



Inclusion and Diversity two years on



The story so far...

In 2016, the House of Lords Administration formally voiced our commitment to a more welcoming, inclusive and diverse organisation. After consulting widely with colleagues from all areas of the Administration, including our WENs (Workplace Equality Networks) and the Board, we launched our first formal Diversity and Inclusion action plan. Two years on and we have built a solid foundation. We have launched new training programmes, new initiatives and communication campaigns, in addition to launching the first Parliamentary Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Awards, as one highly visible way of celebrating our successes.

Summary from Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments

"I am very proud of how much has been achieved in the last two years. As an Administration we have made significant strides towards achieving our goals and improving our culture for the better. Inclusion and diversity remains one of our four priorities and, I hope, a focus for all colleagues at every level. We know that there is still more to do before we can say that we are fully engaging and representing all staff within a truly inclusive culture, but we can be pleased with how far we have come."

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments

Six ways you can get involved [it's really not scary!]

1. Be clued up on the latest best practice, by attending our mandatory training courses 'Diversity, Inclusion and You' and our 'Building Disability Confidence'.
2. Get connected with our Workplace Equality Networks (WENs).
3. Become a mentor and/or a mentee.
4. Find out what's in your Office business plan and how you can contribute locally to creating an inclusive culture within your team.
5. Apply to participate in one of our internal initiatives such as role model and champion opportunities or our LGBT, Trans Allies and Talent Management training programmes.
6. Fill out your diversity data on MYHR (even if you choose the prefer not to say option for some questions this helps us build a picture of, and better understand our workforce).

External recognition:

UK Top 50 Inclusive Employers, number 23 (2017 & 2018)

The Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers ranks UK based organisations that promote inclusion across all protected characteristics, throughout each level of employment within their company. It includes age, disability, gender, LGBT, race, faith and religion.

Silver status in the National Inclusion Standard (2018)

The National Inclusion Standard is an accreditation tool developed by Inclusive Employers to help organisations deliver their diversity and inclusion strategies and measure their progress. Other organisations which met the criteria for a National Inclusion Standard this year include the Cooperative Bank, the British Film Institute and Sony Pictures.

Colleagues that have been shortlisted for external awards:

Simon Burton was shortlisted for the Cooperate Ally award at The British LGBT Awards.

Nicole Mason shortlisted for an Outstanding Woman in the Public-Sector award at the Precious Award in the category.

What's next?

Our ambition remains to become a more welcoming, inclusive and diverse organisation. We believe that by focusing on inclusion we will move our culture forward and create a working environment where all colleagues, members and visitors feel comfortable.

The switch from diversity and inclusion to inclusion and diversity sets the tone for the upcoming 2019-2021 Inclusion and Diversity action plan 'Focus on Inclusion'.

Why Focus on Inclusion? We see our diversity as a great strength. By focusing first on inclusion, we aim to create high performing teams which embrace, value and include difference - whether that be a difference of opinion, working style, or a difference resulting from a person's background or protected characteristic. If we succeed in creating an inclusive culture then anyone can join in and all voices will be heard, resulting in better performance and increased innovation.

When colleagues feel able to contribute fully, we succeed in creating a culture of inclusion that people want to be part of, making us an employer of choice. We want to ensure that we build on the benefits of an increasingly diverse workforce so that colleagues from all backgrounds reach their full potential, also resulting in wider diversity amongst our senior leadership.



What progress have we seen?

Of the fifty-four actions set out in our 2017-2019 action plan we have completed all but three. All three actions will be carried over to the next action plan as our work over the last two years showed us that they needed to be re-worked to ensure maximum effectiveness.

In the last two years we have seen the launch of the MENCAP work experience scheme, as well as the House of Lords Administration's own mentoring scheme. We also recommitted to being a 'Living Wage Employer', became a 'Disability Confident' employer and celebrated the success of our colleagues at the first Parliamentary Diversity & Inclusion awards.

Laying the foundations of an effective programme of activities has involved collecting diversity data for the first time. We collect diversity data to help us understand what our workforce looks and feels like and to identify if there are any barriers at play, also helping to ensure that our structures and processes are free from discrimination and bias. Most importantly, the data should spur us to build on the benefits that a diverse workforce can bring to our Administration. Another early project involved working closely with the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service (PPCS) to ensure that we award contracts to contractors and suppliers who share our values and commitment to both diversity and inclusion. By creating conversation starters and guides we hope to make advice and best practice instantly accessible to colleagues via our intranet. Our Inclusion Passport is another tool, designed to start conversations between colleagues and their

line managers which will help us to create working conditions which mean that everyone feels able to work in an environment which enables them to perform at their best.

Each member of the House of Lords Management Board has committed publicly to personal diversity and inclusion objectives for the first time and many have signed up to be Board-level WEN* champions, given their time to mentor colleagues and offered shadowing opportunities.

In the last two years we have offered colleagues from all levels of the Administration the opportunity to become Inclusion Champions. In that time our Inclusion Champions have played a vital role in communicating key messages, campaigns and initiatives to their teams, helping us to reach all layers of the Administration. It is also now mandatory for all colleagues to take part in our 'Diversity, Inclusion and You' (DI&Y) training. DI&Y is a face to face interactive course using live forum theatre, video and various exercises to challenge participants and help all colleagues reach a clearer understanding and appreciation of the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace. Similarly, all colleagues are required to attend a face to face 'Disability Confident' training, which aims to equip colleagues with knowledge of current best practice, inclusive language and legislation. It is also mandatory for anyone making recruitment decisions to have completed our online Unconscious Bias course. Additionally, we have offered more specific training opportunities including, LGB** and Trans allies courses, Equality Analysis training and

Mental Health First Aid courses. The Administration guided a cohort of participants through the Parliamentary Talent Management Programme for the first time in 2017, which provides mentoring, coaching, shadowing opportunities as well as action learning sets, classroom sessions and an opportunity to work on a project which aims to develop the participants' skills and experiences.

Our WENs continue to drive change by hosting events, running various awareness-raising campaigns and initiatives and importantly contributing to our Equality Analysis processes. In 2017 we welcomed a new WEN-ParliON - which focusses on issues concerning social mobility. To raise awareness, we have also created and participated in several communications campaigns; telling stories and celebrating the differences of colleagues from all over the Administration, including our International Women's Day, National Inclusion Week, PariOUT's 'Four Things' and PariABLE's 'Purple Stories' campaigns.

Adapting our thinking

Our 2016-2019 Action plan included 54 actions. The three actions we didn't complete in our 2017-2019 plan were:

Female Leadership Programme

In 2016, when the action plan was still in development we held several focus groups gathering views from colleagues across the House. One suggestion which

gained support was to develop a leadership programme for female colleagues at HL7 and HL8 grades. Since then our thinking has shifted and we believe that the best investment is to create a leadership programme which does not prescribe gender and/or other protected characteristics. This leadership programme will still have a heavy focus on inclusion, but by including different backgrounds and perspectives we believe we will increase awareness of both existing barriers and perceived barriers to colleagues progressing on to senior management positions.

People Pledge

Originally the People Pledge was created to outline the behaviours that we expected colleagues to both display and receive in their interactions whilst at work. However, we have since found that the Parliamentary Behaviour Code already outlines these objectives and to avoid confusion for our colleagues, we chose not to duplicate existing activity.

Mapping Talent Pipelines

This action continues to be necessary. However it was identified that it would be most impactful when completed in conjunction with the work being done by other HR colleagues on career communities, which is due to be launched in late 2018.



Talent Management Programme



What's the project about: For the first time in 2017, the House of Lords took part in the Talent Management Programme, offering places for colleagues at grades HL5 - HL7 to participate in a year-long series of development opportunities including mentoring, coaching, action learning sessions and the opportunity to work on a project demonstrating their skills.

Participant perspective: I am finding the programme very useful and it has driven me to take opportunities which I usually would not have taken in my day-to-day job. I have put my name forward to manage an apprentice for 6 months to improve my management skills. This has given me the opportunity to attend an open morning briefing where I met all the candidates and explained the work of my office to them. I interviewed six candidates for the post which enabled me to develop my interviewing skills and complete Unconscious Bias training.

Attending the courses have a bicameral feel to them, I am the only House of Lords staff member in my action learning set which helps provide me with an insight into the workings of the Commons. I very much enjoyed the 'Influencing and Personal Impact' course. It had a nice atmosphere and I got to know staff from the Commons better. House of Lords staff have had the opportunity to socialise with Commons staff in the Sports and Social Bar which also adds to the bicameral feel.

I have had some very good suggestions from my mentor, such as looking at the jobs in the library and shadowing in PDS, to broaden my horizons. My mentor has given me good advice on how to approach my project and we have discussed increasing my confidence and they have provided me with their insights into managing staff.

I have found the programme to be very positive and it has focused my mind on achieving my goal of promotion.

Oswin Taylor, Legislation Office



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We have many case studies to share from across the Administration, but here we have focused on three examples which showcase a variety of positive experiences.



Doorkeepers 'Disability Confident' training

What's the project about: Disability confidence training is now mandatory for all colleagues and it has been designed to ensure that we are up to date with best practice and terminology regarding accessibility and disability.

Participant perspective: The Doorkeepers attended this training session in one group and all of them said that they enjoyed the session, in addition to finding it very enlightening, specifically due to the attitude of the trainer who had spent time in preparation. This included taking the time to speak to my Training Liaison Officer for some 30 minutes so that she could ensure the session was geared towards the situations the doorkeepers could find themselves faced with. I cannot speak highly enough of the facilitator, in her manner, subject knowledge, attitude and willingness to listen to our views were outstanding.

Keith Phipps Principal, Black Rod's Office



House of Lords - Mencap Work Experience Scheme

What's the project about: Statistics indicate that only 6% of people with a learning disability are in paid employment, despite more than 60% wanting and being 'able' to be in work. In many cases, they haven't been given the opportunities to get that first vital piece of experience on their CV. This scheme aims to help people get work-ready, providing opportunities for people and increasing their confidence in the workplace. It's also a great experience for the teams taking part; not only do they get an extra pair of hands, but they also get the chance to experience the benefits of working with an enthusiastic individual who may see things differently. Organisations who have run similar schemes report that they have seen increased levels of morale, collaboration and commitment from teams which have taken part.

Participant perspective: Callum joined the Clerk of the Parliaments' Office on the Mencap Work Experience programme in May working two afternoons each week. Having looked at Callum's skills we thought he could help us with a number of tasks that we had not been able to do due to a reduced team size. One of those tasks was to undertake an audit of our stationery supplies and

set up a new system of monitoring stocks, purchase orders and invoices. Another task was to update files with metadata following the Office 365 rollout.

Callum tackled those tasks with enthusiasm and skill, providing welcome insights into how we could make full use of software. It quickly became apparent that Callum's skills could usefully be employed in other areas relating to digital change programmes. As the office was continuing to work below full capacity we were able to offer Callum a short-term part-time contract to continue to help us with applying metadata to files, ensuring a consistent records management framework, as well as embarking on an audit of IT hardware across the wider Clerk of the Parliaments' Office.

It was a joy to have Callum working with us; he was delightful company and continually brought new ideas to the office. The work experience programme was a great success for this office and one which we would recommend to others. We would definitely like to take part in the programme again.

Sarah Kerr, Clerk of the Parliaments' Office