

Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network Annex A

The Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network

The National Apprenticeship Service has reported research showing that companies with a more diverse workforce perform better (every 1 per cent increase in the diversity rate of the workforce can lead to a 9 per cent rise in sales revenue), so making good business sense. This initiative also sits well with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) objectives of increasing the number of females and BME employees within the Service and research has shown that a workforce that more closely matches the communities they serve deliver better services to those communities. The Government's goal for 2020 is to increase Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) apprenticeship starts by 20 per cent.

The core principles of Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) Membership includes; employing apprentices; driving an inclusive culture; championing diversity, gathering data, reporting back; and making a pledge. If adopted, a number of activities will need to be developed to achieve the goal of increasing the diversity of our workforce through apprenticeships.

In developing our pledge it will be important to consider all aspects of the employment process, and this begins with an application process and a written pledge which must contain the following:

- A minimum of three measurable actions which have been approved for sharing in the public domain.
- The name of a dedicated diversity champion with this organisation.
- Activity to widen participation and improve diversity through the apprentice programme.
- An action to collect internal diversity data.

This could also include:

- Actions to improve the apprenticeship recruitment process: more inclusive entry requirements and assessment practice.
- Actions to support progression: role models and internal peer supports.
- Organisational targets for the diversity of apprentices: Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), Learning Disability and Disabled (LDD), female etc.
- Actions to champion diversity and apprenticeships: through our networks and supply chain.

Membership of The Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) has a number of stated benefits which we will share with other network members such as the BBC, Barclays, Balfour Beatty, and includes:

- Monthly newsletters
- Support tools and materials
- Networking communications toolkit
- Case studies and best practice guides
- Peer support
- Use of the network's logo

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The Network and its membership benefits fit extremely well with the Authority's resourcing and EDI Objectives 2016-2020 and will support us to meet these objectives.

This report seeks member approval for the proposed draft pledge that is required in order to join the network.



Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network Pledge

Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) are delighted to be part of the Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) and we pledge to drive diversity in apprenticeships through our commitment during 2018 to:

- Use the ADCN to support our People Strategy to attract and retain a diverse workforce by encouraging and actively promoting employment applications from all groups in the community.
- Use our apprenticeship programme to maintain a skilled and committed professional workforce, and work towards employing a workforce that is more representative of the working-age population of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.
- Ensure our resourcing activities relating to our apprenticeship programme include engagement with our communities through local schools and interest groups. We will work with a range of partners to target different priority groups such as those from disadvantaged backgrounds and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) to broaden the diversity of our talent pool.
- By the end of 2018 it is planned that ten per cent of our workforce will either be apprentices, or will have completed an apprenticeship.
- Ensure our apprenticeship programme is a key element in promoting an inclusive culture by creating pathways to facilitate the upskilling of our employees and creating visible opportunities for progression for all employees.
- Roll out unconscious bias training, initially to managers and then to make available to all employees.
- Using our e learning platform, develop a range of Diversity and Inclusion learning and development tools and increase the uptake of completed modules.