

Equality and diversity position statement

An internal perspective....

Our commitment to equality and diversity is something that runs deep in the IPCC, but our understanding of how to give effect to that commitment in a way that is recognisable and appreciated is not as developed as it should be. This statement is intended to be a starting point for the discussions and action planning that will follow. It sets out our vision with respect to Equality and Diversity, our thoughts about how we will achieve our goals and how we will know when we have got it right.

It also sets out what we will do when we get things wrong. We all need to be able to raise concerns about the way certain things are done or said, without fear of repercussions. Equally, we need to feel confident talking about potentially sensitive matters without being stifled by political correctness. If we can learn to talk about these things, respectfully and thoughtfully we will be well on the way to translating our commitment into something genuinely felt as well as valued.

Our vision is for the IPCC to be, and be seen to be, an exemplar in the field of equality and diversity. An organisation that:

- values people of all backgrounds¹
- opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- treats and rewards staff fairly, respectfully and transparently
- develops everyone to be able to meet their full potential

We will achieve this through:

- creating an environment where difference is celebrated and respected
- thinking carefully about the implications for all staff in reaching decisions
- monitoring the implications of our decisions for different groups of staff
- challenging ourselves to do better when we need to
- celebrating success when we are making progress
- training and developing staff to increase our understanding of people from diverse backgrounds¹

When we make mistakes we will:

- acknowledge and learn from them
- support all of the people affected
- deal with serious or repeated failures fairly, but firmly

¹ Different backgrounds includes protected characteristics, regions and countries of the UK, speakers of other languages – in particular, Welsh – policing or non-policing backgrounds.

And we will know when we have got this right because:

- we will be successful in recruiting and retaining staff from a diverse range of backgrounds
- all staff will feel comfortable working here
- we will see diversity in all parts and at all grades of the organisation
- we will be recognised externally as the exemplar we set out to be

And an external perspective...

The IPCC exists in large part because of the lack of confidence members of the public have in the ability of the police to investigate their own actions when things go wrong. Confidence is lowest among many of those groups with protected characteristics – including young people, members of the BME community, those with mental health issues and members of the LGBT community.

Our vision is for the IPCC to be trusted to seek the truth and hold the police to account. In our most recent Corporate Plan we have made improving confidence among those with least confidence our first strategic priority.

We are committed to:

- improving our understanding of their needs
- involving them in the design of our work and the wider complaints system
- improving our communication with these groups
- developing a more user-focused approach to our work, recognising that many people do not choose to be a user of our services
- delivering more timely and high-quality investigations

We will achieve this through:

- creating a diverse reference group for our Change Programme designed to fundamentally review our working practices
- publishing and implementing new guidance on handling discrimination complaints
- publishing new guidance for forces on post-incident procedures
- running a series of engagement events to involve a wider range of groups and interests
- improving our approach to community engagement for the most serious and sensitive investigations
- capturing better and more systematic feedback from stakeholders and users
- improving access by producing easy-read versions of complaint and appeals forms
- encouraging our staff networks for particular protected characteristics to engage with and advise on issues faced by users from those same groups
- ensuring that all staff understand the importance of engagement and the role they can play in fulfilling our ambitions

When we make mistakes we will:

- acknowledge and learn from them
- apologise to those people affected and tell them what we will do differently as a result
- consider carefully the impact of any mistake and whether an investigation or other decision should be re-visited

And we will know when we have got this right because:

- people with protected characteristics will be better informed about the role of the IPCC
- they will be more confident in our ability to seek the truth and hold the police to account
- the IPCC will be regarded as part of the solution, not the problem

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