

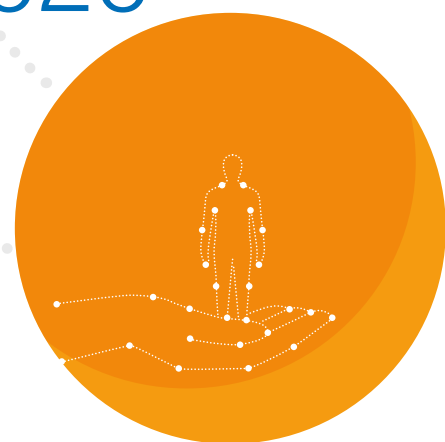
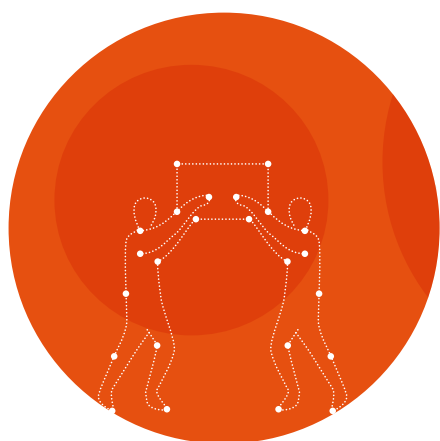


Crown
Commercial
Service



Diversity and Inclusion

Strategy 2017-2020



Representing Modern Britain

Introduction from Malcolm Harrison

“I am delighted to introduce the Crown Commercial Service’s first Diversity and Inclusion strategy. This outlines mine and the Senior Leadership Team’s commitments to create a culture where staff feel included and valued, regardless of their background – a truly great place to work.”

Malcolm Harrison, Chief Executive

CCS has made great strides in tackling diversity and inclusion issues. We have implemented blind recruitment and mandated unconscious bias training to reduce bias in recruitment and promotion. We have listened to comments from our People Survey relating to harassment and bullying, and taken appropriate action. We have made it easier for staff with disabilities to secure reasonable adjustments, and taken more widespread activity with respect of health and wellbeing. However, we have more to do.

My colleagues and I have met with employees from across CCS and they have told us what diversity means to them. Employees would like to see greater representation of women and ethnic minorities in senior positions. They value flexible working cultures that allow people with varied backgrounds and circumstances to achieve work-life balance. They want to be part of an environment where people with disabilities can fully participate. They want opportunities to develop their careers to the best of their ability. They want to feel valued and included at work. Undoubtedly, there are legal requirements on all organisations in respect of how we tackle discrimination, harassment and the protected characteristics. However, the benefits of creating a diverse workforce go far beyond this. Civil servants serve the UK public and to do so, we should represent the diverse communities in the country today. And by valuing the different cultures and points of view, we can challenge ways of thinking and innovate to meet the challenges facing the Civil Service today. This strategy has been developed by and for CCS staff. However, we also work with colleagues from across government in delivering initiatives, including the Talent Action Programme. It is also embedded in the values of Listen, Respect, Collaborate and Trust, which were developed by staff and which guide our ways of working.

Developing a diverse culture requires leadership – and the role of leadership and management is therefore central to this document. My colleagues and I on the SLT are committed to delivering the actions in this document.



Introduction from Matt Denham, Diversity Champion

“It is an honour for me to represent the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and champion diversity for CCS. Last summer, I invited volunteers to join a staff diversity network, an active group to raise the profile of diversity in CCS and to support one another’s development. I received an overwhelming response, and have had the pleasure to work with staff with a range of interests – from equality of opportunity for women, to support for carers and celebration of diverse festivals and religious holidays.”

Matt Denham,
Diversity Champion.

One of the key areas of this strategy is a focus on networks. For example, it was great to see the articles, comments, debates and fundraising that staff initiated and led on International Women’s Day. The network will maintain this momentum with events and communications that reinforce the value of diversity across CCS.

We have discussed the evidence base for diversity at CCS and how we will measure improvements. A key focus of the group is data and analysis, and addressing some of our employees’ concerns about disclosing this data. Data quality, and its use, underpins the priorities in the strategy.

CCS wants to be a leader in creating an inclusive working environment, and will draw upon good practice where it exists. We have been working with colleagues across government, and the private sector, to understand best practice in making diversity happen.

I am delighted that we are now launching our inclusion and diversity strategy, and am excited about the changes we will be putting into place.



Executive Summary

This strategy makes diversity and inclusion part of our strategic objectives for which we are accountable. We want to nurture our talent and leaders from all levels of the organisation so that we develop our skills, innovate and retain talented people for longer and reach our goals. We have appointed a senior leader to champion diversity issues throughout the organisation, and a diversity network to raise the profile of diversity issues within CCS, as well as plug into and support wider civil service action.

This document has been developed by and for staff, and is organised around four key areas:

Leadership and management

This outlines the expectations of leaders at all levels, but emphasises that changes will start from the top. It sets out specific actions to hold our leaders to account in delivering on diversity objectives – including reverse mentoring and mandatory diversity objectives for the SLT. We will know it will have succeeded when our leaders are achieving stretching objectives relating to diversity, challenging their own biases, mentoring opportunities are being taken up and talented staff are progressing within the organisation.

Values and Inclusion

Our values are to listen, respect, collaborate and trust - and we believe these are integral to the way in which we work. We will not accept any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation. We will address complaints and concerns promptly and we will report on how complaints have been handled to ensure trust in the way in which we handle employees' concerns.

Representation

Modern Britain is made up of diverse communities, and we recognise that we serve our customers better if we represent this diversity at all levels of the organisation. We will increase the number of staff completing equality questionnaires to measure our diversity profile, and identify where protected groups are underrepresented, particularly at senior grades. Increasing representation is a long term process, but we will take steps – such as succession planning, training and development – to increase representation throughout our talent pipeline.

Networks

Staff networks are a moral compass for the organisation, and provide an invaluable role in challenging our actions on diversity, supporting staff, and raising the profile of diversity across the organisation. CCS will sponsor diversity networks, give them the resources they need to carry out their role, and champion their views at senior levels. We want diversity to be visible, and dialogue to be progressive and open, throughout the organisation, with key events and religious holidays celebrated throughout the year.



Introduction

CCS provides commercial and procurement expertise to government departments and the wider public sector. Our vision is to be the commercial services provider for the public sector – delivering outstanding value and excellent customer service. We provide services to a broad range of customers in central government and the public sector, who serve diverse groups and communities across the UK and recognise the importance of a workforce that represents this diversity.



We aspire to be a great place to work, where staff feel valued, included and are able to progress to the best of their ability, regardless of their personal characteristics or background. This document incorporates elements of the Civil Service Talent Action Plan and Cabinet Office Diversity Strategy, while setting out our commitments to our staff.

While it starts from the top, diversity and inclusion is something we all need to work towards to ensure we create the conditions where every colleague can give their best each day, committed to the organisation's goals and values and motivated to contribute to our success, with an enhanced sense of their own well-being. There are lots of opportunities for staff to get involved as we continue to make CCS a great place to work.



Why do we need a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy?

Diversity and inclusion are key components to ensure an engaged and active. As a public sector organisation this strategy will ensure we are fundamentally aligned with our values and corporate social responsibility. CCS should be as diverse as the customer we serve and for all of government this means the UK public. We must reflect modern society and embrace change.

Diversity is a source of strength. The more diverse our teams are, the more insights we have into different customers and local environments, the better our innovation and risk management will be through our diverse ideas and experiences, and the more value we can bring to our customers and UK citizens. Respect for diversity also enables us to fill our resourcing needs and the changing demographic of the world means that we need a workforce capable of responding to skills and talent shortages.

What do we mean by protected characteristics?

When referring to diverse characteristics and populations, we mean those protected by the Equality Act (2010)

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation, and
- Religion and belief

We also strive for diversity in other areas not yet protected by law, such as social class, background and education, and respect for individual differences in respect of, for example, communication and learning styles. We believe that staff should feel valued and included at work, and do not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination.

We recognise the challenges that we face in developing a diverse workforce, increasing representation of protected groups at senior grades; removing barriers to participation; and increasing understanding of the diversity profile by encouraging staff to disclose equality information.



1 Leadership and Management

“Develop a Culture - where people love to work, feel proud, thrive in the environment and feel passionate about the objectives of the organisation.”

CCS People Survey, 2016

Leaders at all levels must be able to foster an inclusive culture within and across teams. Inclusive leaders should make staff feel valued, challenge discrimination in all its forms, and help staff develop their potential. CCS will develop its leaders, and hold them to account on their delivery.

This is what we will do:

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Introducing reverse mentoring for SLT members, and senior management, and mentoring for talented staff in under represented groups.
- Mandating diversity objectives for SLT members, which are publicised to demonstrate commitment from senior leadership on these issues.
- At all times have a nominated SLT member to champion diversity issues throughout the organisation

Line managers

- Undertaking capability building for line managers at all levels, enabling understanding of conducting sensitive conversations, managing performance, bullying and harassment, and cultural sensitivity.
- Appoint a local lead to champion diversity issues at our offices in Liverpool, London, Newport and Norwich, with responsibility for promoting events and initiatives.
- Ensure Diversity and Unconscious Bias training is undertaken by all managers and provide regular reporting on completion rates.
- Ensure managers hold effective one to one meetings with all their staff monthly.

This is how we will measure our success:

- Leaders achieve stretching performance objectives on managing people, including effective handling of bullying and harassment.
- Employee relations data show cases being dealt with promptly and with clear outcomes.
- Increase year by year, take up of mentoring opportunities within CCS.



2 Values and Inclusion

“Great inroads are being made to change attitudes and behaviours, this needs to continue and be sustained to embed fully into the culture.”

CCS People Survey, 2016

Diversity should be championed and welcomed, with bullying, discrimination and victimisation having no place in our workplace. The CCS values to Listen, Respect, Collaborate and Trust must be real and illustrate the importance we place on valuing individuals and the contribution they make, regardless of their background.

We have a bullying and harassment policy, which reiterates that bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation are unacceptable. Staff should know how to raise concerns and be confident that issues will be resolved. The principle of confidentiality can make it difficult to communicate actions that have been taken, but we strive to ensure trust from all staff that issues will be properly addressed.

We will continue its work to eliminate harassment and discrimination in our workforce as follows:

Data and reporting

- The SLT regularly consider appropriate data on employee relations, including handling of bullying and harassment, to demonstrate numbers and types of cases, and how these are handled with updates provided to the People Board.
- Provide support to employees' work-life balance by providing fair paid and unpaid leave for parents and carers; having a fair and flexible approach to part time working and job sharing; promoting community engagement and volunteer work; and leading well-being initiatives.
- Line managers will be trained in handling bullying and harassment, and managing performance without recourse to bullying behaviours.

Supporting Actions

- Clearly signpost our policies and procedures in order that staff know how to raise a concern.
- Continue training volunteers for the Listener Scheme, in order that they can support staff who are feeling bullied, harassed or discriminated against, with expertise in harassment. Train volunteer employees as independent investigators to consider cases of bullying and harassment.
- Line managers will be trained in handling bullying and harassment, and managing performance without recourse to bullying behaviours.



“I would like to see more opportunities for people to job share, and more career progression opportunities for those members of staff who work part-time.”

CCS People Survey 2016

We will know we have been successful when:

- The People Survey shows a year on year reduction of staff stating that they have experienced harassment, bullying, or discrimination.
- CCS reports the timely informal or formal resolution of bullying and harassment complaints. A rise in cases may not be a negative outcome if it reflects employees’ confidence in raising complaints.



3 Representation

“A more diverse Senior Management Team (that) reflect(s) the views and diversity of the workplace in which it is making decisions for.”

CCS People Survey, 2016

We aim to employ the best people on their merit to deliver our aims and objectives, and seeks to eliminate biases that may affect recruitment decisions. We recognise the need to improve representation at senior levels, but it can take time for actions to take effect. To increase diversity, we will focus efforts on succession planning and learning and development to increase diversity of our senior workforce.

This is what CCS will do:

Data analysis

- Understanding and taking actions to address differences in gender pay, and meeting legal requirements for gender pay reporting.
- Enhance understanding of our diversity profile by increasing numbers of staff who complete their diversity questionnaire on the Employee Zone to 80%.
- Undertake regular analysis of our staff profile to identify issues and hot spots.
- Offer opportunities to people who are looking to participate in the workforce – for example young people, unemployed people, disabled people and parents returning to work. This enables us to better represent our local communities, and addresses recruitment gaps. We believe in offering entry level positions, with training and progression, as opportunities for people to develop their careers within government.

Recruitment

- Apply a fair recruitment policy that recruits and promotes on merit, abiding by Civil Service Commission policy and principles.
- Address bias through continuing our use of name blind recruitment and mandating unconscious bias training for all staff. Interview panels will be gender balanced whenever possible.
- Actively participate in developmental schemes, such as apprenticeships, the Civil Service Fast Stream and Positive Action Pathway, as well as exploring internships, placements for students on relevant courses and returnships for people who have had caring responsibilities.
- Demonstrate our commitment to diverse and positive recruitment, through achieving appropriate accreditation (e.g. Stonewall, Two Ticks Disability, Disability Confidence, Living Wage employer).



Succession Planning and Development

- Seek to increase the diversity of SCS staff and the SLT through succession planning, use of the 9 box grid and undertaking diversity analysis of performance and talent marks.
- When staff have the desire and merit, we will train and develop them, and plan our workforce, so that they have the best opportunity to progress within the organisation. This includes a continued commitment to at least five days development a year and support for our staff to secure appropriate professional qualifications. The aim is to develop increasingly representative workforces at all levels of the organisation.

We will know we have been successful when:

- There is an increase in employees recording their details relating to protected characteristics.
- The diversity of new entrants from underrepresented protected characteristics increases.
- There are increasing numbers of employees from underrepresented groups at senior grades and in SCS roles, and a narrowing of any gender pay gap.



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