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Recruiting diverse apprentices – top tips

Recruiting a diverse range of apprentices will bring a range of benefits to your organisation and help you deliver services that reflect the community you serve.

In 2014/15, only 10.6 per cent of apprentices in the UK were from a black, asian or minority ethnic (BAME) background. The government is committed to increase this to 20 per cent.

Using information from the National Apprenticeship Service's *Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network - Communications Toolkit (2016)* this document provides top tips to help you make your apprenticeship programmes accessible to people of all genders, ethnicity, physical ability, age and sexual orientation.

1. Promoting your vacancies

- Advertise apprenticeship opportunities as widely as possible, including registering vacancies on the government's [Find an apprenticeship online service](#).
- Include a note in adverts welcoming applications from under-represented groups.
- Use images of a diverse workforce in your promotional materials.
- Make recruitment criteria specific and essential to the role.
- Where possible, ensure your interview team is diverse and representative of your community.

2. Using outreach

- Build links with established community networks.
- Each local authority should have a 14-19 Partnership to ensure that young people have access to learning opportunities and support. Linking to schools through your local partnerships can be a good way to promote your apprenticeships.
- Engage with your local community radio stations to advertise vacancies and encourage current apprentices to share their experiences.
- Use established local and national events and campaigns such as National Apprenticeship Week to promote apprenticeships.
- Raise awareness of apprentices across your organisation.

Find out how Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust engaged with the local community to increase the amount of applications from BAME in this [case study](#).

3. Addressing unconscious bias in recruitment

- Anonymise CVs when assessing them.
- Use interviews to focus on collecting information, not making the decision.
- Take a look at the Chartered Institute for Professional Development's [A head for hiring](#) recruitment guide based on behavioural science.

4. Emphasising progression and aspiration

- Emphasise the fact that higher and degree apprenticeships can be a great way to support career aspirations. These types of apprenticeships widen access to the professions, allowing people to earn while they learn and progress into higher skilled occupations.

5. Ongoing support for apprentices

- Offer support via workplace mentors to improve retention and progression.
- Offer staff training in issues around discrimination and harassment.

Read how providing young people with a peer mentor and a learning mentor helped their apprenticeships to succeed in this [case study](#) from Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

6. Monitoring apprenticeship programmes

The charity Business in the Community recommends the use of monitoring to:

- assess how employment policies and processes are working and identify areas where these appear to be impacting disproportionately on certain groups of staff.
- identify 'bottle necks' in your talent pipeline to help you decide where to target action and resources.

Further information

For information and support to help you deliver apprenticeships as part of your workforce strategy, visit nhsemployers.org/apprenticeships