

Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025

Promoting fairness
and performance

Foreword

This government is committed to Levelling Up by driving improvements in the day-to-day lives of all citizens, spending taxpayers' money with care and providing excellent services. To deliver those commitments requires a Civil Service that can attract, retain and invest in talent wherever it is found. It is for this reason that we want the Civil Service to have a truly diverse workforce and culture of openness and inclusivity, as a means of delivering better outcomes to the citizens we serve.

A person's background must never be seen as a limiting factor in the Civil Service, rather an asset that can be drawn upon to improve policy making and service delivery. We will encourage a broader range of people into the Civil Service to give depth to our understanding of contemporary society in the United Kingdom. We will build teams where alternative perspectives to current challenges are welcomed and the interrogation of received wisdom is encouraged so that we constantly refine our approach. We believe a diverse workforce should be bound by a common commitment to public service and united by shared values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

We already have superb people at every level of public service, working at home and abroad. But we must do better at attracting an even wider range of talent from more diverse backgrounds and helping people feel encouraged and confident in assuming positions of leadership throughout the Civil Service, challenging any sense that roles in the Senior Civil Service are only for a certain type of person.

With the merit principle front and centre, this diversity and inclusion strategy sets out a series of practical ways in which we will deliver against the commitments made in the **Declaration on Government Reform**. We will more effectively draw on the talents of the widest possible range of geographical, social and career backgrounds. We will make sure that people from minority ethnic backgrounds, those living with disabilities and those who have experienced disadvantage in their early lives can flourish in public service. We will develop an ethos of a connected government across the UK - with career opportunities in every part of the country open to all, a dismantling of barriers and a willingness to question how we can best channel our efforts to help all citizens tackle disadvantage in their daily lives. We will guarantee fairness at work, take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and discrimination and grow a culture that welcomes challenge and demands rigour in how we assess delivery for citizens, with civil servants managed against how they perform not how they look, who they are or where they work.



*Your name,
Nigel Adams*

Rt Hon
Nigel Adams MP



Alex Chisholm

Alex Chisholm,
Chief Operating
Officer for the
Civil Service



Sarah Healey

Sarah Healey,
Permanent
Secretary
Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media and Sport
and Senior
Sponsor for the
Civil Service
Diversity and
Inclusion Strategy

Purpose

The Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022 maintains our focus on mainstreaming the delivery of inclusion, and achieving our key priorities as outlined in the **Declaration on Government Reform**. We will continue to build a more inclusive Civil Service going further than the current Equality Act provisions by building on and expanding a previous focus on Protected Characteristics to deliver for all of our people. Incorporating a broader definition of diversity

(such as socioeconomic, work experience and geographic backgrounds) and embedding activity in our strategic priorities will enable the successful delivery of our corporate objectives.

This strategy is essential to deliver on our shared ambition of A Modern Civil Service where our values are to serve with integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality; driving our vision to be a skilled, innovative and ambitious Civil Service equipped for the future.

Objectives

To enable a Civil Service that:

- **understands and draws from the communities it serves** - drawing from a range of backgrounds, experiences and locations
- **is visible to everyone** - engaging the communities we serve and showcasing what the Civil Service offers
- **is flexible** - supporting innovation, performance and engagement
- **welcomes talent from wherever it comes** - attracting the best talent from all backgrounds



Approach

Taking a data-driven, evidence-led, and delivery-focussed approach, this strategy will support the delivery of reform by attracting and retaining the very best people, leading and working in government; ensuring that the right people are working in the right places with the right incentives. In our diversity and inclusion delivery, as Civil Servants we will ensure individual personal and political views do not influence our advice or actions.

This strategy frames an approach where diversity and inclusion is not an end in itself, but an integral means of delivering better outcomes for our citizens by supporting the delivery of a Civil Service that:

values diversity of teams - challenging groupthink and inspiring a greater diversity of thinking



values and invests in its people - enabling career development through accessible and universal training



has collaborative partnerships underpinned by our values - systems and communities working collectively to deliver improved inclusion



tackles bullying, harassment and discrimination - with specific actions for departments to take in continuing to address bullying, harassment and discrimination



tests its policies - with activity to be data-driven, evidence-led, and delivery focussed



A Civil Service that understands and draws from the communities it serves

More than **one in five Civil Servants are currently based in London**. A more regionally dispersed workforce would benefit the Civil Service as an organisation.¹



Our **Places for Growth** programme will help realise the opportunities to create a more inclusive approach to working, better career pathways for Civil Servants across the whole of the UK and the access to new talent and experiences that will enrich our policy making and connection with the communities we serve; contributing significantly to Levelling Up.

We will:

- Reform entry-level talent programmes to make sure that in line with ambitions for Places for Growth, departments are attracting a broader range of talent into the Civil Service from across the country, including, but not limited to, working with five local authority areas (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Birmingham, Nottingham, North East Local Enterprise Partnership, West of England Combined Authority) to link it up with our skills strategy.
- Develop plans, working with departments and public bodies, to ensure that roles across all grades, including grade SCS1 and above, are relocated to enable sustainable career pathways regardless of their location and to ensure unintended consequences do not occur, for example concentration of those from professional/managerial backgrounds in London.
- Adopt a 'regional campus' model, to ensure roles are moved to a range of locations, including large cities, smaller cities and towns.

¹ Annual Civil Service Employment Statistics 2021

A Civil Service that is visible to everyone

The Civil Service is one of the largest employers in the UK, with over **481,000 colleagues** across the UK.



The work we do affects citizens' lives on a daily basis and yet many people, particularly younger people, may not understand the broad range of services and roles we provide. Interactions may range from attending a local Jobcentre Plus, applying for a driving licence or going through airport security, and behind each process lies an expert team within the Civil Service. To serve our communities is a privilege and one we can underline more in our engagement, outreach and attraction.

We will:

- Use role models from a diverse range of backgrounds to increase the visibility of the broad range of experiences and opportunities available across the Civil Service. For example, Senior Civil Servants who have progressed through both the policy and operational roles, from different backgrounds, showcasing the various routes such as apprenticeships to progression in the Civil Service.
- Strengthen and expand our schools outreach programmes, targeting schools that have a higher proportion of students on free school meals than the national average. Engagement in this activity will be seen as an important duty in a civil servant's career, with all civil servants encouraged to be actively 'paying it forward' by working with local schools and Further Education Colleges.
- Develop Entry and Progression Routes principles to increase support already begun in schools outreach for the Places for Growth strategy, presenting a joined up, coherent narrative that inspires young people from a broader range of backgrounds to pursue a career in the Civil Service. As part of this strategy we are reviewing our entry level talent programmes (for example our **Fast Stream** and Early Talent offerings), redesigning assessments and refreshing our eligibility criteria to broaden representation and accessibility to people from all backgrounds.
- Take an evidence-based approach to progression, using external reports and expertise such as the **Navigating the labyrinth** report to consider how we ensure routes to progress to the Senior Civil Service are transparent, accessible and supported.²

² Annual Civil Service Employment Statistics 2021

A Civil Service that is flexible

Flexibility is important for our people and performance. It is key to increasing innovation, performance, and engagement.



Flexibility in our ways of working and location helps in attracting diverse talent and enabling civil servants to flourish and progress. We want to represent the UK as a whole, not just pockets in our larger cities. We are supporting Levelling Up and the locations agenda, enabling departments to hire people in new locations. This is a key aspect to seizing the full potential of our people and enabling us to find new ways to solve problems and deliver better outcomes for citizens.

We will:

- Continue to develop our published model guidance for managers, ensuring that the advantages of increased flexibility for parents and carers are realised.
- Create workspaces that enable collaborative and flexible working, driving engagement and enhancing productivity as well as more joined up policy development and delivery through the **Government Hubs Programme**. It will support the attraction and retention of top talent by establishing attractive working environments and by supporting inclusivity, health and wellbeing in the way we work, ensuring that all civil servants have the support and workplace adjustments they need to carry out their role.
- Ensure that hybrid working arrangements are used effectively, balancing the needs of the business and the individual to enable colleagues better perform their roles, particularly those with disabilities, caring responsibilities or school aged children; while delivering value for money.
- Continue to implement the Civil Service Carers' Strategy launched in June 2020, setting out our vision and strategic priorities for carers over the next five years.

A Civil Service that welcomes talent from wherever it comes

The **Declaration on Government Reform** published in June 2021 focused on creating a Civil Service with the widest possible range of talent, skills and experience to ensure we have the capabilities we need to deliver outstanding public services.



We must draw on the talents of a workforce with a diverse range of experience, skills and backgrounds; providing an equality of opportunity for all our people and to embed challenge in everything we do and deliver better outcomes for all citizens.



We will:

- Develop a new, innovative and data driven Civil Service Porosity and Pathways Action Plan with a focus on building a clear understanding of our roles and responsibilities, drawing on insight across the Civil Service to ensure the right outcomes are achieved.
- Improve how we reach out and attract external talent. Building upon existing good practice, and in partnership with colleagues across the Civil Service departments and professions, a Talent Attraction specialist will support the development and implementation of a Senior Civil Service attraction strategy.
- Enhance porosity, using secondments, to enable the Civil Service to draw on critical skills from across sectors and at the same time, give those outside the Civil Service exposure to the work of government departments in delivering on policies and serving citizens.
- Emphasise to suppliers supporting the Civil Service the importance of inclusive workplaces, aligned to Places for Growth and which will be tested and measured through regular strategic dialogue between suppliers, strategy teams and customers in the Civil Service to ensure that the services they supply are aligned and can help us deliver our strategic priorities.

A Civil Service that values diversity of teams

Team diversity is crucial to organisational performance.

Establishing teams with differing perspectives, experiences and insight is integral to tackling complex problems, promoting innovation and delivering stronger decision making, where people feel safe and supported to provide their perspective, and positively recognised for doing so.³

There is a clear correlation between diversity and organisational performance enabling better attraction of top talent, improvement of employee satisfaction, and decision making leading to improved outputs.⁴



We will:

- Attend to both individuals and teams. Both need to be effective and the latter must maximise both aggregate individual capability and team diversity of thought (derived from background and experience, including the varied geographical, social and career backgrounds highlighted in the Declaration on Government Reform).
- Recognise the role that line managers play in delivering the diversity and inclusion strategy in particular, managers have a critical role in developing diversity of thought and avoiding groupthink.
- Review our training offer, especially for managers, helping them understand the value of diverse viewpoints and perspectives and their role in making them happen. In particular, leaders and managers will need to understand their role in ensuring individuals feel psychologically safe, able to deploy their skill, ambition and innovation in the workplace, without fear of tired prejudices restricting performance.
- Provide managers with practical tools or examples which can be used to help them gauge whether they are achieving and unlocking diversity of thinking.

³ Matthew Syed, The Power of Diverse Thinking, 2019.

⁴ McKinsey&Company, Diversity Matters, 2015.

A Civil Service that values and invests in its people

We are committed to providing people with accessible and universal training to support them at each stage of their career, to enable them to be effective in their role and develop in their chosen career path.



This includes a comprehensive induction programme that ensures people are supported to be effective in their new role quickly, and understand how they contribute to their department and wider Civil Service goals. Comprehensive accreditation opportunities will be available, from apprenticeships to specialised qualifications and continuous professional development.

We will:

- Encourage rigorous professional development for every employee with a consistent training offering across departments and transparent metrics against which delivery will be measured so that we are at the forefront of best practice.
- Ensure clear and accessible induction for all, to overcome the sense of 'navigating a labyrinth', and provide the knowledge, skills and networks that are necessary to thrive in government for everyone throughout their Civil Service careers.
- Provide a clear, precise and rigorous new standard of knowledge and skills for managers and leaders to ensure **a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and discrimination.**
- Support talented people regardless of background to develop their skills and build their career through using their strengths and to access qualifications for roles in their chosen career path.
- Use positive action where needed in relation to training, support, recruitment and promotion to ensure the broadest range of diversity is achieved and there is an equality of opportunity for all.
- Develop Performance Management systems which, in line with our values, fairly measure both the what and the how of people's delivery.

A Civil Service with collaborative partnerships underpinned by our values

In order to mainstream diversity and inclusion and embed activity successfully into our everyday delivery we know that supportive systems, networks and communities (**individuals, teams, HR leads, Champions, Employee Networks and leaders**) within the Civil Service will need to work collectively and collegiately, embodying Civil Service values.



We will:

- Respect that, as Civil Servants, we make an active choice to join an organisation that requires its people to carry out their duties with dedication and a commitment to the **Civil Service Code** and its core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.
- Ensure political views do not influence Civil Service advice or actions in diversity and inclusion delivery. The boundaries between debates which are about the workplace and debates which are about society can sometimes be blurred and we all must be mindful to prevent well-intentioned initiatives and communications straying into matters of public policy.
- Promote British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Build the Senior Civil Service community, through providing a series of opportunities for our senior leaders to build networks and effective leadership and professional and functional communities, across boundaries and in support of colleagues from a range of backgrounds. This will ensure the experience of joining and being a part of the Senior Civil Service is an inclusive and supportive one.
- Invest in our cross-government employee networks that are important change agents providing significant input, support and reflection as we seek to develop market-leading HR policies, respond quickly to change, respond to new challenges and as we seek to increase the diversity of voices in our decision and policy making processes, supporting us to avoid groupthink.

A Civil Service that tackles bullying, harassment and discrimination

The Declaration on Government Reform is clear that there will continue to be zero tolerance for bullying, harassment and discrimination within the Civil Service. This strategy sets clear and specific actions for departments to take in continuing to address bullying, harassment and discrimination.



We will:

- Review progress made within departments on implementing the recommendations from the **major review** (by Dame Sue Owen) of the Civil Service arrangements for tackling bullying, harassment and discrimination; to identify what more we can do to continue to make progress.
- Monitor progress on bullying, harassment and discrimination through the Civil Service People Survey, with increased reporting of instances, as a result of individuals feeling able to raise concerns, providing the data and evidence for robust interventions.
- Create and maintain an open and transparent culture, through standards for annual 'Speak Up' campaigns across government, encouraging reporting of issues where they arise while providing case studies highlighting actions taken as a result.
- Develop our central policies around sexual harassment, safeguarding and domestic violence, building on those already in place, along with clear employee assistance routes to support victims.



A Civil Service that tests its policies

It is important for our Diversity and Inclusion activity to be data-driven, evidence-led, and delivery focussed. It must align with the Declaration's ambition of coherence and convergence across the Civil Service and we must be mindful not to take action, though well intentioned, that might diverge from that ambition.



We should regularly review these interventions to ensure they are meeting our expectations, having the impact we designed and take the opportunity to refresh in line with updated thinking. In order to optimise delivery, prior to creating interventions we must be ruthless in our approach to ensure our policies and processes are robust.

We will:

- Ensure our more specific, clear, and accessible management training and leadership development builds the capability and confidence to ensure diversity and inclusion through attraction, recruitment, retention and performance management. Demand for this will be shaped by 'Strand 3' of the curriculum, and supplied in the skills Campus.
- Develop an Internal Assurance Framework and Benchmark Standard which will audit and test delivery of this strategy using internal expertise and experience. Whilst these are in development, engagement with external assurance and benchmarking organisations should be by exception only and agreed by Permanent Secretaries supported by Civil Service Human Resources and in line with government standards.
- Continue to measure diversity as an employer. In our departments, professions, regions and across all grades. We will also continue to measure inclusivity through our People Survey and inclusion metrics.

A Civil Service that tests its policies (continued)

We will:

- Mainstream our success measures with our broader organisational priorities, such as Places for Growth, Senior Civil Service Workforce Planning, talent schemes and recruitment priorities. Rather than relying on standalone targets, our ambitions will be embedded in these key deliverables designed to improve our delivery for citizens. Where our data indicates progress is not being made, action will be taken.
- Embed evidence and evaluation in the design, trialling, implementation and delivery of diversity and inclusion interventions in departments.
- Establish a broader and more rigorous evidence base about what delivers tangible outcomes for Diversity and Inclusion in the Civil Service. This should include costs and benefits, ensuring any collection of equality data is proportionate and necessary, being mindful of the privacy of individuals; when testing the efficacy of our policies.
- Underpin our approach through the Public Sector Equality Duty under which we are bound as a public sector employer to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The assessment of the equality impact of new policies through the lens of the duty and legal compliance should be part of the broader decision-making process. When assessing equality impacts, departments should consider all the equality impacts of policies – this means considering the positive equality outcomes from policies, as well as potential negatives. For example, policies which promote economic growth, jobs and prosperity will benefit everyone – including those with different protected characteristics. Also, by ensuring any collection of equality data is proportionate and necessary, being mindful of the privacy of individuals; when testing the efficacy of our policies.

A strategy that enables the Civil Service

The areas of focus outlined in this strategy are those that we feel are most integral to the delivery of A Modern Civil Service that reflects the country we serve, creating opportunities around the UK, finding new ways to solve problems and improve people's lives, achieving excellence in public service delivery and making it easy to collaborate and provide a seamless experience for the public.

By mainstreaming diversity and inclusion delivery into Civil Service Reform priorities and collective key deliverables, inclusive practice will move away from being a distinct activity, to one central to building a more inclusive Civil Service that delivers better outcomes for our citizens.

We will trust departmental accountability, and enable departments to deliver key objectives. This will be supported by a smarter centre (CS Inclusive Practice Team) who will assure there is transparency over what departments are expected to achieve with guidance and sharing of best practice.

The successful delivery of these commitments and priorities will not be left to chance. At the centre (CS Inclusive Practice Team) will monitor progress made, assure activity and report into the CS People Board to promulgate inclusive practice. Using data we will measure the impacts of our actions on the Civil Service workforce diversity by grade, location, department and profession. We will also track measures of inclusion through the annual People Survey and Inclusion Diagnostic to measure improvements to inclusion and fair treatment; supporting us to achieve the commitments made in the Declaration on Government Reform.

Currently members of the Senior Civil Service should have a diversity and inclusion related objective as part of their suite of management and leadership priorities. Objectives will be updated to reflect the focus established in this strategy and to support accountability for the mainstreaming of inclusion delivery.

Taking a data-driven, evidence-led and delivery-focussed approach to our D&I activity, with clearly defined measures of success, will enable us to continually improve in our delivery of improved workplace culture for our people and excellent outcomes for the communities we serve. Supporting the creation of A Modern Civil Service not simply for today, but for tomorrow too, by enabling the Civil Service to be skilled, innovative and ambitious; serving with **integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality**.

Annex – Actions

This Annex outlines specific actions to be taken.

1. Provide greater transparency by publishing plans for Place for Growth target locations.
2. Deliver our commitment for 50% of Senior Civil Servant roles to be based outside of London by 2030.
3. Establish progression pathways for Civil Servants in all of our locations across the UK.
4. Monitor diversity data throughout Places for Growth's rollout to identify and address any unintended consequences.
5. Reinvigorate our secondment/ interchange scheme between the UK Government and the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive.
6. Deliver the National Disability Strategy commitment by increasing the number of Civil Service organisations signed up to the Disability Confident Employer scheme.
7. Deliver an additional 50 Enterprise Advisers to work directly with a school/ college's senior leadership team to support them develop and implement their careers strategy.
8. Publish new Public Appointees guidance to help broaden the range of people applying for oversight roles.
9. Complete Carer Confident accreditation up to and including level 3 across departments.
10. Launch a new Civil Service Porosity and Pathways Action Plan supporting the identification and development of talent at all levels and across all professions.
11. Ensure temporary promotions are being filled consistently through Expressions of Interest or a similarly fair and transparent process.
12. Deliver a new online induction that provides all new starters information on their benefits and responsibilities and how to access career and development opportunities.
13. Deliver increased uptake of internship programmes such as Summer Diversity Internships, Autism Exchange and Leonard Cheshire Change 100.
14. Expand recruitment data, developing innovative tools to ensure consistent recruitment outcomes regardless of background.
15. Review policy role job adverts to ensure that an emphasis is made on the importance of skills and experience, not qualifications, to attract the broadest talent.

16. Deliver the recruitment of 1,000 prison leavers to Civil Service roles by the end of 2023, as part of a wider Life Chances recruitment target covering veterans and care leavers.
17. Launch the new Permanent Recruitment Frameworks for delegated and executive recruitment, working closely with Crown Commercial Service.
18. Establish external engagement to attract diverse skill sets and individuals from a range of backgrounds and broaden the experience of our own people.
19. Complete recruitment campaign data analysis to inform how we improve diverse hiring.
20. Ensure monitoring of Annual Civil Service Statistics, to draw insights into the diversity of organisations to drive resourcing discussions.
21. Monitor our approach on equality of opportunity to ensure that all our people have the same opportunities to progress.
22. Launch a new ambitious apprenticeship strategy for the Civil Service from April 2022, building on our current offer ensuring high quality training across core skill gaps.
23. Deliver a Civil Service wide review into the practices to tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination focussing on data, reporting and processes across the entirety of bullying, harassment and discrimination incidences.
24. Refresh our policies, procedures and guidance outlining options and clarity for employees about how they can confidentially raise concerns.
25. Review how investigations are resourced to ensure independence and efficacy.
26. Set an approach to encourage innovation with support from internal consultancy hub, behavioural insights and innovation teams.
27. Deliver evaluation frameworks, underpinned by data, to support departments and professions to evaluate effectively their diversity and inclusion interventions and programmes.
28. Establish a broader and more rigorous evidence base about what delivers tangible outcomes for Diversity and Inclusion in the Civil Service aligned to the Government's Equality Data Programme to better understand the barriers people face across the UK.
29. Ensure the impact of new policies are assessed based on our legislative duties alongside holistic considerations (economic growth, job creation, prosperity) to include potential positive, as well as potential negative, equality outcomes.
30. Ensure collection of equality data is proportionate and necessary when testing the efficacy of our policies.
31. Deliver an Internal Assurance Framework and Civil Service Benchmark Standard to audit and measure the delivery of our strategic priorities, to ensure a consistent, effective and value for money approach is taken in line with government standards.



