

Toolbox talk

Inclusive Recruitment

(material supplied by Equate Scotland)



Did you know?

Inclusive recruitment has been shown to make the recruitment process better for everyone, not only women or other under-represented groups.

Inclusive recruitment refers to the process of attracting, interviewing, and hiring a diverse pool of talents. These processes are designed to eliminate bias from the recruitment process and ensure the best-qualified people get hired for positions regardless of gender, ethnicity or any other characteristics.

Inclusive recruitment aims to prevent discrimination, ensure all groups have equal opportunities, prevent potential candidates to deselect themselves from the process, and eventually build a strong – and diverse – talent pipeline.

Why does it matter?

The construction sector is changing rapidly with a rising focus on new technologies and increasing challenges from climate change, supply issues and sustainability. With an ageing and shrinking workforce, many specialist skills are vanishing from the sector without new talents to fill this gap. As a result, inclusive recruitment appears as a strategic solution to tap into a wider talent pool.

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A deeper dive

One of the barriers to inclusive recruitment for organisations is often the lack of a set recruitment process in place and the use of informal recruitment practices.

In some industries, word-of-mouth remains a very common way to hire new people and we know that many jobs available in the market are not advertised on traditional recruitment channels – this is what we refer to as the “hidden job market”. This makes it more difficult for job seekers to find new opportunities and for employers to attract a diverse talent pool. The expression, “If you only ever fish in the same pond you only ever catch the same fish,” can be applied to this scenario.

If you do not have an HR department to support your recruitment needs or don't have a process in place, the first step you can take is to create one.

There are some free resources available to guide you such as the Acas' recruitment checklist (www.acas.org.uk/recruitment-checklist).

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How can employers widen their talent pool?

1.

Understand and use inclusive language in your recruitment materials and on your website. Because language can have a bias towards gender, it is important to consider this when writing job descriptions or recruitment materials. Commonly used words and phrases can reinforce unhelpful stereotypes and inadvertently exclude certain groups from applying for roles.

2.

Review your criteria and list of requirements on job descriptions to widen your talent pool. Did you know that women tend only to apply if they meet 100% of the essential criteria, whereas men will apply if they meet only 60%? When reviewing your job descriptions, consider what is actually needed to start the job and what can be learned on the job. Only keep essential criteria to prevent women from deselecting themselves from position.

3.

Identify ways to reach out to under-represented groups. Diversity job boards can offer an alternative to generalist job boards. Online events and networking opportunities can also be considered.

4.

Reduce unconscious bias during the recruitment process. You can, for example, introduce an anonymised application process, where the recruitment shortlisting panel has no access to the demographics (gender, name, age) of the applicant. To support this further the selection and interview panel should also be diverse in its composition.

5.

Get your team on the same page by offering training and guidelines on recruitment best practices. You can make this part of your organisational training on shortlisting and interviews alongside practicalities.

6.

Monitor and track on an ongoing basis to see what insights this data provides about your business. This can be used at a later stage once you have a clearer picture of what needs to change.



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How can employers widen their talent pool?

1. Advertise the vacancies and be transparent
2. Make use of diversity job boards to tap into a new talent pool
3. Use an anonymised application process (blind recruitment)
4. Engage with applicants and encourage discussions
5. Implement a skills-based assessment process for everyone
6. Partner with orgs who have access to new talent pools
7. Take steps to challenge unconscious bias in the workplace
8. Consider upskilling/reskilling programmes and apprenticeships



Take-aways

1.

Inclusive recruitment makes the process better for everyone

2.

Create a recruitment process and clear guidelines to get started

3.

Organisations need to address unconscious bias to widen their talent pool

Established in 2006, Equate Scotland is the national expert in gender equality throughout the STEM sectors.

To learn more, you can visit their website:

www.equatescotland.org.uk

www.equatescotland.org.uk/resources

www.equatescotland.org.uk/equate-events-conferences

Additional materials available include:

[Getting started on gender equality](#)

[Industry Guide for the Construction sector](#)