

# De-Bias Recruitment and Selection Toolkit Summary

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- 10yr London Workforce Race Strategy published Oct 2020
  - Key priority to de-bias recruitment, secondments and professional development opportunities
  - Background:
    - In 2020 45% workforce from BAME background, yet White staff nearly twice as likely to be appointed after shortlisting compared with staff from Black, Asian or Ethnic minority
- De-bias Recruitment and Selection Toolkit developed by London Workforce Equality & Inclusion Team to:
  - Increase awareness of how bias exists within recruitment and selection processes
  - Guide actions that can be taken to ensure process is equitable and bias is eliminated at every stage from job design to onboarding

# De-Bias Recruitment and Selection Toolkit

- 11 separate stages of recruitment & selection
- At each stage toolkit identifies:
  - What might cause bias to occur
  - What de-bias action can be taken to mitigate or remove bias
  - Questions, challenges & common risks
  - Resources

# Bias

- a negative behaviour that can lead to unfairness in the recruitment or selection of candidates

## • Types of Bias:

Type	Definition
Stereotyping	Unconsciously (or consciously) expect a member of a group to have certain characteristics without having actual information about that individual Eg Stereotype a mature candidate to be not as computer literate as a younger candidate
Status Quo Bias	Unconsciously favouring a candidate who has similar characteristics to the person who previously occupied the role Eg Being influenced/by or looking to match characteristics of the person who is leaving/left the role
Confirmation bias	Tendency to search for, focus on, or remember information in a way that confirms our own preconceptions - important to have structured interviews
Outgroup bias	Tendency to have a negative attitude towards people who are from outside the organisation
Decision making bias	Tendency to make decisions based on subconscious influences such as emotions, beliefs or prior experiences rather than objective facts When people (who are similar) work together their opinions tend to converge and everyone agrees with everyone else. This is called groupthink

# 1. Job Design

Bias trigger	De-bias action	Resources
<p>Job designed around current post holder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 'recruiting to type' will not promote diversity</li></ul>	<p>Remove any requirements based on existing role holder</p> <p>Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Role requirements</li><li>- How role has changed</li><li>- Current patient characteristics</li><li>- Impact of technology</li><li>- How role needs to be delivered</li><li>- Whether role could be done remotely</li></ul>	<p>HEE Star interactive model designed to support workforce transformation</p> <p><a href="#">HEE Star: Accelerating workforce redesign   NHS England   Workforce, training and education</a></p>
<p>No objective mapping of equivalence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- if specific qualification requirements are stated</li></ul>	<p>Determine whether a specific qualification is the ONLY way a candidate can demonstrate ability to do the job</p> <p>Consider whether previous experience, skills or knowledge may be just as valuable</p> <p>Consider whether different roles from other organisations may fulfil criteria</p>	<p>18 links within toolkit with further detail on how Knowledge, Training and Experience are considered as part of job evaluation.</p>

# 2. Job Description (JD)

Bias trigger	De-bias action	Resources
Gendered language	Use plain english Avoid jargon, ambiguity, acronyms and other unnecessary words	
Focus on 'nice to haves' rather than 'essentials'	Keep focus on main purpose of the role	
Length of JD - if too long, may make it difficult to read or understand requirements of the role	Keep to specifics of what candidate needs to know Avoid extensive lists of tasks that are rarely required	Plain language: <a href="https://www.plainlanguage.gov/">Checklists and handouts (plainlanguage.gov)</a> AI tools to mitigate biases in JDs: <a href="https://www.atlassian.com/business-teams/collaboration-software">Collaboration software for software, IT and business teams (atlassian.com)</a>
Desirable criteria often based on historic factors	Remove any criteria that cannot be justified Avoid including skills or experience just based on the outgoing person	
Generic & Jargon - act as a barrier to understanding the role requirements	Use plain language Test understanding of JD with colleagues unfamiliar with the role	
'It's not for us' - nothing appealing to BAME applicants or any indication from JD that their application would be welcome	Include images that promote inclusivity Make clear how candidate will be supported in role eg supervision, CPD Test JD contents with staff race equality networks	

# 3. Job Advert

Bias trigger	De-bias action	Resources
Images - Candidates perception of the organisation will be influenced by what they see	Due consideration around use of images to ensure they are: - Inclusive - Representative or organisation/local area	
Language & phrasing	Plain english explanation of job titles Avoid using abbreviations or descriptions that someone who has not worked in healthcare may not be familiar with	Plain English <a href="https://www.plainlanguage.gov/">Checklists and handouts (plainlanguage.gov)</a> Gender Decoder <a href="https://katmatfield.com/gender-decoder/">Gender Decoder: find subtle bias in job ads (katmatfield.com)</a>
Where advert is placed	Go beyond NHS jobs to where local unemployed community may look and specialist providers eg charities	
Geographical restrictions	Build in to recruitment process as assessment of whether whole or part of job could be done remotely	
Length of time advert is open - Can exclude those who take a more considered approach to the job/suitability (evidence shows women can take longer to decide to apply)	Extend advert deadlines where possible	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement	Ensure that an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement that meaningfully represents the organisation's values and encourages applications is included in all adverts	
Not a job advert	Don't put out job advert until you have a job description	

# 4. Job Application

Bias trigger	De-bias action	Resources
Trac & NHS job application forms aligned to Agenda for Change	Include questions on fit with NHS values - Encourages candidates to consider personal qualities alongside experience & education	<a href="http://skillsforcare.org.uk">Application and selection process (skillsforcare.org.uk)</a>
Complex & long process - Not user friendly	Focus on skills Keep job application short (shorter version available on Trac) - may encourage younger candidates as they describe other activities/achievements Alternative means of applying eg practice visit or video interview to answer key questions used to shortlist Help completing application form	<a href="#">Reducing the delay between job offer and start date   NHS Employers</a>
Unnecessary information requested that may trigger bias		Recruiting for Skills in a Primary Care Setting - resources



# 5. Shortlisting

Bias trigger	De-bias action	Resources
Lack of weighting between essential and desirable criteria	Consider priorities for role - in certain roles, attitude may be more important than skills Consider assessment centre & speed interview instead of CV & application	Recruiting metrics <a href="#">cheatsheet-recruiting-metrics-for-smbs_v2.pdf</a> ( <a href="#">linkedin.com</a> )
Lack of hiring managers idea of ideal number of years service	Automated shortlisting - may not be suitable for all roles Panel members to assess candidates independently before joint decision to avoid 'group thinking'	

# 6. Interview and Assessment

Bias trigger	De-bias action	Resources
Language used and questioning techniques	<p>Send a warm /motivational email invitation to candidates prior to interview</p> <p>Personalise the invitation, combined with social norms</p> <p>Emphasise the NHS values and social mission in your correspondence with the candidates.</p> <p>Prior to the interview day, send a quick message to candidates wishing them good luck</p> <p>Check understanding of questions</p> <p>Challenge use of language that may not be inclusive</p>	STARR Interview Questions sample interview questions from Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust.
Accents, judgement about ability, expectation of use of English phrases and idioms	Psychometric debiasing	
Judgement about candidate's ability to be understood by others	<p>Interview training for all involved</p> <p>Consideration of panel chosen - if several internal candidates, consider having panel member who does not know them, to offer unbiased view of responses</p>	
<p>Design of questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to be clear what information is being sought</li> <li>- Avoid long, complicated questions</li> </ul>	Adoption of the STARR model of designing interview questions will support a de-biased process	
Timing of interviews	<p>Ensure flexible timing</p> <p>Check for any specific requirements to enable them to attend</p>	<p><a href="#">Inclusive culture   NHS Employers</a></p> <p>Better Hiring Institute toolkit</p> <p><a href="https://www.betterhiringinstitute.co.uk">BHI Website (betterhiringinstitute.co.uk)</a></p>

# 7. Selection

Bias trigger	De-bias action	Resources
Final selection decision maker	Consider overhaul of interview process eg 'blind' interviews Consider psychometrics to assist decisions of team requirements	
Non tested and not objective scoring systems	Design scoring or ranking systems, avoiding subjective criteria	
'Team fit' - Avoid using this as a reason for favouring a candidate	Consider appointments of candidates who 'add' to the organisation culture rather than 'fit'	
Unconscious and conscious decisions based on first impressions or non verbal behaviour	Consider cross organisational recruitments leads	

# Example Interview Questions & Scoring Guide

Candidate Name	Panel Member	Date

Answer - score each answer from 1-5 (5 being the highest)

Question description	Add Question	Comments	Score
<b>1.</b> <b>Opening questions:</b> Start the conversation and put the candidate at ease. Example questions can be found in the 'Values based interview questions guide'.			
<b>2.</b> <b>Question from their screener responses</b> (once live in Trac).			

## Opening Question

- Remember to ask same question to each candidate applying for same role
- Example questions:
  1. Why are you interested in this role?
  2. Why do you think you are a good match for this role?
  3. What gives you the greatest / least satisfaction at work?
  4. What makes a good / successful / rewarding day for you?
  5. In what kind of team do you work at your best?
  6. What energises / motivates or demotivates you at work?
  7. Describe your most satisfying work experience?
  8. What does success mean to you?
  9. What is important to you when looking at a new role?

# Example Interview Questions & Scoring Guide ctd

<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Past experiences questions:</b> (Min 1)</p> <p>This question should help explore values and evaluate the behaviors you have identified as being important to this role as stated in the Job description and personal specification. They start with tell me a time when.....</p> <p>Example questions can be found in the Values based interview questions guide</p> <p>You can then ask the STARR probing questions.</p>	<p><b>3.a</b></p> <p>Tell me about a Situation when you...</p> <p><i>Probe using these STARR questions:</i></p> <p>What was the Task you needed to accomplish?</p> <p>What Actions did you take and what was your role?</p> <p>How did it turn out and what Results did you achieve after?</p> <p>What Reflections do you have now, looking back on the situation</p> <p><b>3.b</b></p> <p>(Optional) Tell me about a Situation when you...</p> <p><i>Probe using these STARR questions:</i></p> <p>What was the Task you needed to accomplish</p> <p>What Actions did you take and what was your role</p> <p>How did it turn out and what Results did you achieve after</p> <p>What Reflections do you have?</p>		
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## Example Past experience questions



*"Please tell me about a time at work when..."*

### Respect

1. You found it difficult to show respect
2. You acted respectfully
3. Someone else displayed a lack of respect to you
4. You witnessed a colleague or patient behaving disrespectfully
5. You had to manage someone who showed rude or inappropriate behaviour
6. You showed respect to someone of another culture
7. You put yourself in someone else's shoes
8. You gave feedback about someone's behaviour

### Kind

1. You showed empathy
2. You showed someone they were valued
3. You protected someone's dignity
4. You found it difficult to be kind
5. When you saw a colleague was unhappy
6. You were compassionate in a difficult situation
7. You helped someone who felt anxious or scared
8. You made time for a colleague or patient
9. You put someone else's needs above your own

### Positive

1. You faced a challenging situation
2. You were open and flexible to change
3. You found it difficult to stay positive at work
4. When you were asked to do something you have never done before
5. You were under pressure to perform
6. Someone in your team was being negative
7. You helped someone when you were under pressure yourself
8. A change was introduced you didn't agree with

### Professional

1. You had to deal with a complaint
2. You received negative feedback
3. You had to give difficult feedback
4. Something happened that you disagreed with
5. Your responsibilities were changed without your consultation
6. When you were challenged or ignored
7. You had to communicate a difficult message
8. You had to deal with a sensitive situation at work
9. You spotted something that compromised safety

### Teamwork

1. You had to deal with a difficult colleague
2. You supported someone else at work
3. There was a conflict in your team
4. When a new person joined your team
5. You didn't feel supported at work
6. You inspired or motivated someone
7. You shared your knowledge or learnings
8. A mistake was made in your team and how it was handled
9. You found a way to improve something

## Probe your Past experience question using Star probe questions

Probe the candidates response using the **STARR model**.

Use the same probing questions for all candidates. Score candidates using the criteria in the 'scoring sheet'. Remember to ask all of these questions, even if the candidate touches on them in their initial answer, to secure 'more detail'.



# Example Interview Questions & Scoring Guide ctd

<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Scenario questions</b></p> <p>Helps you explore how they may act in the future using this evidence based 7 question approach to explore values within specific job roles.</p> <p><i>Example questions can be found in the Values based interview questions guide.</i></p>	<p><b>4.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are your immediate thoughts and feelings about this scenario?</li><li>• How do you think this sort of situation could arise?</li><li>• What do you believe is the most challenging aspect of this situation?</li><li>• What would you do if you faced this situation? What actions would you take, if any?</li><li>• What do you think the consequences may be for taking these actions?</li><li>• What would be the right thing to do to live up to our values?</li><li>• Describe a similar situation you have faced. [Probe in detail using STARR].</li></ul>		
<p><b>5.</b></p> <p><b>Role based questions.</b></p> <p>This is an opportunity to ask some role-based questions.</p> <p>( You may add more than 3 if required )</p>	<p><b>5.a</b></p> <p><b>5.b</b></p> <p><b>5.c</b></p>		



# Example Interview Questions & Scoring Guide ctd

<p><b>6.</b> <b>Equality questions</b> A chance to explore issues relating to diversity and equality. <i>Example questions can be found in the Values based interview questions guide.</i></p>			
<p><b>7.</b> <b>Closing Question</b> A chance for final observations.</p>			

Examples of equality questions:

- 1. How would you describe your current thinking about diversity and equality in the workplace?
  - How has your thinking changed over time?
  - What do you think has influenced this [change in] thinking?
  - How do you think this might change in the future?
- 2. What is your definition of diversity in the workplace?
  - What does a diverse workplace look like?
  - Why is it important?
  - What are the benefits of a diverse workplace?
- 3. How would you advocate for diversity and equality initiatives with individuals who don't see its value?
  - What are some ways you might do that?
  - How would you go about that?
  - What would be the end result?
- 4. Why is it important to address diversity and equality issues in the workplace?
  - What are some ways organisations might do that?
  - How would organisations go about that?
  - What would be the end result?
- 5. Please tell us about an instance when you have demonstrated leadership or commitment to equality in your work

# Example Interview Questions & Scoring Guide ctd

## Examples of closing questions

- 1. What would success look like for you in this job?
- 2. What tends to get done (or not get done) on your 'to do' list?
- 3. Why do you think you are likely to do well in this role?
- 4. What qualities do you believe you would bring to our team?
- 5. What are the biggest adjustments / challenges you believe you would face if you were successful in getting this role?
- 6. Sum up why you believe you are a good candidate for this role?
- 7. What would prevent you from accepting an offer if one was made? 8. Are there any final points you would like to make that we have not covered to support your application?
- 9. Finally. What questions do you have for us?

6.

### Equality questions

A chance to explore issues relating to diversity and equality.

*Example questions can be found in the Values based interview questions guide.*

7.

### Closing Question

A chance for final observations.

# Scenario questions for specific job roles

- see relevant Toolkit pages

Role	Page in toolkit
Nursing	105-107
Primary Care - Non clinical	108-110
HCA	111-113
AHP	114-116
Doctors	117-119
Senior Management	120-122
Admin & Clerical	123-125
Support Roles	126-128
HR Professional	129-131

# Interview Scoring System

Score	Descriptor
5	<b>Much more than acceptable</b> (Significantly exceeds criteria for successful job performance) Provides large amounts high quality evidence in detail of experience considerably beyond the level specified in the role profile.
4	<b>More than acceptable</b> (Exceeds criteria for successful job performance) Supports competence with compelling details of experience. Demonstrates past abilities at or beyond that required in the role profile.
3	<b>Acceptable</b> (Meets criteria for successful job performance- an appointable score) Has provided sufficient quality and quantity of evidence of competence to undertake the role. Answers are drawn from experience. Demonstrates potential to develop into the role.
2	<b>Less than acceptable</b> (Generally does not meet the criteria for successful job performance,) Has presented either insufficient evidence or unsupported evidence of abilities. Evidence does not show sufficient experience or is unconvincing. Relies on hypothetical answers rather than experience. May have the potential with support and development to undertake the role.
1	<b>Much less than acceptable</b> (Significantly below criteria for successful job performance) Sparse evidence given of competencies or experience. Does not support assertions of ability with any details of experience.
0	<b>No Evidence</b> Did not attempt to answer question or provided response unrelated to question

# 8. Conditional offer/ pre-employment checks

Bias	De-bias action		
Informal 'checking up' on candidates	Organisational values and NHS Constitution to be upheld throughout interview process Discourage hiring managers to make informal enquiries with previous employers or manager's own network of contacts Ensure all communication with candidates is done via recruitment/HR team - eliminates opportunity for informal questioning post interview		ICO guidelines on privacy <a href="https://ico.org.uk">The employment practices code (ico.org.uk)</a>
Lack of clarity regarding next steps	Provide clear communication to successful candidate on preemployment process to avoid ambiguity about giving notice		

# 9. Unconditional offer

Bias	De-bias actions	Resources
Potential for pay disparity and other inequalities	Consider how pay compares to regional average	
Potential for disparity in non-pay benefits	London wide guidelines for starting salaries and oversight on offers Consider 'manager discretion' to award uplifts in salary	
Length of time between conditional and unconditional offers may lead to disengagements of candidate	Minimise delays on pre-offer checks Clear communication of timings	

# 10. Induction and onboarding

Bias	De-bias action	Resources
Length of time between offer and start date	Maintain regular communication Effective, early induction Senior leader attendance Opportunities for new joiners to share feedback and perspectives	
Informal communications	Ensure informal communications are the same across all new starters, particularly if some are already known to the employer Onboarding should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Information about how to join staff networks</li><li>- Details of commitment to Equality and Diversity</li></ul>	
International medical graduates (IMG) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Important to have an awareness of the added challenges facing IMGs who may have trained in countries where culture &amp; health systems are very different and may have also relocated</li></ul>	Comprehensive IMG induction	<a href="#">Welcoming-and-Valuing-International-Medical-Graduates-A-guide-to-induction-for-IMGs-WEB.pdf (e-lfh.org.uk)</a>

# 11. Talent approach

Bias triggers	De-bias action	Resources
Not ready for step up	Ensure candidates are given fair opportunities to demonstrate their readiness for the next level up. Consider what evidence can be collected to support this and what testing and assessment processes have been put in place to ensure fairness.	<a href="#">Talent Management Toolkit – Leadership Academy</a>
Growing local staff into senior roles	Develop system wide standards for training and development provision Develop a system to ensure stretch opportunities are available on a fair basis Offering work placements, internships and pre-employment programmes + Mentoring and reverse mentoring schemes for staff from BAME backgrounds	Guidance - Business in the Community - Inclusive Succession Planning <a href="#">MergedFile (bitc.org.uk)</a>