



RIVER AND MERCANTILE

# **River and Mercantile Group**

## **Diversity Policy**

March 2021

## A. Introduction

Asset management is a people business and the intellectual capital of the people employed is core to success. There is clear evidence to suggest that issues relating to diversity and inclusion also affect the performance of companies and investments and as a result needs to form part of our thinking when providing solutions to clients.

Our five-year strategy has four core pillars:

### 1. Distribution

Understanding our clients and providing them with appropriate and market leading products

### 2. Strategy

Being more efficient, more entrepreneurial, having diverse capabilities and products and adapting to change.

### 3. Technology

Developing, understanding and adopting the right technology.

### 4. People

Developing our Employee Value Proposition, competing for and retaining the best people in order to deliver the best service for our clients

The River and Mercantile Group is entirely dependent upon its staff to deliver the strategy and the services expected by its clients. The Group firmly believes that cognitive diversity will help us to understand clients' needs, drive innovation, help integrate technology appropriately and overcome challenges.

The Group is committed to creating an inclusive, collaborative, supportive and productive environment for all of its people in order to attract and retain the best talent. The Group also believes that intersectionality\* is key to understanding the challenges and barriers to creating a diverse workforce and, where possible, would like to take this approach in addressing matters of diversity holistically rather than focusing on single, discrete issues in isolation.

This policy aims to put in place a framework and some commitments that the Group will make to improve and sustain diversity at work and drive the strategy of the business.

## B. Policy Statement

The Group is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination and values the differences that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation. As clearly stated in all of our employment policies the Group will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, paternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency.

All staff are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy. Behaviour, actions, or words that do not align with the policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the Group's disciplinary policy.

Behaviours relating to fair and inclusive practices will be included in performance indicators for all staff and will form an integral part of annual performance reviews.

The policy is applicable to all "workers" (employees, directors, partners, secondees, temporary agency staff, clients, suppliers and contractors) whether permanent or temporary. The policy applies to all processes relating to recruitment, employment and development and to any dealings with customers and clients.

The policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in the law, demographics and internal business requirements. The policy will be underpinned by a Diversity action plan and progress relating to the plan will be reviewed annually and the policy will be reviewed as appropriate.

## C. Commitments to the Diversity Action Plan

Diversity is integral to the Group's overall business strategy and forms part of our commitment to creating a compelling Employee Value Proposition. However, in order to ensure that we start to drive the right changes to support improvements in Diversity, we believe it is important to have a specific Diversity action plan. In order to deliver this plan the Group will make the following commitments:

### 1. Leadership

The Group will:

- set board-level objectives on specific targets for diversity such as board and senior management composition.
- set diversity objectives for the senior leadership team related to behaviour, training and, if appropriate, targets.
- identify a senior level champion for leading the diversity action plan.
- secure top-level ownership and sponsorship for the plan.
- develop and cascade a diversity vision statement.

### 2. Measurement

The Group will:

- undertake a full audit in relation to policies and procedures to ensure they do not discriminate.
- obtain workforce diversity metrics and compare them with the sector and produce a report for the senior leadership team to identify key target areas for the plan.
- start to measure candidate diversity metrics to identify recruitment challenges to diverse candidate attraction.
- add inclusion related questions to the staff survey to gauge opinion on diversity and inclusion within the group.

### 3. Education

The Group will:

- integrate diversity into mainstream training and development programmes such as management training.
- establish unconscious bias and inclusive leadership training programmes that create behavioural change.
- integrate diversity competencies into leadership framework for the development of future leaders.

### 4. Communication and consultation

The Group will:

- establish key lines of communication across the business on diversity matters.
- undertake an audit of existing communications channels so that compliance and inclusiveness are assured.
- ensure that communication imagery and graphics are inclusive.
- communicate and celebrate the organisation's successes in diversity.

## 5. Targets

The Group will:

- agree aspirational targets for the workforce and board composition over a five-year period with the chief executive and the board.
- establish formal measurement tools to assess the climate in the organisation (for example the regular staff engagement survey and diversity focus groups where appropriate).
- assess progress in achieving its diversity objectives on an annual basis.
- develop relationships with external bodies to assess progress (with, for example, the Diversity Project or the Women in Finance Charter).

## 6. External profile

The Group will:

- join appropriate organisations in order to network, exchange best practice and generally raise the Group's profile.
- Prioritise, through marketing, developing a good external image to create awareness of the Group's diversity and inclusion activities to clients and to potential staff.

## D. Notes

intersectionality\*

'intersectionality' describes how discrimination against different facets of a person's identity can overlap and impact their lives. For example, by being both Black and a woman could result in greater discrimination than that experienced by being a person of colour or by being female.