



# Employment Matter Guidelines

## Recruitment and Selection

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## Introduction

**The recruitment and selection of your employees is a critical first step in providing equal opportunity for women in your organisation.**

Keep in mind that women are not a homogenous group but reflect the growing diversity of the larger population. By recognising and valuing women's differences (such as age, religion, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, disability, sexual orientation, etc.) and building consideration for differences into your recruitment and selection processes, your organisation stands to benefit from the diversity of women's contributions.

The information provided here aims to assist you to start thinking about:

- How you could analyse your workplace to identify any recruitment and selection issues for women.
- Suggested actions you could take to address the recruitment and selection issues for women you have identified.

Not all issues, actions and examples suggested here are relevant to your organisation. It is up to you to decide what is appropriate and relevant for your organisation to consider when analysing your workplace to identify issues for women, and taking actions to address these.



### Analysing Your Workplace

To assist you analyse your workplace to identify recruitment or selection issues for women, we suggest you:

- revisit your workforce profile to find where your female employees are.
- consult with your employees.
- examine your existing recruitment and selection policies and practices.

### Questions to Identify Recruitment and Selection Issues for Women

**Remember, your organisation is unique and may have unique issues. However, the following questions may be helpful when analysing your workplace.**

?	Is your recruitment process delivering you a diverse range of quality job candidates – male and female?	?	Are both men and women being appointed to operational line jobs in your organisation?
?	Is the broadest pool of candidates considered for all positions?	?	Are both men and women being appointed to senior management positions in your organisation?
?	Do both men and women respond to your job advertisement? If you take a closer look at your respondent profile, are women of different backgrounds (for example, culturally diverse women) among your respondents?	?	Does your recruitment provider/agency provide you with a diverse range of quality candidates – male and female?
?	Are both female and male candidates applying for roles in non-traditional areas? Do both female and male candidates get these jobs?	?	Do your interview questions and selection processes meet anti-discrimination legislation guidelines?
?	Are your recruitment processes transparent, easily reproducible and accessible for a diverse pool of candidates?	?	Are selection panel members aware of your organisation's equitable recruitment and selection policies and procedures?
?	Do women who are pregnant, part-time or home-based, or who have family responsibilities, make it on to your selection shortlists?	?	Would your recruitment and selection processes and decisions withstand the rigour of a review by an independent third party?



## Suggested Actions to Take to Address Recruitment and Selection Issues for Women

To **comply** with the Act, you need to take actions to address the recruitment and selection issues for women you identified. You do not need to do everything all at once and you can aim to achieve equal opportunity over time.

To be **waived** from reporting in following years, you must demonstrate that you have taken all reasonably practicable measures to address recruitment and selection issues for women you have identified (for example, your issue might be difficulties in recruiting female graduate staff).

**The following suggestions will help you start thinking about actions you could take to address any recruitment or selection issues you have identified.**

Keep in mind that:

- Not all of these actions may be relevant to your organisation. You will need to decide whether you choose to do all, some, or none of the suggested actions, and whether you wish to tailor suggested actions to suit the needs of your workplace.
- If your workplace analysis demonstrates your organisation has no issues for women in this employment matter, you would not need to take any actions.



### Developing Policy and Procedures

- Put in place a policy requiring recruitment and selection processes to select the best person for the job.
- Develop a quality, consistent process for recruitment that delivers diverse recruits.
- Have a recruitment strategy that links to your business plan, and to a strategy to retain employees.



### Reviewing Recruitment and Selection Opportunities

- Monitor each stage of your recruitment process to identify any practice that may disadvantage some candidates.
- Investigate whether women have equal opportunity in the recruitment and selection process by collecting information on the numbers of men and women:
  - applying for positions
  - being short-listed
  - being interviewed
  - being appointed, and
  - survey staff about their perception of equity in recruitment procedures.
- Consider collecting diversity information as part of the process. There could be a pool of diverse candidates you're not reaching or unnecessarily excluding.



### Reviewing Job Descriptions

- Ensure all job profiles/descriptions reflect the real requirements of the job, rather than describing the person who filled that job previously.
- Write job profiles in language that encourages both men and women to apply – including women of differing backgrounds. For example, avoid use of jargon and acronyms that tend to be exclusive.



### External Advertising

- Review advertisements to ensure that language, style, images, etc are inclusive, and appeal to candidates of different backgrounds.
- Identify yourself as an EEO employer/family-friendly workplace.
- State that both men and women are encouraged to apply for the position.
- Place the advertisement in a variety of media, rather than in 'men's' or 'women's' media or trade outlets.
- Expand your reach across a range of different communities by advertising with special interest organisations, ethnic media, specialist disability recruitment agencies, etc.

"We've had a very strong female influence in all the recruitment decisions ... our advertising is written by women and features women and I believe this has influenced the number of women in the marketing department, which has grown from 35 to 54 per cent in two years."

Helen Hovenga  
Personnel Manager  
Mars Inc



### Working with Recruitment Providers/Agencies

- Ensure your provider complies with lawful advertising guidelines (see [HREOC guidelines](#)).
- When selecting a provider, make a key selection criterion 'Evidence of sourcing quality, diverse applicants'.
- Hold your provider accountable for delivering female as well as male applicants.



### Increasing the Pool of Applicants

- Communicate vacancies throughout the organisation to attract a diverse applicant pool.
- Consider partnerships with key providers (for example, schools, universities, TAFEs, and training companies) to find quality female and male candidates.
- Establish contacts and partnerships with organisations and networks that serve ethnic or other communities.
- Build Intern programs into these partnerships.



- Offer both female and male employees training, shadowing or cross-skilling opportunities to develop their skills further.
- Encourage existing staff, including women, to apply for vacancies – this can be a useful way of encouraging women into non-traditional areas.
- Consider filling the vacancy with high-potential female and male staff eager to broaden their experience.
- Review the job requirements for essential qualifications. Be prepared to give value to different kinds of employment and overseas experience in lieu of formal training and local credentials.
- Be prepared to provide a workplace that accommodates differences in terms of employee needs and values (eg, childcare, same-sex benefits, job-sharing, flexible work hours, etc).



### Recruiting Internally

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- Advertise the position widely to attract a diverse applicant pool, for example, would employees on maternity/parental leave have an opportunity to see the advertisement?
- Design internal job advertisements as you would an external job advertisement – to attract a diverse applicant pool and get the best person for the job. For example, use inclusive language and images that speak to all candidates.
- Ensure both female and male quality candidates are given equal opportunity to be short-listed.
- Consider offering both female and male employees the position as a development assignment.
- Prepare employees to apply for internal positions by:
  - implementing and monitoring succession planning for both female and male employees.
  - providing opportunities for both female and male employees to work in different organisational areas and gain a broad range of work experience.
  - providing female and male unsuccessful candidates with feedback on the recruitment selection process, and offering development opportunities to position them well for the next internal recruitment opportunity.



### Interviewing

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- Ensure that all interviewers are provided with sensitivity/awareness training related to diversity and gender issues.
- Ensure interview panels consist of people from a range of backgrounds and a good understanding of the requirements of the job.
- Encourage panel Chairs to challenge and address discriminatory assumptions made by panel members when deciding on the successful candidate.
- Consider both female and male internal candidates – you may find that their knowledge and understanding of the business assists them to outperform the external candidates.



### Communicating your Policies and Procedures

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- Publicise your recruitment and selection policy widely in the organisation.
- Ensure both female and male employees, and employees on long-term leave have access to the recruitment and selection policy and procedures information.
- Train managers on your recruitment and selection policy and procedures.
- Hold managers accountable for providing equal opportunity in recruitment and selection by including this requirement in managers' workplace and performance agreements.
- Encourage managers to lead by example by sourcing and selecting top female candidates.

If you would like additional information on how to recruit and select equitably, you may wish to visit the [HREOC website](#). This site provides information on how to ensure your recruitment practices are lawful.



### Predominantly Male Workplace Issues

An equal opportunity program must deal with the specific needs and issues of your organisation. Such a program identifies and outlines the issues you are addressing and the initiatives you will put in place to achieve results. The most significant issues facing organisations with a majority of male employees may be:

- A lack of applications from female employees
- A low proportion of women in management
- A low proportion of women in non-traditional occupational categories eg. trades, labouring, plant and machinery operators
- Problems retaining female employees

?	What is the percentage of women with the required skills in your area? Does the number of women in your organisation reflect this percentage?	?	Have job descriptions been evaluated to ensure requirements are relevant?
?	Is the culture accepting of women?	?	Are the selection criteria or skills you require necessary, non-discriminatory and relevant to the job?
?	Have you educated all staff to change perceptions about traditional men's and women's jobs?	?	Can you train current female employees to undertake the job on offer or take female apprentices?
?	Have managers had training on the integration of women into traditional male areas of work?	?	If you employ through a recruitment agency, are they following equal opportunity processes?
?	Do you have policies in place that attract female applicants?	?	Can you visit schools, TAFE colleges, employment agencies, universities to encourage women to apply for positions in your organisation?
?	Do you have formal recruitment procedures and training in interview techniques?	?	Are men and women assessed on the same competencies?



### Predominantly Female Workplace Issues

EOWA is aware that some organisations have been implementing very good Human Resources policies for a number of years but have under reported on this information because they don't see it as relevant to equal opportunity for women. All HR policies and practices, whether formal or informal, affect all the people in your organisation and, therefore, are relevant to equal opportunity for women.

?	Are the recruitment/promotional processes formal?	?	Is every candidate assessed against the same criteria?
?	Does the job classification system reflect the skills/knowledge required for each job?		Does the organisation have strategies for employing people from other EO groups? How do these relate to the equal opportunity for women in the workplace strategies?



## Case Studies

All case studies are available from [www.eowa.gov.au](http://www.eowa.gov.au)

### Mixed Gender

**Sara Lee Household & Body Care**, a small manufacturer of soap and other detergents, recognised that they had a low representation of women at senior level and also in non-traditional areas. [Read how they proactively combated this ...](#)

**John Wiley and Sons**, an educational textbook publishing and distribution company, recognised through analysis of recruitment statistics that they had difficulty recruiting women into non-traditional roles. [What Actions did they take? What were the Outcomes? Read On!](#)

### Predominantly Male

**Rockwell Automation Pty Limited**, a machinery and motor vehicle wholesaling organisation with a predominantly male workforce, found that it was difficult to recruit women into their industry. They found a need existed to promote the benefits of a career path for women in the company and within the technical areas. [Read more about this ...](#)

**Kimberly Clark Australia** is best known, particularly by working mothers, for its range of disposable nappies. It's a company that is committed to delivering improved outcomes for women within the organisation especially with regard to the low number of applications from women for middle management, upper management and non-traditional female roles. [How did they do it? Read on ...](#)

**Boulderstone Hornibrook**, a large predominantly male construction company, found it difficult to recruit new female employees and wished to specifically focus on increasing the number of females recruited into the company. [Find out how their actions are now the secret of their success!](#)

### Predominantly Female

**Bevilles Jewellers**, employing approximately 260 people in the retailing of jewellery, needed to develop a consistent, comprehensive, equitable and objective recruitment and selection process based on knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, aptitude and qualifications. [What did they do? Read on ...](#)

At the **Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICA)**, analysis indicated that the organisation has a very high female employment rate, however, had a very balanced level of female and male job applicants. The ICA wanted to ensure that this excellent balance of candidates continued. [How did they do this? Find out...](#)

Workplace culture is the driving force behind the **Australian National Credit Union (ANCU)**. So much so, ANCU could not find any issues with recruitment or selection, but inspirationally, they wish to continue their pro-active recruitment approach. [Read more to find out how remarkable their actions and outcomes are.](#)

**Autoliv Australia**, a seatbelt and airbag manufacturer outside of Melbourne, has been dedicated to keeping its workforce safe and well. Through the results of surveys, feedback, consultation, analysis of statistics and focus groups, Autoliv found that needed to attract and recruit available females in the labour market who have technical-based competencies. [Find out how they did this.](#)

**Blake Dawson Waldron (BDW)** is one of Australia's largest law firms, with more than 180 partners, and has a clear goal to attract, retain and develop the best staff available. But what happens when it is difficult to attract female lawyers? [Find out how easy it was for BDW to increase their recruitment of female lawyers and improve profits!](#)

### Group Training

For the last 14 years, **Downs Group Training** has placed young people in full-time and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships throughout the Toowoomba region of Queensland, and currently has more than 520 people placed. The recent shift to school-based apprenticeships and traineeships has opened up diverse opportunities for more young people to take up a wider variety of trade and training options. [More on this ...](#)

**Group Training Employment** realised that females were under represented in their organisation. They could see no 'formal' gender barriers to staff appointments but in some trade areas, where industry experience is essential, there was a limited pool of suitably experienced females available. [Read how their actions have resulted in incredible outcomes!](#)

### Diversity Related

[Nationwide Building Society – Age Positive Champion](#) (UK) – The Society is committed to an inclusive employment environment that attracts and retains employees across the age spectrum. It also believes in employee choice and has developed policies that recognise the changing lifestyle needs of its employees.



## Related Links and Resources

### Publications

*Best Employment Practice – An Essential Guide to Recruitment and Termination Issues in NSW*

NSW Department of Industrial Relations

Telephone: (02) 9243 8774

[www.dir.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au)

*Effective Recruitment & Selection Practices*

Robert L Compton/Alan R Nanakervis

Personnel Management in Practice Series

CCH Australia Limited

Telephone: (02) 888 2555

[www.cch.com.au](http://www.cch.com.au)

[Attract, Retain and Motivate: A Toolkit for Diversity Management](#)

Articulates 10 key steps for HR managers to effectively attract, retain and motivate top quality employees via diversity management practices. Steps focus on recruitment, selection, appraisal, promotion and reward functions. (AUST)

[A Business Case for Diversity](#)

Making a strong case for benefits of workplace diversity, this report elaborates on considerations and strategies (related to leading, recruiting, training, etc) for achieving and managing a diverse workforce. (CANADA)

### **2001 Equal Opportunity Handbook and Model Policies**

Law Society

Although written to assist legal practitioners, the document contains a wealth of information about equal opportunity which is relevant to many organisations.

[http://www.lawsociety.com.au/pdfs/eo\\_policy/eo\\_policy.pdf](http://www.lawsociety.com.au/pdfs/eo_policy/eo_policy.pdf)

### Internet sites

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

[www.dewr.gov.au](http://www.dewr.gov.au)

Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

[www.hreoc.gov.au](http://www.hreoc.gov.au)

CCH Australia Limited

[www.cch.com.au](http://www.cch.com.au)

Department of Industrial Relations in your state.

Council for Equal Opportunity in Employment

<http://www.ceoe.com.au/>

The Council for Equal Opportunity in Employment Limited is Australia's leading diversity organisation. We focus on creating workplaces where differences are respected and valued; and there is no discrimination or harassment.

Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

[Diversity Australia](#)

[www.diversityaustralia.gov.au](http://www.diversityaustralia.gov.au) is a newly developed portal for diversity management, directed mainly to business, including business educators. The site is provided by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs and complements another new portal which has a government and community focus. Both sites will be available in April 2002.

### [Paths to Equal Opportunity](#)

A website of the Government of Ontario, providing a clearinghouse of resources for business and service providers that will help them create inclusive workplaces. (CANADA)

### [Achieving Cultural Diversity in Group Training Companies: A Good Practice Model](#)

A report that looks at good practice in recruitment and retention of people of diverse cultural/linguistic backgrounds with group training companies. (AUST)

### [Making the Most of a Diverse Workforce](#) (PDF)

An employer's guide to EEO, from New Zealand's EEO Trust. "In today's competitive marketplace organisations need to know they are recruiting from both the widest pool and the best available." (NZ)

### [Age Positive](#)

Website for a government campaign that is aimed at tackling age discrimination and promoting age diversity in the workplace. Includes numerous case studies. (UK)

### [WORKink](#)

This website provides resources, information, success stories, etc, and is designed for employers and others to enhance equitable and meaningful employment of people with disabilities. (CANADA)