



RCNi



# **RCN GROUP EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

**Version 2.1**

## **1.0 OUR AMBITION**

The RCN Group aspires to be a world-class champion of equity, diversity, inclusion and human rights.

Our ambitions extend to becoming an anti-racist and anti-discriminatory organisation too.

We recognise the transformative nature of the action required to achieve this and commit to providing the necessary accountability, resourcing and governance to embed this in our day-to-day actions.

We want to do this not just because it's the right thing to do, but because we understand the benefits of being a diverse, fair and inclusive employer. We know that people work better when they can be themselves. We see a diverse workforce as a source of strength to help develop our services and products, and to best serve and represent all our members. And our corporate reputation is important in attracting and retaining employees, members and customers, and in role-modelling what we expect from other employers for our members.

We see it as our responsibility to protect, influence and uphold the value of human rights within the RCN Group. We are fully committed to eliminating unlawful and unfair discrimination and will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation of employees, job applicants, or others who work on the RCN Group's behalf.

Everyone who works for the RCN Group has an important part to play in achieving our ambition. All RCN Group employees and those who work on the RCN Group's behalf (such as temporary agency workers, off-payroll workers and suppliers) are responsible for upholding the commitments described in this Statement. This Statement sets out our ambition and commitments as an employer. As a trade union and a professional body, we also produce and regularly review a strategy to champion and defend equity, diversity, inclusion and human rights, to use our strengths and capability as a force for positive challenge and change.

**Equity** recognises that to reach equal outcomes individuals need different levels and kinds of support.

**Equality** means each individual or group is given the same resources or opportunities.

**Diversity** is the range of people in an organisation or profession. For example, this means people of different age, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality and people with disabilities.

Representation of the diversity of people in an organisation or profession refers to how those different perspectives, experiences, and issues are understood, and are making meaningful contributions at every level.

**Inclusion** is about a sense of belonging to – and being valued by – an organisation or profession. It is the recognition of how well the thoughts, contributions, presence and perspectives of different people are actively valued and integrated into a working environment.

An inclusive workplace is characterised by active cultures, processes and practices which enable individuals and groups to perform at their highest levels as a result of being psychologically safe, free from discrimination, properly supported, empowered to collaborate and inspired to innovate.

**Anti-racism** is the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes that promote racial equity in society.

**Human rights** are basic rights and freedoms afforded to all people in the UK regardless of their nationality or social status. They are not privileges that can be taken away. They are founded on fundamental principles such as dignity, fairness, equality, respect and autonomy.

**Intersectionality** is when an individual's race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and other characteristics or identities overlap or 'intersect' so that they can be affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages.

## 2.0 OUR COMMITMENTS

The RCN Group is committed to:

- 2.1 **Providing equality of opportunity for all**, preventing discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity/ expression/ reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, community

background (in Northern Ireland), spent criminal convictions, trade union membership, and status as a carer.

As an employer, we will ensure that all our policies, procedures, practices, processes and systems lead the way in terms of equality of opportunity, and will demonstrate clearly how they do this. This includes:

- recruitment and selection
  - working patterns and time off
  - pay and benefits
  - learning, training and development,
  - managing people
  - leaving employment and afterwards
- Decisions will be based on merit (apart from where limitations are allowed under the Equality Act 2010).

We will carry out equity impact assessments on all projects, policies and service developments which have an impact on RCN Group employees (see the [Equity Impact Assessments Guide](#)). This is to examine the impact on those with protected characteristics, to identify practical steps to remove any possible discrimination and to tackle any potential negative impacts. The person with operational responsibility for an activity will carry out an assessment, which must accompany any formal papers, for example to the Executive Team, Partnership Forum and any RCN Group committee.

We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that individual employees are not disadvantaged because of their disabilities.

## **2.2 Attaining a diverse workforce** that is truly representative of all sections of UK society, and of the members we serve.

We will monitor the composition of our employees, and the operation of our policies and procedures, including gender and, in time, ethnicity pay gaps. We will compare employee data with data on our membership, the wider UK population and other relevant sources.

Where we identify under-representation, barriers, or potential bias we will take action to address them, including positive action in line with equalities legislation.

We will seek to adopt practices, policies and create workplace cultures that actively challenge structural and institutional forms of discrimination, as we recognise the impact that these have on shaping life chances and outcomes.

## **2.3 Promoting an inclusive culture** and harmonious working environment, respecting and valuing everyone's differences where each employee is treated with respect and can give their best.

We will promote and foster good relationships across our people and those who work on our behalf, underpinned by the RCN Group's core behavioural competencies and Respect Charter, and applied through the supporting policies and procedures.

We will ensure that our employees understand their equity, equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights responsibilities in the context of their roles.

We will continually strive to improve our knowledge and practice.

We will promote good people management practice to be consistently fair in the way we treat people, and also flexible and inclusive to support both individual and business needs.

We will consider the different needs of particular groups and will develop policies and provide specific support and guidance where it is needed.

We will promote and support the activities of the staff networks and consult with them on the development of policies and services. We will also support staff peer support groups.

We will promote inclusive events and activities across as broad a range as possible, and support staff to get involved.

- 2.4 Upholding human rights** ensuring that all RCN Group employees and those working on the RCN Group's behalf are responsible for actively demonstrating respect for the basic rights and freedoms of every person. We will ensure that the RCN Group is not complicit in any human rights abuses.

We will issue an annual modern slavery statement setting out the RCN Group's actions aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business and its supply chains.

We will ensure that the RCN has safeguarding measures in place to protect a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

- 2.5 Ensuring that our employees have access to the knowledge, learning and skills development they need** to meet their responsibilities and deliver on the RCN Group's commitments outlined in this Statement.

We will encourage employees to critically examine their own attitudes and those of others to ensure that bias does not affect judgement.

Any learning and development opportunities we offer will aim to meet the diverse needs of our employees.

**2.6 Monitoring, evaluating and reporting** on how well we are meeting the commitments set out in this statement.

We will use routine reporting and audit activity to inform the Executive Team, relevant committees and RCN Council about how well we are meeting our commitments in this Statement across the RCN Group, and to identify opportunities to address any areas of concern.

We will set individual and team objectives where relevant to ensure that we can deliver on these commitments.

**2.7 Taking seriously any complaints about potential breaches** of the intent of this Statement that are made about employees or those working on the RCN Group's behalf, by fellow employees, members, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the RCN Group's activities. Breaches by employees will be regarded and dealt with as misconduct.

## DOCUMENT AND VERSION CONTROL SUMMARIES

### Document control summary

Title	RCN Group Equity, diversity and inclusion statement
Status	Agreed
Version no.	2.1
Date	29 April 2021 Updated to reflect EDI strategy 01 November 2024
Owner	Chief People Officer
Approved by	RCN Executive Team on 23 January 2021 RCN Partnership Forum on 8 February 2021 RCNi Partnership Forum by email in February 2021  Updated approval from: RCN Chief People Officer on 01 November 2024 Head of HR at RCNi on 30 October 2024 RCN Foundation Director on 22 October 2024
Circulated to	All RCN Group staff
Next review date	April 2026

### Version control summary

Version	Date	By	Summary
1.0	10 February 2015	Peter Cocco, Head of HR Operations and Organisational Development	Agreed statement
2.0	29 April 2021	Sara Herritty, HR Business Partner (Policy & Projects)	Key changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on ambition and commitments</li> <li>• Separates out the equality impact assessment form and guide.</li> </ul>
2.1	01 November 2024	Vicky Knappett, People Policy and Projects Lead	Updated to reflect external facing EDI strategy