



**NES**  
NATIONAL  
EQUALITY  
STANDARD

**Sample final assessment report**



**EY**  
Building a better  
working world

**Organisation name**

## Limitations of this sample report

The following document provides an **overview** of the key elements of a NES final assessment report. This document is **limited in scope**, its purpose is to provide a **snapshot** and does not include the level of detail which would be provided in a client report.

The report follows the basic structure of a standard NES report which would usually contain approximately 120-140 pages.

In Section 1 of the report an executive summary provides headline results against the 49 competencies and key examples of good practice and areas for improvement across the 7 standards.

In Section 2 high level findings, general strengths and recommendations are provided for those competencies that have partially or not met the NES standard (this would vary depending on organisational score however for the purpose of this report 11 competencies are detailed).

In Section 3 the assessment and scoring methodology is provided.

In Section 4, detailed findings and further insights are outlined. In a standard NES report, the additional findings are broken down by the 7 standards, with detailed insight provided against all 49 competencies (7 competencies for each standard). For this report we have selected 4 competencies as examples to illustrate the type of information and recommendations provided.

References are made to “pages xx” and “competencies x.x.” which would usually indicate where additional detail could be found.

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# Organisation details



<b>Client name</b>	Organisation name
<b>Type of assessment</b>	NES assessment
<b>Report type</b>	Final report
<b>Lead assessor</b>	[Lead assessor]
<b>Assessment team</b>	[Assessment team members]
<b>Quality assurance</b>	[Name of QA reviewer]
<b>Date</b>	XXXXXXXXXX

## Assessing organisation

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Section 1:

# Summary of key findings

# Executive summary



This organisation has been certified with the National Equality Standard (NES) having successfully reached the level of proficiency required to meet each standard. The organisation has undergone a comprehensive and quality review via a thorough documentary analysis and a series of on-site interviews.

The organisation's policies and practices relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) have been assessed against the 49 competencies contained within the NES framework. The organisation has been evaluated as fully compliant against 38 of these.

The NES assessment team would like to give a special thanks to [names] for their commitment, drive and coordination of all activities throughout the NES assessment process, and to all others who participated in the interview process.

This report details the process undertaken to complete the NES assessment. The report describes observations of current good practice which meet or exceed NES requirements and key areas for improvement followed by detailed recommendations, where necessary, to reach the required level of proficiency for NES certification.

This will be supplemented by an implementation plan.

The assessment was undertaken in two key stages. The first stage was a documentary review of the evidence provided. This enabled the assessor to gain an understanding of whether the organisation had met the requirements of the standard within its documentary evidence. The second stage comprised of on-site interviews, supplemented by a survey. Interviews took place with employees and leadership to supplement and validate any documentary evidence already reviewed.

## Organisation's NES Assessment 20XX: Headline results



[Name]  
Head of NES assessment delivery

[Name]  
NES Chief Executive

# Results against the 49 competencies



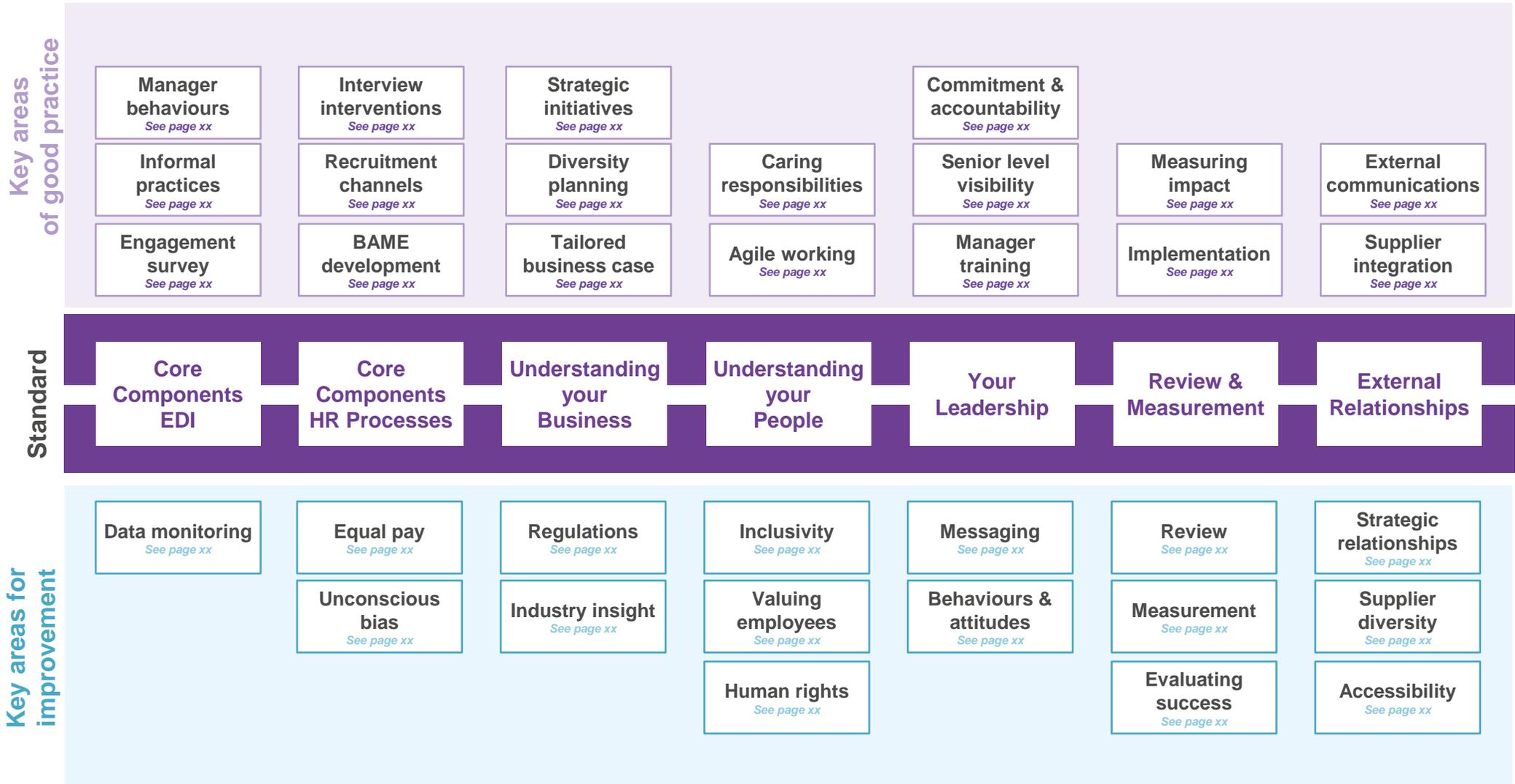
1 Core Components EDI	2 Core Components HR Processes	3 Understanding your Business	4 Understanding your People	5 Your Leadership	6 Review & Measurement	7 External Relationships
● 1.1 Culture	● 2.1 Talent identification	● 3.1 Strategic initiatives	● 4.1 Inclusivity	● 5.1 Commitment & accountability	● 6.1 Review	● 7.1 Community development & support
● 1.2 Policies & informal practices	● 2.2 Recruitment processes	● 3.2 Setting priorities	● 4.2 Caring responsibilities	● 5.2 Messaging	● 6.2 Measurement	● 7.2 Strategic relationships
● 1.3 Governance	● 2.3 Appraisal & performance monitoring	● 3.3 Progress & action planning	● 4.3 Valuing employees	● 5.3 Behaviours & attitudes	● 6.3 Evaluating success	● 7.3 Customer insight
● 1.4 Data monitoring	● 2.4 Career progression	● 3.4 Business planning	● 4.4 Employee support	● 5.4 Senior level scrutiny	● 6.4 Return on investment	● 7.4 External communications
● 1.5 Engagement survey	● 2.5 Learning & development	● 3.5 Business case & benefits	● 4.5 Flexible working	● 5.5 Senior level visibility	● 6.5 Cost of exit	● 7.5 Supplier integration
● 1.6 Employee feedback	● 2.6 Equal pay	● 3.6 Regulations	● 4.6 Employee adjustments	● 5.6 Targeted training	● 6.6 Tracking & analysing	● 7.6 Supplier diversity criteria
● 1.7 Communication approach	● 2.7 Unconscious bias	● 3.7 Industry insight	● 4.7 Consideration of human rights	● 5.7 Measurable leadership competencies	● 6.7 Implementation	● 7.7 Accessibility

# Broad overview of your organisation



The diagram below illustrates some of the key examples of good practice and areas for improvement across the seven standards.

These are explored in detail in Sections 2 and 4 of this report.



## Section 2:

# Key outcomes



# Key organisational strengths



The diagram below details some of the key organisational strengths observed throughout the assessment process.

For more examples of good practice please see\*  denoted from pages xx to xx, the detail of which is contained in Section 4.



- The D&I strategy evidences a clear approach and strategy to EDI at a global level, with a structure that embeds diversity commitment by setting up diversity leads across all parts of the organisation.
- Many different approaches are used to ensure EDI messages are communicated consistently and clearly, for example staff bulletins are used to share EDI news stories and the monthly newsletters assist with the D&I brand development. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

- Four specific unconscious bias courses and a number of 'anytime' learning materials are available.
- There is a good understanding of bias and staff have personally led best practice initiatives such as the de-personalising candidates programme.
- The approach to CV screening has helped to reduce bias in recruitment. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

- Numerous community development activities are supported by the organisation, many of which are closely linked to the social mobility agenda, including the Breaking the Stigma campaign.
- Partnerships with external organisations are helping to empower young people through sports programmes and technology mentoring respectively. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

- There are initiatives and training courses in place which help address specific challenges identified through engagement survey results, including training on managing diverse teams.
- Over two-thirds of staff surveyed demonstrated an awareness of the corporate values and the D&I agenda.
- Interviews with staff indicated that the culture has improved in recent years.
- Rewards can be allocated through the 'Appreciation Scheme' for demonstrating the corporate values. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

- There are good examples of building and sustaining positive relationships, including intelligence roles in stakeholder engagement.
- Awareness day events with external providers have received positive feedback, with 60% of attendees stating they feel more comfortable discussing issues at work as result of the sessions.
  - Interview feedback identified that collaboration with public health bodies has helped to raise awareness of specific issues. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

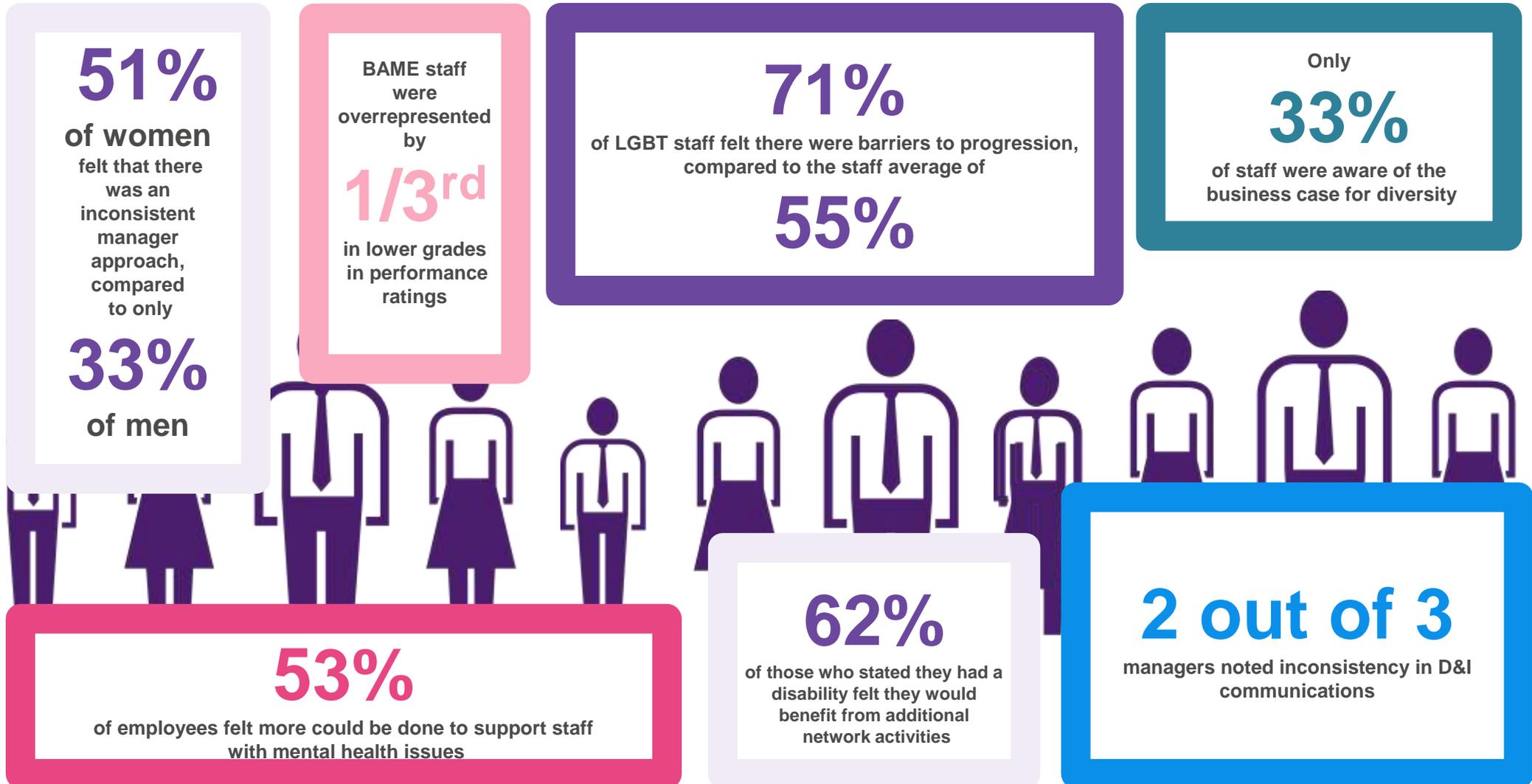
- Initiatives such as the Disability and Mental Health Networks, help to support mental and physical wellbeing and raise awareness.
- The Health and Wellbeing Calendar details a range of awareness raising events.
- There is first-class access to medical and occupational support. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

- The EDI agenda and leadership news is well-communicated through email bulletins, Yammer and regular newsletters.
- Staff feel empowered to speak up and engage with leaders through initiatives such as the Business Daily stand-up sessions and fortnightly lunches with the leadership team. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

- Ethnic Minority Group networking and 'soft skill' development series have been successful in attracting employees and a diverse range of students and clients.
- Feedback from the Female Leadership Programme has been extremely positive and has made a measurable impact: 43% of newly appointed leaders are female.
- Individuals with responsibilities in HR processes such as recruitment and performance management have mandatory unconscious bias training. *[For full details see competencies x.x, x.x]*

# Overview of key areas for improvement

The information below highlights some of the key survey findings. These topics are explored further in section 4



# Summary of key areas for improvement segmented by each standard



## 1. Core Components EDI

This standard identifies the ways in which your organisation demonstrates inclusive practices and how EDI is integrated within the fabric of your business .

### Evidence provided

#### 1.5 Engagement survey

- The organisation has an Annual People Survey (APS) which employees are actively encouraged to complete and actions are taken to address specific issues identified.
- The APS communications plan details the key dates, messages and various channels utilised to encourage survey completion during the two-month lead up to the survey.
- APS results indicate evidence of significant improvement in key areas.
- 'What We Did' details the action taken in response to the previous survey results.
- Workshops have been held throughout the central management office to discuss the findings of the APS.
- Results generated by the APS are disseminated to managers and discussed with staff. Staff are encouraged to provide input into the action plans.
- A management event took place to formulate actions to address issues.

*For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx*

### Key areas for improvement

#### Response rate

- Some staff noted that the 'What We Did' initiative targeted issues where the organisation could demonstrate quick and immediate results which were visible but did not address long-term systemic issues.
- At present, the APS is completed via email so it is not trusted by all as being anonymous.
- There is a perception amongst some that the questions are tailored to suit the responses the organisation would like to receive.

#### Obtaining valuable results

- The APS is not analysed across other protected characteristics besides gender.
- The phrasing of the APS questions are sometimes misleading. For example, staff interpret the question which asks whether employees feel discriminated against based on "working patterns" as meaning employees are required to work long hours.
- These misinterpretations result in the APS not providing accurate data on staff engagement and discrimination.

### Recommendations

- The 'What We Did' initiative should be developed to include progress against longer-term goals such as improving transparency of career progression, widening training options available and improving managers' attitudes towards agile working as outlined in the implementation plan.
- The organisation must ensure that the APS is anonymous and should communicate to staff that the responses will not be attributable. This can be communicated through the 'Daily News' email alerts and the Intranet Hub.
- Staff should be engaged in the APS and its dissemination for the duration of the campaign to sustain a high response rate. This could be achieved by including the survey and what it hopes to achieve as one of the 'Key Communication Points' in all team meetings leading up to the survey. Employee group and network representatives may also be consulted on survey question design.
- Update the APS questions to include protected characteristics other than gender. In your sector, we would expect to see ethnicity and disability, in addition to gender, as a minimum.
- Any analysis that identifies a trend or potential disproportionality should be investigated. This should be shared during the regular 'Deep Dive' sessions and plans put in place to mitigate the trends identified. The plans should be incorporated into the wider D&I strategy document.
- A review of the questions should be conducted to assess their effectiveness in capturing useful data. Identify those questions which are ambiguous and cross-check against the NES survey question bank provided in the appendix to identify more specific and relevant questions.
- The organisation should look at other methods of systematically collating employee views and gauging employee engagement for example, through the introduction of regular questionnaires similar to the Sustainability Mini-Survey used across the Finance Department. Please see the appendix for an example.
- There is a need for further guidance to interpret terms used in the APS. The "NES D&I Terms Guidance Document" could be used to provide clearer definitions.

# Summary of key areas for improvement segmented by each standard



## 2. Core Components HR Processes

This standard addresses the ways in which talent is attracted, retained and managed fairly and inclusively within the business.

Evidence provided	Key areas for improvement	Recommendations
<p><b>2.5 Learning &amp; development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are a range of development programmes available for staff, including the career pathway programme, coaching and feedback training, amongst many others.</li> </ul> <p><i>For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some staff felt that the level of investment in the EDI aspect of training provisions did not sufficiently equip staff to meet the unique demands of the organisation.</li> <li>Interviews with staff indicated that the money and resource is not available to develop staff; as such there is a sense that careers are not progressing at the moment.</li> <li>Some employees reported that they need to 'fight' to get on training courses due to budget constraints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There should be training provided to help staff understand the cultural norms of the various different groups and nationalities they work with. This could be introduced as part of the Manager Upskill Course, the general On-boarding Course and the Top Leader Programme.</li> <li>Training needs analysis should be conducted through capturing feedback from career coaches during their 'Coach Catch-ups' to identify and target specific and appropriate training for staff. Based on feedback already captured through 'Talk and Tell' sessions, training on leading diverse teams should be included.</li> <li>The organisation should plan the Monthly Manager Training schedule around the operational schedule to ensure training opportunities are in place and are enabling individuals to progress.</li> <li>Based on the metrics captured in the NES assessment survey, there is a need to allocate additional training budget to meet skills or development gaps for middle-managers. We estimate you will need two days allocated to training based on the number of middle-managers in your organisation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.6 Equal pay</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The business has set principles to ensure fairness and equity are fundamental to the pay approach.</li> <li>The organisation operates a 'lockstep' system for determining staff pay, which means that all staff at the same level are paid the same salary.</li> <li>The organisation has committed to ensuring that the process for market testing salary levels is robust and transparent and that judgements are accurate and competitive.</li> <li>Bonuses are determined annually based on performance review ratings.</li> </ul> <p><i>For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applied ratings are analysed by gender to ensure fairness but no analysis is carried out across any other protected group.</li> <li>Some staff stated that they feel there is a lack of transparency in the bonus allocation process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis should be carried out across any other protected group besides gender to ensure fairness in pay. This would be most applicable to ethnicity and disability in your sector. This could be piloted with the Central Division who have the best access to reliable and up-to-date data. Please see the appendix for guidance.</li> <li>The Employee Network Steering Group should lead the review and moderation of other protected groups once diversity data has been collected on a wider scale to challenge any disproportionate trends.</li> <li>A job evaluation process overseen by the HR Compensation Coordinator should be implemented to sample the pay awarded at like-for-like grades to ensure no pay disparity, in line with the anticipated gender pay reporting requirements.</li> <li>The organisation should attend the government monthly equal pay seminar to better understand the approaches to capturing, analysing and reporting on pay data applied by other large and complex organisations.</li> <li>The organisation should communicate the bonus allocation process to employees, including its correlation to ratings. This can be shared in its Year-End Review emails, as well as during 'Coach Catch-ups', particularly during the review period.</li> <li>Ratings and bonus should be monitored through the HR CompSystem to ensure there is no disproportionate trend in awards among diverse groups.</li> </ul>

# Summary of key areas for improvement segmented by each standard



## 3. Understanding your Business

This standard provides an opportunity for your organisation to contextualise the NES to ensure it is relevant to your sector and is aligned to your specific business priorities.

### Evidence provided

#### 3.2 Setting priorities

- There are clear and defined priorities for the organisation as a whole with respect to EDI, in particular, gender and ethnicity.
- The organisation's aspiration of recruiting more women and more talent from BAME backgrounds is generally understood across the organisation.

*For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx*

#### 3.7 Industry insight

- The organisation has identified a range of sources to better understand sector-specific benchmarking.
- The organisation takes part in EDI-related benchmarking exercises every few years to check that they are in line with good practice and to measure progress. Benchmarking is described as: 'A way to ensure the business remains relevant in as many diversity strands as possible, not only for current employees but also for future talent, customers and the community.'

*For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx*

### Key areas for improvement

- There is a lack of understanding of the various underrepresentation issues in different locations and / or divisions and a lack of recognition that there may be a need for different analysis priorities to be taken into account.
- For example, for some divisions within the Business Service function they are overrepresented by women and there is a need to attract more men.
- Currently there is no UK-wide strategy on EDI that can be contextualised at a divisional and location level which recognises that there are unique issues facing different locations and teams.

- Some staff noted that the management of industry organisations and networks is poor and the opportunities and benefits they bring are not adequately capitalised on.
- For example, the organisation is a member of the Industry Networking Forum for ethnic minorities; however interviewees noted that little is done on formal ethnic minority benchmarking.

- It is unclear whether benchmarking activities are regularly evaluated.

- There is a lack of benchmarking available.

### Recommendations

- Workshops should be held at all major locations (e.g. Bank) with local employees to further understand the overarching issues at each location.
- The Annual People Survey (APS) should be analysed by location / division (e.g. Client Services) to better understand the diversity profile of the organisation in these sub-sections.
- The new joiner forms provided at induction day and the exit questionnaires provided to leavers should include questions to capture relevant diversity data. For your sector, this would include gender, ethnicity and disability.
- Local / Divisional EDI Champions should be allocated.

- Based on information gathered from the activities recommended above, the EDI Steering Group should use its 'Unity' strategy sessions to discuss how best to contextualise EDI priorities by location.
- The EDI Champions should be invited to these sessions and should promote initiatives that would be of most value to their location / division.

- The organisation should undertake a mapping exercise of its current relationships with external organisations and networks to its identified EDI priorities to identify the potential and most relevant sources of benchmarking data for its business.
- In addition to its existing priorities, the organisation should consider also benchmarking for disability, as it is also relevant to the sector.
- For any gaps identified, the NES team can provide qualitative good practice benchmarks for applicable protected characteristics.

- The impact of each benchmarking activity can be tracked against a list of KPIs in order to determine which to continue investing in. A benefit-tracking tool similar to the CSR Benefit Measurement Dashboard could be adapted to help assess the impacts and benefits. Please see the appendix for an example.

- Benchmarking data from organisations of similar size and sector along with data from the NES assessment can be used to inform / set clear aspirational targets which can be included in the organisation's EDI Strategy and Action Plan, and can be monitored and adjusted by the Executive Team.

# Summary of key areas for improvement segmented by each standard

## 4. Understanding your People



This standard addresses the ways in which the diverse needs of your people are being met throughout their employment experience.

### Evidence provided

### Key areas for improvement

### Recommendations

#### 4.3 Caring responsibilities

- The organisation has a flexible working policy which sets out both informal and formal procedures that can be put in place for those who have caring responsibilities.
- The business is working with an external provider to develop a national maternity coaching initiative. The eligibility criteria for the scheme, along with further details of the initiative were not provided to the assessor.
- Many individuals wish to return to work following having a family. Childcare vouchers are provided and eligible employees have access to two on-site nurseries. The business also offers paid leave for when unexpected situations arise with children and adults for whom employees have a caring responsibility.

*For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx*

#### 4.5 Flexible working

- There is a formal flexible working policy in place.
- A range of formal flexible working options including job-shares, staggered hours and term time working are available to employees.

*For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx*

- There is no support group to help employees who care for children, the elderly or disabled, as well as those employees with disabilities themselves.

- It was reported that some managers were not supportive of flexible working practices and expected staff who had childcare responsibilities to be available on their days off.
- For example, many women provided feedback that indicates that there was a lack of flexibility for women returning from maternity leave.

- Return rates for maternity returners one year on is not known.

- There are limited platforms to formally recognise and promote senior role models with caring responsibilities.

- Some staff viewed flexible working as an obstacle to promotion.

- The formal flexible working policy is perceived as not always being consistently applied, with some managers perceived as showing preferential treatment.
- Within some business units there is a perception that managers' view individual's performance as affected by their decision to work flexibly.

- A Working Parent and Carers Network is recommended to promote family-friendly diversity activities. The business can also work with other local groups and social enterprises to provide external support and guidance. For a full list of providers, please see the appendix.
- The organisation should consider doing more to understand the effect that increasing caring responsibilities may have on its people. The 'People Panel' sessions could be used as a platform to discuss the issues, challenges and necessary support for staff with caring responsibilities. For example, the provision of emergency childcare and eldercare provision should also be considered.

- Managers should be made aware of the benefits of agile working, and how technology can be utilised in a way that ensures the business can operate and function appropriately. A session on agile working and technology could be scheduled for one of the upcoming Monthly Manager Training sessions.
- Divisions which have low staff retention (e.g. Business Services) could be used as a pilot before rolling out to the wider organisation, as they would benefit the most from this training.

- Complete an analysis of any changes to the return rates for maternity returners one year on. These changes should be reviewed by the EDI Steering Group. Exit questionnaires should be analysed further should any discrepancies in the return rates be identified.

- Consider introducing a platform to showcase individuals demonstrating inclusive behaviours. Examples include a 'Spotlight' section on role models with caring responsibilities or headline articles in the 'Our News' company newsletter.

- Engage with the Employee Networks and EDI Champions to conduct briefing sessions at 'My Team' meetings on the merits and challenges of flexible working.

- The Flexible Working Policy, Section 1.3.6, should be updated in accordance with the Flexible Working Regulations 2014.
- Webinar sessions should be held to inform managers of changes to legislation and ensure they have a good understanding of the formal flexible working policy.
- Review the performance ratings of part-time staff to ensure that no disproportionality exists. Goals and targets should be adjusted appropriately for part-time workers and this should be emphasised by the HR Representative prior to all review panels.

# Summary of key areas for improvement segmented by each standard



## 5. Your Leadership

This standard measures the extent to which your senior leadership team are leading by example and practising the inclusive and inspiring behaviours that demonstrate their commitment to EDI.

### Evidence provided

#### 5.1 Commitment and accountability

- There is evidence of significant leadership commitment to EDI, with individuals taking ownership of the EDI agenda.
- EDI issues are discussed as a standing agenda item at monthly Top-level Management Team (TMT) meetings and EDI forms part of the TMT performance objectives.
- The documentary evidence indicates that the current structures support the organisation's commitment to EDI:
  - The EDI Advisory Group.
  - The Board of Directors has signed up to a Diversity Charter.
  - TMT may join one of the organisation's support networks.
- There are several examples of leaders' involvement and engagement:
  - The organisation's EDI video workshops were delivered by local TMT members.
  - Regional managers met with members of staff after the annual peak period.
  - TMT members support the diversity group mentoring scheme.

**For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx**

### Key areas for improvement

- Although employees stated that generally the company culture is one where people feel "comfortable being themselves", some noted there is a perceived stigma associated with the LGBT community and part-time workers.
- Some inconsistencies were noted in relation to the benchmarking submission and staff perception. Please see page X for more details.
- It was noted that middle managers need to be more visible and have more training to manage diversity within their teams.
- Previously, there were face-to-face diversity training sessions provided, this has now been replaced with an e-learning platform and there is no face-to-face training delivered in relation to diversity or equality law.
- There is a need to ensure that all leaders and managers view diversity as a key strategic priority and have individual responsibilities for specific EDI actions.
- Some staff reported a lack of senior-level role models across some protected groups.
- It was stated that previously there was an EDI objective in the leadership competencies measured as part of the performance review process, however this does not currently appear to still be the case.

### Recommendations

- Focus groups should be set up to further understand the needs of the LGBT community and part-time workers. Based on these sessions, a clear action plan should be drafted to address the issues and ensure there is no stigma associated with these groups. The local LGBT Champions should be responsible for delivery against this plan.
- Ensure that lessons learnt from EDI activities at specific locations (e.g. Canary Wharf) are fed back into the EDI Strategy and Action Plan and aligned to the Business Strategy.
- More could be done to ensure that EDI is integrated into the core values of the organisation and there is a focus on diversity within all organisational processes. For example, EDI could be incorporated as one of 'Our Key Organisational Values' which are currently being defined.
- Re-introduce diversity training sessions into the Monthly Manager Training schedule.
- Ensure that all middle-managers, not just those with specific EDI responsibilities such as network sponsorship, understand the importance of setting and reviewing diversity aspirations, especially in those business units and locations where staff are less aware of the EDI agenda.
- Review the People Goal to ensure it is more tailored to inclusion and getting more senior leaders to take ownership i.e. those less proactive in the EDI space.
- EDI objectives should be included on the 'Manager Metrics' scorecards and goal plans, and form part of the Performance and Review Process to help incentivise manager involvement and commitment.
- Consider how senior-level managers can be more involved both informally in the agenda and formally with specific roles and responsibilities.
  - The current EDI governance structure (including the EDI Steering Group) should be reviewed to identify where additional responsibilities could be assigned.
  - Local EDI Champions for key protected groups should be assigned to help promote the agenda locally.

## Brief summary of key areas for improvement segmented by each standard



# 6. Review and Measurement

This standard assesses the effectiveness of EDI initiatives that have been undertaken within your organisation and examines the proposed progress and success factors that determine the impact each activity has had on the organisation, the local community and on the individuals involved.

### Evidence provided

### Key areas for improvement

### Recommendations

#### 6.3 Evaluating success

- The organisation's main focus has been on evaluating the success of gender-targeted initiatives and evaluation of data shows "positive progress" with regards to attendees' career progression.
- No Employee Networks have strategies and targets agreed annually and achievements are not tracked accordingly.
- The evidence provided indicates that the organisation has very few initiatives in place to support its commitment to EDI.
- The local membership of the EDI Advisory Group was refreshed.
- There is no dedicated role of 'EDI Sponsor'.
- Area action plans are in place. EDI Leaders coordinate activity and ensure that the different areas are aligned.
- Middle managers have very few specific KPIs relating to EDI.
- All training for the end-of-year validation contains no unconscious bias training.
- The organisation has initiatives in place to respond to the analysis of the results of the people engagement survey.

- Very few interviewees were clear as to what "success looks like" and stressed the need for clear, measurable criteria to be defined at the onset in order to measure future success.
- There is no requirement within the organisation's business case submission tool to define success criteria for an event or initiative.
- Although the organisation has a number of initiatives which demonstrate its commitment to continual improvement, there do not appear to be clearly defined and stretching aspirations in place.
- Those that were interviewed described how previous initiatives could be reviewed to build upon previous successes. This includes interventions that worked well and demonstrated success and those that did not meet the desired objectives.
- Some, but not all, new initiatives have timescales for achievement and individuals identified to ensure accountability.
- There is a lack of intelligence on how the efforts made by the EDI Steering Group are impacting the situation on the ground, therefore resulting in a reduced understanding on how to improve.
- More can be done to strengthen the tracking and review of career ambitions and interest areas.

- Develop specific criteria for measuring the success and effectiveness of EDI-related interventions. (please see section 4 on standard methodology for doing this). The successes should be tracked using a tool similar to the CSR Benefit Measurement Dashboard, and regular progress updates should be provided to the EDI Steering Group at its meetings to ensure constant progression.
- Ensure that the business cases submitted for the Employee Networks are aligned with success criteria so that any initiatives can be effectively and systematically evaluated.
- Clear EDI aspirations should be set which are measurable, add real value to the organisation and involve a greater level of leadership. This could be based on what the organisation considers to be the ideal representation of specific protected characteristics at senior grades which is relevant and proportionate to the organisation (e.g. gender, ethnicity and disability). Timelines should be set for when this will be achieved by.
- The organisation should consider the lessons learnt from the recent and ongoing Operational Improvement process and how this can be translated into the context of EDI. Key individuals involved in the Operational Improvement process should be invited to attend the EDI Steering Group meetings to provide their insight.
- Benchmarking, sector knowledge and lessons learnt should feed directly into the setting of future, stretching aspirations.
- The organisation should capture feedback from those individuals involved in the EDI agenda to provide insight on how EDI activities have enabled individuals to become better equipped within their roles. This should be communicated via the Intranet, 'My Team' meetings and the 'EDI Community' briefing sessions.
- Review the impact of initiatives in place for effectiveness using the NES Measurement Tool provided in the appendix and analyse the results for future planning.
- Utilise the Industry Networking Forum to share best practice and to learn from other organisations' good diversity practice. The sessions could also be used to showcase the EDI successes of the organisation to date.

*For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx*

# Brief summary of key areas for improvement segmented by each standard



## 7. External Relationships

This standard assesses the ways in which both suppliers and clients have been considered in your organisation's efforts to improve EDI.

Evidence provided	Key areas for improvement	Recommendations
<p><b>7.2 Strategic relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organisation engages with a number of external organisations and initiatives with the aim of building positive strategic relationships.</li> <li>Interviews and documentary evidence provided a number of good examples of building and sustaining positive relationships, such as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligence role in stakeholder engagement</li> <li>Awareness day event</li> <li>On-site health and well-being unit</li> <li>Collaboration with public health bodies</li> <li>Education programmes and meetings with industry associations / alliances</li> </ul> </li> <li>There is a strategic focus placed upon who the business works with, intended to bring benefit to the employees and the community.</li> </ul> <p><i>For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx</i></p>	<p><b>Engaging communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a concern that local communities do not have an awareness of what the organisation does and are not aware of the fact that the organisation is there to support and help them.</li> <li>Without continuous engagement with communities there is a concern that a lack of trust could exist.</li> <li>The organisation works with many different groups and communities and therefore may not have a strong understanding of all the cultural differences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Measuring benefits and impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organisation is currently not assessing the benefits of the collaborative approaches.</li> <li>There is currently no tool or mechanism to assess the benefits of the organisation's strategic relationships.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organisation should consider speaking to Somali and Bangladeshi communities, who are disproportionately represented across the customer base, on the benefit gained from its 'Reaching Communities' programme. This engagement would help to bring awareness of the work they are doing, how they can better help and any risks (which they may not understand due to cultural differences).</li> <li>Staff who work with individuals predominantly from specific ethnicities / nationalities should be given opportunities to gain an appreciation and respect for the values of these cultures and how to treat and behave with them. Additionally, members of these communities could hold talks with staff about their cultures. For example, a session could be introduced during the Stakeholder Speaker series to accommodate this.</li> <li>The organisation should consider working closer with charities who help raise awareness of what the organisation does. There is a need to engage more directly to improve awareness of their CSR profile.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organisation should ensure that all investments have clearly identified desired outcomes and the organisation should identify the factors that would measure the benefits or return on this investment.</li> <li>This could be achieved by utilising the NES Measurement Tool provided in the appendix, and applied consistently and regularly (e.g. quarterly to all strategic relationships) to measure any benefits.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.6 Supplier diversity criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was reported that the organisation is now focused on supplier relationship management.</li> <li>Employees had some understanding of the benefits of monitoring suppliers.</li> </ul> <p><i>For detailed evidence and good practice see page xx-xx</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is currently no mechanism in place to capture the ownership and diversity data of suppliers.</li> <li>The current supplier base is mainly made up of larger companies which form the basis of their preferred supplier list.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce a section in the New Supplier Tender Form which requires suppliers to answer specific EDI questions and provide evidence of EDI considerations in their business. Ensure that vendors have the opportunity to provide internal diversity data through this form. An example is provided in the appendix.</li> <li>Consider hosting 'Meeting the Supplier' events targeted at SMEs and local start-up businesses to widen the potential pool of preferred suppliers that the organisation uses.</li> </ul>

# Compliance against protected characteristics



# Compliance against the protected characteristics

The NES is a holistic assessment which seeks to ensure all of the nine protected characteristics have been supported in some way. The table below details some of the organisation's activities and good practice which relate to each of the protected characteristics.

<p>Age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The organisation has a default retirement age, which is not in line with current legislation. Please see attachment for detailed recommendations for urgent implementation.</li><li>▪ Employees working beyond the pensionable age of 65 can be granted part-time working arrangements to support their run down to retirement. An analysis was conducted using the HR tracking tool to understand potential disproportionality in performance ratings with regard to age groups.</li><li>▪ The organisation offers 'Priority Services' to customers who are of state-pensionable age, and has demonstrated that it adheres to both the industry regulator's requirements and the trade association's Code of Practice regarding age.</li><li>▪ As a partnership, one part of your business structure is exempt from the default retirement age and this legal exemption should be considered.</li></ul>
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The appropriate reasonable adjustments have been made, as and when required in line with the Equality Act 2010.</li><li>▪ The organisation's CEO signed a pledge to support the a disability campaign with a high-level Government Official for disabled people and expressed personal support for the cause.</li><li>▪ The Carers and Disability Network aims to provide support and information to disabled employees and carers. Although the Network is still refining its plans and future strategy, it was noted that it has already been successful at facilitating some peer-to-peer communications / support and an online membership form has helped identify what is important to members.</li><li>▪ The Network for Dyslexic People has been set up to support all neuro-diverse employees.</li><li>▪ There are several methods through which employees can receive support and guidance, including a third-party psychological support provider and Operational Health team advice.</li><li>▪ Training is available to support staff with disabilities or mental health problems, including Business Disability Forum guides. When the need for additional training is identified new training opportunities have been introduced, including site / team specific training.</li><li>▪ The organisation is engaged in a number of initiatives to support persons with disability in employment, including more diverse recruiting, provision of work experience and supporting relevant organisations.</li><li>▪ One of the business units is considering accessibility, visual / hearing impairments and colour blindness / anosmia in the design of new buildings. The Carers and Disability Network has also provided input on the design of the local training site to ensure maximum accessibility.</li><li>▪ The organisation has partnered with a Paralympic sporting event and in this respect, has helped raise money and sponsor several athletes. This partnership resonates with employees and is positive for external brand and employee engagement.</li><li>▪ There are a number of ways through which the company ensures their materials and services are accessible to their customers, such as Priority Services, alternative / adjusted billing arrangements and assistance with meter access.</li><li>▪ All employees have access to free, independent and confidential counselling support through the Employee Assistance Programme provided by an external, independent party.</li></ul>

<b>Gender reassignment</b>
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>
<b>Race</b>

- Concerns were raised on the way medical insurance is being applied, please see detailed recommendations in the appendix on good practice in this area.
- The assessor identified conflicts in relation to the Dual Use provision.
- The organisation has been involved with a number of events to increase visibility around transgender issues, such as the Transgender and Recruitment' breakfast event to discuss with talent acquisition specialists the approaches taken to attracting and recruiting transgender candidates and the independently-run industry network for transgendered professionals and alliances.

- The Paternity Leave Policy makes reference to civil partnership and marriage and states that the employee's wife, partner or civil partner is eligible for time off for antenatal appointments, two weeks of paternity leave and additional paternity leave as per the new legislation. This policy does not differentiate between opposite or same sex relationships or marriages, ensuring that they are inclusive of all.

- Maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave arrangements are in place and the organisation has recently formalised its approach to Shared Parental Leave.
- There appears to be a good maternity returner rate, with the most recent analysis indicating only 23 resignations out of 350.
- Examples were provided of the organisation encouraging pregnant employees to apply for roles even a short time before commencing maternity leave.
- The Parents' Network is currently in the development stage and aims to promote awareness of the support options available, develop guidance for line managers on how to assist staff, discuss legislative changes and provide a discussion forum for working parents.
- Whilst survey and interview feedback from staff was generally good, two cases were identified where individuals were treated unfairly as part of the end of year review process (see attachment for guidance).

- The BAME Network aims to create a sense of community, engage employees, promote the business case for diversity and positively influence the inclusion agenda. Numerous examples of employee involvement in BAME Network activities were evidenced. The Network produces a newsletter and developed a leaflet to advise staff on career development, as well as a document outlining how to set quality objectives and development plans.
- A reverse mentoring programme scheme was introduced to improve senior management's understanding of the issues faced by BAME staff. The BAME mentoring pilot was developed to target low engagement scores and the perceived lack of career opportunities and guidance among this group, and has led to the development of a BAME focus group.
- The organisation participated in an external cross-organisational mentoring scheme which involved group coaching facilitated by a senior lead mentor, and provided BAME role models and peer support.
- The EDI events calendar lists events taking place over the year including internal Employee Network events and important cultural events such as Black History Month.
- A specialist recruitment agency is used to target BAME talent at entry levels.
- The organisation sponsors the BAME Star Club, showcasing the achievements of the best BAME students nationwide.
- The BAME Network is working closely with the training and development team to develop initiatives to support black employees in their career progression.
- The Corporate Talent Panel is working with regional leaders to understand opportunities available for BAME development and succession.
- A number of positive initiatives were identified however disproportionality is still an issue and there is a lack of understanding of the definition of race within the law. Please see attachment for detailed guidance.

## Religion and belief

- The EDI intranet site contains articles to inform staff of cultural events and promotes key cultural days. A factsheet has been developed which lists religious and cultural festivals.
- The BAME Network arranges several religious and cultural celebrations throughout the year including Diwali, Lent and Chinese New Year. Communications are issued to all staff to encourage attendance and participation.
- Communications help raise awareness of Ramadan, explain the practice and how staff should adjust their behaviours and make allowances for their colleagues. Adjustments to employee working hours / travel requirements are made during Ramadan.
- Extended leave is provided for religious festivals / events.
- On-site catering accommodates vegan, halal and kosher requests, along with other dietary requirements.
- Prayer or faith rooms are available in a number of offices.
- Religious celebrations are acknowledged through internal communications and activities led by staff diversity interest groups.
- Christmas parties are now referred to as year-end events to include individuals from all religious backgrounds.
- There is a concern that in those locations with larger Muslim populations, the needs of Muslim employees during Ramadan are not being adequately addressed.

## Sex

- The organisation should be aware of the forthcoming equal pay reporting requirements since there is currently no mechanism in place to address this.
- Part of the succession process at senior levels involves the identification of top female talent for targeted development programmes.
- A taskforce for women is in place to design and monitor initiatives related to gender progression within the organisation.
- A number of targeted development programmes are in place for women, including the Leadership Programme for Women and Women in Business initiative.
- The organisation has encouraged the use of diverse interview panels.
- There is scrutiny of candidate slates to ensure diversity in recruitment.
- The company's gender aspirations include a goal to increase the number of women in senior leadership succession plans to 40% and achieve 30% female middle management and 30% executive board membership by 2020..
- The Women's Network aims to support the goals of women and ensure to recruit, develop and retain quality female talent. It has over 500 members, a representative at every major operating region and 20% male membership. Its activities include webinars, annual conferences and lunchtime events, as well as its mentoring programme.
- Numerous examples of employee involvement in Network activities and other events were evidenced in the documents provided, including a lunchtime session entitled "Nurturing Your Future Career With Us" hosted by a regional Women's Network events team.
- The company's leaders get involved in the gender agenda through numerous events and activities. There are also visible women role models who share experiences and champion the issue through forums such as Network publications and external industry conferences.
- Some of the company's EDI related achievements are Level 2 in the Gender European Equality Standard and Gold under Opportunity Now.

## Sexual orientation

- The LGBT Alliance Network aims to connect and support employees, work with external organisations and share and celebrate achievements. Anecdotal feedback from events has been positive, particularly in relation to changing people’s perceptions and understanding. Numerous examples of employee involvement in Network activities and other events were evidenced in the documents provided, including the following: The LGBT Celebration evening event, Bi-Visibility Day and London Pride.
- The LGBT Alliance Network membership has increased by a third as a result of communication, events, opportunities and articles. The Network has also successfully promoted awareness of multiple identities through events and communications.
- The LGBT Alliance Network advised the a business function on a concern regarding the criminalisation of homosexuality in certain countries and how this could affect outsourced workers. Additionally, the Network has advised the Employee Relations Team to develop an anti-bullying element to their programme, engaging with Stonewall on this.
- The organisation is a founding member of the national LGBT Corporate Champions initiative.
- The LGBT Alliance Network has active participation and a high level of visibility within the organisation, with engagement from employees across UK offices tracked to ensure wide-reaching engagement.
- The network also has an established ‘Happy Supporters’ element, encouraging a wider range of staff to actively support initiatives and events.
- A wide range of social events including theatre trips, quiz nights and picnics are held, often in collaboration with other LGBT groups from companies within their own sector.
- The network has developed a toolkit to help managers support LGBT colleagues.

## Social mobility (not currently protected by UK equality law)

- The organisation supports a number of businesses working towards the social mobility agenda. Partner social enterprises are working to help young people of different backgrounds into work through education, training and on-the-job experience.
- Through partnership with local colleges, the organisation has offered a number of business and technical apprenticeships to young people from underrepresented backgrounds.
- A number of industry-specific scholarships and summer placements to students at a local university are offered each year.
- The organisation ran a telephone interview skills workshop for a Community Interest Company which aims to facilitate a more diverse job market, specifically targeted at individuals with refugee protection.
- The organisation has provided work experience to a number of young disadvantaged people in different parts of the UK under the Prince’s Trust placements.
- The organisation funded the development of a new construction skills centre and created an employment brokerage scheme at a college with Job Centre.
- The organisation has demonstrated evidence of how the industry regulator’s code of practice to protect vulnerable customers (e.g. based on severe financial insecurity from cessation of services) has been applied.

# EDI maturity model



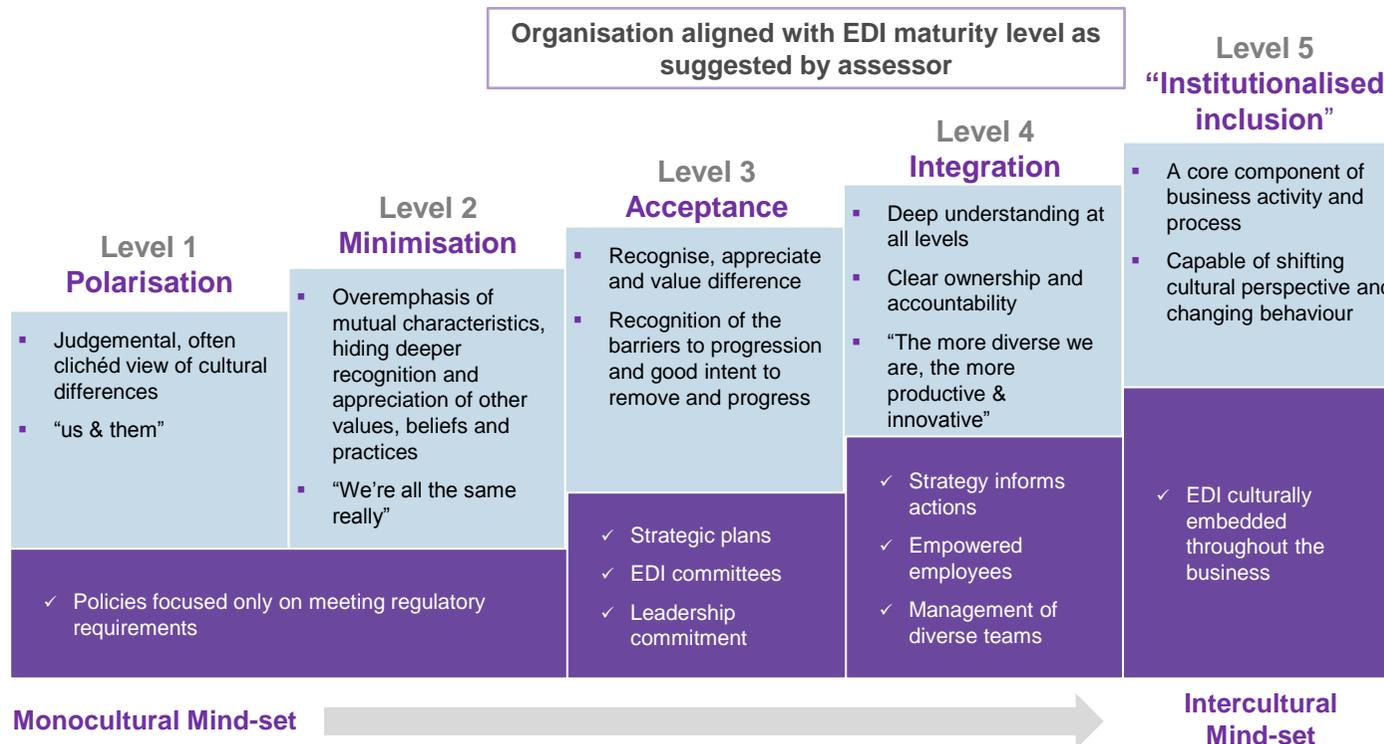
# EDI maturity model

The NES EDI model below articulates the assessors’ analysis of an organisation’s current maturity level. The model shows increasing levels of proficiency with regard to the extent to which EDI culture is embedded within an organisation. It may be used as a tool to identify an organisation’s standing within the broader maturity spectrum and the stages that an organisation will need to travel through in order to achieve and sustain a truly inclusive culture.

The assessors’ analysis suggests that the organisation has a visible passion and strategic commitment to EDI, with a clear intent to progress on its EDI journey. There is a clear understanding of the impact diversity can have on the innovative potential of the workforce and the ability to meet client needs today and in the future.

It is clear that the investment to transform the culture and values is making a significant impact, with staff evidently proud of the organisation and the culture of trust and collaboration exhibited. However it is interesting and unique to note that these strong cultural foundations do not yet appear to be matched by the sufficient leadership accountability and role modelling required to truly integrate and embed EDI.

As the organisation moves towards an enterprise model, some areas of concern identified by the NES assessment may be addressed and integrated throughout the organisation as a matter of course. However there are some key areas, documented within this report, that would help the organisation become one which is truly inclusive.



Source: The NES EDI maturity model contains modified elements from the Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (CMS), M. Bennett 1980, and Lockheed Martin DMM model

# Employee quotes



# Employee quotes

We have collated some key employee quotes from the on-site interviews to illustrate some of the significant themes that were observed.

**a transparent pay culture**

**We don't have**

EDI is very much a **big priority**

There is an astounding **lack of diversity** the higher up in the organisation

Essentially **fascinating work**

People are treated with **respect**

**Ever-changing**

**Underfunded, underpaid, under-resourced, forced to fail**

**Zero tolerance** to workplace bullying

I feel free to be **myself** here

**Supportive**

**Lack of trust** between managers and staff

## Section 3:

# Assessment methodology



# Methodology

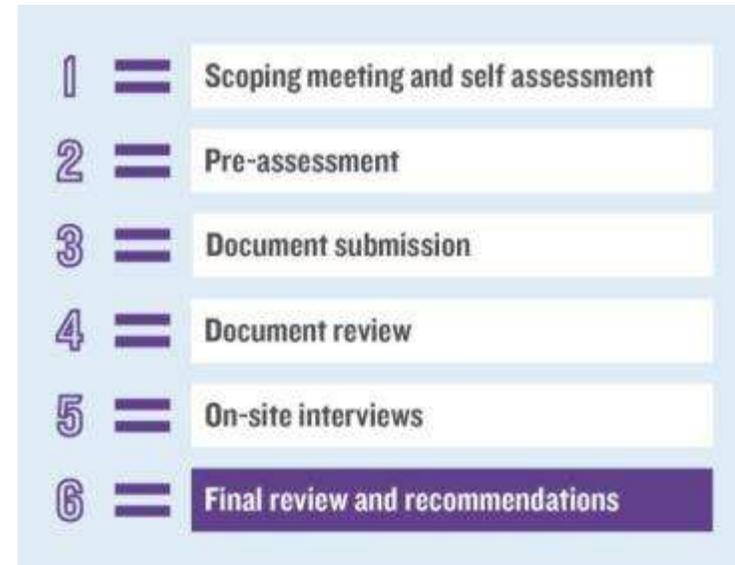
The assessment was undertaken in two stages. The first stage was a document review of the evidence provided. This enabled the assessor to gain an understanding of whether the organisation had met the requirements of the standard within its documentary evidence.

The second stage was on-site interviews. These took place over XX days between the dates of XX-XX. The objective of this part of the assessment was to obtain qualitative evidence. Evidence was obtained from in-depth interviews and focus groups with staff and managers to endorse, supplement and validate any documentary evidence already reviewed. The findings detailed within this report are based on an interview sample size of approximately XX employees.

The assessment process concentrated on UK staff only in the following office locations: XX, XX, XX and XX.

Findings represent a snapshot in time and activities in the business may have progressed since the assessment was conducted.

The assessment process was conducted holistically across the business; however specific feedback for individual business groups has been included where deemed relevant.



# Scoring methodology

Each competency has been scored. If a competency has been detailed as fully met there may be a suggested recommendation for further improvement (if applicable), however these suggestions are not necessary prerequisites for success. If a competency is detailed as partially or not met there is a requirement to implement the recommendations made to enable compliance in subsequent reviews

<p>Not met</p> 	<p>Partially met</p> 	<p>Met</p> 
<p>Your organisation presented no documentary or qualitative evidence to demonstrate compliance with this competency.</p>	<p>Your organisation presented partial evidence but there are some significant gaps. The gaps could include (not exclusively):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Parts of your organisation which are currently not meeting the competencies.</li> <li>■ Areas where the quality of the evidence is weak, inconsistent or incomplete.</li> <li>■ Areas which have only just begun to be addressed and are subject to significant further development.</li> <li>■ Areas where interviews were unable to substantiate documentary evidence presented.</li> </ul>	<p>Your organisation presented a variety of good quality evidence that demonstrates that you are fully compliant with this competency.</p> <p>The evidence presented is consistent throughout and embedded in the culture of the organisation.</p>

## Section 4:

# Detailed findings

Detailed findings for four competencies have been provided as a sample.  
In an actual NES report, this section may contain 80-100 pages.



# Detailed findings – Standard 1

## Competencies that have achieved the NES



Final score



### 1.2 Policies & informal practices

**The organisation has comprehensive formal policies and informal practices in place seeking to ensure inclusivity which clearly set out the consequences of discrimination.**

There are a range of formal policies in place which are published on the intranet and the external website. Staff interviewed were familiar with how to access the policies and generally felt the application approach to be consistent. It was noted that all employees are provided with key policy documents upon joining the organisation.

#### Formal policies:

One of the company's core values is to 'work as one, teaming together – harnessing diversity of our people'. This theme is reflected throughout the policies. A number of documents relate to inclusion, fairness and protection from discrimination and harassment, including:

- The HR Policy outlines specific approaches to creating an inclusive culture relating to career development, selection, physical and mental health, discrimination and bullying.
- The Company Code of Ethics lays out the importance of tackling injustice and discrimination and respecting the beliefs and opinions of others.
- The Ethics and Conduct At Work Policy highlights the organisation's commitment to comply with the Equality Act.
- The Code of Conduct outlines the organisation's values and the behaviours expected of employees.
- The Equal Opportunities Policy document emphasises the commitment to an equal approach and defines the types of discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- The Workplace Harassment & Bullying Policy document outlines what constitutes harassment, bullying and guarding against offensive behaviour, jokes and banter.
- The Workplace Health-Related Absence Management describes the organisation's approach to managing health-related absence appropriately and consistently.
- The Job Reassignment Procedure and Lay-Off Procedure documents outline the counselling, training and support available for those redeployed or made redundant.
- The HR policies on Maternity, Paternity & Adoption provide comprehensive information on the policies, provisions, time off, salaries and returning to work.

#### Informal practices:

The assessor identified numerous examples of informal practices which help to create an inclusive environment:

- An industry celebration invite requests that individuals provide information of any special dietary requirements.
- Recruitment team events are held close to the airports and overnight stays are limited to ensure that all staff from across the UK and with family commitments can attend.
- The Christmas Parties are now referred to as year-end events to ensure to include individuals from all religious backgrounds. Events are usually held Tuesday to Thursday to accommodate those with travel requirements or family commitments.

#### **Areas where further improvements may add additional value:**

- The Flexible Working Policy, Section 1.3.6, should be updated in accordance with the Flexible Working Regulations 2014.
- The HR policy should be updated to reflect current legislation. The organisation has a default retirement age, which is not in line with current legislation. Please see attachment for detailed recommendations for urgent implementation.

# Detailed findings – Standard 1

## Competencies that have achieved the NES



Final score



### 1.6 Employee feedback

The organisation has a planned strategy that enables employee feedback and ensures that employees are afforded the opportunity to regularly engage in network activities.

There are many formal and informal engagement mechanisms in place, including: the Employee Engagement Survey, workshop sessions and Employee Networks.

#### Network activity

\*There are several Networks currently in place and numerous examples of good practice were provided, including the following:

- The **BAME Network** aims to create a sense of community, engage employees, promote the business case for diversity and positively influence the inclusion agenda. Reverse mentoring has been introduced to improve senior management's understanding of the issues faced by BAME staff.
- The **LGBT Alliance Network** aims to connect and support employees, work with external organisations and share and celebrate achievements. It was reported that membership has increased in the last two years. Anecdotal feedback from events has been positive, particularly in relation to changing people's perceptions and understanding. There is currently a push to develop additional career development webinars targeted at LGBT employees. Reverse mentoring is also in place. The LGBT Alliance Network advised the business function on a concern regarding criminalisation of homosexuality in certain countries and how it could affect outsourced IT workers. Additionally, the Network has engaged with Stonewall to advise the Education team in the development of an anti-bullying element to their programme.
- The **Women's Network** aims to support the goals of women and ensure to recruit, develop and retain quality female talent. It was noted that the Network has over 500 members, a representative at every major site and 20% male membership. The assessor reviewed the Network's communications and marketing strategy documents which list the numerous communication channels utilised. The group has a comprehensive list of current activities such as webinars, annual conferences, a mentor / mentee programme and lunchtime events, among many others. It was noted that there are currently many manager level members and the Network is trying to get more entry level employees involved.
- The **Parents' Network** is currently in the development stage and aims to promote awareness of the support options available, develop guidance for line managers on how to assist staff, discuss legislative changes and provide a discussion forum for working parents. The Network was developed as a result of a suggestion from a member of staff during EDI week.
- The **Carers and Disability Network** aims to provide support and information to disabled employees and carers. The Network is still working on plans and future strategy. It was noted that the Network has already been successful at facilitating some peer-to-peer communications and support. An online membership form has helped identify what is important to the members. It was noted by staff that it would be useful if the Network could meet more often to create a forum for discussion.

The rationale behind the development of the Networks is to provide employees with the opportunity to feel included and supported and ensure employees do not feel isolated in a large organisation. They also help the organisation to be more attractive as an employer to a broad set of talent. An interviewee expressed that part of his reason for joining the organisation was their approach to EDI and valuing difference. He stated that this was due in part to the Networks available.

#### Areas where further improvements may add additional value:

- Consider using forums other than the employee networks to capture staff feedback. One mechanism that could be to expand is the 'Ask To Change' initiative from the Finance Department which could be used across the whole organisation.
- Feedback from staff indicates that the Carer and Disability Network could be more active and accessible. The Network should consider introducing a monthly meeting / call for all members.

NES

Good practice

# Detailed findings – Standard 2

## Competencies that have achieved the NES



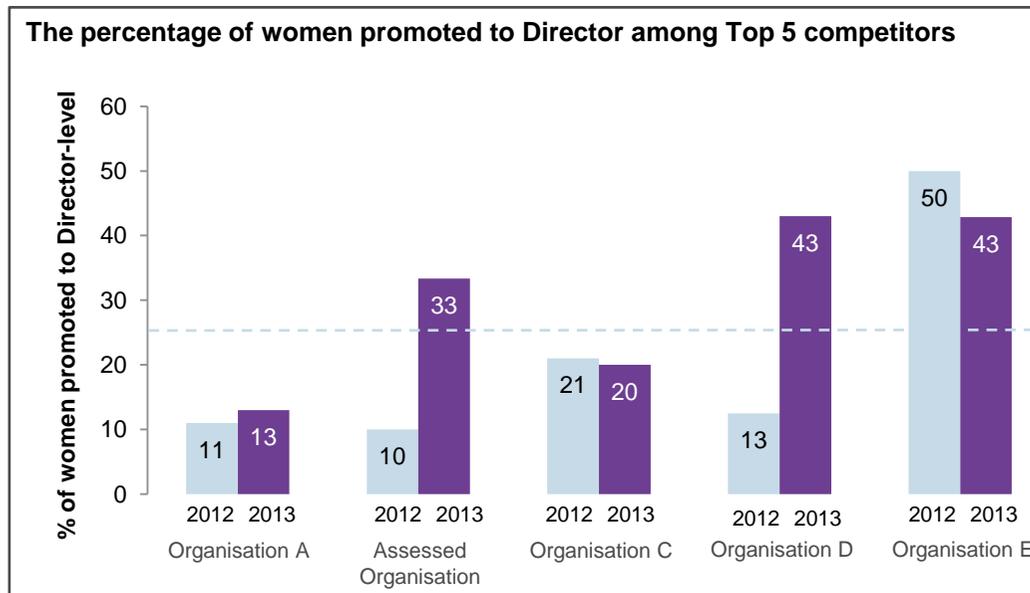
Final score



### 2.4 Career progression

The organisation has provided the opportunity for effective career progression routes to be put in place, tailored and targeted to specific underrepresented groups of staff if there appears to be a barrier to progress.

- There is an established network of individuals across the organisation that can support each other in their development and careers.
- The organisation refers to itself as a meritocracy, striving to create an environment which is inclusive and in which people can give their best. Despite having more women at Director level than their counterparts in the UK, there is recognition that more can be done to balance the ratio of men to women at senior levels. This is assisted by targeted career progression initiatives, such as:
  - The Women's Leadership Roundtable consisting of a three-day personal development programme, interaction with a personal sponsor Director, development of a personal career plan, and alumni and networking opportunities.



Source: Industry benchmarking data

# Detailed findings – Standard 2

## Competencies that have achieved partial compliance



Final score



### 2.6 Equal pay

**The organisation has ensured that equal pay reviews have been carried out and plans are in place to mitigate any pay gaps identified.**

The organisation operates a 'lockstep' system for determining staff pay, which means that all staff at the same level are paid the same salary. The organisation has committed to ensuring that the process for market testing salary levels is robust and transparent and that judgements are accurate and competitive.

The organisation's salary principles are communicated to employees via the intranet site and information videos. Some of those interviewed perceived there to be growing transparency around pay at the organisation.

No policy on equal pay was available for review by the assessor; however interviews with staff confirmed that this is currently being developed and the business has set principles to ensure fairness and equity are fundamental to the pay approach. Bonuses are determined annually on a discretionary basis. Ratings affect bonuses for all grades, and some staff stated that they feel there is a lack of transparency in the bonus allocation process. It is not clear how the company ensures no disproportionate trend in bonuses.

The applied ratings are analysed by gender to ensure fairness but no analysis is carried out across any other protected group. Interviews with some staff did confirm that an analysis of pay by age and tenure had been completed at a UK&I level within the organisation. However senior leaders commented that 'nothing systematic' has been done in the area of equal pay at an organisation-wide level.

It was unclear from the evidence provided as to whether a pay review or job evaluation scheme is in place to monitor equal pay between men and women.

#### **Areas where further improvement may add value:**

- Analysis should be carried out across any other protected group to ensure fairness in pay.
- More should be done to review and moderate by other protected groups once diversity data has been collected on a wider scale to ensure no disproportionate trend.
- A dedicated team is recommended to investigate further and ensure that equal pay analysis has been carried out to inform decision makers of the impact of their decisions from an equal pay perspective.
- The equal pay audit coordinator should investigate further and ensure that a job evaluation process is in place to sample the pay awarded at like-for-like grades within specific teams to ensure no pay disparity.
- Additional evidence will be required at the next NES assessment to ensure that an equal pay analysis has been carried out.

# Appendix



# Appendix A: Overview of the 7 standards

## 1. Core Components EDI



### What is it?

This Standard ensures your organisation has essential EDI components in place.

An inclusive culture can be demonstrated in numerous ways including through your organisation's inclusion strategies and policies and be accompanied by informal practices that seek to ensure inclusivity.

The core components of a culture of inclusion will involve an examination of attitudes and behaviours and as a consequence requires focused, determined and strong inspiring leadership and a long-term strategic approach.

### What does it seek to achieve?

It seeks to ensure that your organisation is developing a culture that truly embraces difference and is implementing strategies and approaches to ensure that inclusivity is a core priority which is both sustainable and recognised by both your staff and customers.

This Standard analyses the extent to which an EDI governance process has been embedded and ensures that EDI has been appropriately considered in all decision-making processes.

Organisations need to have clear policies in place to ensure inclusivity and fairness and to protect from harassment or discrimination and that employees are empowered, feel engaged and able to provide feedback and contribution to the inclusion agenda.

Your organisation should also have a clear mechanism in place to monitor the diversity profile of the business, analysed where permissible by the protected characteristics at all levels and grades and this analysis should inform where appropriate, future representation plans for employing a representative workforce.

### Why is this important?

A culture of inclusion is of key importance as it enables each individual to thrive in their own unique way.

It ensures that the talents of each individual are being fully utilised.

Numerous pieces of research support that performance increases when employees are valued for the diversity they bring and where inclusive practices are part of the fabric of the organisation.

## 2. Core components HR processes

### What is it?

This Standard ensures your organisation has essential EDI components integrated within all your HR processes and systems.

It addresses the on-boarding / induction process, selection methods, positive action programmes (where necessary) and career progression initiatives which address disproportionality.

It assesses the ways in which the organisation has considered tailored interventions and ensures that any training content and delivery is inclusive and takes into account specific requirements that are relevant to an individual's protected characteristics.

Organisations need to demonstrate the ways in which they have attracted and harnessed EDI, how their practices are free from bias and how their retention strategies reflect this.

### What does it seek to achieve?

This Standard addresses the entire employee journey demonstrating how differences in pay have been considered and reviewed, how conditions of service and employee benefits are implemented, how staff are appraised and performance managed and how professional training and development opportunities are provided.

The Standard will seek to ensure that each individual's circumstances has been fully embraced and appropriately responded to by offering a variety of approaches that suit individual circumstances and learning styles.

Examples that should be provided include specific interventions to develop employees and any effective career progression routes that can be tailored to specific under-represented groups of staff where there appears to be a barrier to progress.

The annual appraisal process should also be used to reward EDI contribution and progress.

### Why is this important?

Evidence suggests that appropriate consideration of the impact of talent attraction and retention can play a crucial role and have a long term impact on an organisation's success.

To ensure positive sustainable change, senior leaders should be able to articulate their commitment, the vision for EDI, the ways in which retention can be further enhanced and how success will be measured.

A progressive organisation should be considering the potential for bias which can exist in a number of ways including during recruitment, retention and promotion.

## 3. Understanding your business

### What is it?

This Standard provides an opportunity for your organisation to contextualise the NES to ensure that it is relevant to your sector and is aligned to your specific business priorities.

Its principal aim is to establish the level of insight you have into your industry whilst ensuring any measurement criteria is sufficiently stretching and maintains a degree of relevance and proportionality. It provides a framework for you to identify what your key priorities are across a number of indicators and protected characteristics.

### What does it seek to achieve?

The competencies within this Standard seek to ensure that you have identified EDI as one of your key strategic priorities and you can demonstrate the ways in which you have integrated these into your business planning process in a way that is consistent with your sector.

It seeks to measure the extent to which a specific and unique business case has been established and how you have articulated any benefits to all employees.

This Standard also measures the extent to which you have acquired knowledge of your sector regulations (if relevant), and are capturing benchmarking intelligence to assist in forward planning.

### Why is this important?

Your organisations approach to EDI should sit at the heart of the business planning process.

Integration in a structured way enhances visibility that all employees and customers recognise and respond to in a way which will encourage a long term and sustainable improvement.

## 4. Understanding your people

### What is it?

This Standard ensures your organisation has a relevant and proportionate focus on its people throughout their employment journey.

It addresses the specific inclusive approaches in place to meet individual diverse requirements, how flexible working arrangements are implemented and how employee adjustments are proactively anticipated and implemented.

It also addresses the way in which your organisation ensures staff are working towards a healthy work-life balance.

### What does it seek to achieve?

This Standard identifies the range of employee support programmes in place to meet specific issues and assesses the level of tailored support provided for staff.

Your organisation will need to provide specific examples of how staff have been supported on an individual basis.

### Why is this important?

Your people are your greatest asset.

When addressing specific employee requirements it is essential to listen to the needs of your people and have a planned strategy that enables employee feedback.

A healthy work-life balance can only be achieved if interventions are put in place to enable staff to work flexibly whilst meeting business objectives.

An organisation that recognises and celebrates the unique value each member of staff contributes is both explicitly and implicitly informing their people that it values the differences each diverse individual brings.

## 5. Your leadership

### What is it?

This Standard measures the extent to which your senior leadership team are leading by example and practising the behaviours that they have agreed to demonstrate as part of their commitment to EDI, ensuring your leadership are visible, accountable and open to scrutiny and demonstrate inclusive behaviours.

This Standard will be seeking an unambiguous commitment across the whole organisation that defines the way the company will use its leaders to inspire others to work towards making a positive difference to its staff, clients, customers, suppliers and society at large.

### What does it seek to achieve?

This Standard seeks to identify how your Leaders inspire and empower others, how they are accountable for the delivery and implementation of the EDI strategy and how they ensure that any diversity aspirations set are progressed, achieved and make a measurable difference.

This Standard assesses the ways in which leaders are committed to model best inclusive practice and behaviours and are widely acknowledged to do so.

It will assess the extent to which they are actively involved in EDI related work, how this is being accompanied by appropriate public statements and the ways in which they are demonstrating visible ownership of the EDI agenda.

### Why is this important?

Effective Leaders don't just manage change, but they create change by inspiring their employees.

By acting as inspiring role models and by taking ownership of the EDI agenda leaders will ensure that they are accountable for progress on EDI and are actively engaged in reviewing and rewarding behaviours that enhance their organisation's commitment to EDI.

This sends out a clear signal to all employees and sets a consistent behavioural example to the rest of the organisation which is underpinned by a measurable commitment.

## 6. Review and measurement

### What is it?

This Standard assesses the effectiveness of EDI initiatives that have been undertaken within your organisation and examines the proposed progress and success factors that determine the impact each activity has had on the organisation, the local community and on the individuals involved.

This Standard seeks to review the effectiveness of a range of initiatives and measure the impact that these have had on the organisation.

### What does it seek to achieve?

It seeks to identify the ways in which your organisation can demonstrate that it has identified and implemented systems to measure, monitor and report progress on EDI.

### Why is this important?

The key to effective review and measurement is ensuring that through every process, objectives are set and success criteria are established to identify if an activity has been effective or ineffective and to identify the costs and return on investment expected for each.

This analysis will enable the business to identify new opportunities, cost savings and increased revenue that they have created by effectively managing EDI and using it as a strategic lever to gain competitive advantage.

Through data capture, analysis and the identification and tracking of key performance indicators, your organisation and the EDI processes can and should demonstrate clear progress and results.

## 7. External relationships

### What is it?

This Standard ensures proportionate consideration is given to your organisation's external relationships with customers, suppliers and the community.

It addresses how the organisation strengthens its external recognition through the clients, suppliers and communities that it engages with and attracts.

It also addresses the suppliers used and the influencing power as a procurer to encourage change within the supply chain and how this is monitored and continually improved upon.

### What does it seek to achieve?

This Standard seeks to identify the connections made between corporate social responsibility, community activity and how the organisation engages with different communities.

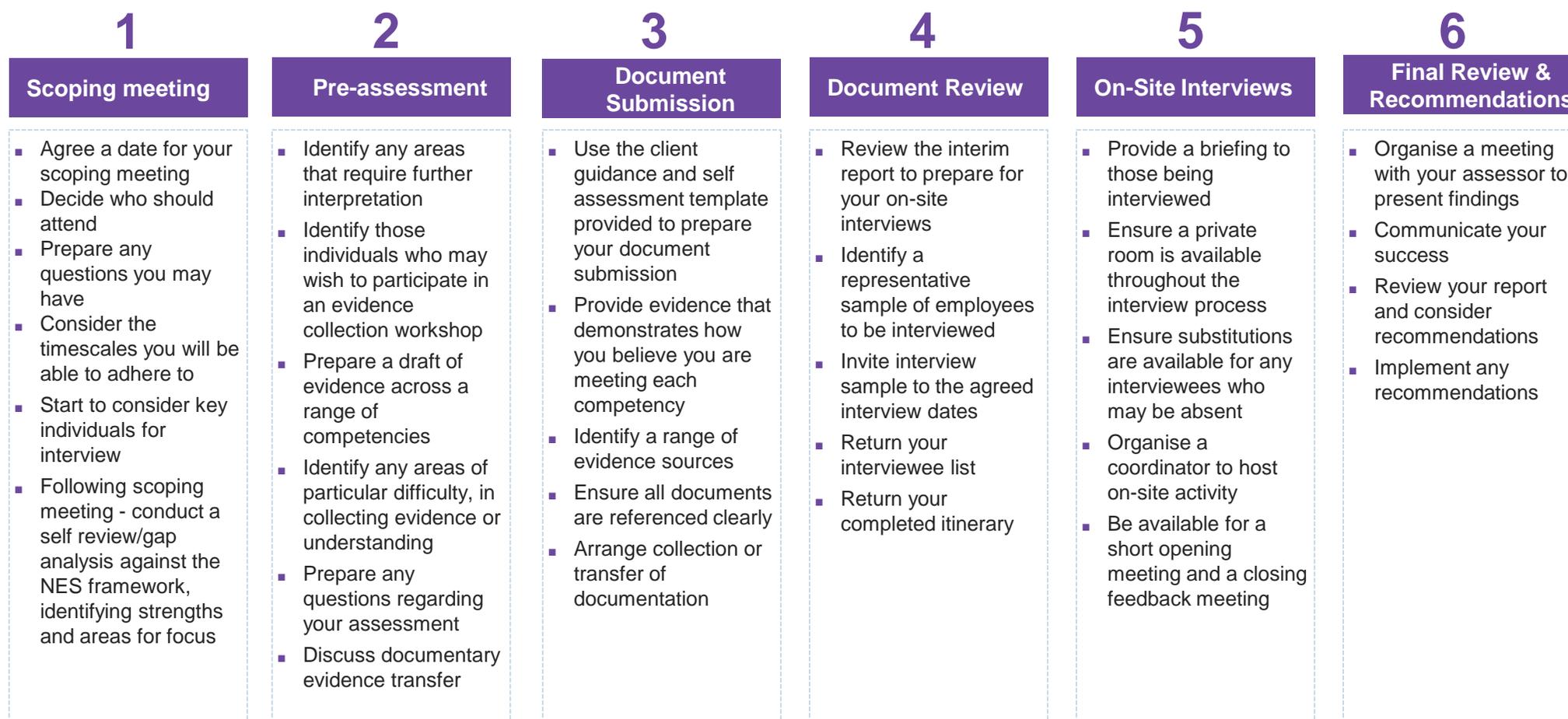
It seeks to address the ways in which strong relationships and strategic alliances are developed with external organisations such as women, minority and disabled owned businesses, SMEs, the Third Sector as well as community outreach organisations.

### Why is this important?

This Standard focuses on brand reputation, external perception and community involvement and the correlation these have with an increase in market share and client satisfaction.

# Appendix B: Full NES process overview

The diagram below outlines the NES assessment journey.



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