Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit

Inclusive recruitment is a source of competitive advantage; it increases creativity and productivity (The Recruitment & Employment Confederation, 2012). King’s strives to be global leaders in research, innovation and education, we must therefore recruit a diverse range of people. This toolkit provides useful tips to recruitment and selection guidance and aims to ensure:

- A consistent and inclusive approach to recruitment and selection;
- Adherence to King’s College London’s Recruitment and Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Policies, particularly in relation to the Equality Act 2010;
- Those members of staff are recruited based on their ability and managers can attract and recruit high quality diverse staff.

All hiring managers should aim to:

- Write inclusive Job Descriptions with clear and objective criteria focusing on what is considered crucial to the role and minimising emphasis on time serviced/qualifications
- Use Inclusive Advertising practices to attract a diverse recruitment pool ensuring you are hiring the best candidate for the role
- Actively think about the Inclusive selection and interview process to minimise impacts of unconscious and implicit bias and ensure candidates can perform at their best
- Ensure fairness in appointment & contract where negotiation process is transparent and standardised

Before you get started on recruitment & selection process, you should ensure that the Hiring Manager and all members of the shortlisting and interview panels have completed the ‘Diversity Matters’ training and are aware of their own implicit biases. The ways in which bias could be embedded within an organisation’s recruitment and selection process are discussed in the last section of this booklet.

We strive to be global leaders in research, innovation and education, we must therefore recruit a diverse range of people. Inclusive recruitment is a source of competitive advantage; it increases creativity and productivity (The Recruitment & Employment Confederation, 2012).

If you would like further information on any tips or further support, please contact the King’s Recruitment or Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team who will be more than happy to support you.
1. Inclusive Job Advertisement

The first step of the recruitment process is to keep in mind is who will be attracted by your advert. Of course, we want to attract the best candidates, but it is important that the language used is inclusive and is not off putting for a subsection of the population (e.g. women or Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people).

Consider using welcoming and positive action statements, here are some examples:

“At King’s, we are deeply committed to embedding good equality and diversity practice into all of our activities so that the university is an inclusive, welcoming and inspiring place to work and study, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.”

“We encourage and welcome applications from across the global community and all appointments are made solely on merit.”

To find out more about King’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, visit www.kcl.ac.uk/diversity

Consider all language carefully:

- Use the second person ‘you’ while referring to the reader in the description of the requirements and expectations of the candidate to help people to visualise themselves in the role and to creates a sense of belonging.
- Avoid any wording that could present barriers and are unnecessary, (e.g. young, mature, active).
- There is significant research showing that men and women relate to different words in job advertisements (e.g. Gaucher, et. al, 2011). Therefore Gender-neutral language and words should be used in job adverts unless there is an occupational requirement, or it is part of a positive action statement – see below.
- Use a Gender Decoder website to determine stereotypical words prior to publishing a job advert
- Limit the list of skills and qualifications on the job advert to those that are crucial to perform the role.
Criteria:
Criteria should focus on what is essential for the role rather than on qualifications or time served (e.g. “7 years in a similar position”), to take into consideration candidates who have taken career breaks, have changed careers or may not have formal qualifications but extensive experience. Consider including experience working within a diverse environment (or specific under-represented groups if this is required of the role) as an essential requirement, rather than a desired or recommended option.

Positive action VS Positive discrimination
Positive action allows employers to encourage job applications from under-represented groups. Examples of permitted positive action include positive action statements or placing advertisements where they are more likely to be seen by the members of a disadvantage group. In addition, if two candidates are equally suited for a vacancy, an organisation is allowed to select the candidate who is underrepresented in that organisation based on their diversity profile (Equality Act 2010). However, employers must ensure that they have evidence from equality monitoring data to justify their positive action. On the contrary, a positive discrimination (or positive affirmation), which means an automatic selection of under-represented groups without a justification, is not legal in the UK. Positive discrimination refers to treating one person more favourably than another on the ground of that individual’s sex, race, age, marital status, or sexual orientation. A selection on merit must be the overriding principle. (Times Higher Education, 2008)

Targeted positive action messages for relevant jobs:

- **For PS Grades 1-5, Research Assistant, Postdoc and Teacher roles**: We particularly welcome male candidates as they are under-represented at this level
- **For PS Grades 6-7, Lecturer roles**: We particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are under-represented within the university at this level.
- **For Professional Services at 8 and above and Academic & Research at Senior Lecturer and above**: We particularly welcome applications from female and black and minority ethnic candidates as they are under-represented within the university at this level.

Be Welcoming
Consider highlighted the positive features of the work environment that are likely to appeal to women and other under-represented groups, such as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policies, Flexible working and parental/carer leave policies, Bullying and Harassment Policies.

Consider including welcoming statements:
- 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, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
- The core values of King’s College London reflect a strong commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. We strive to be an inclusive and culturally competent organisation that respects the differences of our community by offering an environment that celebrates diversity and embraces inclusion. King’s community
have a responsibility to enact King’s values and priorities, eliminating disparities and ensuring that all students, staff, faculty, and directorates have equal opportunities. Regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, language, abilities/disabilities, socioeconomic status, geographic region, or other defining characteristics our staff and students should feel welcome and valued.

- We encourage and welcome applications from across the global community and all appointments are made solely on merit.

### Implicit Bias in Recruitment & Selection

The selection process can be a useful way of assessing a candidate's skills and abilities. However too often the results of tests from selection centres are being accepted based on ‘blind faith.’

**For example:**

- **Falling into the ‘mini-me’ trap:** We all know that first impressions count. Interviewers form opinions about candidates within the first few minutes of meeting them leading to bias in decision-making.
- **Organisational fit and recruitment filtering:** Organisational fit operates when employers, recruitment agencies and head hunters seek individuals who not only have the skills and abilities to undertake the task of the job role, but also consider the extent to which an individual will fit into the culture of the organisation.
- **Informal networks and word of mouth recruitment:** We know that the old boys’ network acts as a way of excluding some social groups from taking advantage of recruitment opportunities. The ‘it’s not what you know, but who you know’ practice still operates within the recruitment business today.
- **Sector based stereotyping:** Excluding individuals from employment opportunities because of sector norms and stereotypical perceptions only exaggerates ingrained bias.
How to tackle recruitment bias:

- Review your recruitment images: If you want to attract applicants from a wide range of backgrounds employ images and text that will appeal to a broad range of possible candidates. Research shows that minority groups respond to adverts that reflect their social identity.

- Set diversity targets for recruitment agencies: If you don’t ask you don’t get. Without direction from their clients, there will be little motivation for recruitment agencies to field a wide range of talented candidates.

- Remove bias within selection tests: Ensure that the types of case studies you use as part of any selection tests do not favour any particular group. Similarly, ensure that you use psychometric tests that are free from bias.

- Be aware of the ‘halo affect’: The halo effect operates at an unconscious level and allows candidates to pass through a ‘favourable filter’, by sending unconscious codes about who they are and their relationship to the interviewers.

2. Inclusive Advertising

As with job descriptions, where and how a job is advertised can influence the pool of candidates to recruit from. The job advert should be based on the job description and required criteria using inclusive language, welcoming statements, and including positive action statements. To attract a diverse recruitment pool, consider:

- The best places to advertise.
- Identifying and connect with diverse organizations such as professional bodies, ‘by and for’/minority-led organisations (e.g. organisations run by BME individuals for BME individuals/communities), other areas of King’s including internal staff networks, your and colleagues personal/professional networks and community organisations
- Consider what opportunities you can provide for potential candidates to get a sense of the diversity of our workplace or broader community (such as a tour or attendance at an event).

3. Selection & Interview

Hiring/Recruitment Panels/Teams/Hiring Committee

All interview panels should consist of at least two people, at least one being a woman, and where possible at least one BME colleague. Where there are very few women or BME staff in the department, seek to establish a relationship with other departments at the faculty, university or suitable partner organisations, whereby individuals could be seconded to participate in the recruitment process. However, you should also be considerate of staff members’ time and refrain from continually asking the same individual to sit on panels. Additionally, enabling more junior women and BME staff to participate on the panel, with suitable coaching and support where they will have an equal decision-making role, or where this
is not suitable, to shadow the panel and provide observations would help to increase diversity and to provide junior staff with development opportunities. King’s has made a commitment that all those involved in recruitment will undertake EDI training. This is critical to increasing diversity within the workforce. Those involved with recruitment should undertake the manager and leader Diversity Matters training. All hiring committee members should be responsible for actively considering issues related to equality, diversity and inclusion in the selection and interview process. This is to avoid placing responsibility for EDI on a few individuals and making these individuals the “representatives for diversity.”

All members in the hiring/recruitment panels/teams/committee should be involved in the shortlisting process with their views respected by the hiring manager.

Tips for Conducting assessments and interviews:

• Determine a list of standard questions which relate to the person specification essential and desirable criteria that will be asked to every candidate;
• Avoid asking questions relating to applicants’ protected characteristics;
• Consider when it is held (i.e. during standard hours-10.00-16.00);
• Consider where it is held (i.e. disability access and impact of any imagery in the room);
• Highlight any of the positive features of the work environment that are likely to appeal to women and other under-represented groups and any features of the role which allow for flexible working (and mention those that will definitely not);
• Check if the shortlisted candidates require any reasonable adjustments to be arranged;
• Any assessments need to be relevant to the job, well designed and properly administered.

Example Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Questions

Hiring managers should assess an applicant’s awareness and commitment to EDI issues by including at LEAST one EDI specific questions in interview questions list. Below, is a list of questions that hiring managers can use when assessing a candidate’s suitability for a role. These questions should be tailored where appropriate.

Questions that can be used when interviewing for any role

• How do you define "diversity" from a professional perspective?
• Please give an example of your ethnicity and/or cultural identity impacting your work.
• Explain how diversity has played a role in your career.
• The University has a diverse workforce (in terms of ethnicity, class, culture, language, sexual orientation, and disabilities). Can you tell us about your experience working with and serving such a diverse population?
• What do you see as the fundamental characteristics of organizations that create an inclusive environment?
• What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse working environment?
• What steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
• Please share an example that demonstrates your respect for people and their differences; and how you’ve worked to understand perspectives of others?
• Provide an example of a time you communicated a complex concept to an individual who spoke English as a second language.
• In what ways have you demonstrated commitment and sensitivity to the importance of diversity in your previous experience?

Questions that can be used for Clinical or Research roles
• What is your definition of a diverse patient population?
• What behaviours, techniques, or decisions allow you to function most effectively as a provider or employee when working with a highly diverse patient population?

Leadership roles, roles that involve working within or leading teams, and line management roles
• What tools/techniques do you bring for promoting collaboration among underrepresented groups?
• Please tell us about an instance when you have demonstrated leadership or commitment to inclusion in your work.
• Describe your experiences in incorporating equality, diversity and inclusion into strategic planning.

Teaching or Development roles
• What is your experience of training or teaching diverse [student] groups?
• The College is involved in ongoing work to decrease the attainment gap and make learning equitable for all students across King’s. What is your understanding of the attainment gap and how have you incorporated what you know about attainment gaps, into your teaching methods?

4. Appointment & Contract

As a potential or current employee, it is important to remember that negotiation should occur at the time of appointment or promotion. For many reasons, women and BME candidates are less likely to negotiate salary and benefits than white men are, which contributes to the gender pay gap.

Encourage salary negotiation by showing salary ranges. Women are less likely to negotiate their pay. This is partly because women are put off if they are not sure about what a reasonable offer is. Employers should clearly communicate the salary range on offer for a role to encourage women to negotiate their salary. This helps the applicant know what they can expect. This will help address King’s Gender Pay Gap.

5. Activation of Employment

Within 5 working days of employment, a HR system profile will be created, an ID card and email will be provided, and the terms of probation will be discussed. Additionally, line managers should consider an informal induction to the department. This may include a tour of the campus and office, and introductions to other team members including a senior female member of staff. The new employee should also meet with HR on the first day to discuss benefits and policies.
**Tips to Make a New Hire Feel Welcome:**

- Prepare the workstation for the new team member’s arrival. It is a caring gesture that create a positive first impression.
- Provide some King’s merchandise! A coffee mug or lanyard can make an employee feel at home in the new organisation;
- Have a bulletin board or document that describes team members’ job descriptions, reporting structure, personal facts (e.g. hobbies, family life) and pictures to help remembering new names and faces;
- Notify all team members ahead of the employee’s first day, to stop by and meet them;
- Use a mentoring or buddy system to provide additional support and advice from a more experienced employee with no reporting relationship to the new employee. This mentor should take the new employee to lunch on the first day;
- Provide plenty of on-the-job training to minimise any uncertainties involved with starting a new role. It is also advisable to have a conversation about employee’s development needs, in order to avoid roadblock in career journey;
- Ask the new member for their feedback and views on relevant matters. It would make them feel valued. It would also create an opportunity for the line manager to learn about any problems, or concerns.

**Equality Law**
If you are interested in further reading, the Equality and Human Right Commission produced a [Guide on Equality Act 2010 for Employers](#), which is available online.