



# RECRUITMENT GUIDANCE

Implementing the Gender Pay Principles and removing gender bias in recruitment processes

STATE SERVICES COMMISSION  
TE KAWA MATAAHO



New Zealand Government

ministry for  
**Women**  
minitātanga mō ngā  
Wāhine



**CTU**  
NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS  
Te Kauae Kaimahi

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# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

This guidance gives advice on how to make sure that recruitment strategies, policies, and processes are free from gender bias and reflect the agreed [Gender Pay Principles](#).

This guidance is part of a suite of guidance on remuneration systems and human resources practice to support achievement of key milestones in the [Gender Pay Gap Action Plan](#) and assist organisations to give effect to the Gender Pay Principles. It is designed to be updated as new evidence and evaluation becomes available. The suggested actions and evidence are not intended to be exhaustive or fixed.

## Application

This guidance provides recommended actions for organisations to use when recruiting and when developing a strategy to ensure that recruitment is free from gender bias. Organisations should consider how this guidance applies to all employment arrangements (including contractors) in accordance with Gender Pay Principle 4 – Sustainability.

## What this guidance includes

The guidance includes a suggested framework for developing the goals, strategy, and actions that underpin bias-free recruitment. Engaging with employees and unions and using recruitment metrics to develop goals and review progress are key approaches in the framework.

The recommended steps and actions follow a recruitment process from beginning to end. They start with organisational capability, because understanding bias and developing cultural competency are foundational to mitigating bias in human resource practices. The job scoping and person specifications sections recommend reconsidering what is needed in the role to widen the pool of potential candidates. Using gender-neutral language and being inclusive are key themes in the attracting candidates and job advertisement sections. The shortlisting and interviewing sections emphasise

having clear criteria, being aware of bias, and mitigating group-think. Advice on how to ensure salary offers are fair and minimise the risks of negotiation draws on existing guidance for Public Service agencies - [Ensuring gender is not a factor in setting salaries](#).

A list of references and further reading is also included.

## About bias

Our thinking about men and women is still deeply influenced by beliefs about appropriate male and female behaviour. This includes the types of work that men and women should do, the importance of jobs where men or women dominate, and who should do unpaid work. The resulting gender bias leads to poorer labour market outcomes. Removing bias from recruitment processes and practices will address a key point at which it impacts negatively on women's employment, pay, and progression opportunities.

Women are diverse, and it is important that recruitment policies and practices take account of these differences. Public Service data shows that ethnic and gender pay gaps compound so that Māori, Pacific, and Asian women experience bigger pay gaps than European women. To change these outcomes, actions to reduce bias need to consider diverse perspectives and needs.

Beyond fairness, and the legal right to equality and non-discrimination, there is a strong business case for improving employment outcomes for women. It leads to better employee engagement and satisfaction, better employee attraction and retention, more diverse leadership, and better organisational performance.

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- 1 Note that this guidance does not cover assessments for recruitment purposes, which would include psychometric, cognitive, and work testing. There is policy work underway by the State Services Commission on recruitment testing, which may be included in this guidance at a later stage or in separate guidance.
  - 2 In groupthink, group members refrain from expressing doubts and judgments or disagreeing with the consensus. See *Groupthink* at <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/groupthink>

# INTRODUCTION - Continued

## Participation and engagement

Gender Pay Principle 5 – Participation and Engagement – underpins this guidance. Working collaboratively with employees and unions from the earliest stages of developing the policies and strategies that govern recruitment processes, as well as in the review and evaluation of processes and outcomes, is required to meet this Principle.

## How this guidance was developed

The Gender Pay Principles Working Group developed this guidance in partnership with the Gender Pay Gap and Pay Equity Taskforce. The Gender Pay Principles Working Group is comprised of unions, State sector agencies, and the State Services Commission, Te Kawa Mataaho. It was established in 2017 after a pay equity claim was filed against the State Services Commissioner by the Public Service Association, Te Pukenga. The group developed the [Gender Pay Principles](#) through a collaborative process, and it is now creating resources to support the implementation of the Principles in State sector organisations.

## Summary of recommended actions

1. Develop and review your strategy, policies, and processes jointly with employees and unions and with reference to the [Gender Pay Principles](#).
2. Assess your strategy, policies, and processes for impacts on diverse women – especially Māori, Pacific, and Asian women – who experience the largest gender pay gaps.
3. Organisational capability is foundational and includes bias and cultural competency training for everyone involved in recruitment.
4. Base the candidate criteria on the skills and capabilities you have identified that you need, including hidden skills, and agree these early in the process so that you can refer to them throughout.
5. Understand and value the skills developed through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha.
6. Make the candidate criteria as broad as possible to reach a wide range of candidates, and make sure that specific qualifications and experience you ask for are necessary.
7. Use gender-neutral language in all your recruitment material.
8. Use a structured, standardised interview process, allowing enough time to do it justice, to mitigate group-think, and to be culturally responsive.
9. Monitor and moderate shortlist, interview, and salary decisions.
10. Make salary offers consistent with the guidance, [Ensuring gender is not a factor in setting salaries](#).

# A FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING GOALS, STRATEGY, AND ACTIONS TO ENSURE RECRUITMENT PROCESSES ARE FREE FROM GENDER BIAS

The six steps below provide a framework for developing the goals, strategy, and actions needed to ensure that your recruitment processes are free from gender bias.

1. Measure each step of the recruitment process to identify where and why gender bias may be occurring.
2. Determine/prioritise actions with employees and unions to address the points where you have identified gender bias as a barrier to meeting organisational goals.
3. Set organisational goals with employees and unions for removing identified gender bias from recruitment processes.
4. Conduct regular reviews to ensure the intended outcomes are achieved and that progress towards recruitment processes free from gender bias is sustained.
5. Seek feedback on the recruitment experience to identify possible sources and reasons for gender bias.
6. Ensure results of investigations into potential gender bias and actions to address the issue are transparent and accessible.

It is important to note that this is a cyclical process that involves constant measurement and evaluation.

Steps for a strategy for recruitment free from gender bias	Considerations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p><i>1. Measure each step of the process to identify where gender bias may be occurring.</i></p>	<p><b>What to measure</b></p> <p>The metrics below are examples of what you may wish to measure or record in your recruitment processes. The purpose is to understand whether you are attracting women (and diverse women) and whether the proportion of women declines at any point in your recruitment process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where vacancies are advertised</li> <li>• Gender balance of candidates</li> <li>• Gender balance of candidates compared to that of the long and short lists</li> <li>• Gender balance of candidates for various job families, e.g. administration, management, and technical</li> <li>• Gender composition of interview panels</li> <li>• Gender balance of preferred candidates</li> <li>• Monitor starting salaries at regular intervals<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Candidate experience of the process (this is a qualitative measure) including feedback from diverse women</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Human Rights Commission advice on collecting demographic details</i></b></p> <p>Employers can ask questions or seek information about the race, colour, ethnic or national origins, gender, or disability of candidates only if they are collecting anonymous statistical data for equal employment opportunities reporting, or for collecting data on who responds to their job applications. In this case demographic data should be collected on a separate form, which advises candidates of the purpose. See the <a href="#">Human Rights Commission’s pre-employment guide</a></p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 4 Sustainability</a></p> <p>Agencies collect, analyse, and monitor data to identify all the factors that contribute to gender pay gaps.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 1 Freedom from Bias and Discrimination</a></p> <p>Employees, unions, and agencies jointly evaluate policies and practices to identify where and when gender bias and discrimination can occur.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the guidance, [Ensuring gender is not a factor in setting salaries](#) produced the PSA and the Gender Pay Gap and Pay Equity Taskforce at the State Services Commission.

Steps for a strategy for recruitment free from gender bias	Considerations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p><b>1. Measure each step of the process to identify where gender bias may be occurring.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparative outcomes of external providers versus in-house recruitment for the above metrics.</li> </ul> <p>Measuring ethnicity as well as gender will help with understanding the effectiveness of your processes for different groups of women.</p> <p>Reviewing who applies and who makes it through each stage of the recruitment process can help you to identify which actions you should focus on to ensure you are reaching and encouraging diverse candidates.</p>	
<p><b>2. Determine/prioritise actions with employees and unions to address the points where you have identified bias as a barrier to meeting organisational goals.</b></p>	<p>If you can see that you are attracting a gender balanced range of candidates but there is a drop out of women between the long and short-listing stages, you will need to examine how bias or lack of clarity in your process may be affecting the gender balance of your shortlist.</p>	<p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 5 Participation and Engagement</a></p> <p>Employees, unions, and agencies jointly develop, implement, monitor and evaluate plans to address gender pay gaps.</p>
<p><b>3. Set organisational goals with employees and unions for removing identified gender bias from recruitment processes</b></p>	<p>You may also wish to look at your current data (if you collect it) and use the metrics above to develop goals or targets, e.g. a certain percentage or an increase from 20 to 50 percent by June 2020.</p> <p>Include these goals and how they will be measured in your agency Gender Pay Action Plan.</p>	<p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 4 Sustainability</a></p> <p>Employees, unions, and agencies jointly set explicit goals and timeframes to eliminate gender pay gaps based on analysis of potential points of bias.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 5 Participation and Engagement</a></p> <p>Employees, their unions and agencies work collaboratively to achieve mutually agreed outcomes.</p>
<p><b>4. Conduct regular reviews to ensure the intended outcomes are achieved and that progress towards recruitment processes free from gender bias is sustained.</b></p>	<p>You may wish to use metrics as suggested in Step 1 above and also use qualitative data from surveys/interviews to review and monitor progress towards your goals.</p>	<p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 5 Participation and Engagement</a></p> <p>Employees, unions and agencies jointly develop, implement, monitor and evaluate plans to address gender pay gaps.</p>
<p><b>5. Seek feedback on the recruitment experience to identify possible sources and reasons for gender bias.</b></p>	<p>Groups to seek feedback from include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>candidates</li> <li>panel members</li> <li>managers.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6. Ensure results of investigations into potential gender bias and actions to address the issue are transparent and accessible.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The numbers/measures/results are available to all employees and unions.</li> <li>There is targeted explanation of results and corresponding actions to key people involved in the process (managers/HR/SLT).</li> </ul>	<p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 2 Transparency and Accessibility</a></p> <p>Employment and pay practices, pay rates, and systems are transparent. Information is readily accessible and understandable.</p>

# RECOMMENDED STEPS AND ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE GENDER PAY PRINCIPLES AND REMOVING GENDER BIAS IN RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

This section makes recommendations under 8 steps in the recruitment process. It provides further information about the recommendations, links to references, and signals the relevant Gender Pay Principles

## Step 1. PREPARATION: ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p><b>Removing gender bias</b></p> <p>Build awareness among all employees involved in the recruitment process of the impact of gender and other biases, how they intersect, and how to mitigate them.</p> <p>Ensure bias training includes a gender focus.</p> <p>Undertake a thorough review of organisational policies and practices that may perpetuate bias.</p>	<p>It is important for those involved in recruitment to have bias training, because it enables a shared understanding of how bias and discrimination can occur in recruitment processes and why actions to mitigate bias are important.</p> <p>Bias training can be effective for increasing awareness of bias and reducing bias, although it is unlikely to eliminate it.</p> <p>Bias training is the first step in addressing biases and needs to be treated as only one part of a comprehensive strategy for achieving system-wide change.</p> <p>Every element of the employment cycle needs to be considered in bias training, from pre-employment attraction strategies through to development, progression, and remuneration.</p> <p>Bias training should workshop issues within the workplace that can perpetuate bias.</p> <p>Bias training should include examining the values of New Zealand European culture, that these are not universal, and what ethnic privilege means.</p> <p>Bias training should acknowledge that work in this area can be uncomfortable and challenging and should include practical strategies for employees.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 1 Freedom from Bias and Discrimination</a></p> <p>Employees, unions and agencies actively raise awareness amongst all employees of gender stereotyping and conscious and unconscious bias.</p>
<p>Ensure that any external recruitment agencies can demonstrate that their processes are free from bias.</p>	

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p><i>Valuing caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha</i></p>	
<p>Develop a shared understanding of the range of skills acquired through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha.</p>	<p>Māori and Pacific women in particular may have significant work experience and skills resulting from responsibilities and commitments to whānau and their wider communities.</p>
<p>Recognise the value of skills and competencies acquired through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha at every step of the recruitment process.</p>	<p>For example, membership of a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) may include these skills and experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• events organising (school fair, fundraisers, sports days)</li> <li>• managing relationships (parents and teachers, community organisations and neighbours, Boards of Trustees)</li> <li>• project coordination</li> <li>• funding applications</li> <li>• budgets/financial management</li> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• public relations and promotion</li> <li>• representation and liaison with local communities</li> <li>• translation expertise</li> <li>• specific cultural guidance.</li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 3 Relationship between Paid and Unpaid Work</a></p> <p>Agencies take active steps to ensure that time out of the workforce for unpaid and /or caring work does not result in disadvantage in pay or barriers to progression;</p> <p>and:</p> <p>Skills and experience gained through unpaid and/or caring work are utilised and rewarded.</p>
<p><i>Respecting and including different cultures</i></p>	
<p>Ensure your organisation understands, values, and embraces a range of cultural values and practices and reflects this understanding in communications, workplace culture, strategies, policies, and procedures.</p>	<p>As well as the importance of cultural competency for reducing bias in recruitment, there is strong <a href="#">evidence</a> of the wider value of diversity and inclusion to organisations.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 1 Freedom from Bias and Discrimination</a> Employees, unions, and agencies pay particular attention to the compounding impacts of gender combined with other factors.</p>
<p>Ensure all employees involved in recruitment processes, especially HR practitioners, undertake training to develop their understanding of cultural norms relating to authority, age, body language, promoting oneself, and the compounding impacts of gender and ethnicity.</p>	<p>HR practitioners lead practice in an organisation, so it is especially important that they receive this training.</p>



Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<b>Resourcing</b>	
Ensure your organisation is adequately resourced to address gender bias and to support culturally inclusive practices in recruitment processes.	See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 4 Sustainability</a> Senior leaders make an ongoing commitment to eliminate gender inequalities and allocate budget and resources accordingly.
<b>Participation and engagement</b>	
Ensure that genuine input is sought from employees and their unions in the design phase and throughout the development of recruitment strategies, policies, procedures, and training packages – and in the monitoring and review of outcomes.	See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 5 Participation and Engagement</a> Genuine input is sought from the design phase and throughout the process;  and:  Employees, their unions, and agencies work collaboratively to achieve mutually agreed outcomes.

## Step 2. PREPARATION: JOB SCOPING

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Avoid inherent bias in job scoping by undertaking a thorough analysis of what the job involves.</p> <p>Break down the job into the component tasks, rather than focusing on a general sense of the person or job title or qualifications.</p>	<p>Deeply embedded gendered norms and biases create preconceptions about who is best suited to certain occupations.</p> <p>Avoid fitting the job description to a stereotype of who traditionally does the job.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are you imagining in the job?</li> <li>• Does this reflect a commonly held stereotype?</li> <li>• How are you involving employees and unions in designing job scoping processes?</li> <li>• Do union representatives have input into job scoping through membership of the remuneration committee or other forums?</li> </ul>
<p>Identify the hidden skills essential to performing the job.</p> <p>Give appropriate weight to hidden skills.</p>	<p>If hidden skills (e.g. communicating verbally and non-verbally, keeping work processes running smoothly, and connecting across cultures) are overlooked this can lead to gender bias, including in starting salaries and undervaluation of the role.</p> <p>For example, emotional intelligence or coordinating skills may be noticed more in supervisory or managerial roles or valued more when performed by managers, but not when performed by an administrator. These skills do, however, influence how effectively employees carry out their work.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Spotlight tool</a> provides a framework and examples to help identify and categorise skills that are often overlooked and consequently undervalued. The Spotlight framework can be used in writing job descriptions and job advertisements, assessing candidates against the skill requirements, and designing interview questions.</p> <p>See also the <a href="#">Gender-inclusive job evaluation standard</a>.</p>
<p>If specific cultural expertise is desirable, include it as a specific requirement.</p>	<p>Specific cultural expertise should be included in job descriptions, recognised, and remunerated. It shouldn't just be expected because a candidate is Māori, for example.</p> <p>Be specific if particular Māori Crown relations skills, knowledge of te ao Māori, or te reo Māori are needed.</p>
<p>Keep the job description as brief as possible.</p>	<p><a href="#">Research</a> shows that more job requirements deter women candidates and fewer job requirements attract more women candidates. This is because women generally take the job requirements and the application process more seriously and literally than men.</p>

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Presume all roles are flexible by default unless there is a good business reason for them not to be.</p> <p>Consider creative options for structuring the work.</p>	<p>The Public Service <a href="#">Gender Pay Gap Action Plan</a> includes the goal that all roles are flexible by default by the end of 2020, unless there is a good business reason for them not to be.</p> <p>Consider that Māori candidates may have particular needs for flexibility to accommodate iwi, hapu, whānau, and other obligations, and that other groups may have similar obligations.</p> <p>See Employment New Zealand’s <a href="#">Flexible work legislation and information</a>.</p> <p>Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you considered a team approach to working out shift swapping and cover?</li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 3 Relationship between Paid and Unpaid Work</a></p> <p>Agencies normalise flexible and part-time working arrangements for all positions and employees without adversely affecting security of employment;</p> <p>and:</p> <p>Employees, unions, and agencies create workplace environments that support and encourage men’s participation in unpaid and/or caring work.</p>
<p>Review job descriptions through a gender and ethnic diversity lens to ensure that the language and the way jobs are described are inclusive.</p>	<p>Involve a range of people with gender, diversity, and cultural expertise in periodic reviews of job descriptions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diversity and inclusion advisors</li> <li>• Māori advisors</li> <li>• Pacific and other cultural advisors</li> <li>• external job evaluators</li> <li>• employees and unions.</li> </ul> <p>See ‘gendered language’ in the Attracting Candidates section below.</p> <p>Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would a Māori or Pacific woman want to apply for this job or see herself as a good fit?</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure that the proposed positioning in the band/salary range for the role is consistent with your organisation’s gender-neutral salary criteria.</p>	<p>Your organisation’s gender-neutral salary criteria should be developed collaboratively with employees and unions and be consistent with the <a href="#">Gender Pay Principles</a> and the guidance <a href="#">Ensuring gender is not a factor in setting salaries</a>.</p>

### Step 3. PREPARATION: PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Develop the person specifications early in the process so you can use consistent candidate criteria in the job advertising, shortlisting, and interviewing.</p>	<p>It is important that the same candidate criteria are used to develop the job advertisement, shortlisting criteria, and interview questions and scoring, as applicants will apply for the job and prepare based on these criteria.</p>
<p>Pay particular attention to traditionally 'gendered' positions.</p>	<p>Gender bias is more likely to occur when you are developing person specifications for a job traditionally done by women or men.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would a woman reading the person specifications for a firefighter role see herself in the role?</li> <li>• Would a man reading the person specifications for an administrator role see himself in the role?</li> <li>• As a recruiting manager do you have a pre-formed idea of who could/would do this role?</li> </ul>
<p>Express person specifications in gender-neutral language.</p>	<p>Don't ask for characteristics that may be readily associated with either women or men.</p> <p>See 'gender-neutral language' in Step 4. Attracting Candidates section <a href="#">below</a>.</p>
<p>Ensure the person specifications reflect the actual requirements of the role.</p> <p>Be wary of using non-specific terms such as 'a good fit with the organisation' in person specifications. Frame specifications in terms of the skills or capabilities the role requires.</p>	<p>See Step 2. Preparation: <a href="#">Job scoping</a> above for guidance on ensuring the requirements of the position are free from gender bias.</p> <p>Non-specific terms such as 'a good fit' are open to interpretation and allow bias to become a factor in assessing candidates.</p>
<p>Ensure person specifications enable candidates to demonstrate that they can meet the requirements through experience, qualifications, or skills acquired in other ways.</p>	<p><b>Experience</b></p> <p>Candidates may have skills without extensive experience. Asking for extensive experience can limit applications from women who may not have as much continuous time in particular roles.</p> <p>For example, <a href="#">Google advertised for a Global Creative Director in Marketing</a> with a minimum requirement of '12 years of experience in a world class creative agency'. However, only 3% of advertising creative directors are women, and specifying long experience further limited the pool.</p>

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Ensure person specifications enable candidates to demonstrate that they can meet the requirements through experience, qualifications, or skills acquired in other ways.</p>	<p><b>Qualifications</b></p> <p>Take care in requiring qualifications, specific or general, unless they are essential to the role (such as a nursing degree) as the candidate may have acquired the necessary skills through equivalent experience.</p> <p>Asking for specific degree major requirements can limit applications. For example, some Google job ads ask for a degree or equivalent practical experience, e.g. 'a BA/BS degree in Computer Science or equivalent practical experience.' Google is also open to candidates who have alternative degrees to its preferred majors, e.g. a Master's degree or PhD in Engineering, Computer Science, or related technical field.</p> <p>Māori and Pacific candidates are statistically likely to have spent less time than others in tertiary education. This may be reflected in their qualification levels, even though they may have the required experience.</p>

## Step 4. ATTRACTING CANDIDATES

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Avoid narrow person descriptions in job descriptions and advertisements.</p>	<p>It is important to build a job description and a job advertisement starting with the minimum skills required to perform the tasks to attract the widest range of candidates.</p>
<p>Actively reach out to a diverse range of potential candidates.</p>	<p>Strategies to broaden your candidate pool include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• building relationships with local iwi organisations, ethnically diverse networks and so on</li> <li>• exploring internship options for women</li> <li>• connecting with secondary and tertiary institutions</li> <li>• liaising with other employers regarding roles that could be secondment opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>One strategy to reduce the impact of discrimination and enable particular groups to achieve equal outcomes with other groups is to introduce <a href="#">special measures</a>. Special measures are used to ensure equal outcomes rather than simply equal treatment.</p> <p><a href="#">Positive actions to achieve equality</a> (special measures) are permissible under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 s 19 (2) and the Human Rights Act s73 (1) under certain conditions and are intended to be temporary.</p> <p>Websites to reach diverse audiences include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://mahi.co.nz">mahi.co.nz</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Māori and Pacific Jobs</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mana Recruitment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">getaflex</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">wise ones</a></li> </ul> <p>See also <a href="http://careers.govt.nz">careers.govt.nz</a>.</p>
<p>Ensure that the public face of your organisation is gender and culture inclusive.</p>	<p>Check the images and language in your public facing material, and consider who represents your organisation at events.</p> <p>Ensure that your values statements are gender and culture inclusive and are easily accessible for candidates.</p> <p>Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could Māori, Pacific, or Asian women look at your website and see themselves working in your organisation?</li> </ul>

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
Use gender-neutral language	<p><a href="#">Research</a> shows that when job advertisements include more masculine than feminine wording, participants perceive more men within these occupations and women find these jobs less appealing. Women candidates may be influenced by feelings of belonging over considerations of skill level in judging job appeal.</p> <p>There are tools to assess whether the language in job advertisements and job descriptions is likely to change the proportion of men and women responding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Gender Decoder for Job Ads</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Applied Job Description Analysis Tool</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Textio</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">TalVista</a></li> </ul>
Ensure your organisation’s website is clear that skills acquired through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha are valued.	
Ensure your organisation’s website promotes flexibility and provides examples of its flexible work practices.	

## Step 5. JOB ADVERTISEMENT

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Show that your organisation understands and embraces a range of cultural values and practices.</p>	<p>Link to your recruitment page and mention your:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approach to diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• family-friendly policies, including flexible work</li> <li>• openness to support diverse interview practices and needs, e.g. kaiawhina/ support people</li> <li>• commitment to building Māori Crown relations capability</li> <li>• policies which may make your organisation attractive to Māori, e.g. help with relocation if necessary, tangihanga and cultural leave, recognition of cultural expertise.</li> </ul>
<p>Encourage candidates to provide evidence of skills gained in caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha.</p>	<p>State that you welcome applications from candidates who may have gained the skills and experience you are looking for in caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha.</p> <p>State that you are open to applications from candidates who may not meet all the requirements.</p> <p>Put information on your recruitment page about your approach to learning and development.</p>
<p>Promote your organisation's commitment to flexible work.</p>	
<p>State the salary rate, range or scale for the job or that it is available on request.</p>	<p>Organisations should consider the seniority or type of role when deciding whether to advertise the salary: are applicants for this role likely to be confident enough to ask for salary information?</p> <p>Put information on your recruitment page about whether negotiation is available, including that candidates who proceed to interview will be advised of how salary negotiation is conducted.</p>
<p>Use gender neutral language.</p>	<p>Language influences who applies for jobs, and gender-neutral language has been shown to encourage women considering applying for a job. See 'gender neutral language' in Step 4. <a href="#">Attracting Candidates</a> above.</p> <p>Avoid superlatives such as expert, superior, world class, or terms like rockstar and guru.</p>



Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
Ensure the job description, language, and visuals appeal to a wide range of candidates.	<p>Use multilingual job titles and headings where possible.</p> <p>If you are advertising a job that has been traditionally filled by one gender, consider strategies to broaden the appeal, such as targeted advertising, using images of a different gender in the role, and stating that applications from women and men are welcome.</p>
List only the essential requirements for the job and keep the advertisement short.	The job description and job advertisement should describe the minimum requirements for the job.
Ask for specific qualifications and experience only if they are essential to the job.	See Step 3. Preparation: <a href="#">Person Specifications section</a> above.
Evaluate the application process to ensure there are no barriers to a wide range of candidates considering applying for the job.	<p>Don't ask for non-essential information in application forms.</p> <p>Explain why you are asking for information and how it will be treated/stored.</p>

## Step 6. SHORTLISTING

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
Conduct shortlisting with reference to your organisation's gender and diversity goals.	
Conduct shortlisting with reference to the selection criteria you have determined.	
Ensure everyone involved in shortlisting is aware of how gender bias can lead to assumptions about an application.	All those involved in recruiting have undertaken your organisation's recruitment training including content on reducing gender bias.
Take into account the skills and experience that are equivalent of qualifications.	Recognise prior learning. For example, the 2017 Care and Support Workers Pay Equity Settlement recognised 12 years or more of experience as equivalent to a NZ Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Level Four).
Take into account the skills and competencies acquired through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha.	See 'Valuing caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha' in Step 1. Preparation: Organisational Capability <a href="#">above</a> .
Avoid negative assumptions about periods of leave and/or multiple fixed term employment.	
Ensure that shortlisting decisions are made by groups.	<p>Group decisions are generally less biased than individual ones, partly because they generate more diverse ideas, and because we are better at seeing bias in others than in ourselves.</p> <p>A shortlisting panel, led by the recruiting manager, should determine the shortlist, with input from HR and approval from the one-up manager, to ensure that the shortlist is in keeping with your organisation's gender and diversity goals.</p>
<p>Ensure that shortlisters are aware of the effects of group-think.</p> <p>Take measures to avoid group-think.</p>	<p>Groups can be subject to <a href="#">group-think</a>, which can lead to perpetuating a dominant bias. It is important to ensure that every member of the group develops their own opinion independently.</p> <p>To maximise the effectiveness of group decision-making, <a href="#">to avoid group-think</a>, and to ensure that all panel members have meaningful input into the shortlisting, assessment and selection processes, the recruiting manager should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an open leadership style</li> <li>• structure discussion</li> <li>• encourage dissent</li> <li>• reduce time pressure on decision making</li> <li>• ensure the panel is diverse in its make-up</li> <li>• have access to subject matter experts.</li> </ul> <p>Diversity within groups mitigates group-think but does not guarantee a good outcome for diverse candidates.</p> <p>Refer to HR for advice if they are not represented on the panel.</p>

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
Include more than one woman on a shortlist.	<p><a href="#">Research</a> has found that shortlists with only one woman do not increase the chance of a woman being hired, but when there is more than one woman on a shortlist the chances increase.</p>
Investigate the pros and cons of CV anonymised recruitment and monitor the outcomes if you implement it.	<p>Based on the positive results of a number of studies on anonymised CVs to reduce gender and other biases, it has become a common approach in international jurisdictions. (See for example <a href="#">Moss-Racusin et al</a>). However, there is <a href="#">evidence</a> that anonymising CVs may be counter-productive in environments where efforts to increase diversity are already occurring.</p> <p>Note that it is very difficult to remove all identifying aspects of an application.</p> <p>CV anonymised recruitment cannot be relied on alone, since bias can enter in the later stages of recruitment processes.</p> <p>Be aware that CV anonymised recruitment may be considered culturally inappropriate by Māori.</p>
Monitor the outcomes of your shortlisting process.	<p>Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does your shortlisting process result in a gender-balanced shortlist?</li> </ul>

## Step 7. INTERVIEWING

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Conduct interviews by panel.</p> <p>Ensure your panel is diverse and gender balanced.</p> <p>Support panel members who bring a gender or cultural lens to the interview process.</p>	<p>Using multiple rather than single interviewers reduces bias and makes for better hiring decisions overall.</p> <p>The panel should consist of the same people for each candidate being interviewed.</p> <p>The panel should consist of the same people who conducted the shortlisting.</p> <p>Diversity within groups mitigates group-think but does not guarantee a good outcome for diverse candidates (so it is important to mitigate bias with a range of strategies throughout the recruitment process).</p> <p><a href="#">Research<sup>4</sup></a> has found that some studies show that the more women there are on a panel, the more likely it is that women are selected for a role, while some studies find the opposite.</p> <p>Monitoring the outcomes of panel decisions will help organisations understand whether gender balance on panels is achieving the desired outcomes.</p> <p>Be aware that a large panel may be intimidating for a candidate.</p>
<p>Ensure panel members receive training on how gender bias can lead to assumptions about a candidate.</p>	<p>See 'Removing gender bias' in Step 1. Preparation: Organisational Capability <a href="#">above</a>.</p> <p>For example, panel members should be wary of assuming that women with caring responsibilities do not have ambitions or are not looking for challenging roles.</p>
<p>Include cultural competency in training for panel members.</p>	<p>Cultural competency should include an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural norms relating to authority and negotiation</li> <li>• appropriate meeting protocols</li> <li>• cultural norms relating to body language</li> <li>• the compounding impacts of gender and ethnicity</li> <li>• cultural norms about promoting oneself (Kāore te kumara e korero mō tōna ake reka – the kumara does not brag about its own sweetness).</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> The research is referenced in Diverse selection panels, p.9 of Evidence-based actions for employers

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Establish the cultural and physical needs of candidates and make sure these are met</p> <p>Consider ahead of time how you will practically meet these needs and conduct the interview.</p>	<p>Offer all candidates the opportunity to bring kaiawhina/support/spokesperson(s) to the interview.</p> <p>Ensure everyone and everything is prepared for kaiawhina/support/spokesperson(s). For example, ensure that parking and a seated waiting area are available, and that greeting and hospitality are arranged.</p> <p>Ensure that there is enough seating for kaiawhina/support /spokesperson(s) in the interview room, or let candidates know in advance if there are space constraints.</p> <p>Ensure that panellists and greeters are comfortable pronouncing candidates' names.</p> <p>Consider how to conduct an interview that includes kaiawhina/support /spokesperson(s). For example, do panellists expect to hear directly from candidates as well as kaiawhina/support /spokesperson(s) during the interview?</p> <p>Ensure that practical considerations are agreed prior to the interview, e.g. who will pay any travel for kaiawhina/support/spokesperson(s)?</p>
<p>Ensure interviews are structured and standardised.</p>	<p>Ask candidates the same questions, based only on criteria relevant to the job description and person specifications.</p> <p>Ask questions in the same order, using a structured interview template.</p> <p>Use a framework or scoring system that reflects the weight of the most important criteria.</p> <p>Use a scoring methodology to help panel members to score answers consistently and to help compare results. There is an example of a methodology to score candidates' responses in the <a href="#">Leadership Success Profile</a>.</p> <p>Score candidates in real time, and hide scores for a candidate's previous answers to reduce <a href="#">confirmation bias</a>.</p>
<p>Prompt candidates to offer examples of skills gained through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha.</p>	<p>Tell candidates that they are encouraged to answer questions using examples of skills gained through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha, and prompt them if needed during the interview.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 3 Relationship between Paid and Unpaid Work</a></p> <p>Agencies take active steps to ensure that time out of the workforce for unpaid and/or caring work does not result in disadvantage in pay or barriers to progression.</p>

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Include information in the interview about your organisation's commitment to and range of flexible work options.</p>	<p>Panel members could provide examples of how flexibility works in their organisation.</p> <p>Consider that Māori candidates may have particular needs for flexibility to accommodate iwi, hapu, whānau and other obligations, and that other groups may have similar obligations.</p>
<p>Use robust panel decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Use an approach that will help to avoid group-think; see 'Avoid group-think' in Step 6. Shortlisting <a href="#">above</a>.</p> <p>Following the interview, panel members should discuss their individual scoring of the candidate's responses.</p> <p>Score candidates horizontally, i.e. compare candidates' scores for each answer rather than the sum of their answers. There is research that gender stereotypes kick in when we evaluate one candidate at a time, less so when evaluating several candidates simultaneously and comparing them systematically.</p> <p>It is important to allow enough time for a considered decision-making process.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Leadership Success Profile</a> has advice on how to test bias in the conversations about a candidate following an interview.</p> <p>Be aware that the decision-making process may include discussions about bias and may be uncomfortable for panel members.</p>
<p>Moderate or review selection decisions for gender bias.</p>	<p>Document the basis for any decisions or recommendations.</p> <p>Formally record the decision/recommendation.</p> <p><a href="#">Review or moderate decisions by someone with responsibility for gender and diversity policies.</a></p> <p>Moderators should have gender expertise and could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diversity and inclusion advisors</li> <li>• Māori advisors</li> <li>• Pacific and other cultural advisors</li> <li>• HR practitioners</li> <li>• union representatives.</li> </ul>

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Monitor and evaluate panel decision-making processes to ensure your organisation is achieving the outcomes to meet gender and diversity organisational goals.</p>	<p>Refer to the 'Framework for developing goals, strategy, and actions to ensure recruitment processes are free from gender bias' <a href="#">above</a> for more information on evaluation and monitoring.</p> <p>Evaluation by an observer with gender expertise can provide valuable feedback on the interview process. This may be as part of periodically evaluating recruitment processes for gender bias.</p> <p>Ensure that the interviewee is aware of the role of any observers.</p> <p>Observers with gender expertise may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diversity and inclusion advisors</li> <li>• Māori advisors</li> <li>• Pacific and other cultural advisors</li> <li>• HR practitioners</li> <li>• union representatives</li> </ul> <p>Ensure there is a mechanism for gathering feedback from successful and unsuccessful candidates about the recruitment process.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 4 Sustainability</a></p> <p>Agencies collect, analyse and monitor data to identify all the factors that contribute to gender pay gaps.</p>
<p>Only ask questions relevant to the selection criteria in reference checks.</p>	<p>Be aware that candidates from more privileged backgrounds or with more continuous work history may have more impressive references and referees.</p> <p>Use a structured and standardised approach to seeking information from referees, based on questions relevant to the selection criteria.</p> <p>This helps to guard against referees being led to respond in way that confirms the recruiter's perceptions of a candidate.</p> <p>Document referees' responses as part of the formal decision-making process.</p>

## Step 8. SALARY OFFER

Refer to the guidance issued by the Gender Pay Gap and Pay Equity Taskforce in partnership with the PSA: [Ensuring gender is not a factor in setting salaries.](#)

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Consider operating systems where there is no, or highly constrained, managerial discretion in setting starting salaries.</p>	<p>For example, more than 80 percent of the Department of Corrections workforce is employed on collective agreements with transparent pay scales and set criteria for progression. Starting salaries for most of these roles are the same and staff progress according to a structured competency system and/or qualification. This has been the main contributor to a zero gender pay gap within this segment of the workforce.</p>
<p>Ensure proposed salary offers are supported by evidence, and that the salary offer is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• justifiable in line with your organisation’s gender-neutral salary criteria</li> <li>• consistent with starting salaries for these roles across the organisation.</li> </ul>	<p>Formal gender-neutral salary criteria are needed to guide salary setting decisions, to maintain consistency in salary offers, and to constrain managerial discretion. Together these help to mitigate bias.</p> <p>Salary criteria should be developed collaboratively with employees and unions.</p> <p>The salary criteria should comply with Section 3 of the <a href="#">Equal Pay Act 1972</a> to reflect the skills, responsibility, effort, and conditions of work the job involves.</p> <p>Recruiting managers should know the existing midpoint and range of current salaries for the role, as an objective benchmark for the offer.</p> <p>For example, the Department of Corrections identified a gender pay gap in starting salary in head office roles. It created a tool for hiring managers and panels for all appointments on salary bands that shows the average and range of current salaries for the role being appointed to, accounting for length of service of existing employees. It provides these measures for both the relevant role and group of employees. It also provides information on the impact a proposed starting salary would have on the gender pay gap.</p>
<p>Moderate salary offers to ensure gender bias is not a factor.</p> <p>Require further scrutiny of offers that do not comply with your salary criteria.</p>	<p>Amongst other moderation processes, recruitment panels could recommend starting salaries alongside their appointment recommendations.</p> <p>Organisations could also establish a process where recruiting managers recommend starting salaries to two or three other managers (including one from another part of the organisation).</p> <p>Require offers that diverge from your organisation’s salary criteria to have a higher level of sign-off than one-up, as well as HR review.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 1 Freedom from Bias and Discrimination</a></p> <p>Employment and pay practices are free from the effects of conscious and unconscious bias and assumptions based on gender</p>



Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Ensure recruiting managers understand and implement organisational expectations around equitable salary offers.</p>	<p>Budgets should allow for equitable salary offers, to avoid pressure on recruiting managers to make unfair salary offers.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 4 Sustainability</a> Senior leaders make an ongoing commitment to eliminate gender inequalities and allocate budget and resources accordingly.</p>
<p>Ensure the salary offer reflects the full value of skills gained through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha.</p>	<p>See Valuing caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha in Step 1. Preparation: Organisational Capability <a href="#">above</a>.</p>
<p>Ensure the salary offer reflects the full value of cultural expertise, Māori Crown relations skills, knowledge of te ao Māori, and/or te reo Māori.</p>	
<p>Ensure the salary offer is not unfairly influenced by factors not related to the job requirements, including a candidate's previous or current salary.</p>	<p>Relating a salary offer to a candidate's previous or current salary can perpetuate gender pay gaps.</p> <p>Relating a salary offer to a candidate's previous or current salary also creates a risk that the offer will not be in line with your salary criteria.</p> <p>Factors not necessarily related to the job requirements that may unfairly influence a salary offer include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• candidate's previous or current salary</li> <li>• part-time nature of the role</li> <li>• flexible work requirements</li> <li>• parenting and caring responsibilities</li> <li>• gender</li> <li>• ethnicity</li> <li>• religion</li> <li>• age</li> <li>• disability (which does not prevent the candidate from performing the role).</li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">Human Rights Commission</a> advice on accommodating disability and religious beliefs.</p>
<p>For transparency, provide the candidate with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the salary rate or range for the role</li> <li>• the criteria the salary offer is based on</li> <li>• a copy of the CEA (for roles covered by the collective agreement).</li> </ul>	<p>A candidate needs to understand how the salary offer relates to the salary range for the role, their level of competency, and the salary criteria. This enables a candidate to assess the offer and to negotiate a fair salary.</p> <p>Where collective agreements are negotiated, they include pay rates and pay systems that are transparent and accessible to all. See <a href="#">Employment Relations Amendment Act 2018</a>.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Gender Pay Principle 2 Transparency and Accessibility</a> Employment and pay practices, pay rates and systems are transparent. Information is readily accessible and understandable.</p>

Recommendations	Further information and related Gender Pay Principles
<p>Be aware that salary negotiation outcomes generally favour men over women. Increased transparency about pay and negotiation can improve negotiation outcomes for women.</p> <p>Provide information for shortlisted candidates on whether the salary offer is negotiable, when the salary offer will be discussed, and the process for negotiation.</p> <p>Alternatively, operate systems where there is no, or highly constrained, managerial discretion in setting starting salaries.</p>	<p>Some candidates may be less comfortable with negotiation or may have lower salary expectations, e.g. women, part time workers, new migrants, Māori and Pacific peoples, and women returning to the workforce. Providing more information will help these candidates to be better prepared for negotiation.</p> <p>There is <a href="#">evidence</a> from research conducted in the New Zealand Public Service that Māori, Pacific, and Chinese candidates – and Pacific women in particular – may not negotiate pay.</p> <p>There is also <a href="#">evidence</a> that women with larger responsibilities for work in the home have a different approach to negotiation and lower pay expectations. These women may need to conduct a more complex negotiation with their partner/whānau over the division of labour in the home, and with their employers over the salary, hours, and conditions of paid work.</p> <p>Example of information for shortlisted candidates: The salary is negotiable and will be discussed with the preferred candidate(s) following the interview stage. The criteria we use to determine our offer will be shared with the preferred candidate when an offer is made (e.g. range of skills the candidate brings, how much support the candidate will need in the role initially). We won't ask for a candidate's previous or current salary.</p>

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Behavioural Economics Team of the Australian Government [Going blind to see more clearly: unconscious bias in Australian Public Service shortlisting processes](#)
- Employment New Zealand [Spotlight skills recognition tool](#)
- Employment New Zealand [Guide to the Gender-inclusive job evaluation standard](#)
- Employment New Zealand [Flexible work legislation and information](#)
- Equality and Human Rights Commission [Unconscious Bias training: An assessment of the evidence for effectiveness](#)
- Forbes [How To Take Gender Bias Out Of Your Job Ads](#)
- Forbes [Groupthink: 7 Tips To Prevent Disastrous Decisions](#)
- Glassdoor [10 Ways to Remove Gender Bias from Job Descriptions](#)
- Government Equalities Office [Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations: Evidence-based actions for employers](#)
- Government Equalities Office [What works to reduce your gender pay gap: Family friendly policies action note](#)
- Harvard Business Review [7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process](#)
- Harvard Business Review [Designing a bias-free organisation](#)
- Harvard Business Review [How to take the bias out of interviews](#)
- Harvard Business Review [Why Diversity Programs Fail](#)
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- Human Rights Commission [Positive actions to achieve equality](#)
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