

# Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit

For all involved in recruiting staff at King's.

## Introduction

King's College London strives to be a global leader in research, innovation, and education. We must, therefore, recruit a diverse range of people. Inclusive recruitment has been proven to be a source of competitive advantage, increasing creativity and productivity. King's has an [ambitious strategy](#) and vision to be a more fair, inclusive place to work and learn.

This Toolkit has been designed to support hiring panels to conduct fair, transparent and inclusive recruitment processes, with a view to increasing the diversity of King's workforce/faculty in line with faculty/university KPIs. This guidance provides useful tips for each stage of the recruiting and hiring process to ensure:

- A consistent and inclusive approach to recruitment and selection;
- Adherence to King's Recruitment and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policies, particularly in relation to the Equality Act 2010;
- Members of staff are recruited based on their ability; and
- Managers can attract and recruit high quality diverse staff.

This toolkit contains four sections:

1. Inclusive Recruitment Checklist
2. Inclusive Language
3. Positive Action
4. Inclusive Cultures

# Top 10 Tips for Inclusive Recruitment

## A Checklist

- 1) Standardised your processes.** Ensure you are following the [processes and guidance](#) available from the HR Recruitment team.
- 2) Take Diversity Matters.** Ensure that anyone involved in recruitment of the staff member has undertaken [Diversity Matters training](#) at the appropriate level. This should include reception or administration staff involved in the process.
- 3) Use inclusive language.** [Inclusive language](#) should be used in your advertisements, descriptions and in your interviews. Ensure you are addressing candidates using the correct name (including pronunciation) and pronouns.
- 4) Use targeted [positive action](#) where you can.** This will encourage candidates with specific characteristics to apply.
- 5) Think carefully about your advertising.** Branch out beyond the obvious places and consider sharing via Jiscs, [student societies and groups](#) and [staff networks](#). Utilising characteristic specific advertisers, such as [Proud Employers](#) or [BME Jobs](#).
- 6) Build and showcase your [inclusive team culture](#).**
- 7) Ask about a candidate's [work to support Equality, Diversity & Inclusion](#) in their interview**
- 8) Be available to answer questions and give insight into the team.** Think carefully about who has access to additional information and how this impacts their applications.
- 9) Check and challenge yourself** and other panellists throughout the process, ask for more evidence or information and avoid making snap decisions.
- 10) Reflect on the experiences** after hiring and speak to the appointed staff member about their experience.

# Inclusive Language

The language we use to describe and advertise roles communicates our expectations and shapes others'. Whilst the way we use and understand language varies, there are patterns and trends in language use that may appeal to or dissuade specific groups.

This document provides tips and tools to ensure your adverts, job descriptions, and interview questions aren't unconsciously appealing to, or dissuading, specific groups and potentially limiting your candidate/talent pool.

1. Use the second person 'you' while referring to the reader in the description of the requirements and expectations of the candidate. This will help people to visualise themselves in the role, creates a sense of belonging and avoids unnecessarily gendered language.
2. Avoid any wording that could present barriers and are unnecessary, (e.g., young, mature, active).
3. Gender-neutral language and words should be used as far as possible in job adverts, unless there is an occupational requirement, or it is part of a positive action statement. Use a [Gender Decoder](#) tool to determine stereotypical words prior to publishing a job advert. This can help you understand and identify examples and areas for you to focus on.
4. You might have an unending list of experience in mind for a given role, but to highlight your commitment to inclusion, it's important to trim the list down to make it more appealing to a wider pool of candidates. Instead of including all desired qualities, you can soften the message with language like "familiarity with," or "if you have any combination of these skills".
5. Unnecessary jargon/acronyms in adverts can be a barrier to credible candidates. Whilst experienced candidates in a similar role may understand jargon, these word choices can make other candidates feel unqualified.

Insider language is a quick way to make someone feel like an outsider; assume the candidate doesn't know the ins-and-outs of the institution.

6. Ensure you are addressing the person correctly. If you are unsure of the pronunciation of a name, research it in advance and take some time to practice. You may wish to write it phonetically in your notes and be sure to make any adjustments once the person has introduced themselves. Do not give the person a nickname or amend their name unless they explicitly ask you to do so.
7. Introduce yourself using your pronouns, and if you wish, title. This enables the candidate to address you correctly and will make them feel more comfortable about sharing their own.

# Engaging in Positive Action

Positive Action is a **voluntary strategy Hiring Managers may employ to achieve a more balanced, representative pool of candidates, from which to recruit**. In law it must be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim and be based on one, or more, of the protected characteristics set out by the Equality Act 2010, most commonly these are Race and/or Sex.

## Positive Action vs Positive Discrimination

*Positive Action* and *Positive Discrimination* are two terms that are often conflated or confused. As a Hiring Manager, it is important to distinguish between the two.

A key difference between positive action and positive discrimination is that positive action is lawful, whereas positive discrimination, generally, is not. Positive action is permitted where there is clear 'disadvantage for those who share a particular protected characteristic'.

In the recruitment context, unlawful positive discrimination is where an employer recruits a candidate **because they have a relevant protected characteristic, rather than because they are the best candidate**. It is also unlawful, for example, to set quotas to recruit a specific number or proportion of people with a particular protected characteristic.

Positive Action seeks to **make opportunities more transparent, accessible, and inclusive of candidates based on evidence of disadvantage**, it does not remove the need for candidates to demonstrate they are the most qualified for the job.

## Examples of lawful Positive Action

- Encouraging more applicants from under-represented groups by advertising vacancies to a specified audience/network or conducting outreach to these groups.
- Making a public statement in recruitment adverts, ensuring prospective applicants are aware that your organisation welcomes applications from the target group, based on evidence of under-representation.

## Examples of unlawful Positive Discrimination

- Moving someone through the recruitment process on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

- Favouring people from under-represented groups at any stage of the application process, such as removing the need for a certain stage for any group of people.

### **Implementing Positive Action**

Follow these steps to include Positive Action in your recruitment process:

- Explore your [local data](#) for evidence of under-representation at the level you are advertising. You can compare your faculty staff diversity to the mean of [London and/or Russell Group Universities here](#).
- Based on your analysis, and evidence of under-representation, you should decide to implement positive action to encourage applications from women, Black and Ethnic Minority, and/or disabled candidates.

### **Include a Positive Action statement in your advert:**

- We particularly welcome applications from X candidates as they are currently under-represented within the faculty at this level.
- We particularly welcome applicants from X candidates as we are keen to better engage that community in our research projects
- At X we do Y (examples of how faculty/directorate/team value equality, diversity & inclusion such as events, networks, etc) to actively support those currently under-represented across King's/faculty.
- We particularly welcome applications from X candidates as King's strives to have our staff and employees mirror diversity of our student population.

Once an advert has been published, you can undertake activity to raise the profile of the opportunity with the groups you have identified. This can include: sharing via Jiscs, Twitter and LinkedIn, or you might specifically share the advert with [student societies and groups](#) and [staff networks](#). It may also include utilising characteristic specific advertisers, such as [Proud Employers](#) to attract LGBTQ+ candidates.

Further information can be found in the [UK Government Quick Start Guide to Positive Action in Recruitment and Promotion for Employers](#).

# Inclusive Culture

When advertising a vacancy, you can demonstrate King's commitments to an inclusive culture where all can thrive. These tips and tools are designed to help you foreground these commitments and bring them to life in your adverts.

1. Highlight the positive features of your local work environment. The ['Our Culture'](#) and ['Equality, Diversity and Inclusion'](#) pages on the King's jobs website give an insight into what is happening College-wide. Consider how you might enhance this, drawing on reflections from your immediate team. This might include supporting parents and carers with leave, or enabling flexible working.
2. Consider highlighting local/university commitments to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; you might mention faculty/university [Athena Swan Awards](#), [King's Race Equality Charter](#) engagement, your participation in [Stonewall Workplace Equality Index](#), or work you have done related to King's [membership of the Business Disability Forum](#).
3. Consider including welcoming copy for your adverts:
  - a. At King's, we are deeply committed to embedding good equality and diversity practice into all our activities so that the university is an inclusive, welcoming, and inspiring place to work and study, regardless of age, disability, trans identity or history, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.
  - b. We encourage and welcome applications from across the global community and all appointments are made solely on merit

## Interview questions on inclusion

You might ask candidates to 'demonstrate a commitment to equality, diversity & inclusion' throughout the application process. Here are some model interview questions:

- a) How do you define "diversity" from a professional perspective?
  - b) Please explain how diversity has played a role in your career.
  - c) King's has a diverse workforce and student body. Can you tell us about your experience working with and serving a diverse population?
  - d) What do you see as the fundamental characteristics of organisations that create an inclusive environment?
  - e) What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse working environment and what steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
  - f) Please share an example that demonstrates your respect for people and their differences and how you've worked to understand perspectives of others.
5. Ensure a diverse, representative shortlisting and interview panel. Where there are few women or BME staff, seek to establish a relationship with other departments at the faculty, university, or suitable partner organisations, or consider inviting students or more junior colleagues to participate in the recruitment process. You should also be considerate of staff members' time and refrain from asking the same individual to sit on panels repeatedly.