



BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY

The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network



OPENING DOORS: WHAT WORKS

Reducing intersectional bias in recruitment

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This groundbreaking research seeks to identify which business actions have the greatest impact in supporting jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds, facing intersectional disadvantage. This report summarises qualitative and quantitative data, gathered from individuals and employers, and makes three key recommendations for businesses:

1. **Build social mobility into your Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) strategy.** Sign up to [Opening Doors](#) and use our simple framework to guide you.
2. **Look at social mobility through an intersectional lens.** Download our [toolkit](#) to uncover rich insights into how different characteristics intersect to create new barriers.
3. **Collect diversity data through the recruitment process.** Our Advisory Team can provide bespoke support to help you do this effectively.

INTRODUCTION

Over 50% of jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds feel overlooked in the UK job market.¹ The disadvantage faced by these jobseekers is often compounded by other factors, such as gender, race and disability.

Working in collaboration with Aldermore Bank, Heathrow Airport Limited and Lloyd's Register, Business in the Community (BITC) undertook a groundbreaking research project to test whether and how different characteristics intersect to create additional barriers to work. The outcome of the research project is a set of recommendations for businesses, to enable them to increase the impact of their inclusive recruitment strategies, underpinned by a wealth of data to help pinpoint the most effective employer actions, to support specific groups of jobseekers into work.

FOREWORDS

Aldermore

It's encouraging to see so many businesses making progress in supporting jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds, facing intersectional disadvantage, but there is still more work to be done. In today's diverse and interconnected world, equal opportunity in the professional market is more crucial than ever. The What Works report is a timely and insightful exploration of eye-opening data, addressing the barriers faced by jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds, especially those experiencing intersectional disadvantages. The report identifies actions that businesses should consider and presents a compelling case for businesses to reimagine their recruitment strategies.

As we navigate the complexities of social mobility and intersectionality, it's clear that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. However, the recommendations provided in the report offer a solid foundation for businesses committed to making a meaningful impact. By embracing these strategies, employers can contribute to a more equitable job market, where talent and potential are recognised and nurtured, regardless of background. This report is not only a catalyst for change but also a practical guide for businesses at various stages of their social mobility journeys. I would encourage businesses to consider this report and share their experiences and best practices to ensure that every jobseeker, irrespective of their socioeconomic status or intersecting identities, has the opportunity to succeed and thrive.

STEVEN COOPER
CEO
Aldermore

Heathrow

Heathrow Airport is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace and has set a public commitment in Heathrow 2.0, our sustainability plan, to be an inclusive employer of choice for local diverse talent.

The 'What Works' research is an important step forward in helping us to understand more about social mobility. With over 50% of jobseekers from low socio-economic backgrounds experiencing barriers to work, this is a clear signal to employers, that whilst many of us have made positive strides to create inclusive recruitment practices, more needs to be done. What we have learned from this research is that these barriers can sometimes be compounded by intersectionality factors, including but not limited to race, gender and disability.

This is a complex area. As a business community, we can create meaningful impact. I personally welcome the opportunity to collaborate, share and learn with others to respond to the three calls to action highlighted in the report.

PAULA STANNETT
Chief People Officer
Heathrow Airport



At Lloyds Register, we believe in fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace. Our commitment to these values drives us to support initiatives that empower individuals from all walks of life to access meaningful employment opportunities. It is in this spirit that we are proud to have been a part of this groundbreaking research from Business in the Community, which seeks to identify business actions that significantly impact jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds, who face intersectional disadvantages.

Opening Doors is the result of meticulous research, combining both qualitative and quantitative data from individuals and employers. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the barriers faced by jobseekers and offers actionable recommendations for businesses to help overcome these challenges.

We encourage businesses to embrace these recommendations, not just as a moral imperative, but as a strategic advantage. By promoting social mobility and addressing intersectional disadvantages, businesses can tap into a wider talent pool, foster innovation, and create a more inclusive workplace culture.

We are committed to leading by example and supporting our partners in these efforts. Together, we can create a more equitable future for all.

SHARRON PAMPLIN
Chief People Officer
Lloyd's Register

METHODOLOGY

1. A **rapid, desk-based literature review** to establish the extent to which evidence already exists on employer interventions to improve access to jobs for jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds, facing intersectional disadvantage
2. A series of **employer interviews**ⁱⁱ understand existing approaches to social mobility and addressing intersectional disadvantage at recruitment
3. Two **YouGov surveys**:
 - Individuals from a low socioeconomic backgroundⁱⁱⁱ
 - A broad cross-section of employers of different sizes, sectors and regions^{iv}
4. Three **focus groups** featuring individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds,^v to further explore the findings from YouGov's individuals survey



SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

CALL TO ACTION 1: BUILD SOCIAL MOBILITY INTO YOUR EDI STRATEGY

A significant proportion of individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds reported frustrating experiences with the recruitment process and struggled to secure good work. Employers need to review their job searching, application and assessment processes to identify potential barriers, and scope for bias, and incorporate mitigating actions into their inclusive recruitment strategies.

When thinking about social mobility, employers should recognise that there are significant differences in the barriers experienced by a person in the C2 social class, compared to someone in the E social group.^{vi} Businesses should build these differences into their social mobility strategy.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

YouGov

- 53% of employers are taking deliberate actions to attract more diverse talent into jobs, rising to 73% for large businesses
- The most cited reason for attracting diverse talent is 'because it's the right thing to do', identified by 65% of businesses, closely followed by 'to encourage diversity of thought', identified by 62%
- Only 8% of businesses have recruitment targets for people from low socioeconomic backgrounds. This increases to 14% for large businesses

Employer Interviews

Every organisation reported taking action to improve the diversity of its workforce. Different businesses are targeting different demographics of workers but the most targeted demographics are women and ethnically diverse jobseekers. This was supported in the employers YouGov survey, in which 51% of large businesses reported targeting ethnically diverse jobseekers and 42% reported targeting women.

Many of the businesses we interviewed are starting to take action to support jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Most of the actions being taken to support jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds are focused on early careers, particularly via outreach. Far fewer businesses reported amending their recruitment processes to support social mobility and even fewer were seeking to support experienced hires.

Employers reported three key challenges to building social mobility into inclusive recruitment strategies:

- **The international dimension:** social mobility is not recognised as an issue in many other countries, making it difficult to secure senior level support (and investment) within some multinational businesses
- **Lack of relevance:** similarly, most questions developed for identifying a person's socioeconomic background are irrelevant to non-UK nationals
- **Diluting focus:** although social mobility is important, there is still a lot of work to be done to support other priority groups and some businesses are reluctant to shift resources until further gains have been made in those areas

THE JOBSEEKER PERSPECTIVE

YouGov

- 13% of respondents had not been invited for an interview or an assessment for any of the jobs that they had applied for over the past two years. This increased to 17% for people from Other Asian (excluding Pakistani and Indian) backgrounds, 18% for jobseekers aged 45-54, and 23% for people with disabilities who self-described as 'limited a lot').
- 16% of people from low socioeconomic backgrounds were not offered any of the jobs that they had applied for during this period.
- There were some significant differences in the reported experiences of individuals from the C2 social class compared to the E social class, e.g. men in social class E were more than twice as likely as any other individual in a lower socioeconomic group to cite 'any physical or mental health concerns' as a barrier to applying for work (20% compared to 11% of E women, 7% of C2 males and 8% of D males).
- **Diversity commitments:** Jobseekers place a high value on companies which set out strong ethical values and a commitment to EDI. This is particularly true for those from an ethnic minority.
- **Job descriptions:** Participants reported experiencing a mismatch between job descriptions and the 'on-the-job reality'. They disliked job descriptions that focused on personality traits, rather than skills. Many said that they found job descriptions inaccessible to read and understand.
- **Experience:** Minimum experience requirements, especially for entry-level roles, make jobs inaccessible for many jobseekers.
- **Skills:** Many participants were unsure what transferable skills they had and would like support to identify what roles they would be suited to

Focus Groups

Through the focus groups, we gathered feedback on the different elements of the recruitment process.

Job searching

- **Platforms:** Jobseekers find the job searching process extensive and exhausting. Some are overwhelmed with searching through vast numbers of job postings and the quantity of job application platforms and avenues to apply can make the process time-consuming.

“

Job descriptions don't match the role in reality. Hopes and expectations are shattered because of that.

”

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

“

I passed the interview, but they offered me a wage £5k lower than was advertised. They said it was because I was new. I said the advert did not say that the salary was dependent on experience.

”

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

The application process

- **Bias:** Many participants felt that they tended to do better in a recruitment process if they hid or masked elements of their identity (e.g race, ethnicity, educational background)
- **UK bias:** Some reported that a lack of UK-based experience was a major barrier to gaining access to roles
- **Reasonable adjustments:** Disabled participants expressed concerns about whether working environments would meet their accessibility needs and that a lack of clarity about the employer’s approach to reasonable adjustments sometimes deterred them from investing time in applying
- **Accessibility:** Disabled applicants also reported some platforms and application processes were inaccessible

- **(Lack of) feedback:** A common frustration across participants was the lack of feedback during and after the application process – many reported getting no feedback at all, others a lack of contextual feedback. They wanted feedback in written form to enable future learning and development.

“

When I do not disclose that I am a woman and my ethnic origin, I am invited for interviews.

”

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

“

I started an admin job and the interview was accessible, but the actual job wasn’t – it was meant to be a computer-based job but ended up being a paper-based job.

”

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

The interview/assessment

- **Accessibility:** Disabled participants welcomed being given the option for a virtual interview or assessment
- **Advance notice of questions:** Many participants cited the benefits of receiving interview questions in advance
- **Diverse interview panels:** A small number of participants felt that their race (Black) was an issue when being interviewed by an all-White panel
- **Disability bias:** Many with disabilities felt they had to hide their disability until the offer stage so as not to be considered 'too much work' or 'less efficient'

“

Is there a need for three people on the (interview) panel? It puts pressure on candidates.

”

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

“

Facing ableism; employers assume we can't perform, but it would be better to assume we can and give us a chance.

”

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

CALL TO ACTION 2: LOOK AT SOCIAL MOBILITY THROUGH AN INTERSECTIONAL LENS

The research shows that there are a small number of actions that employers can take that will benefit a significant percentage of jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds. However, when you look behind the key actions, there are notable differences between the actions that different groups of people facing intersectional barriers identify as important. Therefore, employers need to implement a range of different actions if they are to remove barriers for the majority of jobseekers from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Similarly, employers wanting to attract more applications from a specific diverse group should invest in understanding the unique experiences and needs of that particular group.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

Among the businesses we spoke to, there was a growing awareness of intersectionality but very few organisations had already identified or implemented actions specifically designed to support jobseekers facing intersectional barriers. There was a recognition among some organisations that social mobility needs to be embedded into overall EDI strategy, rather than developed as a separate strand, given its intersectional nature.

Employers identified two main challenges when it comes to addressing intersectional barriers:

- **The “ever-expanding EDI agenda”:** there was a recognition that businesses need to be braver and bolder, but also a fear that broadening inclusive recruitment efforts would be overwhelming
- **Data analysis:** even if businesses are collecting data on socioeconomic background, they often find that their HR systems do not facilitate analysis of intersectionality

THE JOBSEEKER PERSPECTIVE



You see all sorts of jobs out there, it is difficult to find ones that suit me and my qualifications.



FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

YouGov

Two barriers were consistently identified by all groups of individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds, regardless of other characteristics:

- Not having enough personal confidence to apply (31%)
- Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available (30%)

However, there were notable differences in the next most popular response depending on gender, age, disability and race.

- ‘Not knowing whether the job can be done flexibly’ – identified by women, White British*, Black, Mixed ethnicity individuals and those in social group C2*
- ‘Belief that people like me don’t do that kind of job’ - identified by White British* individuals, people aged 55+, and those in social group E
- ‘Having time to look for the right job (i.e., need to take the first job you get)’ – identified by men, Asian individuals, people aged 18-24, and those in social group C2*
- ‘Any physical or mental health concerns’ – identified by disabled individuals

* Two answers identified by same number of respondents

Further variances exist where different characteristics intersect. The same pattern (where there is consistency across groups in the most popular responses, but differences below those top answers), was repeated across the survey (see Annex A).

CALL TO ACTION 3: COLLECT DIVERSITY DATA THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

While many employers understand the benefits of a diverse workforce, it can be challenging to develop the evidence-based interventions needed to make this a reality. Businesses should collect and analyse diversity data, not just on their current workforce, but also throughout the recruitment process to ensure that they are able to identify and mitigate any barriers that make it difficult for some groups of people to access their jobs.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

YouGov

- Only 16% of employers collect data on socioeconomic background during the recruitment process (rising to 25% of large employers), compared to 59% of businesses that collect data on gender
- Of those who do collect socioeconomic data, 75% use the [Social Mobility Commission’s four questions](#))
- Overall, 44% of businesses currently collect diversity data at application stage (61% of large businesses), and an additional 13% of businesses plan to start doing so in the next two years (rising to 16% for large employers)
- One third (33%) of businesses said that they neither collected diversity data at the application stage, nor planned to start doing so in the next two years (this fell to 12% for large employers)

EMPLOYER INTERVIEWS

The employers we spoke to generally recognised the benefit of collecting diversity data, but identified three key challenges to doing this:

- Amongst those employers who do ask candidates about their socioeconomic background, disclosure rate is very low (anecdotally, substantially lower than other diversity data such as gender and race). There were several reasons given for this: a lack of understanding about why the employer wants this data, a fear that it will be used to disadvantage the applicant, an inability to answer the questions (i.e not knowing the information being requested), disengagement with a lengthy disclosure form.
- The Social Mobility Commission's four questions are not relevant for non-UK nationals
- The (lack of) functionality of HR systems can inhibit intersectional analysis

THE JOBSEEKER PERSPECTIVE

YouGov

More than one-fifth (22%) of respondents identified 'blind CVs' as an employer action that would make a difference to the recruitment process. This was particularly important to Black Caribbean respondents (37%), Other Asian respondents (29%), and individuals aged 55+ (26%). This question did not specifically ask about providing diversity data, but it suggests that a significant proportion of job applicants overall, and an even greater proportion of applicants from particular groups, are not confident that they will be treated fairly in the recruitment process when they reveal certain characteristics.

CONCLUSION

‘Opening Doors: What Works’ demonstrates that while social mobility is gaining traction with employers, there is still a lot of work to be done to level the playing field for all jobseekers, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

Employers are at very different stages of their journey when it comes to social mobility: some are yet to tackle it, others are quite advanced in their approach. Yet there is more homogeneity when it comes to intersectionality; though there are outliers, most businesses are struggling to grasp it in any meaningful way. We hope that this report is the catalyst to change that.

We launched [Opening Doors](#), our inclusive recruitment campaign, in February 2022. It pulls together the most impactful employer actions on recruiting diverse talent into a single, simple framework. This research shows that those actions remain relevant, while also providing the evidence employers need to nuance their inclusive recruitment strategies so that they can have more success with their target groups – crucially, ensuring that

no one is left behind because they face intersecting barriers to work. We have published a summary of the data as part of this report (Annex A), but we will also seek to make more of the intersectional data available to Opening Doors employers over the coming months.

This research project has provided a huge amount of rich insight, providing answers to many of the questions we asked at the start, around which actions would have the greatest impact on supporting low socioeconomic jobseekers facing compounding disadvantage. But it has also identified priority workstreams for the future. A key question that we don’t believe anyone has been able to answer effectively yet is ‘how can we improve disclosure rates of diversity data among candidates?’. There are lots of examples of employers making real strides towards the collection of existing workforce diversity data, but we know that for most, encouraging applicants to disclose presents a significant challenge, and this is something BITC will seek to explore later this year. After all, as the oft-quoted adage goes, “if you can’t measure it, you can’t improve it!”.^{vii}

ⁱ Forage, 2021 ([FE News](#))

ⁱⁱ Participating employers/employer groups: Anchor, Aldermore, bp, Business Stream, Co-op, Deloitte, DWF, Enterprise Mobility, Federation of Small Businesses, Greggs, Heathrow Airport Limited, Heathrow’s People Leadership Forum, Lloyd’s Register, Morgan Sindall, National Grid, Phoenix, Severn Trent, Siemens, Thames Water, TUC.

ⁱⁱⁱ Total sample size was 2256 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 18 March – 10 April 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative UK adults (18+) in social groups C2, D and E by gender, age, region and ethnicity.

^{iv} Total sample size was 650 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 18 March and 10 April 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of those in senior management positions in HR or recruitment by business size, sector and UK region (aged 18+).

^v 1 x all low socioeconomic individuals, 1 x low socioeconomic background plus disability, 1 x low socioeconomic background plus minority ethnic background.

^{vi} Low socioeconomic background is generally comprised of people from the C2DE social groups. C2 is defined as ‘skilled manual occupations’, whereas DE is ‘semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations’. [ONS](#)

^{vii} Peter Drucker

ANNEXES

YUOGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

WOMEN

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having enough personal confidence to apply	38%
Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	32%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	19%
Not understanding the job description (e.g., jargon, too complex)	16%
Belief that 'people like me' don't do that kind of job	15%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	54%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	53%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	44%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	38%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	16%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	51%
Employer website	43%
Social media	23%
Recruitment agency	23%
Friends	16%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

The job allows flexible working	46%
The job provides flexible working hours	41%
Feeling respected and included	39%
Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	38%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	34%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	73%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	48%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	46%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	44%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	21%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

MEN

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	29%
Not having enough personal confidence to apply	24%
Having time to look for the right job (i.e., need to take the first job you get)	13%
Belief that 'people like me' don't do that kind of job	11%
Not being able to access training to get the right skills	11%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	50%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	44%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	35%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	34%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	16%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	47%
Employer website	45%
Recruitment agency	28%
Social media	23%
Friends	21%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	39%
Feeling respected and included	31%
The job allows flexible working	30%
The job provides flexible working hours	28%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	27%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	61%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	46%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	40%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	32%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	22%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

DISABILITY – LIMITED A LOT

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Any physical or mental health concerns	48%
Not having enough personal confidence to apply	36%
Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	35%
Belief that 'people like me' don't do that kind of job	27%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	25%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	42%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	42%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	38%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	35%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats	18%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Employer website	55%
Online job board	49%
Social media	29%
Recruitment agency	23%
Jobcentre Plus	17%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

The job allows flexible working	36%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	32%
The job provides flexible working hours	31%
Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	30%
Feeling respected and included	30%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

The job allows flexible working	36%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	32%
The job provides flexible working hours	31%
Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	30%
Feeling respected and included	30%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

DISABILITY – LIMITED A LITTLE

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having enough personal confidence to apply	39%
Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	35%
Any physical or mental health concerns	31%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	22%
Not understanding the job description (e.g., jargon, too complex)	21%
Belief that 'people like me' don't do that kind of job	21%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	55%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	52%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	47%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	38%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	18%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Employer website	45%
Online job board	45%
Recruitment agency	22%
Social media	20%
Friends	20%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	44%
The job allows flexible working	40%
Feeling respected and included	39%
The job provides flexible working hours	36%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	32%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	68%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	52%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	44%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	41%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	24%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

ETHNICITY – WHITE BRITISH

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having enough personal confidence to apply	33%
Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	30%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	14%
Belief that 'people like me' don't do that kind of job	14%
Not understanding the job description (e.g., jargon, too complex)	14%
Having time to look for the right job (i.e., need to take the first job you get)	14%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	50%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	49%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	39%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	36%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	15%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	47%
Employer website	43%
Recruitment agency	22%
Social media	21%
Friends	16%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	40%
The job allows flexible working	39%
Feeling respected and included	36%
The job provides flexible working hours	36%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	31%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	69%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	49%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	42%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	40%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	19%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

ETHNICITY – BLACK

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	27%
Not having enough personal confidence to apply	19%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	17%
Not being able to access training to get the right skills	14%
Having time to look for a job (e.g., caring responsibilities too great)	14%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	56%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	44%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	39%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	37%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	24%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Employer website	50%
Online job board	50%
Recruitment agency	40%
Social media	37%
Friends	34%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

The job provides flexible working hours	37%
The job allows flexible working	32%
Feeling respected and included	29%
Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	29%
The business ensures candidates are interviewed by people from diverse backgrounds.	28%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	28%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	53%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	44%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	41%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	32%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	31%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

ETHNICITY – ASIAN

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	35%
Not having enough personal confidence to apply	27%
Having time to look for the right job (i.e., need to take the first job you get)	17%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	16%
Having time to look for a job (e.g., caring responsibilities too great)	13%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	58%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	53%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	45%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	39%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	21%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	60%
Employer website	53%
Recruitment agency	33%
Social media	22%
Friends	20%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

The job allows flexible working	44%
Feeling respected and included	40%
The job provides flexible working hours	38%
Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	35%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	33%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	63%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	43%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	38%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	37%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	28%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

ETHNICITY – MIXED

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	24%
Not having enough personal confidence to apply	22%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	20%
Having time to look for the right job (i.e., need to take the first job you get)	15%
Any physical or mental health concerns	14%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	46%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	43%
Being able to apply by just filling a form	41%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	37%
The application could be submitted in-person, on the phone, or via a third party such as my college or a charity	26%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	50%
Employer website	41%
Social media	36%
Friends	33%
Recruitment agency	33%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

Feeling respected and included	36%
The job allows flexible working	35%
Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	32%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	30%
The job provides flexible working hours	29%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	55%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	48%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	44%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	27%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	25%

YUOGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

AGE – 18-24

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	35%
Not having enough personal confidence to apply	32%
Having time to look for the right job (i.e., need to take the first job you get)	19%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	18%
Not understanding the job conditions, e.g., working hours, pay, location	18%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	49%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	49%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	40%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	39%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	30%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	57%
Employer website	45%
Social media	40%
Recruitment agency	24%
Friends	23%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	36%
Feeling respected and included	31%
The job allows flexible working	27%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	27%
The business uses blind CVs (i.e. identifying information such as your name, age and educational institutions is hidden from the recruiter)	25%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	57%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	45%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	43%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	29%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	28%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

AGE – 55+

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having enough personal confidence to apply	23%
Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	22%
Belief that 'people like me' don't do that kind of job	11%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	10%
Not having the digital skills to apply	9%
Not understanding the job description (e.g., jargon, too complex)	9%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just filling in a form	48%
Being able to apply by just sending a CV	44%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	34%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	23%
The application could be submitted in-person, on the phone, or via a third party such as my college or a charity	14%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	36%
Employer website	31%
None of the above	23%
Recruitment agency	22%
Friends	16%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	39%
Feeling respected and included	35%
The job allows flexible working	31%
The job provides flexible working hours	29%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	28%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	66%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	48%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	43%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	34%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	21%

YOUNGOV SURVEY OF PEOPLE FROM LOW SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

SOCIAL CLASS – E

What barriers have you encountered when applying for a job?

Not having enough personal confidence to apply	32%
Not having the right skills for the jobs that are available	31%
Belief that 'people like me' don't do that kind of job	21%
Not knowing whether job can be done flexibly	20%
Not understanding the job description (e.g., jargon, too complex)	17%

What would make it easier to submit an application?

Being able to apply by just sending a CV	53%
Information about the timeline and length of the recruitment process is clearly stated in the job advert	50%
Being able to apply by just filling in a form	48%
I could apply for a job on my mobile phone	29%
Information about the job and the whole recruitment process was provided in accessible formats (e.g. visual, auditory)	16%

How do you typically search for vacancies?

Online job board	47%
Employer website	40%
Recruitment agency	27%
Social media	23%
Friends	17%

What would make the biggest difference to your experience of the recruitment process?

The job allows flexible working	44%
Getting constructive feedback at each stage of the process	43%
The job provides flexible working hours	36%
Feeling respected and included	35%
The recruitment process (e.g. job advert, forms, interviews) focuses on skills rather than experience and qualifications	32%

What would make you more likely to apply to a particular organisation?

Include all essential information in the job description, including salary, working hours and location	74%
Set out the day-to-day activities of the role in the job advert	49%
Ask for skills rather than qualifications and experience	43%
Make clear what kinds of flexible working requests they will consider	41%
Provide the contact details of an individual at the organisation that you could contact with any queries	20%



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network



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