



Parliamentary  
and Health Service  
Ombudsman



## Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019

# Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion vision

To foster a culture of diversity and inclusion.

To develop and nurture our workforce to excel, making the most of their unique backgrounds and experiences.

To operate with integrity, respect and empathy for colleagues, and people and organisations we work with.





# Our objectives

## Our people and culture

Cultivate and promote an inclusive culture that maximises the talent, skills and diversity within our workforce.

## Build and maintain a diverse workforce

Identify, attract and retain a pipeline of diverse candidates with a wealth of experience and talent.

## Access to our service

Anticipate the needs of people who use our service, ensuring our service is accessible and individual to their requirements.



## Our governance

The Diversity Steering Group will provide strategic oversight of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation. It will provide clear leadership in the approach of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and be responsible for embedding the vision into the way we work and our culture.

The Diversity Working Group will support the Diversity Steering Group in making the organisation a diverse and inclusive workplace. It will harness employee insights and ideas to incorporate into policies and working practices and ensure that communication about equality, diversity and inclusion is effective, appropriate and raises awareness about this strategy's objectives and progress.

---

## Monitoring

The Diversity Working Group will provide updates to the Diversity Steering Group at a quarterly meeting, monitoring progress against each of the strategic objectives and actions.



# Our values

In every aspect of this strategy we will seek to embed our corporate values of:



## **Independence**

We are independent from organisations we investigate, holding them to account for service failure.



## **Transparency**

We communicate with those using our service and then publish information about our findings, how we are performing, and how organisations we investigate have implemented our recommendations.



## **Fairness**

We listen carefully to complainants and the organisations we investigate and we make impartial and fair decisions based on relevant evidence.



## **Excellence**

We learn from engagement with complainants and organisations we investigate to improve our accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness and the quality of our decisions.



# Our people and culture

Cultivate and promote an inclusive culture that maximises the talent, skills and diversity within our workforce.

Priority	Action	Deliverable
1. Cultivate a supportive, welcoming, inclusive and fair work environment that maximises the talent, skills and diversity within our workforce.	<p>a) Promote understanding of the values and expected behaviours of the organisation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. promoting our policies along with raising awareness of the avenues available to all employees in tackling these issues;</li> <li>ii. communicating with new joiners on the culture of the organisation.</li> </ul> <p>b) Work with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum, Dignity at Work Network and Break the Stigma Group to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. support participation from across the organisation;</li> <li>ii. utilise workforce feedback from across the organisation;</li> <li>iii. provide support in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion issues.</li> </ul>	<p>a) Share expected values and behaviours with all employees by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. reviewing and updating the equality and diversity, dignity at work, reasonable adjustment, bullying and harassment and grievance policies, and ensure these are available to all employees;</li> <li>ii. sharing insight on the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and People Strategy with all new joiners at the new Corporate Induction.</li> </ul> <p>b) Promote each group on the diversity and inclusion pages on our intranet along with contacts. Provide opportunity for members from these groups to bring ideas, issues and concerns to Diversity Working Group meetings.</p>
2. Increase the awareness and understanding of diversity and inclusion within the workplace.	<p>a) Provide diversity and inclusion training to all PHSO employees.</p> <p>b) Developing a yearly inclusivity calendar.</p> <p>c) Focus on four to six events within the inclusivity calendar and organise activities.</p>	<p>a) Ensure all colleagues participate in Diversity and Inclusion training within six months of induction.</p> <p>b) Make the inclusivity calendar available to all employees. Use internal resources such as our intranet, and established communication channels to highlight activity on a regular basis.</p> <p>c) Provide targeted activities in relation to the inclusivity calendar across the year, involving people from across the organisation in developing, resourcing and delivering.</p>

Priority	Action	Deliverable
3. Become a “mentally healthier” workplace, reducing the stigma attached to talking about mental health.	<p>a) Promote knowledge, understanding and awareness of stress, mental health and well-being by:</p> <p>i. raising awareness of mental health and the support available for employees;</p> <p>ii. raising awareness and developing knowledge through training.</p>	<p>a) Increase knowledge, understanding and awareness by:</p> <p>i. promoting our Break the Stigma Group, our mental health first aiders and employee assistance programme through the diversity and inclusion intranet pages and through campaigns during Mental Health Awareness Week/Month</p> <p>ii. providing training to all employees, developing awareness of stress, mental health and wellbeing in conjunction with Learning and Development team and monitor participation.</p>
4. Develop inclusive working behaviours throughout management levels.	<p>a) Develop a behaviours framework that has equality at its core, enabling all employees to feel comfortable and be themselves in the workplace and in turn perform at their best.</p> <p>b) Ensure inclusive leadership behaviours are an overarching theme of management training, leadership training.</p> <p>c) Incorporate 360° feedback into performance evaluation for all at manager level and above.</p>	<p>a) Deliver a behaviours framework, and publicise this to all employees.</p> <p>b) Deliver training incorporating inclusive leadership behaviours within our Exemplary Manager Training, Exemplary Leader Training and separate Inclusive Leadership Training programme.</p> <p>c) Create and run a mechanism for collecting 360° feedback for everyone at manager level and above to be considered as part of their professional development plan.</p>
5. Review our internal policies.	<p>a) Carry out a review of relevant policies relating to equality, diversity and inclusion and make sure these are available to all employees.</p>	<p>a) Review the recruitment, equality and diversity, dignity at work, reasonable adjustment, flexible working, bullying and harassment and grievance policies in line with our organisational behaviours and values, and with input from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum, Dignity at Work Network and Break the Stigma Group where required. Make changes where required and publicise to all employees. Centralise location of all policies, making them easily accessible.</p>

# Build and maintain a diverse workforce

Identify, attract and retain a pipeline of diverse candidates with a wealth of experience and talent.

Priority	Action	Deliverable
1. Evaluate diversity and inclusion data to understand where there may be gaps in the representation of diversity within the organisation or adverse reasons for existing employees leaving. Where needed, we will create strategies to resolve and improve representation.	<p>a) Review and analyse current workforce demographics, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and length of service. In conjunction with best practice guidance provided by the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion, identify:</p> <p>i. areas of underrepresentation</p> <p>ii. issues in reasons for leaving if there are any.</p>	<p>a) Develop of an action plan for:</p> <p>i. increasing representation in areas identified as underrepresented</p> <p>ii. resolving issues in reasons for leaving if there are any.</p>
2. Evaluate and review current recruitment process.	<p>a) Evaluate and review current job adverts/role specifications using equality impact analysis and consideration of unconscious bias where needed to create role templates for future use, including a statement that we are a culturally diverse employer.</p> <p>b) Evaluate and review our current process for considering applications and interviewing applicants, identifying areas for development to ensure it is competency based and includes awareness raising of unconscious bias for interviewers.</p>	<p>a) Implement standardised role templates using language that is equal, diverse, inclusive, devoid of bias and stating we are a culturally diverse employer.</p> <p>b) Deliver training to all interviewers on competency based recruitment process and the unconscious bias that may arise within the process.</p>



Priority	Action	Deliverable
3. Target diverse populations promoting internship, apprenticeship and employment opportunities.	<p>a) Be visible in our commitment to the Disability Confident Scheme, encouraging applications from people with disabilities.</p> <p>b) Evaluate opportunities for internship and apprenticeship roles across the organisation, targeting diverse populations, for example parental leave returners, veterans, social mobility.</p>	<p>a) Advertise roles broadly, displaying our commitment to the Disability Confident Scheme to ensure we are encouraging applications from a diverse pool of candidates.</p> <p>b) Develop and implement internship and apprenticeship programmes targeting diverse populations.</p>
4. Ensure all qualified internal candidates have an opportunity to compete for open positions and apply for developmental opportunities.	<p>a) Ensure all employees are aware of open positions, including those on long term leave away from the office and that they have equal access to apply.</p> <p>b) Ensure all employees are aware of developmental opportunities such as training and masterclasses, including those on long term leave away from the office, and that they have equal access to participate.</p>	<p>a) Develop and implement a process for ensuring that colleagues on long term leave are aware of the roles that are available internally.</p> <p>b) Develop and implement a process for ensuring those on long term leave are aware of developmental opportunities.</p>

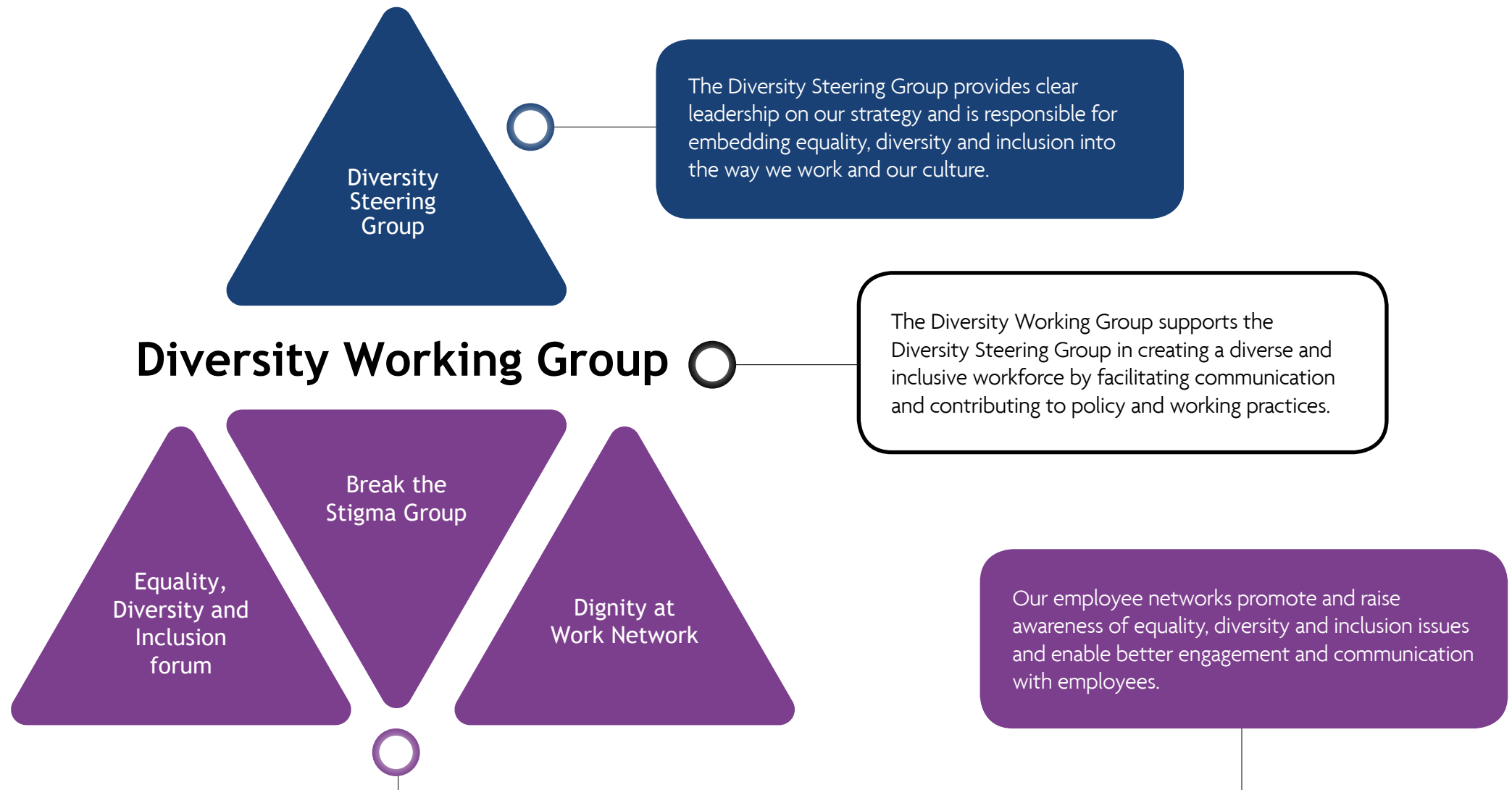
# Access to our service

Anticipate the needs of people who use our service, ensuring our service is accessible and personal to their requirements.

Priority	Action	Deliverable
1. Broaden access to our service and remove barriers (real or perceived).	<p>a) Ensure we have an understanding of:</p> <p>i. the diversity demographics of people who use our service</p> <p>ii. the experience of people using our service.</p> <p>b) Carry out a full review of the assistive technologies we offer and address gaps if/where they exist.</p> <p>c) Ensure that the delivery of the service is inclusive and specific to the needs of the people who use our service, considering factors such as disability and reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>d) Ensure we are delivering on the principles of Ask, Listen, Do.</p> <p>e) Ensure that the delivery of the service is person orientated, displaying empathy and building rapport, considering factors such as age and language while maintaining professionalism.</p> <p>f) Promote our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion on our website and social media.</p>	<p>a) Collect data through our complainant survey on a bi-annual basis relating to:</p> <p>i. diversity demographics of our complainants;</p> <p>ii. quantitative data relating to the experience of using our service.</p> <p>b) Monitor whether we are providing reasonable adjustments as required through complainant survey and quality assurance reviews on a biannual basis.</p> <p>c) Deliver training to all employees on mental health, autism and reasonable adjustments. Monitor attendance and feedback through the complainant survey on a biannual basis.</p> <p>d) Adhere to the Ask, Listen, Do Principles, working in partnership with people, and communicating in a person-centered way, follow good practice and the law in feedback, addressing concerns and complaints and providing leadership in line with these principles.</p> <p>e) Provide examples through casework insight where using tailored approaches have delivered a person orientated service, displayed empathy and built rapport.</p> <p>f) Publish information about our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and activities at regular intervals throughout the year.</p>

Priority	Action	Deliverable
2. Build and develop relationships to share knowledge and best practice, improve public services and frontline complaint handling in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.	<p>a) Create and develop a forum across ombudsman organisations for sharing knowledge related to equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>b) Create a forum for sharing knowledge on equality, diversity and inclusion to improve public services.</p>	<p>a) Create a cross-organisation group to share knowledge on equality, diversity and inclusion in conjunction with the Ombudsman Association.</p> <p>b) Share knowledge gained across the organisation to improve public services frontline complaint handling in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion issues.</p>
3. Review our operational policies.	a) Review operational policies with an equality, diversity and inclusion lens.	a) Review the Service Model Policy and Guidance in line with behaviours, values, feedback from caseworkers and complainants on equality, diversity and inclusion and propose changes where required.

# Organisational framework



## Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Citygate  
Mosley Street  
Manchester  
M2 3HQ  
United Kingdom

Telephone: 0345 015 4033

Textphone: 0300 061 4298

Fax: 0300 061 4000

Email: [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)

[www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

Follow us on:



If you would like this document in a different format, such as Daisy or large print, please contact us.

