



2019 ethnicity action plan

Introduction

We aim to have inclusive workplaces across our global business, where everyone feels they can be themselves and are valued for what they bring. We promote diversity and inclusion in the broadest sense, to create an environment that offers everyone the opportunity to perform and progress.

Current state

Our workforce is not currently as representative of the diversity of our clients, customers and the global communities, as we want it to be. We are working to attract ethnic minority talent at every level and remove barriers in order to build a sustainable talent pipeline. This pipeline needs to embody the diversity of people: their backgrounds, thoughts, creativity and actions in order to help us achieve the goal of creating long term value for clients and customers around the world.

This year, to better understand experiences of our people in Standard Life Aberdeen, we began to gather feedback from our ethnic minority employees in the UK – through focus groups, individual conversations and our ethnicity employee network. In future, we will extend this across all of the regions in which we operate. The key themes we heard were:

- ▶ There can be awkwardness discussing race and more cultural sensitivity would be welcomed
- ▶ Cultural awareness training would be helpful for line managers to equip them to lead teams inclusively
- ▶ Continue to review and develop how we attract ethnic minority candidates through our recruitment processes to broaden our talent pool
- ▶ There should be no barriers to progression for ethnic minority talent
- ▶ There are few ethnic minority senior role models across the organisation
- ▶ Increased visible leadership commitment would be welcomed.

We have used these themes to help create this action plan with our people. The action plan highlights our areas of focus for the next 12-18 months, for our locations where we know ethnic minority representation is not as high as it could be.

Progress to date in 2018

- ▶ Appointed our Group General Counsel as executive sponsor to drive progress
- ▶ Signed the 'Race at Work Charter' to help drive change and improve opportunities for people from ethnic minority communities, and to build on previous Best Employer for Race accreditation
- ▶ Worked with our people to better understand current experiences in Standard Life Aberdeen
- ▶ Broadened how we attract ethnic minority talent at early careers stage, with outreach programmes in the UK (through Princes Trust, Taylor Bennett Foundation, SEO Her Capital) and the US (Inroads programme)
- ▶ Supported ethnic and multicultural employee networks to run cultural awareness events, sessions on talking about race at work, networking and personal development events.

Following significant change in our organisation we are looking to gather further information to enable us to:

- ▶ Establish whether we have the data we need to set ethnicity targets
- ▶ Define further actions we need to take to support employees from ethnic minority communities, appropriate to the local workforce in each of our global locations.

Ultimately, success will be a combination of delivering on this plan and a commitment from everyone in the organisation to consider diversity & inclusion in all actions and decisions.

2019 ethnicity action plan

1. Leadership accountability

Our Executive Committee will:

- ▶ On a bi-annual basis, review planned progress against increasing and retaining ethnic diverse talent in the business
- ▶ Gather feedback through regular open conversations (round tables, focus groups, webinars and open conversations with senior leaders) that all employees can attend
- ▶ A senior leader will sponsor 'Unity', our ethnicity and multicultural employee network.

2. Inclusive leadership capability

- ▶ Continue to raise the capability of leaders and managers on what it means to be inclusive, the impact of negative behaviours, reducing unconscious bias, and the need to consider all of these as essential in creating a diverse, inclusive culture.

3. Increasing cultural awareness

- ▶ Partner with our ethnic minority and multicultural network to improve awareness and understanding across our workforce.
- ▶ Develop a toolkit with information on different cultures, how to speak about race in the workplace and better understand our colleagues, and to help create an inclusive workplace.

4. Attraction

- ▶ Review recruitment practices to make sure there are no barriers for, and that we proactively reach, a wider pool of ethnic minority candidates.
- ▶ Continue sponsorship and participation in outreach programmes that support those from ethnic minority communities, to encourage attraction to our sector and our organisation.
- ▶ Profile stories of talented people with an ethnic minority background from across the organisation.
- ▶ Hold events with speakers sharing their experiences.

5. Succession and development

- ▶ Succession planning and recruitment at plc Board level will include ethnicity considerations, increasing to all talent and succession conversations as our workforce data grows.
- ▶ Introduce reverse-mentoring to increase our understanding of the experiences of ethnic minority employees and support development and progression.
- ▶ Better understand the ethnic minority talent we have across our global organisation.
- ▶ Raising the visibility of talented ethnic minority talent at CEO-2/3/4 level by including ethnicity considerations in succession and development conversations as workforce data grows.

6. Know more

- ▶ Have conversations globally to better understand the barriers faced by ethnic minorities, to inform our global ethnicity action plan and ensure it reflects regional needs.
- ▶ Following organisational changes, increase the capability to collect ethnicity data across locations in line with our people system migration, while also complying with legal requirements.
- ▶ Work closely with our networks to encourage disclosure of diversity data to obtain a more comprehensive picture of how representative our workforce is.
- ▶ Continue to work with our partnership organisations, such as the Diversity Project, to increase our understanding and make progress across the industry.



Race at Work Charter

Standard Life Aberdeen was one of the first signatories of the Race at Work Charter. The Race at Work Charter is a set of UK Government-backed commitments which employers are being encouraged to consider. The charter consists of five principles, to help ensure that organisations address the main barriers to employment faced by people from BAME communities:

- ▶ Appointing an Executive Sponsor for race
- ▶ Capturing data and publicising progress
- ▶ Ensuring zero tolerance of harassment and bullying
- ▶ Making equality in the workplace the responsibility of all leaders and managers
- ▶ Taking action that supports ethnic minority career progression

Our action plan will help us achieve these commitments, improving outcomes for BAME employees and stakeholders. While this a UK-based initiative, we will seek to implement the actions globally.

Support through our employee network

Our global ethnicity and multicultural network, Unity, is committed to supporting Standard Life Aberdeen in attracting, engaging and developing an ethnically and culturally-inclusive workforce, where people of all backgrounds can succeed.



The network is pivotal in bringing together and raising awareness of the different cultures our employees represent. It does this through a variety of internal initiatives, ranging from guest speaker sessions to food festivals. It also works in partnership with the organisation to influence change – ensuring that its members have opportunities to play their part, and to make their voices heard at all organisational levels.