



# FAIR RECRUITMENT ADVISER INITIATIVE

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Information for Fair Recruitment Advisers involved in the recruitment to Professional Services roles at Band 7 and above.



## Fair Recruitment Adviser (FRA) Initiative: Information Pack

We're so pleased you want to find out more about becoming a Fair Recruitment Adviser and this information pack will tell you everything you need to know to get started.

Your time, skills and insights as an Adviser will contribute to an important part of our work to advance race equity at LSE – not just in the roles you help recruit, but also any insights you can share to help us shape and refine our process.

Your role involves promoting fairness and transparency during interview panels, to help reduce the impact of unconscious bias at the interview stage for Professional Services roles at Band 7 and above. This initiative has been developed to improve the representation of ethnic minority staff in senior Professional Services roles in the School.

The initiative will recruit staff volunteers, who identify themselves as being from a BAME background, to be Fair Recruitment Advisers. The Advisers will be available to join interview panels across the School as an equal member of the interview panel. They are also encouraged to participate in shortlisting to the post. The Adviser will receive comprehensive training for this role including training in unconscious bias, recruitment and selection and participating in interview panels and hiring decisions.



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## Background

As part of our [School's Race Equity Framework](#), the Human Resources Division (HR), the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit (EDI) and the LSE EmbRace network group have worked together to consider initiatives that can be put in place with the aim of significantly increasing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) representation at senior levels at LSE.

The Fair Recruitment Adviser Initiative builds upon the anonymisation of applications for Professional Services staff, which was launched in 2019 to reduce the impact of unconscious bias during the recruitment process from application to interview stage.

LSE embraces diversity and promotes inclusivity at all levels; however, it is recognised that BAME staff are under-represented at senior levels. It is the School's aim for staff at all grades to better reflect the diversity of wider society, which in turn enriches LSE's own community. The purpose of the role of Fair Recruitment Advisers is to promote fairness and transparency during interview panels and to reduce the impact of unconscious bias at the interview stage for Professional Services roles at Band 7 and above.

The work of our Fair Recruitment Advisers contributes directly to advancing race equity at LSE, through the [Our People](#) strand of our [Race Equity Framework](#).

## Why are we piloting Fair Recruitment Advisers?

Internal data over the last few years shows a disparity in the representation of BAME candidates and white candidates between interview and appointment stage, with a particular under-representation of BAME employees at Band 7 and above.

Since the introduction of the anonymisation of applications for Professional Services Staff, we have seen an increase in the number of BAME applicants being shortlisted. However, the proportion of BAME applicants being shortlisted for interview and being appointed remains consistently lower for BAME applicants than for white applicants.

Research continually shows that unconscious bias and 'group think' can impact on how we make hiring decisions: for example, we are likely to hire in our own image due to affinity biases. By including individuals from different backgrounds on interview panels, we reduce this risk by ensuring that multiple perspectives are included in the decision-making discussions. Diverse perspectives help panel members to challenge one another, so that assumptions can be avoided, and assessments are evidence-based.

As a result, we will be piloting this initiative for 12 months, before evaluating progress and making any changes as appropriate.

## What does our data show?

Below is an overview of what our data shows for the years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.<sup>1</sup>

### Current Headcount

The table below shows the numbers and percentage ratio (within each grade) of staff who identify as Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME). What the table shows is that the higher the grade is, there are less individuals who identify as BAME. There is a high ratio (over representation based on the School's average) of individuals who identify as BAME in Bands **SB01 (+38%)**, **SB02 (+23%)**, and **SB03 (+20%)**. At the other end of the scale, you have a relatively low ratio (under representation based on the School's average) in the higher grades. For example: **SB07 (-10%)**, **SB08 (-20%)**, **SB09 (-27%)**, and **SB10 (-22%)**.

**Table 1 Current staff identifying as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (as at 21 June 2021)**

	SB01	SB02	SB03	SB04	SB05	SB06	SB07	SB08	SB09	SB10	Grand total
#	162	19	56	64	93	80	58	11	≤ 5	≤ 5	543 - 553
%	71%	56%	53%	33%	28%	21%	23%	13%	6%	11%	33%

### Recruitment

Table 2 below shows the numbers of recruitment campaigns in Academic Session 2018/19 and 2019/20. It shows that **664** campaigns were ran in 2018/19, of which **476** were Professional Services roles. There was a marked decrease in campaigns ran in 2019/20 due to the recruitment freeze which took place following the Covid 19 Pandemic, which first impacted LSE part way through the Academic Session. In this year, there was a total of **445** recruitment campaigns, of which **336** of them were Professional Services and **80** of these were Professional Services roles graded between Band 7 to 10. Table 3 also gives a further breakdown of each specific grade.

**Table 2 Recruitment campaign numbers**

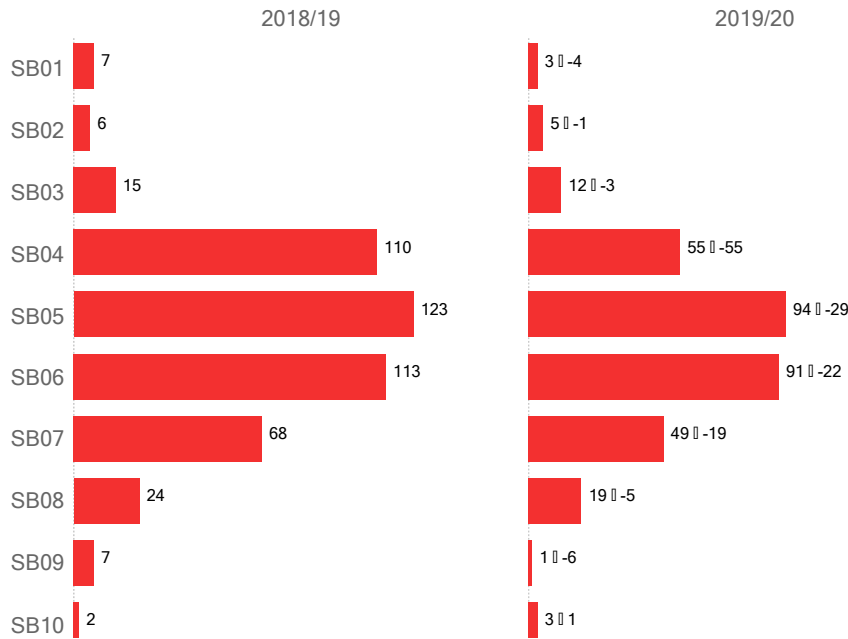
Campaign Type	2018/19	2019/20
All	664	445
Professional Service (All Bands)	476	336
Professional Service (Band 7-10)	109	80

**Table 3 Professional recruitment campaign numbers for Bands 7-10**

Campaign Band	2018/19	2019/20
7	68	49
8	24	19
9	7	1
10	2	3

<sup>1</sup> The year for the purposes of this data starts from 1 August and ends on 31 July.

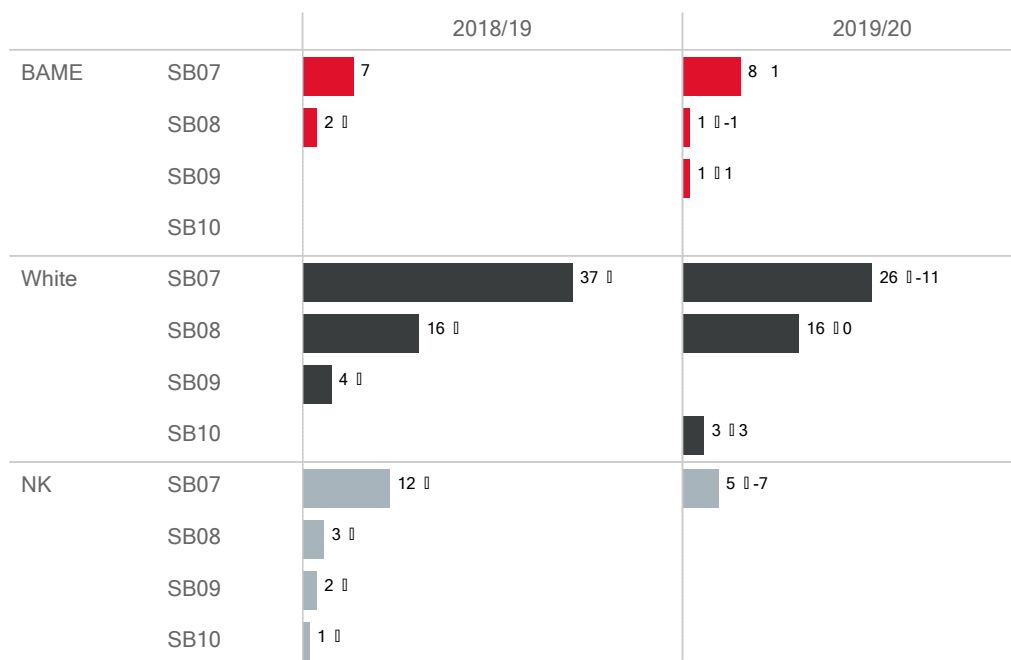
**Table 4 Professional recruitment campaign numbers for all bands**  
Two academic year history



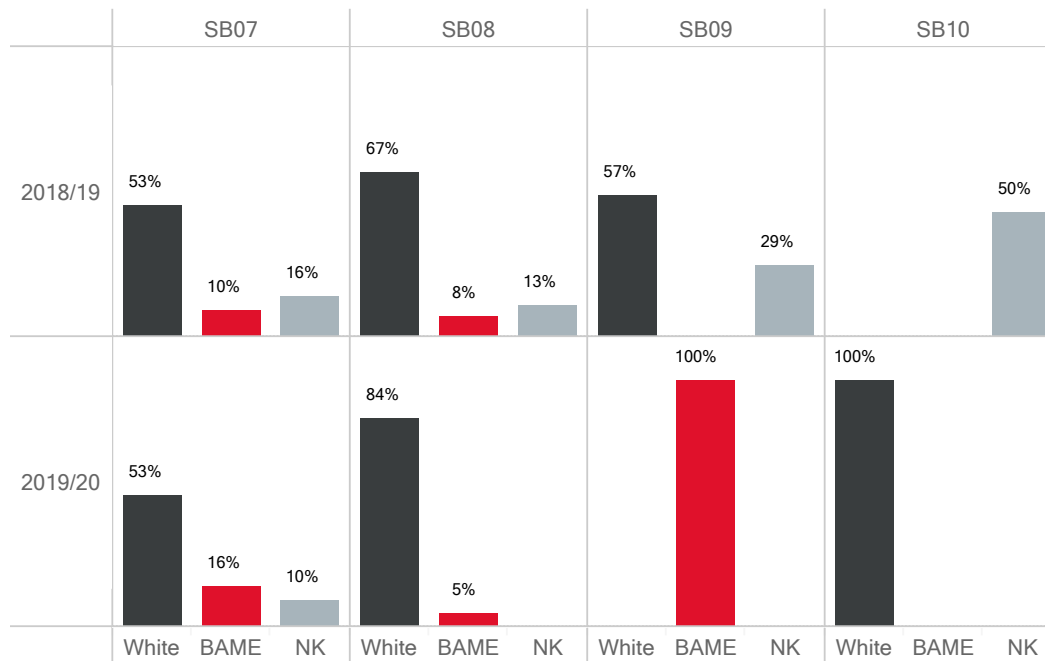
**Appointments**

Table 5 shows the number of appointments made via the recruitment system by grade and identified ethnicity. When comparing between banding or years in this data, you should take into account the fluctuations in opportunities offered. Taking **SB07** you can see that there were **7** BAME appointments in 2018/19 out of a possible **68** opportunities, making an appointment ratio of **10%** of SB07 appointments. However, in 2019/20 there were **8** BAME appointments, out of a possible **49** opportunities making an appointment ratio of **16%**. Table 6 details the appointment ratios where you can see this effect.

**Table 5 Appointments made via the recruitment system by grade, year and ethnicity**  
Two academic year history



**Table 6 Appointment ratios based on the number of people appointed / campaigns ran**  
*Two academic year history*



**Internal Appointments**

Table 7 shows the number of internal appointments which have occurred within our HR system by ethnicity and academic year. The trend here follows a similar trajectory to the recruitment data and shows a higher number of internal appointments going to those who identify as **White**. The data also shows that there is a higher number of movements within **SB07** and to a less extent within **SB08**. There was a steady increase in internal appointments from **2016/17** to **2019/20**, raising from **197** to **235** appointments. Looking purely at the numbers there was some evidence to suggest that appointments in **2017/18** were improving for those who identified as BAME but progress has not been marked in the last couple years when compared to those who identify as **White**.

**Table 7 Internal appointments made via the HR system by grade, year and ethnicity**  
*Four year history*

		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	SB07	26	34	31	28
	SB08	<5	<5	<5	6
	SB09	<5	<5	<5	<5
	SB10		<5	<5	<5
White	SB07	94	98	107	125
	SB08	44	43	50	45
	SB09	13	14	19	15
	SB10	14	14	12	13

## What is expected of you as an Adviser?

The Fair Recruitment Adviser provides support to senior recruitment panels, so that the appointment of selected candidates is fair, transparent and equitable in relation to ethnicity. Advisers will provide additional knowledge and insight and support the panel to make informed choices which reflect LSE's diversity and inclusion aspirations.

Advisers are expected to commit to all prerequisite training sessions to equip them with the appropriate knowledge and skills to challenge, probe and assess during recruitment panels. All Advisers will play a key part in the recruitment of each role and will participate as a full panel member, empowered with the necessary skills for decision-making.

To perform well in this role, participants will be expected to:

- Champion the principles and commitments within [LSE 2030](#) to champion an inclusive LSE
- Provide visible diversity in panel discussions – to help applicants feel comfortable and confident to perform their best at interview stage
- Communicate cultural insights and key points of consideration to panel members
- Escalate any issues or concerns to the HR Partner Support Group for further discussion and, prior to a decision being finalised, challenge any discussion or decision-making which seems unfair or unjustified
- Contribute to decision-making if more than one candidate is appointable
- Challenge unconscious biases and assumptions
- Question a panel's selection choices based on homophilous relations, i.e. where a panel member perceives a candidate as being similar to themselves
- Comply with recruitment practice in terms of record-keeping.

## Training and Development

Advisers are normally expected to attend the full programme of training in order to take part in shortlisting and interview panels. The training consists of:

- Recruitment and Selection Training [3 hours]
- Interviewing Techniques and Assertive Communication Training [3.5 hours]
- Understanding the Fair Recruitment Adviser role [2.5 hours]
- eRecruitment System Training [1 Hours]
- GDPR Training [1 Hours]

## Fair Recruitment Advisers in Practice

Once the training has been completed, Fair Recruitment Advisers will be able to take part in interview panels. Opportunities to join a panel will be communicated to all Advisers as they become available, and they will be invited to put themselves forward.

Advisers will be provided with information about the role, including the job description/person specification, panel members and timescales, and take part in shortlisting and the interview.

Fair Recruitment Advisers are expected to volunteer for at least one panel each School year, up to a maximum of three panels a year. Advisers should only volunteer for a panel where they are available to take part. Once a panel slot has been allocated, they are expected to attend. If unexpected circumstances arise and the Adviser who has been allocated can no longer participate in the interview and shortlisting, they should contact the Chair as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Advisers are expected to participate in the interview alongside the other panel members: this includes asking interview questions, participating in post-interview discussions and hiring decisions. If the Adviser needs further information about the role, they should contact the Chair prior to the interview.

The Adviser will be supported throughout their participation in the initiative by the HR Partner Support Group. They can contact this group at any time to ask questions, give feedback or raise concerns. As this is a pilot initiative, we will be continually gathering feedback from participants to understand their experiences and determine how the initiative is meeting its aims.



## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

### Am I eligible for the initiative?

This initiative is intended for Professional Services Staff at salary Band 5 and above who identify themselves as from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. Individuals who don't identify to any of these categories will not be eligible for this initiative.

However, all staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the School's recruitment processes and may register to attend a Recruitment and Selection training session to further their knowledge about recruitment at LSE.

### How do I apply?

If you meet the criteria outlined above and are interested in signing up to be a Fair Recruitment Adviser, or have any questions regarding the role, please email [HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk](mailto:HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk).

Those who sign up to be a Fair Recruitment Adviser must attend the relevant training prior to taking on the role.

### Can I apply as a fixed-term member of staff?

You are still eligible to apply for this initiative if your contract is fixed-term; however, you will need to ensure that the length of your contract enables you to commit to the prerequisite training sessions which you must attend. Please also be aware that calls to sit on recruitment panels will be subject to the volume of senior recruitment per term.

### Can I apply if I am in my probation period?

You can apply to be part of this initiative after you have been confirmed in post. The probation review period is an important time for people to establish themselves in their substantive role/department and get to know the LSE; therefore, applications can be made after being confirmed in post.

### Can I apply if I am on a secondment?

Yes, if your secondment is for a position at salary Band 5 or above, you are eligible to apply.

### Do I need to discuss this with my line manager before I apply?

Yes, you will need to discuss this initiative and get approval from your line manager.

### What do I do if my line manager isn't able to release me?

Managers are expected to support their staff if they wish to get involved in this initiative, recognising that they are volunteering their time and efforts to support the School. However, if there are clear business or resourcing concerns then a line manager may decide not to approve the application or ask you to apply at a later date. In this case, they would be expected to have a discussion with you to explain the reason.

### Why is this initiative only for interview panels at Band 7 and above?

Our data shows that BAME staff are particularly under-represented in Band 7 to 10 posts.

### I'm not familiar with the recruitment process, can I still apply?

Yes, a full training suite tailored to this role will be provided to all individuals who sign up. Support will also be provided before, during and after training and each recruitment cycle.

### How much time will I need to commit to this initiative?

All Fair Recruitment Advisers will need to commit to the prerequisite training sessions for this initiative. This bespoke training will provide individuals with the skills required to perform as a specialist on a recruitment panel, which is essential for this role.

We recognise that participants are volunteers; therefore, the time commitment for this initiative is centered around the time that participants are reasonably able to commit. The more engaged participants are, the more they will get out of it. Participants will need to commit to supporting a recruitment campaign from the initial stage through to the interview and up to the offer stage. We do expect individuals to be able to commit to one recruitment cycle per School year, up to a maximum of three recruitment panels a year.

Participants should also consider time for feedback, questions and discussions before, during and after interviews. Collecting feedback and understanding the experiences of the Fair Recruitment Adviser is pivotal to measuring the success of this initiative and understanding the wider needs of BAME staff at the School.

### **What is the minimum time that I need to be a volunteer?**

Due to the training and support provided for this role, we would ask the Fair Recruitment Adviser to carry out this role for a minimum of one year from appointment.

### **How else can I support the improvement of diversity and inclusion at LSE?**

This initiative is aimed to help the School achieve an improved representation of BAME staff at senior levels in line with its commitment to embrace equity, diversity and inclusion at all levels, to better reflect the School's ethos.

In addition to registering for this initiative, you may be interested in the following School activities which promote racial equality and inclusion:

- The School's application for the Race Equality Charter (REC)
- Events led by the EmbRace committee
- LSE's BAME Mentoring Initiative
- Events and informative resources provided by the School's EDI Team
- LSE's Race Equality Framework (REF)

### **How will this initiative help me?**

This initiative has been designed to work collaboratively with BAME employees to achieve better representation at our senior PSS levels. This training provides the opportunity to develop valuable, transferable skills which will aid career progression and facilitate networking across our School. Taking part in interview panels also provides you with hands-on, direct experience of interviewing as well as providing them with an opportunity of meeting new colleagues and developing positive professional relationships. Fair Recruitment Advisers are supported by the HR Partner Support Group throughout their participation in the initiative.

Advisers will:

- Make a valuable contribution to LSE's recruitment and decision-making
- Make a personal contribution towards helping LSE meet its equity, diversity and inclusion goals and diversifying our community and talent
- Gain opportunities to build relationships and network with key players and senior leaders across the School

- Boost their profile and visibility within the School, which will help to further their presence in LSE's community
- Increase their skills and experience which can be added to CVs and contribute towards Career Development Review (CDR) discussions
- Receive high value, targeted training to build knowledge and provide transferable skills
- Get involved in senior level recruitment and interview panel experience which is especially useful for career development and those looking to upskill or move into leadership roles.

### **Why does LSE still use the term BAME?**

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) are umbrella terms used by the UK government and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to refer to all non-white people. However, we recognise that these terms are problematic, in that they mask differences in lived experience and outcomes for many different ethnic groups. Improving our community's understanding of these differences will be part of our work on race equity at LSE.

### **How does the operational process actually process?**

The process from the time a PSS Band 7 post is advertised to the point in which an applicant is appointed is outlined in Appendix B.

### **If I wish to raise any concerns about the interview panel I have been supporting as a Fair Recruitment Adviser, what do I do?**

If a Fair Recruitment Adviser wishes to raise any concerns about the interview process, they are encouraged to raise these with the Chair as quickly as possible during the selection process. If the nature of the concern cannot be raised with the Chair and/or may have resulted in a significant inequality of treatment of the candidate(s), this should be escalated to the HR Partner Support Group. If the concern remains unresolved, the HR Partner Support Group will escalate this to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) or their delegated representative. This may involve a meeting with the COO and a representative from the HR Partner Support Group should the COO need any further information.

### If I am due to leave LSE at the time I am asked to be an FRA, who should I notify?

Please send an email to [HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk](mailto:HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk).

### What support will I be given?

Supporting Fair Recruitment Advisers throughout their role is important and access to support will be available throughout the process. The main point of contact for Advisers will be the HR Partner Support Group. Participants can contact [HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk](mailto:HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk) to ask any questions, provide feedback or raise concerns in relation to this process.

You can also collaborate and network with other Fair Recruitment Advisers to share ideas, resources and learning to assist you through your journey. A Fair Recruitment Adviser reflective session will be held every term – this will be a safe space where members can share their experiences. HR Partners who are part of the support group will also be present to lead the session.

As this is a pilot initiative, continual feedback from participants will be encouraged so that we can better understand participant needs, monitor individual experiences, and improve processes to ensure that the initiative can fulfil its aims.

## LSE's Race Equity Framework and Our People

[LSE's Race Equity Framework](#) builds on work already underway, expands our actions further and keep us focused and accountable in advancing race equity at our School. It is organised into three strands (or themes) aligned to LSE 2030 to maintain momentum:

- Education – to make sure an LSE education reflects the diverse world around us and empowers students to shape more equitable communities
- Research – to make sure our School's research and knowledge engagement activities contribute to understanding race equity within and beyond LSE
- Our People – to make sure policies and practices support racial equity and cultural change across our School.

The work of our Fair Recruitment Advisers contributes directly to the Our People strand of this Framework and its ambitions to support our community through policies and practice. Visit our [web pages](#) to see the key actions planned or in progress and check the latest [updates](#) to see what's happened so far.



## Appendix A

### Fair Recruitment Adviser – Role Summary

#### Key Responsibilities of the role:

This is a volunteer role to support PSS interview panels (Band 7 and above). It will provide increased involvement of BAME employees in senior recruitment panels and will be a development opportunity as well as a decision-making responsibility. The role is expected to make a real difference to BAME representation at the School by tackling potential unconscious bias and false assumptions.

This role holder will help to support a fair interview process for BAME individuals who are applying for Professional Services staff (PSS) roles at Band 7 and above in which they are not disadvantaged in any way due to false assumptions and biases. The postholder will play an active role in the recruitment of each role empowered with the necessary skills for decision-making, including:

- Participating in shortlisting and interview panels for PSS recruitment campaigns at Band 7 and above, alongside other panel members
- Supporting the interview panel to avoid judging candidates on characteristics such as their accent or making assumptions about their lifestyle or background based on their appearance at interview, by focusing on the duties and requirements detailed in the job description and person specification of the role
- Challenging prejudices, stereotyping and deeply ingrained discriminatory attitudes, values, and misconstrued biases
- Helping BAME candidates to experience a fair interview.

#### This will be achieved by:

- Questioning the panel's selection choices based on homophilous relations
- Questioning and constructively challenging the panel as appropriate
- Focusing the panel on job criteria and facts when making a decision

- Participating fully in the shortlisting and interview panel discussion
- Participating in post-interview discussions and providing input into hiring decisions for the Chair to consider
- Encouraging all panel members to have enough time to make their decision and reflect upon the options presented.

### Participation

The role holder is expected to participate in at least one recruitment panel per School year (from the date that formal training has taken place), up to a maximum of three panels<sup>2</sup> a year.

The role holder is expected to participate in the Fair Recruitment Adviser Safe Space sessions that will be held by the HR Partner Support Group every term. The Safe Space sessions is a space to bring all Fair Recruitment Advisers together to continue to empower each other, to listen to others' views and experiences, ensuring these are considered to help develop the initiative. The role holder will take part in building an inclusive group for Fair Recruitment Advisers. This means working to make sure that Fair Recruitment Advisers are supported, involved, and engaged.

Feedback forms will be available to all panel members after each recruitment exercise. Fair Recruitment Advisers are encouraged to complete the form to continue to support the development of the initiative and highlight any process issues that need to be addressed.

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<sup>2</sup> This may be subject to change. This year 21/22 is a pilot year so this will be reviewed regularly.

## Training and Support

The role holder is expected to attend all the core training associated with this role including Recruitment and Selection training. Training will be refreshed every 2 years. The role holder should not execute their role until the full suite of training is completed, which includes:

### **Recruitment and Selection at LSE [3 hours]**

This interactive training course, which runs at least termly, will support panel members to effectively plan their recruitment. By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Be familiar with the requirements under Equality Act 2010
- Be able to define unconscious bias and its implications for a fair recruitment process
- Be able to proactively plan the recruitment process and implement LSE policy and procedure
- Be able to shortlist fairly and objectively

### **Interviewing Techniques and Assertive Communication Training [3.5 hours]**

This highly interactive workshop with actors aims to give Fair Recruitment Advisers practice in being part of a recruitment panel at the LSE, both in interviewing and assessing candidates and contributing to the panel discussions. By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Have practiced interviewing – asking questions, assessing and rating the evidence
- Have practiced assertive communication techniques
- Have considered and discussed how to influence panel discussions to promote fairness and objectivity

### **Understanding the Fair Recruitment Adviser role [2.5 hours]**

This internally run training by the HR Partner Support Group will focus on providing clarity around the role and responsibilities of Fair Recruitment Advisers.

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Have a clear understanding of the FRA role, responsibilities and the new process
- Explore some of the challenges they may face and how to overcome them
- Explore the different types of biases that may occur during the interview
- Know how to raise concerns and what support is available to them

### **eRecruitment System Training [1 Hour]**

This training will familiarise the Fair Recruitment Advisers with the functionalities of the eRecruitment System that are required to effectively operate as a panel member, including shortlisting candidates and preparing for interviews.

### **GDPR Training [1 Hour]**

The GDPR training will provide the Fair Recruitment Advisers with an introduction to GDPR regulations and the individual responsibilities when dealing with personal or sensitive data.

The role holder may wish to participate in continuing professional development that assists with the skills and knowledge to carry out the responsibilities of the role.

Ongoing support will be provided by the HR Partner Support Group through the Safe Space Sessions and the role holder can access the group outside this forum.

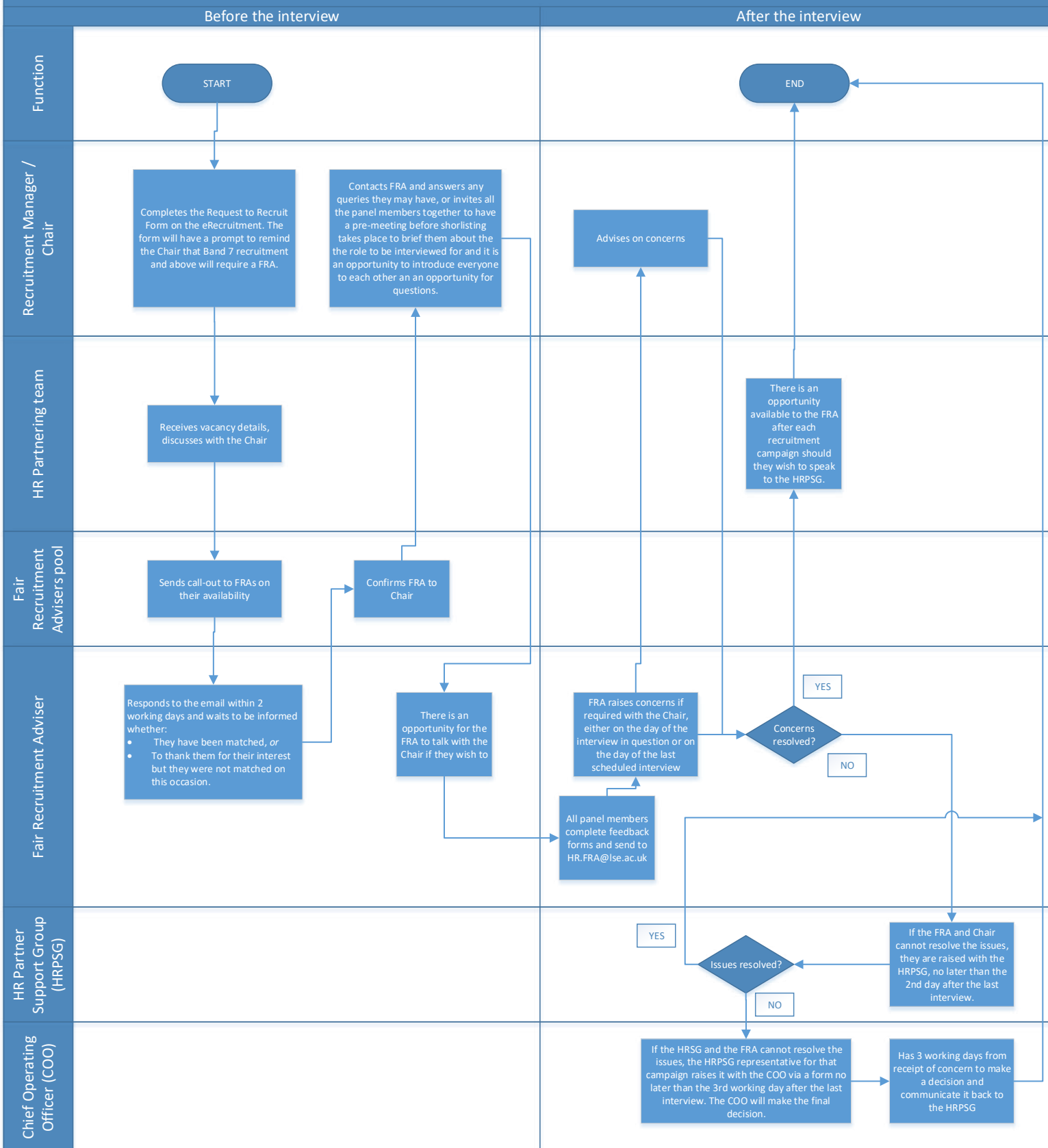
## Confidentiality

This role holder must maintain confidentiality of sensitive information. The role holder will have access to candidate information held on the School's eRecruitment system and be party to confidential recruitment processes and discussions.

If you have any questions about the role of Fair Recruitment Adviser, please get in touch with the HR Partner Support Group at [HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk](mailto:HR.FRA@lse.ac.uk).

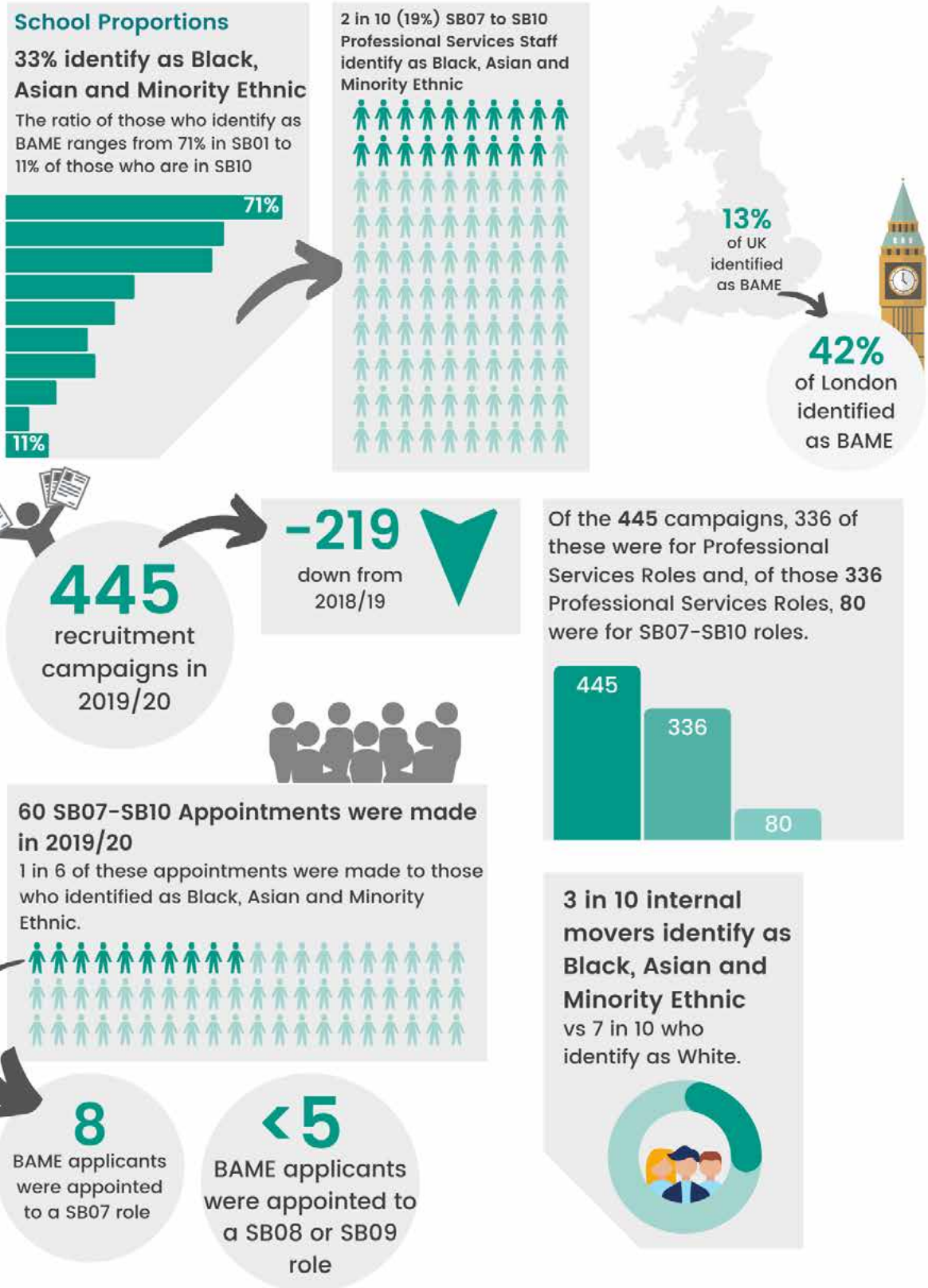
# Appendix B

## Interview panels for Band 7 PSS roles



# Appendix C

## What does our data show?



**[lse.ac.uk/humanresources](https://lse.ac.uk/humanresources)**

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