there regular measurement of progress?