

Diversity and Inclusion

Our Strategy 2023-2026



FOR THE LIFE YOU WANT

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Our Diversity and Inclusion Mission

To develop a diverse and inclusive Certitude that enables colleagues to do their best work for the people we support so they can lead the lives they want.

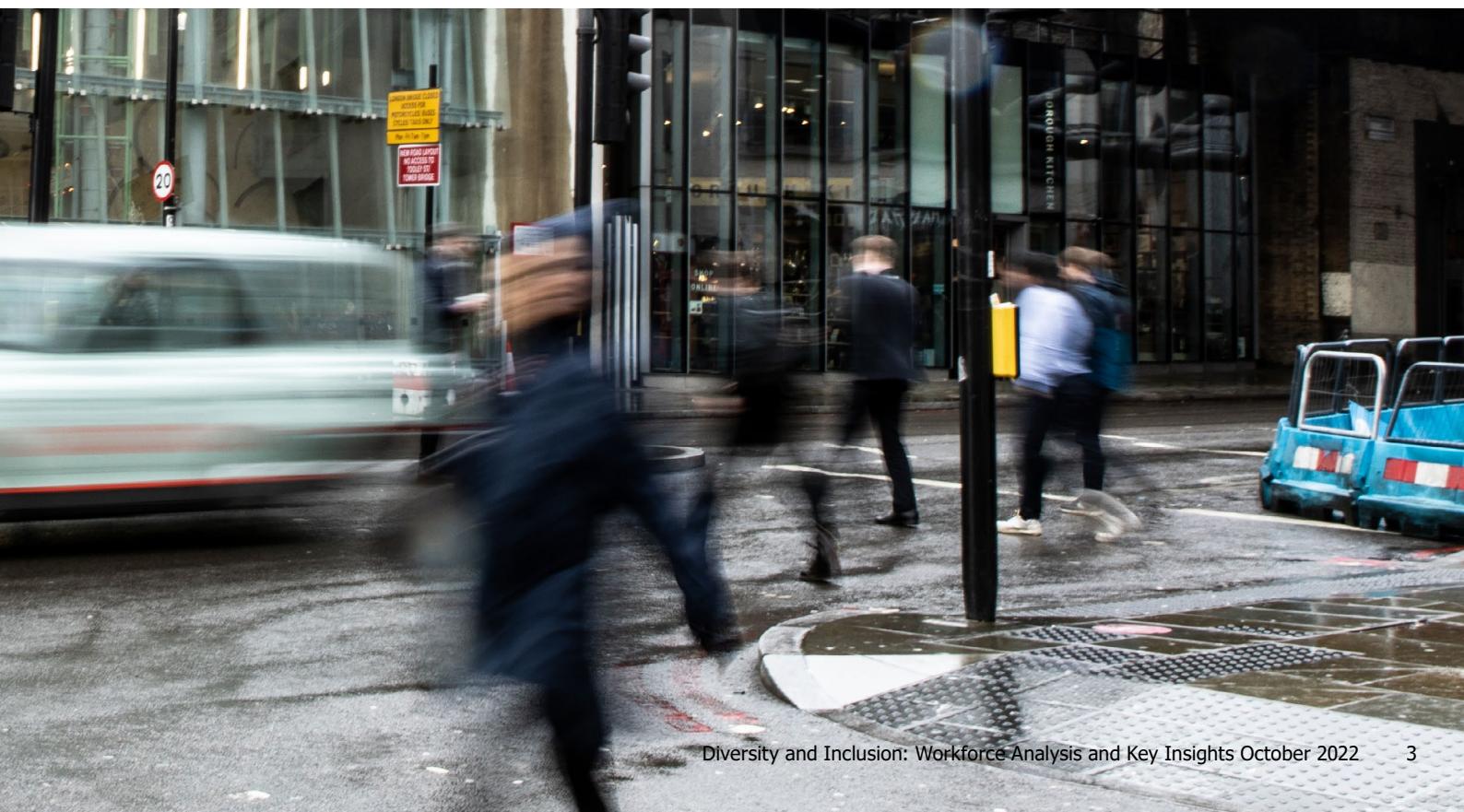
At Certitude we are proud of our 30+ year history of supporting people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs in London. We support 1,800 people through a diverse range of person-centred support to enable individuals to develop new skills, meet new people and live the life they want.

Certitude aspires to be the best social care employer in London, as recognised by colleagues, families and people we support.



We see Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) as essential to the delivery of high-quality support. The more diverse we are as an organisation, the more insightful and relevant we are to those we support.

We operate in diverse, multicultural communities in London and are committed to providing support that is inclusive of those communities. For our colleagues, we want a positive work environment in which everyone can influence, share their knowledge and experiences, and feel their perspectives are valued.



Inclusion is one of Certitude's Forward Plan Golden Threads. Our Golden Threads capture the themes that people we support, their families and colleagues have told us really matter to them.

The Golden Thread, 'We are inclusive' means:

- We want everyone in Certitude to feel valued and able to achieve and contribute to their full potential.
- We want Diversity & Inclusion to be central to our culture and practice.
- We want people we support and their families to coproduce how we govern, lead, manage, learn, appoint, quality assure and design and deliver support

Promoting and supporting diversity is an important part of the People, Culture and OD Strategy. It is about valuing everyone in the organisation as an individual. To maximise the benefits of a diverse workforce it is essential to have an inclusive environment where everyone feels able to participate and achieve their potential.

We see diversity as a strength. As such, our aim is to recruit, retain and develop a multicultural, multi-talented, agile workforce, confident in their abilities to challenge discrimination and promote the rights of individuals they support and their colleagues.

While UK legislation covers age, disability, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation, among others, as minimum standards, an effective Diversity & Inclusion strategy goes beyond legal compliance and seeks to add value to an organisation, contributing to colleague wellbeing and engagement.

At the heart of this is developing a culture of respect and inclusion where diversity is embraced and colleagues feel comfortable being themselves at work.

"I feel that diversity and inclusion are the pillars of Certitude's strong workforce, and having such a diverse range of opinions and perspectives has helped us to come up with innovative ideas that have benefited not only our organisation, but also the people we support."

Anthonia Morgridge, Area Manager

What do we mean by Diversity and Inclusion?

Diversity is about recognising difference.

It's recognising the benefit of having a range of perspectives. Differences include visible and non-visible factors, for instance personal characteristics such as background, culture, personality, workstyle, accent and language.

It is important to recognise a "one size fits all" approach to managing people does not achieve fairness and equality of opportunity for everyone. People have different personal needs, values and beliefs. Good people management practice needs to be consistently fair, but also flexible and inclusive to support both individuals and the organisation.

Inclusion is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive.

An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels they belong, that their contribution matters and that they can perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances.

An inclusive workplace enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively.



Intersectionality describes the ways in which systems of inequality intersect to create unique dynamics and effects.

Systems of inequality can be based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class and other forms of discrimination. Understanding intersectionality is an important part of practising inclusion because it defines how different facets of identity contribute to our unique perspective and team participation, as well as the ways in which different types of discrimination overlap with one another.

How we define and talk about Diversity and Inclusion.

As London's leading adult social care provider for people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health support needs, we value and are proud of the diversity of our workforce.

Race and ethnicity

We want to be considered in our language when describing different ethnic groups. We recognise that "BAME" is an acronym that has been frequently used by organisations as a catch-all term to group all ethnic minorities together.

The term "BAME" emphasises certain ethnic minority groups (Asian and Black) and excludes others, such as the "mixed" Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and other white ethnic minority groups that also face negative disparities. "BAME" is also often used as a generic term for "non-white" which can be unintentionally divisive. We recognise some people who identify as Black, Asian or people from other ethnic minority backgrounds, do not consider collective terms like "BAME" helpful or accurate, a finding that has been reinforced by recent research commissioned by the Cabinet Office Race Disparity Unit (RDU) during the pandemic.

At Certitude, as part of our recording for monitoring purposes, colleagues are asked to share their ethnicity with us, selecting the

ethnic origin they most identify with. Our own Intercultural Network Group changed their name earlier this year from the "BAME" network to better reflect its diverse membership. Our Intercultural Network Group is for anyone who identifies as Black, Asian and any mixed ethnic group, and anyone who is disadvantaged because of their culture or ethnicity.

However, there will be times for reporting purposes and externally where we will need to use a collective term, such as when required to provide monitoring information to external stakeholders (for example our funders or the Care Quality Commission), and we appreciate this may be requested based on categories of ethnicity. We may still need to use the acronym on official reports but it will usually be accompanied by an explanation, i.e. specific information on a particular ethnic group/s.

As an organisation, when we need to talk collectively about people who identify as Black, Asian and any mixed ethnic group, or anyone who is disadvantaged because of their culture or ethnicity, we will use the term "ethnically diverse."

We know collective terms can be useful, not just for monitoring purposes but to raise and address racial discrimination and inequalities. However, we seek to avoid collective terms

"The name 'intercultural' better reflects the aspirations of our network group and the diversity of cultures it represents.

The network is a place where we learn about each other's unique experiences from different cultural perspectives, as well as supporting each other's wellbeing and development."

Lavern Dinah, Organisation Development Consultant, highlighting the important name change from Black, Asian and any Mixed Ethnic Network to the Intercultural Network Group

where possible and check with, and then respect, individuals' own preferences.

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 identifies a range of conditions which fall under the umbrella term of disability. For monitoring purposes, the classification of disability is one of the most underrepresented. The stigma and fear of identifying as disabled in the workplace remains a significant issue for many people. Additionally, many neurodiverse people and people with long-term conditions do not identify as disabled.

We want people to feel confident, safe and supported to bring their whole selves to work and be open about any condition they may have. We also recognise that many people do not identify as disabled, even if they are protected by the Equality Act under this definition. We therefore request information

for statutory monitoring purposes on whether people have a disability, a long-term condition and/or are neurodivergent.

Additionally, we recognise that carers may be covered by the Equality Act if they experience discrimination or less favourable treatment because of the disability of the person they care for.

LGBTQ+

We use the term LGBTQ+ to refer to people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and/or other rainbow sexual and gender identities. We understand that some people might not wish to declare their sexual and/or gender identity to their employers, but we want people to feel safe and supported enough to do so - and help them to understand how the information will help Certitude to be a more diverse and inclusive employer.

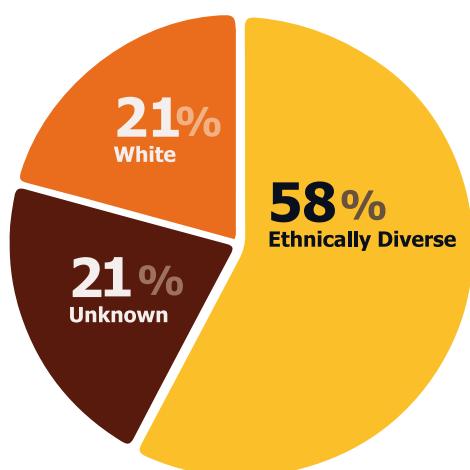
Workforce analysis and key insights

The Workforce Data Analysis and Key Insights work we have developed in the last 18 months provides a valuable baseline.

We understand where Certitude is in relation to Diversity & Inclusion and this informs our strategy, focus and direction. The analysis identified that whilst we have a diverse workforce, there is still more to do. It should be noted that some colleagues have not declared their Diversity and Inclusion status. Benchmarks used (unless otherwise stated) are from the People Count Third Sector HR and Workforce Benchmarks Annual Survey. In addition to comparing with the whole sample, we also looked at 14 peer organisations based in London and the Southeast, some operating in the same or similar provision as Certitude, some a comparator in terms of size. 72% of the whole sample employ staff in London.

Ethnic Diversity

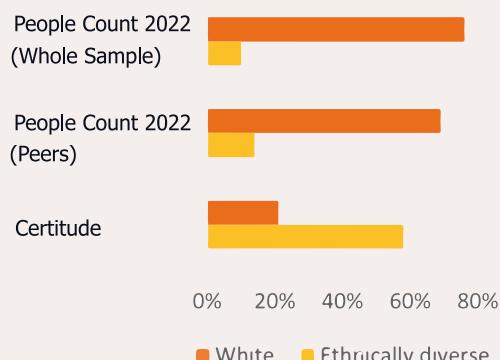
The number of colleagues who identify as ethnically diverse is 57.7%, which is significantly higher than the ethnically diverse population in London (40.2%).



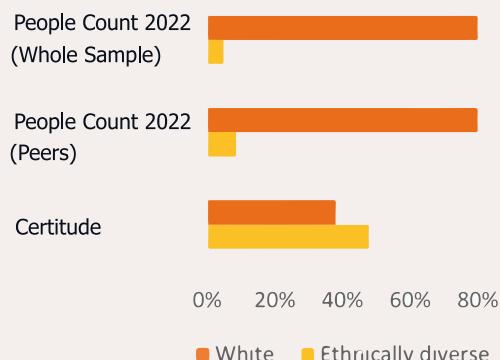
This figure is also significantly higher than our peers (14.1%) and the whole sample (9.9%). The percentage of colleagues who identify as ethnically diverse in management positions (49%) is also significantly higher than our peers (8.8%) and the whole sample (5.4%).

We will continue our work with our Intercultural Network Group and promote opportunities internally.

Proportion of Ethnically Diverse and White Colleagues

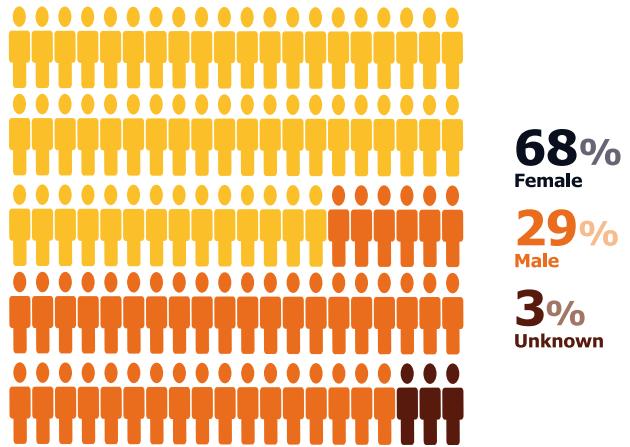


Proportion of Ethnically Diverse and White Managers



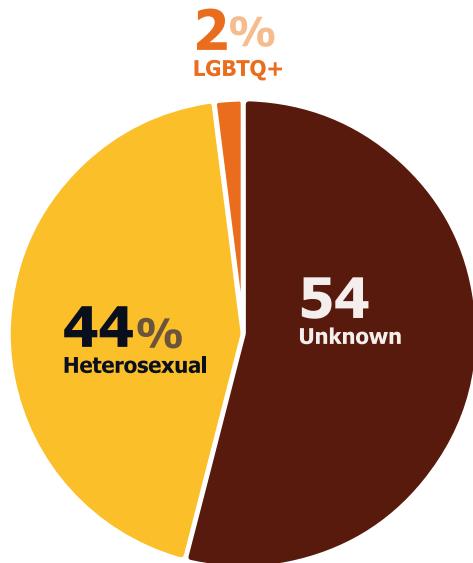
Gender

We have a higher proportion of men (28.9%) compared to our peers (18%) . We acknowledge that our sector typically attracts more female colleagues and as we seek to recruit a more representative workforce, we are focusing on attracting more male candidates.



Sexual orientation

Our LGBTQ+ colleague population of 1.7% is lower than our peers (3.8%) and our whole sample (3.7%). 54% of colleagues have not completed this section in our HR system. We do not know their sexual orientation and a proportion of these may be LGBTQ+ or prefer to self-describe.



We will continue working with the LGBTQ+ Network Group and others to encourage colleagues to feel comfortable in reporting and participating. We will continue to build on the blogs and communications in this area. In 2022 we attended Pride London for the first time, with a stall geared towards welcoming a wide-range of people to work with us. We had a great day and look forward to attending Pride in future years.

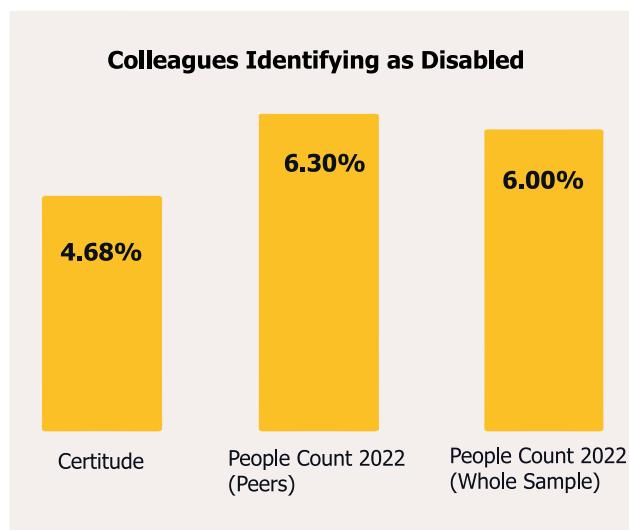
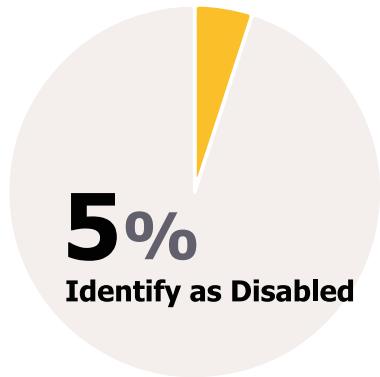
“Our LGBTQ+ Network is a diverse and mixed group of people. Even though we are all members of the same LGBTQ+ network, our ‘rainbow’ identities mean very different things to each of us.”

May Lee, Head of Practice Development, highlighting what the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia means to us

Disability

The proportion of colleagues who identify as having a disability has increased to 4.7%. This is lower than our peer sample at 6.3% and 6% for the whole sample. We aspire to increase the number of colleagues who identify as disabled.

We need to build on work already undertaken by the Disability Employee Network (DEN), encouraging participation. We want colleagues to feel comfortable recording their disability, neurodivergence or long-term health condition in our HR system. This will enable us to provide information, training and tailored support. We will focus on the attraction, recruitment and engagement of colleagues who identify as disabled. In addition, we will provide disability training and support to line managers.

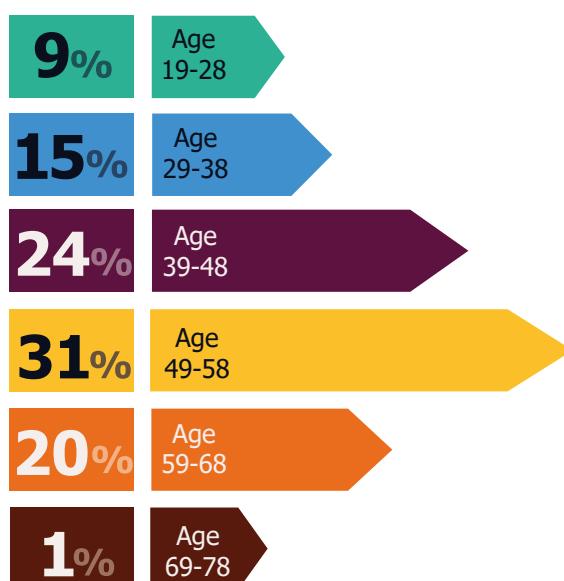


Age

53% of our workforce is aged 49 years or older, of which 53% are at Support Worker level, which is of note given this role can be demanding, both physically and mentally. We will look at more opportunities for part-time working where colleagues request this. We also need to consider the loss of knowledge and experience when our mature workforce chooses to leave or retire. We need to continue to provide opportunities for flexible working and health and wellbeing support.

Our recruitment activity is focusing on attracting a diverse workforce, in particular younger colleagues and male colleagues, to ensure our workforce is representative of the communities we work in. Our recent

Facebook campaign targeted a younger demographic, and our work with partners such as The Prince's Trust and at job fairs at colleges and universities seeks to target these unrepresented demographics.



Employee Survey September 2021

We conduct an employee survey bi-annually to help us understand our employee engagement.

The last survey was in September 2021. This gave us some useful data and feedback that demonstrates that most colleagues see Certitude as being committed to Diversity & Inclusion. However, we know there is more we need to do.

Key findings:

- **79% of respondents feel that Certitude is committed to diversity and inclusion** and values the different backgrounds and perspectives of all colleagues.
- **75% of respondents feel that people at Certitude are treated equally** irrespective of ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion.
- **72% of respondents feel that leaders and managers model and uphold Certitude's values and behaviours.**
- **69% of respondents feel that their contribution is valued.**



“We also aim to be a visible presence in the organisation and help those who may be nervous or uncomfortable about disclosing their disability or long-term condition. We want Certitude to be a leading employer of disabled, neurodivergent staff and staff with long term conditions.”

Helen Watkins, Treat Me Right! Project Manager,
reflecting on the Government’s National Disability Strategy

What we have achieved so far...

- **Set up three Diversity & Inclusion colleague networks** – Intercultural Network, LGBTQ+ Network and Disability Employee Network.
- **A range of Diversity & Inclusion learning** is available on our Learning Academy for colleagues to access and 93% of colleagues have completed D&I eLearning.
- **Created a small task and finish group** to make recommendations for ways to report incidents of discriminatory verbal abuse from people we support towards colleagues. The group is also working to suggest amendments to existing policy to reflect our position on the issue and develop a toolkit for operational colleagues.
- **Specific learning interventions**, for example a Disability Awareness Learning session for our senior management group.
- **Communicated a number of blogs from colleagues** describing a range of different life experiences.
- **Continuing to celebrate a range of cultural and religious events.**
- **Introduced our colleague survey, Have Your Say**, measuring employee engagement and including Diversity & Inclusion and wellbeing.
- **Development of baseline metrics**, analysis of data and key insights.
- **Moving Up Programme** launched for ethnically diverse leaders who want to develop, progress in their careers and build confidence.
- **Wellbeing Steering Group** set up with representatives from across the organisation.
- **Wellbeing Plan developed with a focus on inclusion** and a range of support available for colleagues.
- **Wellbeing Champions** recruited across organisation.
- **Partnerships with The Prince's Trust and Shaw Trust** to reach candidates from a range of backgrounds and people who struggle to access the job market in other ways.
- **Produced Certitude's first TV campaign developed to build our employer brand, with the call to action: "Be the difference.** Become a Support Worker." This was aligned with the Government's campaign to raise awareness of vacancies in the social care sector and was primarily aimed at a younger audience, but was also of interest to an older population.
- **Agile working introduced** where job roles allow, and a flexible working policy.

Our Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Objectives 2023-2026

- **Continue to embed Diversity & Inclusion throughout Certitude**, achieving a fair, inclusive organisational culture demonstrated by the consistent application of our values and behaviours.
- **Attract, develop, engage and retain** a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- **Implement governance arrangements** that ensure the voice of people we support and their families is part of our planning and decision-making to deliver outstanding support.
- **Develop the capability and confidence of leaders and colleagues** through well designed learning and development systems, processes and policies.
- **Monitor Diversity & Inclusion through robust people data analysis**, enabling us to target our priorities and activities.

Performance Enablers

 LEADERSHIP Strong, visible, diverse leadership to role model inclusive leadership	 CULTURE Create a culture where colleagues feel welcomed for who they are, in a place where they can influence the way we do things	 CAPABILITY & CONFIDENCE Learning and development for leaders and colleagues to develop confidence and capability in Diversity & Inclusion
 COLLEAGUE ENGAGEMENT Supported by a robust communication and engagement plan that actively engages all voices	 AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT Where all colleagues, leaders and stakeholders value and demonstrate Diversity & Inclusion. An environment free from discrimination and harassment	 EMPOWERMENT Ensuring colleagues and people we support's ideas and concerns are heard and progressed
 UNDER REPRESENTATION Identify areas to improve under representation and monitor progress	 DATA Use data to measure our progress on Diversity & Inclusion, such as recruitment, development and engagement and retention of our colleagues	 MEASURABLE ACTION Ensure actions can be monitored and measured using clear methods

Our Approach to Digital and Diversity and Inclusion

We recognise that there is much we can do within our Digital Strategy to support our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy. Our aim is to build further equity into digital tools, processes and policies, including equality of access to opportunity, information and resources, and the elimination of unfair biases, stereotypes or barriers that may exclude some colleagues.

We will review what we need to do from a recruitment and technological point of view to make the workplace more accessible for people with conditions that would normally exclude them from a traditional working environment.

We will provide specific training to the IT team about understanding and ensuring equity and removal of bias in delivering technology solutions and support.

We will raise awareness of a range of additional support.

Delivering the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

The Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group will meet regularly. This will be a new group that will include colleagues from different roles, levels and teams within Certitude.

The network groups will continue to meet and will be encouraged to work collaboratively and look at intersectionality.

“It’s important not to make assumptions about people’s gender identity. We all do it though, because we have all been deeply socialised in our binary, gendered ways of thinking. However, until we start to try and open up our thinking and language, we cannot create a safe space for colleagues and people we support who do not fit in to the narrow ‘gender binary’ categories to be themselves.”

May Lee, Head of Practice Development, explaining why we encourage using pronouns in our email signatures

Leadership Team members will continue to be sponsors for the three network groups.

The Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group will update the Leadership Team and the HR Committee six monthly.

The Certitude Board will be updated annually.

Successful Outcomes

- A workplace where all colleagues and leaders value diversity and practise inclusion
- An increase in the diversity of our workforce, particularly relating to characteristics of disability, sexual orientation and age
- We value diverse perspectives and treat everyone with dignity
- We respect each other, always aware of the impact of our thoughts, words and behaviours
- Our colleagues feel comfortable being themselves and feel able to share their ideas and listen to others' views and perspectives
- We live our values, and we feel able to challenge behaviour which goes against our values
- We celebrate and embrace difference



Success Measures

- An increase in the diversity of our workforce, particularly relating to characteristics of disability, sexual orientation and age
- Improvements in our Have Your Say survey data relating to Diversity and Inclusion
- Improvements in awareness and experiences of colleagues as measured by the Have Your Say survey
- An increase in declaration rates of protected characteristics by our colleagues, providing us with better quality data on which to base our analysis and inform our work
- Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are regularly implemented

"The main thing that drew me to Certitude was the ability to work for an organisation that was having a real, positive impact on people's lives. Everyone at Certitude plays a role in this and I was excited about the opportunity to be a part of it."

Post from a Certitude colleague about attracting new talent to Certitude



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