

BS 76005:2017



BSI Standards Publication

Valuing people through diversity and inclusion

Code of practice for organizations



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Published by BSI Standards Limited 2017

ISBN 978 0 580 93633 3

03.040; 03.100.30

The following BSI references relate to the work on this document:

Committee reference HCS/1/1

Draft for comment 16/30338897 DC

Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

Date	Text affected

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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 30 April 2017. It was prepared by Subcommittee HCS/1/1, *National human capital standards*, under the authority of Technical Committee HCS/1, *Human capital*. A list of organizations represented on these committees can be obtained on request to their secretary.

Use of this document

As a code of practice, this British Standard takes the form of guidance and recommendations. It should not be quoted as if it were a specification and particular care should be taken to ensure that claims of compliance are not misleading.

Any user claiming compliance with this British Standard is expected to be able to justify any course of action that deviates from its recommendations.

It has been assumed in the preparation of this British Standard that the execution of its provisions will be entrusted to appropriately qualified and experienced people, for whose use it has been produced.

Presentational conventions

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

Introduction

This British Standard provides a framework and recommendations for valuing people through diversity and inclusion. It indicates how organizations can develop objectives, behaviours and measures that go beyond the minimum rights stated in law and increase the diversity and inclusion of people in or engaging with organizations.

The standard has been developed using BS 76000 as a foundation. BS 76000 provides a management system for realizing the full value that people bring to an organization through their capabilities, knowledge, skills, networks, experience, behaviours and attitudes. This standard identifies the leadership commitment and behaviours required to value diversity and inclusion in all organizations. It provides organizations with the means of developing their own objectives, behaviours and measures for capturing the effectiveness of their approach. It is recognized that all organizations (including SMEs and micro-businesses) are likely to tailor objectives, behaviours and measures to their particular operations, context and aspirations for diversity and inclusion. Some example measures are included.

This British Standard is based on the principles set out in BS 76000 for valuing people in an organization, which are:

- a) people working on behalf of the organization have intrinsic value in addition to their protections under the law or in regulation, which needs to be respected;
- b) stakeholders and their interests are integral to the best interests of the organization;
- c) every organization is part of wider society and has a responsibility to respect its social contract as a corporate citizen and operate in a manner that is sustainable;
- d) a commitment to valuing people who work on behalf of the organization and to meeting the recommendations of this standard which is made and supported at the highest level; and
- e) each principle is of equal importance.

These principles, taken together, form a holistic approach to valuing diversity and inclusion. They take this particular British Standard beyond the human characteristics protected by law in the Equality Act 2010 [1] and public sector equality duties, to capture individual difference, life experience, social context and historical, economic and cultural exclusion. This standard also encourages dialogue on these issues with a broad range of stakeholders and indicates an approach for an organization to take to recognize, value and embed diversity and inclusion within its operations and relationships with customers/clients, supply chains and communities.

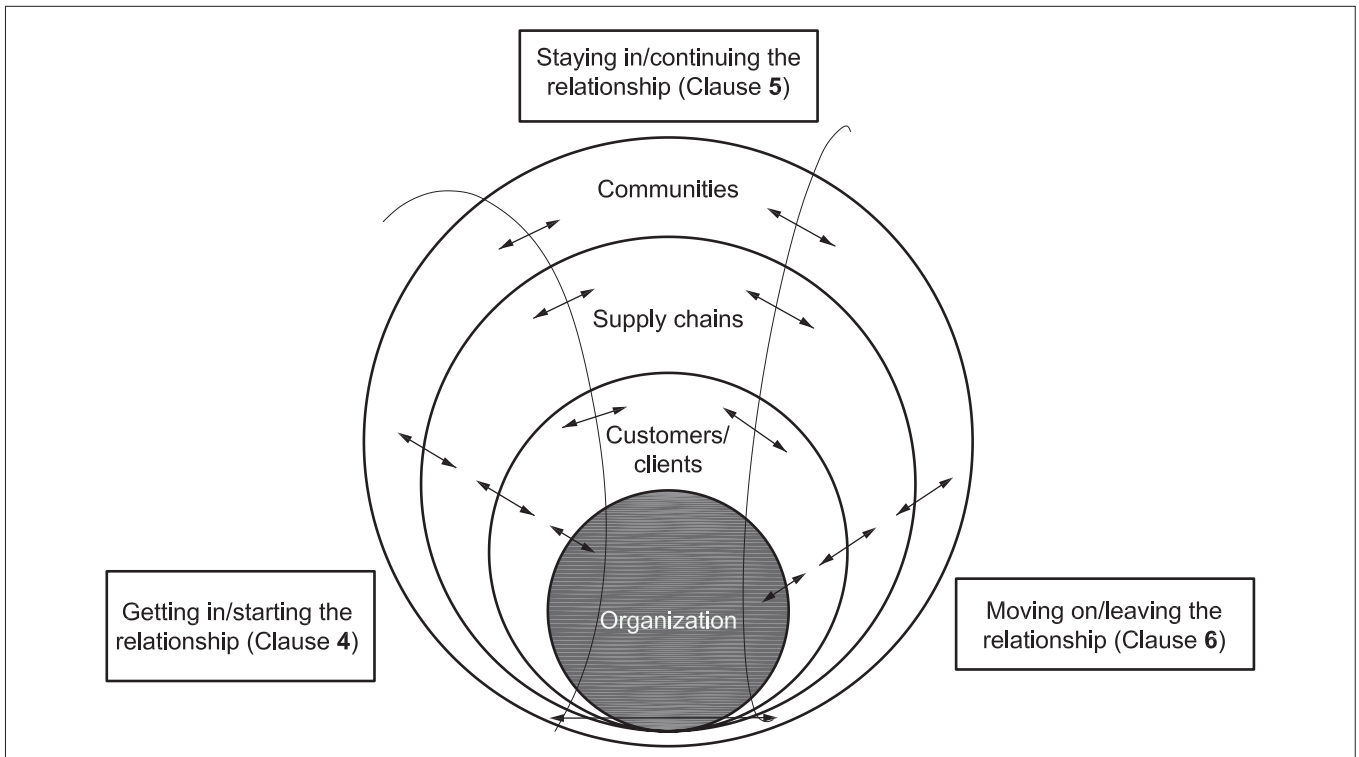
In common with BS 76000, “valuing people” is not confined to the calculation of directly quantifiable monetary value, transactional utility or short-term return on investment. The term is used in recognition that “value”, defined as the inherent and unique merit and worth of people, connotes the actual or potential contribution that people at all levels in the organization make as a result of their unique capabilities, knowledge, skills, networks, experience, attitudes and insights. This standard reflects the belief that recognizing and respecting the value of people beyond the minimum rights stated in law has long-term personal, organizational and societal benefits.

The way in which an organization values its people and stakeholders is at the heart of its success. [Figure 1](#) illustrates how diversity and inclusion can be valued in each of the three phases through which people and organizations interact (whether they are working for the organization, working on behalf of the organization or engaging with the organization as a customer/client or members of the community), namely:

- getting into organizations/starting the relationship (see Clause 4);

- staying in organizations/continuing the relationship (see Clause 5); and
- moving on/leaving the relationship (see Clause 6).

Figure 1 — Framework for valuing people through diversity and inclusion



The phrase “working on behalf of an organization” is deliberately used to acknowledge that it includes those who might be working on behalf of organizations through agencies, subcontractors and self-employment arrangements. The quality of a product or service often relies on the manner in which agencies, subcontractors (and others in the supply chain) value the diversity of the people they employ, or hire, to perform the work on behalf of others. The purpose of this standard is to provide a set of recommendations for influencing, engaging, consulting and aligning diversity and inclusion expectations within supply chains.

The phrase “engaging with the organization as a customer/client or members of the community” acknowledges the importance of the relationship that exists between these stakeholders and the organization for the sustainability of its operation.

This framework highlights the opportunities that exist for dynamic, creative dialogue between these parties related to diversity and inclusion. Such dialogue can inform the improvement of policies, procedures, practices and behaviours associated with diversity and inclusion within organizations and associated supply chains, and ultimately support the ongoing development of products and services provided by the organization.

This British Standard recognizes that the control and influence over the development of diversity and inclusion is strongest in organizations with a directly employed workforce, but that its application can be strengthened through stakeholder engagement.

- [4.1](#), [5.1](#) and [6.1](#) set out objectives, policies, processes, practices and behaviours that support diversity and inclusion within an organization.
- [4.2](#), [5.2](#) and [6.2](#) indicate how customers/clients can be involved.
- [4.3](#), [5.3](#) and [6.3](#) indicate how supply chain partners can be involved.
- [4.4](#), [5.4](#) and [6.4](#) indicate how communities can be part of valuing diversity and inclusion.

In addition, this British Standard acknowledges the need for:

- 1) leadership commitment in actively supporting a culture that acknowledges the value of diversity and inclusion (see [Annex A](#));
- 2) a management system to manage the changes prompted by this standard in a structured and effective manner (see [Annex B](#));
- 3) workforce policies and practices that support key aspects of this activity (see [Annex C](#));
- 4) a framework for establishing relationships with customer/clients (see [Annex D](#));
- 5) a framework for establishing relationships with supply chain partners (see [Annex E](#));
- 6) a framework for establishing relationships with communities (see [Annex F](#)); and
- 7) a systematic approach to measuring, monitoring, analysing and evaluating performance in relation to diversity and inclusion (see [Annex G](#)).

This British Standard assumes knowledge and adherence to appropriate legislation in relation to anti-discrimination and the protection of individuals identified by certain characteristics (see [Annex H](#)).

1 Scope

This British Standard provides a framework for holistic approaches to diversity and inclusion that enable an organization to demonstrate its commitment to valuing people in its widest sense. It is intended to facilitate the fairness and dignity of all at work.

NOTE This British Standard is informed by and supports the principles contained in BS 76000, which specifies high-level strategic requirements for a management system for valuing people.

This British Standard provides recommendations for reviewing, assessing and undertaking a competent and principled approach to diversity and inclusion that encompasses:

- people management and development;
- the evolution of more inclusive policies, procedures, practices and behaviours within organizations supporting supply chain capability and diversity; and
- the building of productive relationships with others, be they customers or clients or people within communities.

This approach focuses on diversity and inclusion in organizations of all sectors, sizes, types and stages of development.

This standard recognizes that each organization is different and that decision-makers need to determine the most appropriate approach according to their organization's context.

This British Standard is intended to be used by any responsible person(s) involved in organizational leadership and management. It is also relevant to stakeholders, including a directly employed workforce, contracted workers, trade unions or workforce associations and networks, community leaders, customers, clients and investors.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 audit

systematic, independent, documented process for obtaining documented information, statements of facts or other relevant information and assessing them objectively to determine the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled

NOTE An audit can be an internal audit (first party) or an external audit (second party or third party), and it can be a combined audit (combining two or more disciplines).

[SOURCE: BS 76000:2015, 3.1]

3.2 diversity

characteristics of differences and similarities between people

NOTE 1 Diversity includes factors that influence the identities and perspectives that people bring when interacting at work.

NOTE 2 Diversity can foster learning from others who are not the same, about dignity, respect and inclusiveness for everyone, and about creating workplace environments and practices that foster learning from others to gain advantages of diverse perspectives.

[SOURCE: BS ISO 30400:2016, 9.1]

3.3 documented information

information required to be controlled and maintained by an organization and the medium on which it is contained

NOTE 1 Documented information can be in any format and media and from any source.

NOTE 2 Documented information can refer to:

- the management system, including related processes;
- information created in order for the organization to operate (documentation); and
- evidence of results achieved (records).

NOTE 3 In this British Standard, documented information can refer to evidence of the defined organizational values and behaviours that support diversity and inclusion.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Annex SL:2012, 3.11, modified]

3.4 flexible working

any kind of working that is considered to be outside a traditional working pattern

NOTE 1 This includes changes to the time, location and contractual arrangements of work.

NOTE 2 A traditional working pattern is one including features such as fixed hours, fixed location, fixed desk and face-to-face interaction by default.

[SOURCE: PAS 3000:2015, 2.1.6, modified]

3.5 inclusion

practice of including all stakeholders in organizational contexts

NOTE 1 Stakeholders from different groups are to be accepted and welcomed (e.g. offered opportunities on the basis of abilities, talents and skills).

NOTE 2 Legislation exists protecting people identified with certain characteristics (see [Annex H](#)). Other differences that are not protected in law, but which can lead to exclusion, include visible and non-visible factors such as social background, language/dialect, culture, work-style, personality and bodily appearance.

NOTE 3 Commitment to the valuing and inclusion of all the ways people are different requires a transparent approach that goes beyond legal compliance and embeds and sustains wider cultural change.

[SOURCE: BS ISO 30400:2016, 9.5, modified]

3.6 management system

set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organization to establish policies and objectives and processes to achieve those objectives

NOTE 1 A management system can address a single discipline or several disciplines.

NOTE 2 The system elements include the organization's structure, roles and responsibilities, planning, operation, etc.

NOTE 3 The scope of a management system may include the whole of the organization, specific and identified functions of the organization, specific and identified sections of the organization, or one or more functions across a group of organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Annex SL:2012, 3.04]

3.7 organization

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives

NOTE The concept of "organization" includes, but is not limited to, a small/micro and medium business, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Annex SL:2012, 3.01]

3.8 outsource

make an arrangement where an external provider organization provides or performs part of an organization's function or process

NOTE An external providing organization is outside the scope of the management system, although the outsourced function or process is within the scope.

[SOURCE: BS 76000:2015, 3.18]

3.9 policy

intentions and direction of an organization as formally expressed by its top management

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Annex SL:2012, 3.07]

3.10 risk

effect of uncertainty on objectives

NOTE 1 An effect is a deviation from the expected – positive and/or negative.

NOTE 2 Objectives can have different aspects (such as financial, health and safety, and environmental goals) and can apply at different levels (such as strategic, organization-wide, project, product and process).

NOTE 3 Risk is often characterized by reference to potential events and consequences, or a combination of these.

NOTE 4 Risk is often expressed in terms of a combination of the consequences of an event (including changes in circumstances) and the associated likelihood of occurrence.

NOTE 5 Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to, understanding or knowledge of an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

[SOURCE: PD ISO Guide 73:2009, 1.1]

3.11 social groupings

groups of people recognized by law, self-identification or self-organization, who share a set of similar characteristics that are defined through demographic attributes or societal exclusion

NOTE People can identify with more than one characteristic, or social grouping, and might have intersecting identities. This could lead to experiences that are different to those experienced by the majority of a social grouping.

3.12 stakeholder

person or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity

[SOURCE: BS 76000:2015, 3.24]

3.13 top management

person or group of people who directs and controls an organization at the highest level

NOTE 1 Top management has the power to delegate authority and provide resources within the organization.

NOTE 2 If the scope of the management system covers only part of an organization then top management refers to those who direct and control that part of the organization.

NOTE 3 Where an organization has a non-hierarchical structure top management implies ultimate decision-makers, who might be business owners or partners.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Annex SL:2012, 3.05, modified]

3.14 unconscious bias

implicit or unintended influence of social background, cultural environment and personal experience in decision making

3.15 under-represented

disproportionate absence or recognition of people from social groupings

NOTE Under-representation of social groupings can be an indication of exclusion and could lead to subsequent disadvantage.

3.16 value

merit and worth of people due to their unique knowledge, skills and abilities

NOTE In this British Standard, "inherent value" refers to the principle that people are valued for who they are; not just because they deliver monetary value or money equivalents to their organization.

[SOURCE: BS 76000:2015, 3.26]

4 Getting in/starting the relationship

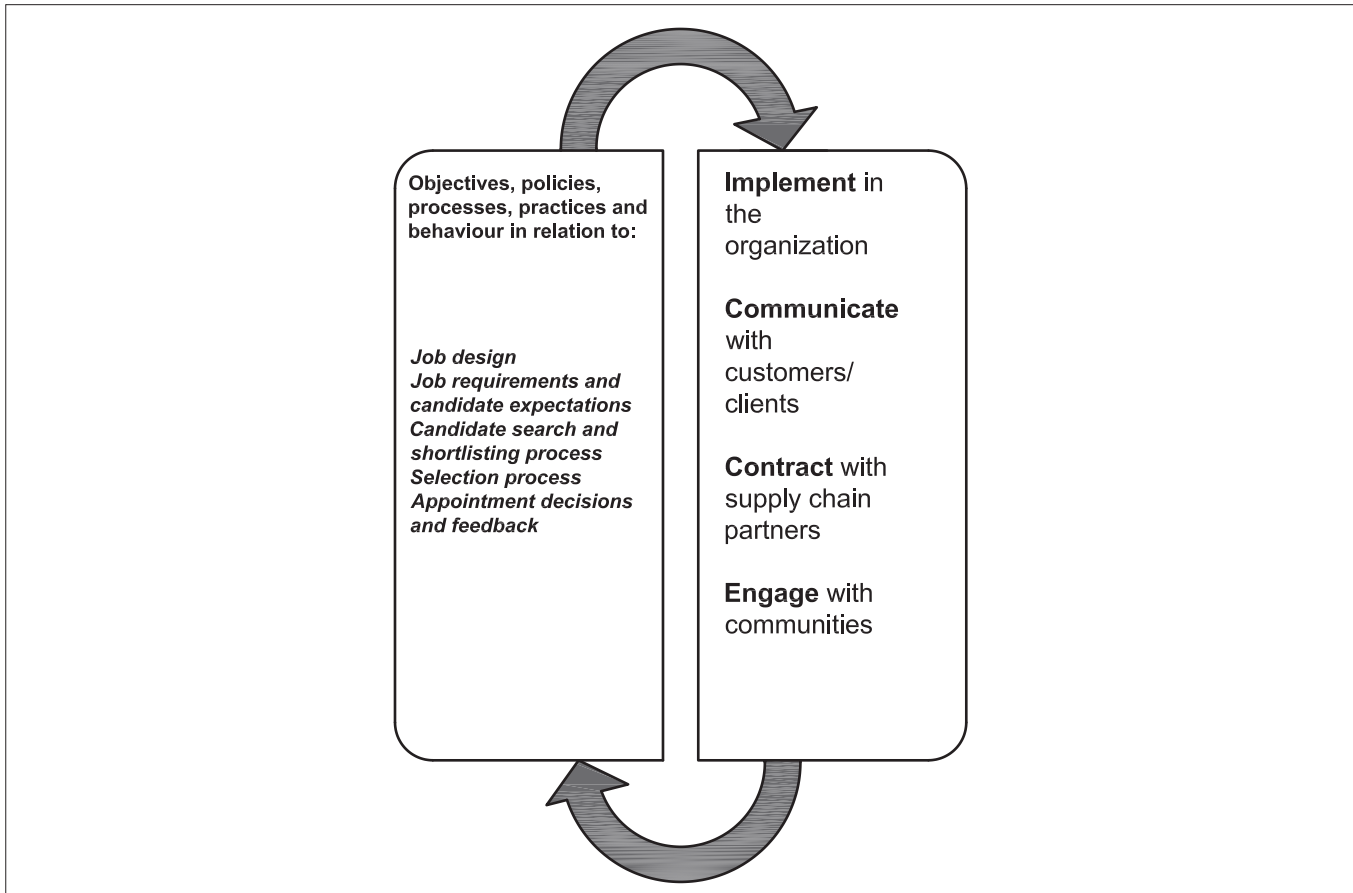
COMMENTARY ON [CLAUSE 4](#)

This clause assumes that, in accordance with [Annex B](#), organizations have a) assessed the context of their business and organization and identified the opportunities and risks of valuing diversity and inclusion, and b) established their aims and objectives in regard to diversity and inclusion. This clause sets out the objectives, policies, processes, practices and behaviours that enable an organization to communicate, consult, engage and influence stakeholders in valuing and increasing the diversity of people attracted to working for or on behalf of the organization, and engaging with the organization as a customer/client or member of the community.

[Figure 2](#) recognizes that the control and influence over the development of diversity and inclusion is strongest in organizations with a directly employed workforce and that the objectives, policies,

processes, practices and behaviours are to be implemented within an organization, but that processes of consulting, communicating and engaging with customers/clients, supply chains and communities are also required before change can be implemented outside of the organization.

Figure 2 — Actions to value and increase diversity of people attracted to working on behalf of or engaging with the organization



4.1 Implementation in the organization

COMMENTARY ON 4.1

This subclause sets out the objectives, policies, processes, practices and behaviours that can help an organization to minimize bias in recruitment and selection such that it is fair and accessible and better able to attract and acquire a skilled, talented and diverse workforce. It is assumed that organizations are operating within a framework for leading and supporting the implementation of this British Standard in accordance with [Annex A](#), a management system in accordance with [Annex B](#), a suite of overarching workforce policies in accordance with [Annex C](#), the frameworks for establishing relationships with customer/clients, the supply chain partners and the community in accordance with [Annex D](#) to [Annex F](#) and performance evaluation in accordance with [Annex G](#).

Attention is drawn to relevant legislation in this area, such as the Equality Act 2010 [1]. As outlined further in [Annex H](#), this Act protects individuals identified by certain characteristics (protected groups) from discrimination and permits organizations to take proportionate positive action measures if people with a protected characteristic are at a disadvantage, have particular needs, or are under-represented in any activity or type of work.

4.1.1 Job design

COMMENTARY ON 4.1.1

As part of an integrated approach to workforce strategy, job analysis/design is a process of deciding on the contents of a job in terms of its objectives, duties and responsibilities, and how these are achieved ethically and in alignment with organizational values.

During job design, the organization should ensure that:

- a) flexibility is built in to the job design process to cater for people from diverse backgrounds (e.g. reviewing how a job is described so any gender-specific language or terminology is removed and how a job is performed to accommodate individual needs);
- b) competencies are taken into account, as well as qualifications and specific experience; and
- c) there is full consideration of the opportunities for different contractual arrangements, working patterns and locations.

4.1.2 Job requirements and candidate expectations

The criteria against which candidates are to be assessed and the methods of assessment should be decided early on and communicated to each candidate. These should focus on the skills, abilities, competencies and qualities required for a specific job.

Job specification requirements should be clearly defined in the job description and should focus on the purpose of the job.

Organizations should ensure that, if the selection process is to include assessments (for example, psychometric tests), candidates are informed of the format and process, and these assessments are job specific, fit for purpose, proportionate, valid and reliable and do not present a barrier to access. Such assessments should be designed to minimize the need for adjustments, but where they are required these should be accommodated to ensure candidates can participate.

4.1.3 Candidate search and shortlisting process

COMMENTARY ON 4.1.3

How and where organizations advertise work opportunities is important to facilitating widening participation and delivering the approach to diversity and inclusion. Educational opportunities and achievements can often be related to family and social background and a “who you know” rather than “what you know” recruitment culture is a significant barrier to social inclusion and mobility.

A proactive approach to candidate sourcing should be applied to enable organizations to optimize all avenues for the supply of future skills needs, including:

- a) work experience/trials;
- b) apprenticeships;
- c) job shadowing;
- d) work placements;
- e) internships;
- f) school leaver recruitment;
- g) graduate recruitment;
- h) retraining and reskilling;
- i) redeployment; and
- j) resettlement and return to work programmes.

A variety of mechanisms should be used to attract talent, rather than single sources. The organization should be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of those mechanisms used in either maintaining the status quo of a workforce profile or improving its diversity.

To broaden outreach and attract candidates from a wider pool of people, organizations should ensure that:

- 1) opportunities are promoted broadly and transparently using a range of methods and media, such as organization websites or notices at its publicly accessible premises; national, local and social media; government and private employment agencies and through community involvement and links with schools, colleges and universities and other training providers;
- 2) private recruitment agencies have a clear understanding of the jobs being advertised, the organization's culture and its commitment to diversity and inclusion and any priorities of the organization in addressing under-representation;
- 3) private recruitment agencies have a clear commitment to diversity and inclusion and are able to demonstrate this in measurable and transparent ways via audit results that show the broadest pool of candidates being attracted and put forward;
- 4) the wording of advertisements accurately describes the purpose and objectives of the job and is inclusive;
- 5) associated advertising imagery reflects a diverse workforce (actually employed or aspired to); and
- 6) the application process, whether paper or technology based, is wholly accessible, available in different formats and easy to use.

Organizations should promote their values and benefits via key messages and recommendations from the current workforce and contractors, using inclusive language and imagery.

Organizations should regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of approaches taken and these approaches should be changed where the desired results have not been achieved.

Organizations should reach out to under-represented groups of people by providing targeted activities to support their preparation for the recruitment and selection process. The rationale for such approaches should be evidence based and their effectiveness in yielding diverse applicants should be reviewed, evaluated and communicated regularly.

Organizations should shortlist on the basis of the job and person specifications, and what is required to carry out the function of the job.

At each stage of the shortlisting process, managers should actively monitor outcomes to identify any patterns of inclusion or exclusion and enable rectification of any bias or exclusion. A full audit trail should be available to demonstrate the decision-making process.

Where curriculum vitae (CVs) or structured application templates are employed, the shortlisting process should employ methods to remove identifying information such as gender, age, etc. to retain objectivity and reduce the influence of bias.

4.1.4 Selection process

COMMENTARY ON 4.1.4

As outlined further in [Annex H](#), attention is drawn to the Equality Act 2010 [1], which permits an employer to take a protected characteristic into consideration when deciding whom to recruit, where people having the protected characteristic are at a disadvantage or are under-represented.