



Improving ethnic representation in your organisation checklist



**Diversity Works
for London**

The below guidance provides you with ideas on how you could adjust your existing practices to offer the same employment opportunities to a wider group of people.

1. Advertising

Explicit encouragement to black, Asian and minority ethnic groups to apply for your job can be done through:

- Stating clearly in job adverts that you are an equal opportunities employer.
- Placing adverts in local or national ethnic minority newspapers and magazines – research demonstrates that this attracts a greater number of ethnic minority applicants.
- Considering what your recruitment literature says about you. Are images all of one type of person?
- Developing non-traditional recruitment strategies to attract a wider range of candidates e.g.: internet jobsite, lifestyle magazines.
- Using testimonials on your literature and company website, reflecting role models from different ethnic minority backgrounds at various levels and in a variety of roles.
- Presenting job application forms, job specifications and person specifications in a variety of formats and possibly languages.
- Providing details of the benefits of working for your organisation, including flexible working opportunities, any healthcare benefits and the range of clubs and societies reflecting a broad range of employee interests.

2. Recruitment events

Further encouragement can be given through the following ways, which allows candidates greater chances to visualise the jobs you have available and meet existing employees:

- Holding work taster sessions within your offices/work venues. This provides an overview of the roles available within your organisation as well as broadening appeal of your Graduate schemes to a wider audience.
- Taking part in local careers fairs organised through job centres.
- Hosting your own recruitment open days within the communities you are trying to reach, such as faith centres, sports or social venues, rather than large offices/hotels which could appear daunting.
- Providing talks and information about your organisation as well as the range of opportunities and potential vacancies to schools and colleges in areas with large black, Asian and minority ethnic populations.
- Using key staff from your organisation to support you at events – ideally from the communities being targeted.

- If you provide uniforms, consider offering clothing which supports the modesty requirements of different religions.
- Be aware of the religious calendar when organising recruitment processes.
- Avoid recommend a friend schemes for recruitment.
- Ensure that any 'Recommend a Friend' recruitment schemes are incorporated into your overall recruitment process so that there is no bias and no unfair advantage.

If you provide refreshments, consider the likely dietary requirements so you do not cause offence. Equally, you should plan your events so that they do not clash with key religious days and festivals. This will allow you to attract the greatest number of applicants.

3. Selecting candidates

- Be careful with short-listing. Ideally, diversity details and names should be removed from the application form in order to avoid any unconscious bias. Research conducted by the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) demonstrated that at the short-listing stage, 50 per cent of The Times 100 employers invited a spoof candidate, Andrew Evans, but rejected a second spoof candidate, Ramesh Patel, even though every detail on their application form, apart from their names, was identical.
- Assessors must receive training on interview techniques and know how to avoid stereotyping or discrimination.

It is easy to unconsciously draw conclusions about a candidate based on irrelevant factors. Training assessors to understand that everyone has stereotypes and helping them to recognise theirs in a safe environment will be key to helping them to make sure that these stereotypes don't affect their decision-making during the recruitment process. In essence, it is important for interviewers to be aware of the danger signs.

It is also important for the assessor to question and understand their interpretation of the candidate's body language during the interview. Whilst strong eye contact in the British culture, for example, is regarded as a sign of honesty, openness and sincerity, in some other cultures, people avoid eye contact with those in authority as a mark of respect. Such lack of eye contact could lead an untrained interviewer to assume that the candidate is being evasive and less than honest.