

SRA BOARD
6 December 2022



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Workforce senior ethnicity inclusion action plan

1. Equality, diversity and inclusion is central in everything we do. We are committed to treating everyone fairly and with respect and to creating a fully inclusive work environment. Valuing difference and diversity of thinking is not only the right thing to do, it makes us a better organisation, and helps to show leadership as we work to improve the diversity of the legal workforce.
2. Every year we publish a report on the demographic breakdown of our workforce, as we expect law firms to do. Our reports show that the overall diversity profile of our workforce reflects that of the communities within which we work. But we have a low representation of staff from certain groups in senior positions (staff at grades J through to L). This is particularly the case for Black, Asian and minority ethnic background staff in senior positions.
3. We have committed to developing an action plan to significantly improve ethnic diversity at those senior levels, recognising that much of what we do will also help other groups. We will go one to use our learning to inform how we can further increase diversity from other under-represented groups. This will complement our wider work to support diversity in our workforce.

Our Action Plan

4. To drive the systematic change we want to see, we will learn from best practice, working with leaders and experts in this area to identify how to successfully increase diversity in our senior team.
5. In first steps we have:
 - published our first annual ethnicity pay gap data, showing leadership and transparency and signaling our commitment to change
 - introduced a reverse mentoring scheme for Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues to mentor our Chief Executive and his executive team
 - introduced a new inter-organisational mentoring scheme, initially targeted at colleagues from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds
 - refreshed our Allies programme to encourage more colleagues to support each other, our networks and our work on diversity.
6. In further work we will:
 - baseline and continue to monitor our data, publishing our annual workforce diversity, gender and ethnicity pay gaps and looking at where our data can tell us more about the reasons for the picture we see, and where we can, for example, undertake intersectional analysis
 - set targets over the next five to ten years. For ethnicity we have agreed to double the number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff within our senior team from 8% (as

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at 31 December 2021) to sixteen per cent in the next five years and to further increase to twenty per cent by 2032. This is in line with the Annual Population Survey Data set, June 2020-2021, expectation that it is expected that the proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people in the UK working population will be close to twenty per cent by 2030.

- focus over the next two years on career development, including four key components:
 - a pulse survey to understand the barriers to career development
 - exploring specific career development programmes for underrepresented groups including mentoring and development activities to assist internal promotion
 - exploring secondment and apprenticeship opportunities
 - bringing diversity alive through learning such as promotion via storytellers and/or showcasing our leaders with an ethnic background.

- focus over the next two years on recruitment, including four key components:
 - sourcing a diverse panel of people – potentially comprising both internal and external people - for our leadership recruitment process, to safeguard diversity related concerns
 - following the Mansfield rule principles when recruiting for leadership positions. The 30 per cent rule relates to all diversity so it is suggested we look at 15 per cent when looking solely at ethnicity. The rule also applies to all gateways in the recruitment process where there is sufficient volume, therefore we will apply it to application, shortlisting and interviewing
 - reviewing and challenging the criteria required to apply for our roles, ensuring that ‘essential’ requirements are really essential, for example such as a degree qualification versus related experience
 - pressing our preferred suppliers in recruitment to work much harder to provide a diverse range of candidates. We will also re-tender to test whether there are others who can do more in this area.

Evaluating our impact

7. We will monitor and assess the impact of our action plan biannually by:
 - analysing our diversity data on an annual basis
 - carrying out equality impact assessments on specific initiatives as appropriate, and annually for the overall programme
 - capturing staff views through our staff surveys, and through the staff networks and focus groups.

8. We will also research best practice on how best to understand the difference we make and use further measures as appropriate.

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9. If a particular element of the strategy does not appear to be working, we will work to understand why and look at what more we can do.
10. We will keep the organisation up to date and report to the Board on a regular basis through the annual HR report typically drafted for April of every year.