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PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

2025 - 2027



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

**ONE
HOUNSLOW**

INTRODUCTION

Equality, diversity and inclusion principles are at the heart of everything we do as a Local Authority. These are underpinned by the Equality Act 2010, which legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties, which require public bodies:

1. To publish information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty annually.
2. To set themselves measurable equality objectives, at least every four years.

The protected characteristics, covered within the Public Sector Equality Duty are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

OUR COMMITMENT

For us equality and diversity mean having a workforce that better reflects our communities. Inclusion ensures everyone feels valued and can contribute. We are committed to being an inclusive employer, fostering a culture where employees can connect, belong, and flourish. Our goal is to create a Fairer, More Equal Hounslow, listening to and meeting community needs. Equality, diversity and inclusion are top priorities, requiring every employee's commitment to accelerate change and embed equality in our organisational culture.

Our Senior Leadership Team is dedicated to advancing our Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan. We will embed the equality agenda within the culture of our organisation, to both ensure our colleagues have equal voice and opportunity, and that they see promoting equality for our communities as fundamental to their role. We have engaged with our staff through several different routes, reaching colleagues at all levels, to understand how well we are living our values and the extent to which they feel they Connect, Belong, Grow and Flourish, the landmarks of our Organisational Wellness Strategy.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Our new two-year action plan action plan has been informed by our most recent qualitative and quantitative data. Drawn from the cultural insights from our My Experience Matters survey, our most recent EDI Data, and our Equality Network Groups' priorities. This action plan aims to increase workforce diversity, especially where we see under-representation at leadership levels, and we want to ensure accountability for delivery among our leaders.

We will champion inclusion through storytelling, staff engagement, and maintaining a safe and supportive work environment. Recognising that change takes time, we are committed to long-term efforts to achieve the desired outcomes. In essence this plan brings our ambitions to life by providing a roadmap of what we will do, when, who will lead the activity and how we will measure success. It sets out our commitment to equality, through four key themes.

1. Developing our inclusive attraction, recruitment and retention approach
2. Ambitious actions to drive equity
3. Holding ourselves accountable
4. Engaging everyone in diversity and inclusion

Theme One: Developing our Inclusive recruitment approach

What our evidence says	What we will do	Progress Measures
<p>We know that we need to further develop our fair and inclusive recruitment and retention approaches, and we know that we need to address diverse representation, organisation, particularly across our senior manager community, as evidenced by our EDI data. We are improving but there is still work to do. Inclusive recruitment is a top priority for our Equality Networks Groups and our leadership teams.</p>	<p>We will develop an even more inclusive recruitment approach, learning from what we have achieved so far that has made the greatest difference. We have set up a project team to undertake a radical review of our approaches, in partnership with key stakeholders, including our Equality Network Groups.</p> <p>We will continue to work hard to increase diverse candidates for senior roles, pushing positive action as far as we can.</p> <p>We will target our recruitment efforts to maximise good employment opportunities for our residents, particularly those that live in our Equality Opportunity Areas.</p> <p>All recruitment activity will align with our values and our new behaviours framework.</p>	<p>Over the course of the next year, all people with hiring responsibility will have attended the required training on inclusive recruitment.</p> <p>90% of panels are diverse (2025/26).</p> <p>Recruitment of people from our Equality Opportunity Areas to increase by 60% over the next year.</p>

Theme Two: Ambitious actions to drive equity

What our evidence says	What we will do	Progress Measures
<p>We want to see and engage with fair and open career development opportunities with clear pathways. Inclusive development approaches are essential.</p> <p>We will set out how we intend to address pay gaps and improve the experience of our disabled colleagues</p>	<p>We will improve reporting and tracking of progression by age, sex, ethnicity, and sexuality.</p> <p>We will develop our inclusive approach to career progression and succession planning, and we will develop an understanding of any barriers to success.</p> <p>We will embed our new behaviours framework to guide recruitment, performance management, and progression.</p> <p>We will undertake a series of pulse surveys to understand on a more regular basis what colleagues think and feel about their everyday experience of working and developing themselves at Hounslow.</p> <p>We will design and implement an inclusive mentoring programme.</p> <p>We will develop and activate an internal coaching pool.</p> <p>We will implement action plans to close our negative pay gaps and maintain our positive pay gaps.</p>	<p>50% of colleagues taking part in management courses are from an underrepresented group</p> <p>Increase in Global Majority and women colleagues progressing from P04/6 roles</p> <p>A score of 4.5 or higher from colleagues reporting "I have a fair opportunity to develop my career".</p>

Theme Three: Holding Ourselves Accountable

What our evidence says	What we will do	Progress Measures
Our senior leadership community want to champion diversity and inclusive practice, ensuring they own accountability. Enhanced governance is needed for reporting and tracking EDI metrics, with a continued focus on these for action and impact.	<p>Directorate's will nominate and support EDI leads, who will provide bi-annual updates on action plan priorities, staff engagement, and monitoring.</p> <p>We will expand the publication of pay gap data to include sexual orientation and intersectionality.</p> <p>We will continue to use qualitative and quantitative tools to understand progression opportunities for colleagues with protected characteristics.</p> <p>We will create entry-level roles/apprenticeships as an organisational design default position to increase the percentage of local young people aged 18-25 and over 50s in the workforce.</p> <p>We will conduct bi-annual audits to track turnover and employee experience, including reasons for leaving and joining.</p>	<p>Published pay gap data on intersectionality.</p> <p>Review annual reporting on D&I including data metrics.</p> <p>Score of 4.5 or higher in engagement surveys that relate to the perception of senior leadership of the council.</p> <p>Quarterly Reports to Finance, Performance and Risk meetings.</p>

Theme Four: Engaging everyone in diversity and inclusion

What our evidence says	What we will do	Progress Measures
We will listen better, value all views, and create a safe environment for everyone to be themselves and share their voice.	<p>We will develop an engagement plan with ENG groups to raise awareness around equality issues.</p> <p>We will support actions to increase the membership and visibility of our staff networks, highlighting their priorities and successes.</p> <p>We will develop options for, and implement, required EDI training for all.</p> <p>We will provide training to people leaders on leading inclusively and creating high-performing teams.</p> <p>We will investigate the experiences of colleagues who do not consider themselves disabled but have a condition that affects their working life</p>	<p>Increased engagement scores indicating that colleagues feel valued and that the workplace is more inclusive.</p> <p>Increase in positive participation in the staff networks through the number of staff joining and active.</p> <p>Disability Confident Leader status Level 3 by 2027</p> <p>A 5% increase in the numbers of employees declaring their protected characteristics.</p>

OUR DATA

Our local authority is committed to robust data governance practices that ensure the integrity, security, and ethical use of equality-related data. We collect data from a variety of sources, including internal HR systems, service user records, community surveys, and national datasets such as the Census. All data collection is conducted in compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), ensuring that personal information is handled lawfully and transparently.

To support our EDI objectives, we disaggregate data by protected characteristics (such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation) allowing us to identify disparities and target interventions effectively. Analytical methods include trend analysis, benchmarking, and equality impact assessments, which help us understand the lived experiences of both our workforce and the communities we serve. We also analyse recruitment, retention, and promotion patterns to assess whether all groups have equitable access to opportunities. Pay gap analysis for gender, disability and ethnicity are conducted yearly to identify and address any disparities. These insights inform our workforce development strategies, including inclusive recruitment practices, targeted outreach, and leadership development programmes aimed at underrepresented groups.

Understanding who uses our services and their experiences is central to delivering equitable outcomes. We collect and analyse demographic data on service users to assess access, satisfaction, and outcomes across different groups. This enables us to identify any barriers faced by individuals with protected characteristics and to tailor services accordingly.

Engaging with our diverse communities is essential to understanding their needs and shaping inclusive policies. We conduct regular consultations, focus groups, and surveys to gather feedback from residents, particularly those from marginalised or underrepresented groups. This qualitative data complements our quantitative analysis and provides valuable context for decision-making. We are committed to closing the feedback loop by demonstrating how community input leads to tangible changes in policy and service delivery.