

Fair Recruitment Specialist Pilot Initiative at St George's, University of London

**Advance HE – Good Practice Grant, What Works
Case Study**

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Background

The decision to trial the Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative at St George's, University of London was made after our Diversity and Inclusion Steering group reviewed and discussed a report detailing data on our recruitment activities. This data, which analysed recruitment activities across a four-year period, showed discrepancies in the numbers of candidates identifying as Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) being shortlisted and appointed in comparison to candidates identifying as white, as well as a lack of ethnic diversity on our recruitment panels.

We understood the reasons for these differential outcomes to be multiple and complex but also recognised contributing factors may be the impact of unconscious bias, stereotype threat and group think, which are more likely to occur where recruitment panels are not diverse. We also felt that the lack of diversity on recruitment panels failed to demonstrate how diverse St George's, University of London is (see below). In order to address this urgent issue, we therefore looked to develop an initiative that could address the lack of representation identified on recruitment panels. This approach would also have the potential to contribute to addressing the discrepancies in shortlisting and interview outcomes also.

We know that these discrepancies are not unique to St George's, University of London; the higher education sector as a whole faces issues of underrepresentation of BAME staff, particularly at more senior levels. Whilst this trend is well recognised in the sector, approaches and best practice in addressing this are less established. This initiative therefore aims to trial an intervention which directly addresses issues of representation and provides a tangible action for our staff community to participate with and for the sector to learn from.

We were aware of a similar initiative at University College London (UCL) and sought guidance from their project lead on the learnings and impact they had identified. Whilst the two institutions are considerably different in size and structure, this was helpful in informing our approach at St George's, University of London and we are grateful for their willingness to share their experience.

Informed by the recruitment data mentioned above, the Fair Recruitment Initiative at St George's, University of London focuses on providing a pool of trained staff volunteers who identify as being from various BAME backgrounds to be available to sit on recruitment panels across the university. The aim in doing so was to ensure multiple perspectives are present in hiring decisions, mitigating for the factors identified above.

In addition to this, we also recognise the importance of demonstrating visible diversity to our applicants. Around 28% of our staff at St George's, University of London are from BAME backgrounds; we are proud of this diversity and want to increase representation further, particularly at senior levels. We recognise the importance of the impression we give to candidates who apply to work with us, and the importance of demonstrating the very diversity we are proud of on our recruitment panels.

Our focus in relation to applying to the Advance HE Good Practice Grant was to support the training of the Fair Recruitment Specialists. In piloting this initiative, it was a key priority for us to ensure that the staff who volunteer as Specialists are sufficiently supported and prepared. The Specialists are therefore required to undertake Unconscious Bias in Recruitment training and Recruitment and Selection training, both on which are delivered internally by our own staff. The Advance HE Good Practice Grant enabled us to provide additional training, delivered by an external provider, which focused specifically on participating in interview panels, recognising the specific context and aims of this particular initiative and the Specialists' role within it.

1.2 Implementation

Below is a summary of how we implemented the initiative. Further information on the details of implementation is included in the What Works Case Study.

With endorsement and support from our Senior Leadership Team and Human Resources, we agreed to pilot this initiative initially, with the aim of developing it to become business as usual should it prove successful.

We began with a project proposal that was drawn up by the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser, with input and consultation from the Learning and Development Manager and Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development. This proposal included within it the outline of training to be delivered to Specialists, as mentioned above, as well as the recognition and support they would receive during their participation. Once the approach for this initiative was agreed, this was taken to our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group for endorsement and to ensure senior buy-in, engagement and awareness across the institution.

The next phase of implementation focused on recruiting the volunteers to become Fair Recruitment Specialists. We communicated the call for volunteers via our all-staff weekly newsletter as well as through direct emails to staff who had previously expressed interest in diversity and inclusion initiatives such as B-MEntor and our Race and Ethnicity Network, which was in development at the time. Our aim was to recruit a minimum 15 volunteers initially, however we quickly secured more than double this number, receiving very positive engagement with the initiative and its aims.

Once we had a pool of volunteers recruited to become Specialists, we scheduled the various training sessions for them to complete. The delivery of this training was disrupted by Covid-19 and our original schedule for the training, and subsequently the launch of the initiative, was delayed as a result. We moved to deliver the necessary training online, with amendments to ensure the same aims and objectives could be achieved.

To conclude the training, we then provided a briefing session that outlined how the initiative would work in practice, the roles and responsibilities of Fair Recruitment Specialists and the support available to them throughout their participation.

We launched the Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative in early November 2020, this was significantly later than planned due to the postponement of the training and changes in capacity of those involved, in response to Covid-19. The launch of the initiative was supported by our Communications Team and by our Principal who highlighted the initiative in her Principal's Briefing Session.

1.3 Impact

As we only launched the pilot in November 2020, we are unable to share data on longer term impact. However there have been various learnings achieved through the set up and launch of the pilot initiative, these are detailed in the What Works Case Study below.

Since launching the initiative 26% of our recruitment activities have included a Fair Recruitment Specialist on their panel. In addition to this, we have also had Specialists join panels for internal roles. This is positive considering the pilot is in its first three months. In addition to this, a number of panels have chosen not to include a Fair Recruitment Specialist because their panel is already diverse in terms of ethnicity.

Having the initiative in place, prompted by our data reports on recruitment at St George's, University of London, has prompted important and necessary conversations across the institution, both within our Senior Management Team and more widely. These conversations have enabled us to both educate and raise awareness of the stubborn issues of underrepresentation of BAME candidates in recruitment activities, both at St George's, University of London and in the sector more widely.

In addition, this initiative has opened up conversations and increased engagement with the topic of unconscious bias and its impact.

1.4 Review and future delivery

Within the institution we will be regularly reporting the impact and findings from this pilot initiative to our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group. In November 2021 we will produce an evaluation report which reviews the full year of the pilot. This will include consultation with the key stakeholders such as, the Fair Recruitment Specialists themselves, HR and Hiring managers who have taken part.

This report will provide recommendations for the future delivery of the Fair Recruitment Scheme Initiative with the aim of this continuing to grow our pool of Specialists and of this becoming part of our core and normal business.

We hope that the case study below, and the project roadmap provided in the appendix, provide useful guidance other institutions who may wish to set up a similar initiative in this area.

1.5 Statement of expenditure

As discussed above, the £1,000 funding we received from the Advance HE Good Practice Grant was used towards bespoke training to support those staff who volunteered to become Fair Recruitment Specialists as part of this pilot initiative.

The training was delivered on 2nd and 10th September by Shepherd Associates.

Statement of expenditure:

Recruitment Panel Training: For Fair Recruitment Specialists (Shepherd Associates)	
Design Fee	£300.00
Delivery Fee	£1,200.00
Use of actors (£175 x 4 for 2 days)	£1,400.00
VAT @ 20%	£580.00
Total	£3,480.00

2 What Works Case Study

St George's, University of London was awarded a Good Practice Grant by Advance HE to support the setup of a pilot Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative. The funding received from Advance HE enabled us to provide expert training to staff who volunteer to become Fair Recruitment Specialists.

This What Works Case Study outlines how we designed and implemented this pilot initiative. Included as an appendix below is a Project Roadmap which outlines the journey from identifying issues to implementing actions to address them.

2.1 Stage One: Understanding our data.

At St George's, University of London, we produce an in-depth analysis report of our recruitment activities on an annual basis. These reports look at application, shortlist and appointment rates by gender, ethnicity, gender and ethnicity combined and disability, across a four-year period.

Our recruitment data demonstrates disparities in the success rates of being shortlisted for interview and appointed after interview depending on ethnicity. Further analysis was done to understand the potential reasons for this, which found that nationality and right to work in the UK status did not impact on these differential outcomes.

In addition, data collection of the make-up of recruitment panels by ethnicity showed a persistent lack of ethnic diversity across the four-year period. These factors enabled us to begin to understand potential factors which contribute to these differential outcomes. Whilst we recognise that reasons for this are complex and structural, we also recognised the potential impact of unconscious bias and group think which are more likely to occur where recruitment panels are not diverse, and the subsequent impact this may have on decision making.

These data reports are reviewed by our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, which includes our Principal, Directors and key stakeholders. This has enabled us to hold important discussions, advance engagement and awareness of key trends and issues relating to recruitment, and to achieve crucial senior buy-in.

After discussion of our 2019 recruitment data report, our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group agreed that addressing the disparities in success rates and underrepresentation of individuals who identify as Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) within our recruitment activities this was a key priority for St George's, University of London to address, identifying ethnic diversity of recruitment panels to be a key area in which we could make tangible changes.

2.2 Stage Two: Planning and recruitment

Following the identification of improving the ethnic diversity of recruitment panels as a key priority, a project plan to pilot a Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative was developed by the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser with input from and consultation with the Learning and Development Manager and Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

We were aware that University College London (UCL) were running a Fair Recruitment initiative and therefore sought guidance from their project lead into the aims of this initiative, how they set up and managed the initiative and their learnings so far. This was really helpful in informing how we would develop a similar initiative within our own organisation, and we are very grateful to UCL for sharing these insights.

The proposal to pilot a Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative at St George's, University of London was shared with our Diversity and Inclusion Committee to ensure endorsement, accountability and engagement at the earliest opportunity.

A final project outline was agreed with input from the Learning and Development Manager, Director of HR and OD, Associate Dean for Culture, Development and Inclusion and Deputy Principal (Institutional Affairs). This document outlined:

- + Aims and objective, linking back to our data findings.
- + Process and management of initiative, including responsibilities of HR and the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser (who would manage the initiative).
- + Role and expectations of the Fair Recruitment Specialists, including time commitment.
- + Support and recognition for Fair Recruitment Specialists via line managers, personal development reviews (PDRs) and from the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser
- + Training needs of Fair Recruitment Specialists

In designing this initiative, we recognised the importance of getting the allocation process right. Staff from all grades would be invited to become a Fair Recruitment Specialist, enabling us to have a good spread of experience and seniority.

Furthermore, we felt it important to enable the Specialists to have the choice as to which recruitment panel opportunities they volunteer for. We agreed that Specialists would not have to be in specific grades or roles (e.g. academic/professional services) in order to take part on panels of the same category, but that Hiring Managers should stipulate any preferences when they first communicate their plans to include a Specialist on their panel. Where particularly senior roles were being recruited to, we agreed consultation with the Hiring Manager must take place to identify the minimum grade a Specialist must be at in order to take part on the panel.

Furthermore, we identified the need for consideration of intersectionality as key, agreeing that our approach and communications must prioritise both balance of gender and ethnicity combined.

In identifying the training needs of the Fair Recruitment Specialists, we included the training courses already identified as those which should be completed by staff involved in recruitment at St George's, University of London. These are:

- + Unconscious Bias in Recruitment (delivered by the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser)
- + Recruitment and Selection (delivered by HR)

In addition to these courses however, we also recognised the need to provide practical training in participating on interview panels. As this initiative was open to BAME staff at all levels, we needed to ensure we provided training which would support those staff who have never interviewed before. Furthermore, we recognised the specific context in which the Fair Recruitment Specialist would be joining a recruitment panel and the need for bespoke training which acknowledged the wider aims and objectives of this particular initiative and the Specialists' role within it. We sought funding from the Advance HE Good Practice Grant to enable us to fund this bespoke training which we felt was integral to the success of this pilot.

We then focused on recruiting volunteers to participate in the initiative. The call for volunteers was sent via our all-staff weekly newsletter as well as through direct emails to staff who had previously expressed interest in diversity and inclusion initiatives such as B-MEntor and our Race and Ethnicity Network, which was in development at the time. We also set up a webpage on the University website which contained further information and a list of answers to frequently asked questions. These communications outlined clearly the aims of the initiative, the role of a Fair Recruitment Specialists, the training they would be required to complete, the time commitment expected and the support and recognition they would receive.

These communications also included a supporting quote from our Principal, demonstrating the senior buy-in and recognition of this initiative as a key priority at St George's, University of London.

Our aim was to recruit a minimum 15 volunteers initially, however we quickly secured more than double this number, receiving very positive engagement with the initiative and its aims. We have a considerably higher number of female Fair Recruitment Specialists signed up than male. This is an area we will seek to address, encouraging more male BAME staff to take part and continuing to monitor the gender balance throughout.

2.3 Stage Three: Training and consultation

The next stage of our implementation focused on delivering the training sessions mentioned above and enabling consultation with the Fair Recruitment Specialists on matters such as support for Specialists, process for panel allocation and provisions for raising queries or concerns.

The training sessions were delivered as specific sessions for the Fair Recruitment Specialists which enabled recognition of the context in which these staff would be participating in recruitment activities. This also meant that the training sessions provided a space to collaboratively discuss how the initiative would work in practice, with valuable insight and feedback from the Specialists themselves. We continued to ensure this collaborative and consultative approach throughout all training sessions and beyond, gaining feedback from the Specialists on how the initiative would best meet its aims whilst remaining beneficial and supportive for them as volunteers.

As mentioned above, the funding from Advance HE's Good Practice Grant, enabled us to provide specific training on participating in interview panels, which we felt was essential to ensure this initiative was successful and our Specialists were supported, particularly those without prior experience of interviewing.

This training was delivered by Shepherd Associates and focused on the following:

- + Understanding the roles and responsibilities of panel members and the Chair for fair and effective recruitment.
- + Learning and practising the range of different question types required to fully test candidate answers and evidence.
- + Practicing taking notes during interviews.
- + Practicing ways to manage and control interviews.
- + Taking part in panel decision making after interviewing.

In addition to the above, the training ensured acknowledgment of the context of this particular initiative and its focus on including perspectives from BAME backgrounds. We felt this added an important element which must be given consideration in the planning, content and delivery of the training. We instructed Shepherd Associates to recognise factors such as challenging assumptions, disagreeing with the panel chair and/or panel members, and navigating power dynamics.

This training session focused on providing practical learning with opportunities to practice skills in situ. The training included specific role-play activities, using actors as interview candidates, so that participants had the opportunity to gain experience and put their learnings into practice prior to the initiative launching. Furthermore, the training was informed and made reference to our institutional recruitment procedures and policies.

Following the various training sessions outlined above, we concluded this stage with a briefing session for the Fair Recruitment Specialists. This session outlined how the initiative would work in practice and provided the Specialists with the chance to ask any questions or raise any concerns they may have prior to the initiative launching. As with the training sessions, the briefing session also took a collaborative and consultative approach with input from the Specialists on how they felt the initiative can be most impactful and effective.

This consultative approach led to the following learnings and developments:

- + Expectations of panellists document
 - This document accompanies the Fair Recruitment Specialists Initiative guidance document. It explicitly outlines the specific expectations that the Specialists have of those staff whose recruitment panels they join. All Hiring Manager and panel members are required to read this prior to having a Fair Recruitment Specialists join their recruitment panel.
- + 1:2:1 Follow up sessions
 - In order to ensure the Specialists feel supported throughout their participation in the initiative, they are each offered the opportunity of a 1:2:1 follow up meeting with the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser if they wish to raise any concerns, discuss any insights or make recommendations going forwards. If necessary, and with the Specialist's consent, concerns would be escalated as required, for example if concerns were raised over the behaviour of other panel members.
- + Provision of action learning sets
 - It was recognised that after participating on interview panels, there may be specific topics or situations that a Specialist(s) may find helpful to explore further in relation to personal development. These topics may relate to recruitment or may be wider. Action learning sets were chosen as a valuable approach to trial, as there is a range of experience amongst the Specialists we have recruited. This approach aims to support the Specialists, fostering collective learning and development, as well as enabling networking and relationship building. An action learning set would be provided upon request from a Specialists or following any trends in feedback received.

A briefing was also delivered to the HR Team, outlining their agreed responsibilities to signpost and promote the initiative and to put Hiring Managers in touch with the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser to arrange for a Fair Recruitment Specialist to join their panel. Through consultation with the HR Team, it was agreed that the existing Recruitment Request Form would be updated to include this initiative on it, asking for Hiring Managers to agree that they will participate. We decided to take an "opt-out" approach, communicating that all Hiring Managers should engage with this initiative unless they have reason not to e.g. their recruitment panel is already diverse.

We also ensured we managed expectations by including a statement on this same HR form, and in the guidance documents that states we cannot guarantee a Fair Recruitment Specialist will always be allocated to a recruitment panel, explaining that the Specialists are staff volunteers and are therefore managing their own workloads alongside participating in this initiative.

2.4 Stage Four: Launch

We launched this pilot initiative in November 2020. In order to officially launch the initiative, we worked with our Communications Team to ensure this was communicated in a number of our weekly all-staff newsletters. In addition to this, we sent direct emails to members of our Principal's Advisory Group, which includes our full Senior Management Team, asking them to disseminate information about the initiative within their areas. Copies of these communications are included in Appendix 1.

Our Principal also highlighted the initiative in her Principal's Briefing session, providing an outline of the aims and objectives and encouraging all staff to engage.

The endorsement from our Senior Management and HR Teams has been essential in raising awareness and engagement with the initiative.

In addition, we have also ensured our relevant training sessions make reference to this initiative, to increase awareness and engagement.

We have experienced a high level of awareness of the initiative following the range of approaches we have taken to communicate it from launch onwards.

2.5 Stage Five: Impact and evaluation

As we launched the initiative in November, it has been running for only 3 months at the time of writing this report. We are therefore able to share reflections on designing and implementing the initiative as well as very early feedback from those who have participated.

In the first three months since launching the pilot initiative, 26% of our recruitment activities have included a Fair Recruitment Specialist. There have also been a number of internal roles that have included a Specialist that are not allocated for in that percentage figure as they are not recorded in our central figures. We have only had one recruitment activity so far where we were unable to allocate a Fair Recruitment Specialist; this was due to very tight timing around the festive break period. Aside from this, all recruitment activities due to include a Specialist have done so within the timelines expected.

As all Fair Recruitment Specialists are volunteers, we acknowledged the risk that we may encounter challenges with a small number of underrepresented staff being asked to sit on a disproportionate amount of recruitment panels. Both the burden on the individual and the risk to the success of the initiative were discussed openly with key stakeholders and with the Fair Recruitment Specialists themselves. We stated that Specialists were expected to volunteer for at least one recruitment panel per year, to ensure no staff felt overburdened. So far, we have not encountered problems in being able to allocate a Specialist to panels requesting one. We will, however, pay close attention to this as the pilot continues and as engagement increases, to identify any challenges that emerge regarding the availability of Specialists to join recruitment panels.

We have feedback mechanisms in place for both Fair Recruitment Specialists and for the Hiring Manager and panellists after a recruitment panel takes place. We have received high levels of feedback from across these roles, which has been hugely valuable and positive thus far.

Learnings from implementation

- + It is essential to gain support and buy-in from Senior Leaders at the outset of the initiative. The expectation for staff to engage with the initiative needs to come from “the top”.
- + The participation of and input from HR is also essential in shaping a successful process to manage the initiative in practice.
- + It would be beneficial to schedule the Fair Recruitment Briefing session to occur first, before the individual training sessions. Feedback from Specialists stated that this would enable them to better understand their role and how the process would work in advance of beginning the training, meaning they would be better placed to ask questions and apply learnings from the training sessions.
- + Embedding reference to this initiative in all relevant activities has increased awareness and engagement e.g. in training sessions, briefings, committee agendas.
- + Fair Recruitment Specialists should be consulted throughout setting up the initiative to ensure their perspectives, lived experiences, concerns and objectives are taken into account.
- + The principle of coproduction has hugely benefited engagement and experience

Feedback from Hiring Managers and recruitment panel members

Early feedback from Hiring Managers and members of the panel has been very positive. Below is a general outline of the feedback received thus far:

- + The impartiality and the different perspective of having someone from outside of the team or area of work has been particularly valuable.
- + Staff mentioned having a Fair Recruitment Specialist added an extra layer of scrutiny
- + Staff mentioned the benefit of explaining the scheme to the interview candidates, which demonstrated the institutions commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- + Feedback was positive in relation to the management of the initiative, the communications and guidance provided.
- + Feedback also demonstrated the ways in which Hiring Managers had ensured the Specialist was included as an equal member of the recruitment panel from the moment they joined it.
- + Some responses mentioned how they would raise further awareness of the initiative amongst their own colleagues to ensure others engage and recognise its value.

Feedback from Fair Recruitment Specialists

Early feedback from the Fair Recruitment Specialists has also been very positive. Below is a general outline of the feedback received thus far:

- + All Fair Recruitment Specialists reported that they felt included as an equal member of the recruitment panel and that their perspective was recognised and considered by the panel members.
- + It was raised that having four panel members, which was the case for some panels once they had the addition of a Fair Recruitment Specialist, might be too many for lower grade roles.
- + All Specialists stated that they agreed with the final hiring decision that was made.

A couple of Specialists had been approached directly by a manager who knew they were participating in the initiative rather than via the allocation route. We ensured this was still monitored alongside all other allocations to ensure accurate records. This worked well in one case, however in another the Specialist felt that the role being recruited to was too senior and it was therefore not suitable for them to be on the panel. This is an area that we plan to pay attention to as the initiative develops, as it is important that the guidelines of the initiative are followed in order to ensure the Specialists feel supported and comfortable in their participation.

We have not yet received any requests for 1:2:1 follow up with the Diversity and Inclusion Adviser, nor have any specific topics or concerns arisen to explore via action learning sets. We are aware that we are in the early stages of this pilot and therefore continue to communicate these follow up options to Specialists.

We are continuing to promote the initiative via the HR Team and across committees where recruitment is discussed. We will also be reporting regularly to our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group on engagement, as the pilot continues.

3 Project Roadmap: Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative Pilot at St George's University of London

Stage 1: Understanding your data	Stage 2: Planning and recruitment	Stage 3: Training and consultation	Stage 4: Launch	Stage 5: Impact and evaluation
Activities				
Collection and analysis of recruitment data by characteristics over a number of years to enable identification of any trends. This becomes part of annual data reporting.	Key priorities and actions are agreed using an evidence informed approach, which relates back to what the institution's data shows.	Training schedule is in place and communicated in advance to Fair Recruitment Specialists.	Comprehensive guidance documents are produced for all staff, which outline the aims and objectives of the initiative as well as the process it follows.	Manager of the pilot ensures all Specialists and panellists are instructed to complete feedback forms after recruitment activities take place.
Recruitment data is regularly shared with relevant committees/groups and key stakeholders to ensure this understanding and awareness is wider than within Diversity and Inclusion.	Timescales and project milestones are consulted upon and agreed. Initiative is approach as an initial one-year pilot to enable room for development and learning.	Training sessions are delivered, and each enable room for consultation and feedback from Specialists to inform launch and delivery of pilot initiative.	A webpage is created to communicate the initiative and signpost guidance documents and contacts for enquiries. This also includes a Frequently Asked Questions section.	Feedback is regularly analysed, alongside data on recruitment activities. This looks at overall trends as well as any trends in different areas (e.g. academic/professional services).

Stage 1: Understanding your data	Stage 2: Planning and recruitment	Stage 3: Training and consultation	Stage 4: Launch	Stage 5: Impact and evaluation
Activities				
Initial trends or patterns are further investigated to ensure a full understanding of what the data is showing	Consultation is undertaken with and obtain buy in from key stakeholders: — Senior Leadership — HR — Learning and Development — BAME staff networks and relevant groups This input directly informs the design of the initiative to ensure positive collaboration.	Specific consultation is sought from Specialists on what their expectation are of other panellists. This feedback is collated into a formal document to be shared with recruitment panels.	Relevant HR form, for managers to use to notify their intention to recruit, is updated. This is informed by earlier consultation with HR on whether participation in the initiative is mandatory or optional.	Regular reports on progress and development of the initiative are shared with key stakeholders and with the relevant key committee(s). Initiative is a standing item where appropriate.
	Methods for monitoring participation within initiatives and related outcomes are established to enable robust evaluation	Briefing session is delivered to all Fair Recruitment Specialists. This allows space for questions and feedback from Specialists. This also outlines support provisions for Specialists.	Communications plan in place to officially launch the pilot across the institution. Where possible gain endorsement and participation in communications from senior management.	6-month reflection is undertaken, reviewing feedback, uptake and trends in data on allocation of Specialists and recruitment manager participation. This is shared with key stakeholders and relevant committees.

Stage 1: Understanding your data	Stage 2: Planning and recruitment	Stage 3: Training and consultation	Stage 4: Launch	Stage 5: Impact and evaluation
Activities				
	Training needs of the Fair Recruitment Specialists are identified considering internal and external resources. Where needed, external courses are commissioned.	Feedback gathered from Specialists on the training delivered to inform future developments of the initiative.	Allocation log is set up to track recruitment activities and the allocation of Specialists to each slot.	Full evaluation review of the pilot is done after one year. Learnings and evidence on impact inform decision on implementation and development of the initiative moving forward. This is shared with key stakeholders and relevant committees.
	Recruitment campaign in place to engage staff to volunteer. This clearly outlines the initiative's aims as well as the commitment required, and support and benefits offered to the Specialists who volunteer.		Robust feedback gathering mechanisms are in place and regularly communicated to Fair Recruitment Specialists and Hiring Managers and panel members	
Intended Outcomes				
Reporting of this data to key groups becomes business as usual e.g. an annual report to the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group. This keeps this topic on the agenda at an institutional level	Clear project plan for pilot initiative with clear timescales, milestones and outputs	Consultation with Fair Recruitment Specialists throughout training and briefing sessions informs initiative. Recognition and awareness of lived experiences are built into the design and delivery of this initiative	Institution-wide awareness of pilot initiative	Informative and comprehensive range of feedback is gathered from both Fair Recruitment Specialists, hiring managers and other panellists via feedback mechanisms.

Stage 1: Understanding your data	Stage 2: Planning and recruitment	Stage 3: Training and consultation	Stage 4: Launch	Stage 5: Impact and evaluation
Activities				
Conversations on trends shown in the data prompt developments and commitments of action to address issues identified, these are led and owned by senior leaders	Approach taken for pilot initiative recognises the needs and responsibilities of the individual key stakeholders. This is essential in ensuring continual engagement and positive experience.	Training sessions successfully address identified training needs and ensure all Specialists are prepared to participate on recruitment panels regardless of previous experience.	Senior endorsement through launch communications ensures positive engagement pilot initiative across institution	Evidence of positive impact of pilot initiative is identified
Endorsement gained from senior leaders and agreement on priority for action at an institutional level	Successful recruitment of staff volunteers to become Fair Recruitment Specialists. Gender balance is also achieved.	Fair Recruitment Specialists are clear on their role and responsibilities participating in the initiative. They also know where they can go to for support.	Clear and comprehensive allocation tool in place to ensure accurate monitoring	Learnings and insights gathered enhance the development of the initiative and its impact
	Robust training provision is in place to ensure Fair Recruitment Specialists are supported and prepared to participate	Learnings from consultation and feedback at this stage directly inform the launch and delivery of the initiative.		

Appendix 1 – Copy of communications to launch pilot

Summary for George's Weekly (all-staff newsletter)

As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion we are piloting a new recruitment initiative which is designed to address issues of underrepresentation of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates in our recruitment activities.

The Fair Recruitment Specialist initiative will provide a pool of staff volunteers who identify as being from a BAME background and who are available to join interview panels across the university. This initiative provides our BAME staff with a development opportunity involving comprehensive training through which they will develop key skills and gain hands on experience taking part in recruitment panels. The initiative also provides opportunities to network and build new relationships.

The creation of Fair Recruitment Specialists brings benefit not only in providing the visible diversity of our community to interview candidates, but also in ensuring panels include multiple perspectives in their decision making.

To find out more about the scheme, including how you can get involved, visit the webpage: www.sgul.ac.uk/about/our-professional-services/human-resources/equality-and-diversity/race-equality-at-st-georges

Ensuring diversity and equality of opportunity is at the heart of our values at St George's. The Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative hopes to be a valuable and constructive way in which we can embody these values in our recruitment practices. I encourage our staff to recognise the importance of diversity in decision making, and engage with this pilot scheme.

Professor Jenny Higham (Principal)

Email to Principal's Advisory Group (PAG)

Dear all,

I am emailing to let you know that we will be launching the pilot of the Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative w/c 2 November.

This pilot initiative has been designed to address the lack of representation on interview panels and to mitigate against potential unconscious bias in hiring decisions. It is also part of wider culture change at the university and aims to further embed diversity and inclusion into our recruitment practices.

All hiring managers will be expected to include a Specialist on their interview panels, where it is not already diverse in terms of ethnicity, from the beginning of November. Therefore please do cascade this message to your teams.

As this is a pilot, we will be testing this approach over the next year and will be monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness throughout to determine how this approach is achieving its aims. This pilot initiative has been recognized by Advance HE and we have been awarded a Good Practice Grant to support the initiative. As part of this, we will be sharing our evaluation of the pilot with Advance HE to support learning and sharing of best practice across the sector.

We have received a fantastic amount of engagement from minority ethnic staff who have signed up to volunteer their time to become Fair Recruitment Specialists to support this initiative. Please note that managers of Fair Recruitment Specialists are expected to recognize this role in Personal Development Reviews. I will also be providing support for Specialists as they participate in this initiative.

Further information and guidance on this initiative is available online. I have also attached the Fair Recruitment Specialist guidance pack to this email for ease of reference.

Please contact me if you have any questions relating to this initiative or would like me to provide a short briefing to your teams.

I look forward to sharing the evaluation and learnings from this pilot with you all in the near future.

Best wishes,

Liz Grand
Diversity and Inclusion Adviser

Appendix 2 – Copy of Expectations of Panellists document

Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative: Expectation of panellists

This document accompanies the full guidance document for participating in the Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative.

Purpose

This document sets out the expectations of panel members who are participating in the Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative. These expectations have been drawn up in collaboration with those staff who have volunteered to be Fair Recruitment Specialists (FRS).

The Hiring Manager and panel members participating in recruitment and including a Fair Recruitment Specialist in this must read these expectations and adhere to them.

In line with St George's Leadership Attributes, we expect Hiring Managers to demonstrate an inclusive and consultative approach to change and decision making, to value and respect diversity and create an inclusive environment. We expect interviews to be conducted in line with these principles, including embracing the participation on panels from Fair Recruitment Specialists.

Expectations

The Hiring Manager and panellists are expected to:

- Ensure that they have all read the Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative guidance document prior to the interview/shortlisting takes place. This is to ensure all members of the panel know about the initiative and why the Fair Recruitment Specialist has joined the panel.
- To explain any terminology or acronyms to the Fair Recruitment Specialist that may not be familiar to them, prior to interviewing/shortlisting
- The Hiring Manager must enable the Fair Recruitment Specialist allocated to their recruitment activity the opportunity to ask any questions they may have, in good time before the interview/shortlisting takes place
- The Hiring Manager and panellists must recognise that the Fair Recruitment Specialists are volunteering their time to support the university in addressing issues of underrepresentation.
- The Fair Recruitment Specialist is treated as an equal member of the
- interview/shortlisting panel, and their perspective is listened to alongside the rest of the panel members
- All panel members are expected to complete the feedback form after the interviews take place to inform the evaluation and development of this initiative



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