

Inclusive Recruitment Report October 2025 – UPDATED MARCH 2026

Introduction

Inclusive recruitment is concerned with the way an organisation designs its recruitment processes to ensure fairness and remove bias at every stage, from job design and advertising, to selection and onboarding. It ensures that the most suitable for the role is appointed, regardless of background or identity. By creating fair and transparent processes, a diverse range of talent is recruited and outcomes are improved for residents and businesses.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has conducted research that just 28% of employers train all interviewers on legal obligations and objective interview practice.

Legal background

UK legislation requires that employers do not discriminate against someone with a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) in the Equality Act 2010.

Lancaster City Council commits to going beyond the legislation to build an inclusive workplace where people feel able to thrive, and that they belong without needing to mask their identities.

Stages of inclusive recruitment, including the actions being taken and future plans

The following stages are set out by the CIPD and have been used as a basis to describe the work that is currently taking place and plans for the future.

Stage	What we're doing	Future plans
Role design and job adverts	Clear templates and guidance provided, checked by HR. Roles job evaluated. Flexible/hybrid working offered by default (managers)	Role profiles due to be launched in the new year, using Co-Pilot to transform traditional job descriptions to outcome focused and strategic documents with plain English behaviours and competencies.

	<p>need to state if not applicable).</p> <p>Salaries clear in job adverts, starting salaries at the bottom of the grade.</p> <p>Organisational accreditations such as Disability Confident are clearly advertised.</p>	<p>Minimal use of essential requirements in person specifications – only used if absolutely necessary.</p> <p>Adverts will also be produced via Co-Pilot to ensure consistency.</p>
<p>Attracting diverse candidates</p>	<p>Marginalised groups are targeted during the advertising phase, using specific websites such as the Armed Forces site, where they are more likely to be seen.</p> <p>Applicants are invited to tell us about any reasonable adjustments required.</p> <p>Expectations are made clear in terms of how to apply, job details, benefits, the timelines for closing dates and interviews.</p> <p>Outreach work continues: jobs fairs, hosting school events, etc</p>	<p>Introduction of a new Application Tracking System (ATS) is underway – this will include tools to assess gender bias in advert wording, as well as how easy it is to read.</p>
<p>Application process</p>	<p>Applications are web based so that applicants can use computer based accessibility tools.</p> <p>Applications are anonymised and no sensitive data is shared with recruiting managers, including name, age, dates of</p>	<p>Creation of bespoke application processes dependent on manager preference</p>

	<p>employment/education, equality data.</p>	
<p>Selection process</p>	<p>Limited automatic sifting – only those who do not have the right to work in the UK are excluded from the selection process.</p> <p>Guaranteed interview scheme for those with a disability and armed forces veterans.</p> <p>Structured interviews based on the knowledge, skills and experience required – each applicant is asked the same questions and scores are allocated by a panel of interviewers. Values based questions are included, with example questions available to recruiting managers.</p> <p>Training is provided to interviewers.</p> <p>The interview panel all shortlist the candidates to interview, put the questions together as a group and agree scoring criteria (applied independently before discussing as a group).</p> <p>Use of skills based assessments is encouraged, such as situational judgement tests, work sample tasks, simulation exercises.</p> <p>Documents are checked to ensure processes are</p>	<p>Development of training for managers</p> <p>Use of updated ATS to allow applicants to choose interview slots that suit them.</p> <p>Managers take more control of the recruitment process to reduce time to recruit by increased access to the ATS which has improved means to shortlist candidates.</p> <p>Development of guidance and training to support the creation of role based selection techniques (skills based assessments)</p> <p>Use the ATS to collect feedback from all candidates to improve processes.</p>

	<p>adhered to (shortlisting matrices, etc)</p> <p>HR support for managers to offer reasonable adjustments such as providing questions in advance.</p> <p>Accessibility information provided at interview invite stage.</p> <p>Pre-employment checks do not include health questions (ie making a job offer subject to health conditions) but occupational health support is sought when appropriate</p>	
Monitoring and measuring	Data developed to assess where successful recruits apply from (this needs to be improved however)	<p>Data gathered through new ATS to inform success of recruitment.</p> <p>Inclusion efforts to be identified and evaluated</p>

Beyond recruitment

New starters are welcomed into the council using a refreshed induction and onboarding programme, with a standard induction list for managers to use, training that is tracked using a Learning Management System, a corporate induction where new starters are invited to meet one another and find out about the council as a whole, and through the use of Wellbeing Passport, a tool to support managers and new starter to get to know each other so that they can bring their whole self to work and be productive as soon as is reasonable. This is all supported by the Probation Policy, followed by the Annual Conversation process.