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POST OFFICE®

ED&I at the Post Office

Inclusion Insights assessment

November 2023

Contents

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Executive summary

Overview

Grant Thornton were engaged by Post Office Limited (POL) to assess their current ED&I agenda, its scope and progress, and suggest the steps required to move the agenda forward. Our assessment is data led across three key sources – diversity and demographic data, ED&I policies and processes, and the lived experiences and perceptions of inclusion of employees and leadership.

This report documents our findings following the assessment. This should be considered alongside the prioritised roadmap we have developed alongside the ED&I team for POL consideration, together with the outputs from a workshop with the Group Executive (GE) to discuss the ED&I vision for POL and accountability mechanisms.

Our data sources for this work:

- 28 process owner and GE interviews
- 1,931 responses: employee survey ~ 57% response rate
- 8/8 responses: GE survey
- Four meetings with network group leads
- Four targeted focus groups with an average participation of 11 members
- 19 additional 1:1s with employees
- Document review:
  - 50+ on ED&I embeddedness throughout employee cycle covering policies around recruitment, selection, to offboarding/exit and HR policies
  - 8+ around strategy, governance, communication, and engagement

Findings summary

Our triangulated assessment places you at a **Characteristic-focused** stage (stage 2), with examples of showcasing some **Emergent** (stage 1) and some **Inclusive** (stage 3) maturity in your overall approach. Throughout the report we have also highlighted the inclusion maturity of each factor.

There is a strong intention to drive ED&I at POL, which is visible in the organisation's approach to awareness raising through network groups and 'let's talk about' sessions and policies which are inclusive and supportive of different lived experiences.

In order to harness this intention and achieve meaningful change, POL now needs to align this to action through the people agenda primarily and then embed this more broadly at a strategic level; set clear commitments and measures of success to embed accountability against the positive intent.
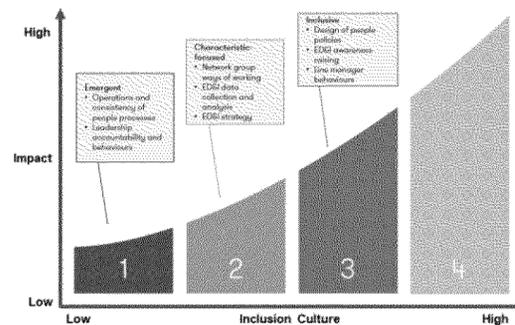
Success and areas of future focus

Successes

Strong ED&I policies and well-regarded initiatives

Effective people management and trust in line managers

Recent successes in employer brand and recruitment experiences

Confidence in the organisation's purpose and intention around ED&I

Future Focus areas

ED&I is viewed as a 'people' objective, not an overarching strategic objective

ED&I strategy is not well communicated, and lacks clear plan for implementation

Low trust in leadership to drive ED&I agenda

Perceptions of unfairness and lack of equal opportunities to progress and succeed

Lack of ED&I embeddedness across the employee lifecycle with limited monitoring and compliance processes

Lack of defined roles and responsibilities to drive the ED&I agenda across the business

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Our scope of work

Building upon your previous work, we (Grant Thornton) has engaged with POL to conduct an ED&I audit to provide a baseline and an external assessment of your ED&I agenda and work with you to support to identify key next steps and focus areas.

Objective	Our Approach

Diversity Data

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Policy, Process & Governance — Employee Lived Experience & Leadership Perception

Roles, responsibility & accountability | Strategy, communication & engagement

People processes

- To assess the level of embeddedness of ED&I through the organisation through:
  - Employee lived experiences and leadership perceptions
  - Review of internal policies, processes and practices around ED&I
  - Demographic analysis through an inclusion and diversity lens
- To provide an implementation roadmap to driving ED&I at POL through leadership workshops and vision setting for effective implementation
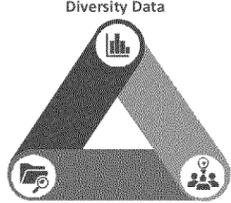
Triangulated data collection

Collected and analysed using our Inclusion Insights tool and responses compared against POL 2022 ED&I survey results

Collected using Inclusion Insights tool, GE interviews and workshops, employee focus groups and 1:1s

Reviewed internal policies, processes, practices, and relevant governance procedures around ED&I at POL and conducted interviews with process owners
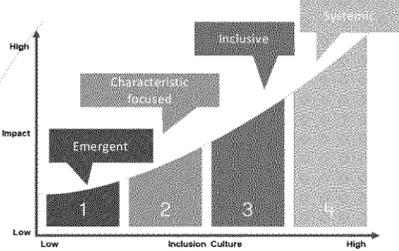
Inclusion Maturity assessment

Maturity levels mapped across our 5 benchmarking factors:
- Talent Attraction
- Talent Development
- Culture
- Strategic Development
- External Impact to identify successes and any underlying barriers to inclusion

Identification of themes

Themes identified based on triangulated data as areas of focus for development, that could help further advance the ED&I agenda

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Inclusion Maturity Assessment - Overview

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Your Inclusion Maturity – an overview

In this report, we have summarised the findings from triangulated assessment of our five factors of Inclusion – Talent Attraction, Talent Development, Culture, Strategy and External Impact which provide your overall inclusion maturity rating. Each section provides an in-depth analysis supporting the key findings for that factor. Based on this and after consideration of your Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) objectives and focus areas, we have co-created a prioritised roadmap with the ED&I team which incorporates our recommendations.

Our triangulated assessment places you at a Characteristic-focused stage which is in line with what we are currently seeing in the market. You are also showcasing examples of Emergent and Inclusive maturity in your approach. Your targeted ED&I policies and awareness raising are indicative of your intention to drive ED&I at POL. However, a lack of a clear strategic direction including roles and responsibilities, low levels of trust in leadership, and employee lifecycle processes which do not embed the principles of inclusion act as a barrier to achieving your ED&I goals, and risks falling behind the market. To drive inclusion, embedding ED&I across the organisation would require an adjusted approach, being driven from the top, which focuses on ED&I more holistically. There is a strong intent and culturally, there appears to be an appetite or perhaps even demand, for this gear change.

Overall Inclusion maturity:
Characteristic Focused

(1) Emergent
The organisation is setting out on its inclusion journey and is doing what it needs to from a regulatory and legal perspective to enable inclusion for colleagues.

(2) Characteristic-focused
The organisation recognises that it needs to provide tailored support to under-represented groups to create equality of opportunity.

(3) Inclusive
The organisation is breaking down barriers to inclusion for all its employees, cognisant of intersectionality and helping them bring their whole selves to work.

(4) Systemic
The organisation is reflecting its inclusion culture on every touchpoint with stakeholders, suppliers and clients – leading their sector in inclusive practices.

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Your Inclusion Maturity – by key drivers of inclusion

High

Emergent
- Operations and consistency of people processes
- Leadership accountability and behaviours

Characteristic-focused
- Network group ways of working
- ED&I data collection and analysis
- ED&I strategy

Inclusive
- Design of people policies
- ED&I awareness raising
- Line manager behaviours

Impact

Low

1 2 3 4

Low   Inclusion Culture   High

(4) Systemic
The organisation is reflecting its inclusion culture on every touchpoint with stakeholders, suppliers and clients – leading their sector in inclusive practices.

(3) Inclusive
The organisation is breaking down barriers to inclusion for all its employees, cognisant of intersectionality and helping them bring their whole selves to work.

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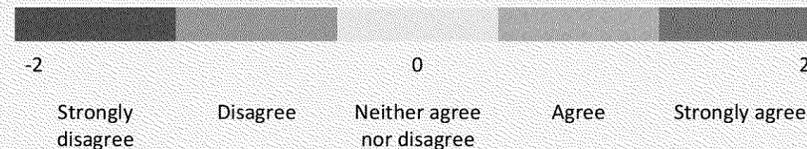
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Our approach through Inclusion Insights

As part of our scope of work with POL, our Inclusion Insights tool was used to triangulate data sources as well as administer two surveys; Employee Lived Experiences to understand employees' experiences with inclusion, and Leadership Perceptions to measure the GE's perceptions around inclusion at POL. Both surveys were split into five factors of inclusion.

Factor of Inclusion	Focus area
Talent Attraction	Employer brand, recruitment, selection processes, and employees' onboarding experiences.
Talent Development	The approach to talent and career development of the employees, including pathways to progression, learning and development opportunities, rewards and benefits.
Culture	Ways of working, levels of psychological safety, embeddedness of an inclusive environment across all demographics, role modelling of inclusive behaviours.
Strategy Development	Communication and embeddedness of ED&I strategy, understanding of organisational purpose, and clarity of vision and goals for ED&I.
External Impact	The approach to driving ED&I externally and alignment with values.

Each question in the surveys is assessed on a five-point scale of -2 to 2, with responses ranging from, 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

-2			0			2
Strongly disagree		Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree		Agree	Strongly agree

This scoring mechanism helps suitably allocate negative, neutral, and positive sentiments across each question. All questions are positively worded such that 'agreeing' is positive, and indicative of an inclusive working environment. **As such, the higher the average overall score is, the more consistent and embedded the experience of an inclusive working environment.**

Our approach to analysis considers both the most common response, response variance, and the sentiment of the response. This is analysed across demographics, functions, grades, and the five key factors to help identify themes. Free text responses provided are analysed and mapped separately.

Outputs from this analysis are combined with findings from our policy, process and governance review to build an holistic picture.

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Employee experiences vary but largely agree with positive lived experiences whilst GE shows differing perceptions

Inclusion Insights registers average employee lived experiences at a score of 0.59 on a scale of -2 to 2, with 62% in agreement or strong agreement. However, there is a considerable variance observed in responses with the highest and lowest individual average scores at 2.0 and -1.8 respectively. The GE survey, which asks the GE questions about their perceptions of inclusion for employees, and what they as leaders have done to create that environment, had an average of 0.34 but individual scores ranging from a low of -0.04 to a high score of 0.83.

Outputs from the employee survey (Employee lived experiences)	Outputs from the GE survey (Leadership perceptions on inclusion)

Outputs from the employee survey (Employee lived experiences)

1931 responses
57% response rate

Overall average score
0.59

Lowest individual average score
-1.8

Highest individual average score
2.0

-2 | 0 | 2

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly agree

Outputs from the GE survey (Leadership perceptions on inclusion)

8 responses
100% response rate

Overall average score
0.34

Lowest individual average score
-0.04

Highest individual average score
0.83

-2 | 0 | 2

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

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Overall, gender does not appear to be driving significantly different experiences of inclusion

However, there are some functions where this is not the case, as highlighted below. In Corporate Affairs, Communications and Brand, women's average score is less than half that of men, but in LGC, People and Retail – DMB, women score > 20% higher than men on average. Interventions in these departments should specifically consider how someone's gender could be impacting on their experiences of inclusion.

Inclusion scores by gender x function

*People who are non-binary, and those who prefer to self-describe their gender have not been included as disclosure levels < 10 people

Men   Women

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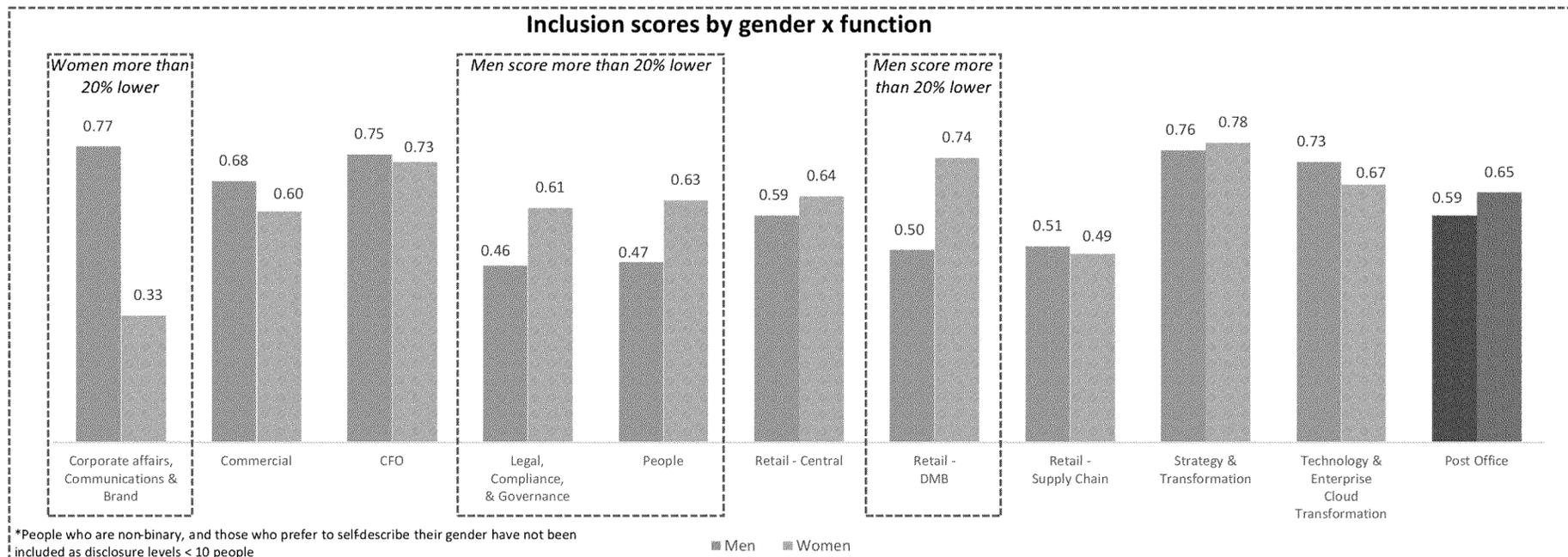
However, lived experiences vary by other under-represented demographics

Whilst not all under-represented characteristics are driving worse experiences of inclusion, we have identified the ones below with lower than average scores. Separate focus groups held centred around lived experiences relating to disability, neurodiversity and ethnicity indicated that systemic barriers to inclusion within people processes and limited trust in leadership to follow through with change are driving these lower scores.

Scores for demographics scoring > 20% below average

Number of responses for each demographic

21	13	231	50	32	10	44	51	33	244	57	

Primary carer to a disabled child / children	Pagan	Has a disability	Mixed or multiple ethnicities	Other ethnic background	Trans	Primary caring responsibilities covering multiple categories	Other religion or belief	Primary carer to a disabled adult(s)	Neurodivergent	Black	Overall average
0.29	0.33	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.39	0.42	0.42	0.45	0.45	0.47	0.59

Demographics with < 10 people are not shown, to protect anonymity.

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Intersectionality

**What is intersectionality?**

Everybody has their own unique lived experience, based on their characteristics and experiences. Intersectionality acknowledges that there may be commonalities of experience within those who have similarity across multiple marginalised characteristics (e.g., a Black gay man, or a Jewish woman who is disabled) due to the way that different systems of oppression interact and compound each other. In focussing on characteristics, we can unintentionally exclude as considering one element of a person ignores those nuances.

Why is it relevant here?

It is important to consider combinations of characteristics in our analysis, to ensure we are identifying these different experiences in order that they can be addressed. Organisations which are at a characteristic-focused inclusion maturity are generally considering interventions to support under-represented groups corresponding to individual characteristics. This can be effective up to a point but can become exclusionary and create a sense of 'other' or competition between characteristics rather than fostering a more general sense of inclusion.

How have we analysed the data?

All combinations of intersecting under-represented characteristics at POL were considered to understand the differences in experiences of inclusion. Of these, data has been shown in the next slide where combined under-represented characteristics is leading to a different experience for individual characteristics *and* where the respondent size was more than 10 people.

Recommendations included in the roadmap and the challenges highlighted throughout this report support movement towards an Inclusive approach rather than a characterised approach. This would be much more effective in supporting those with multiple under-represented characteristics.
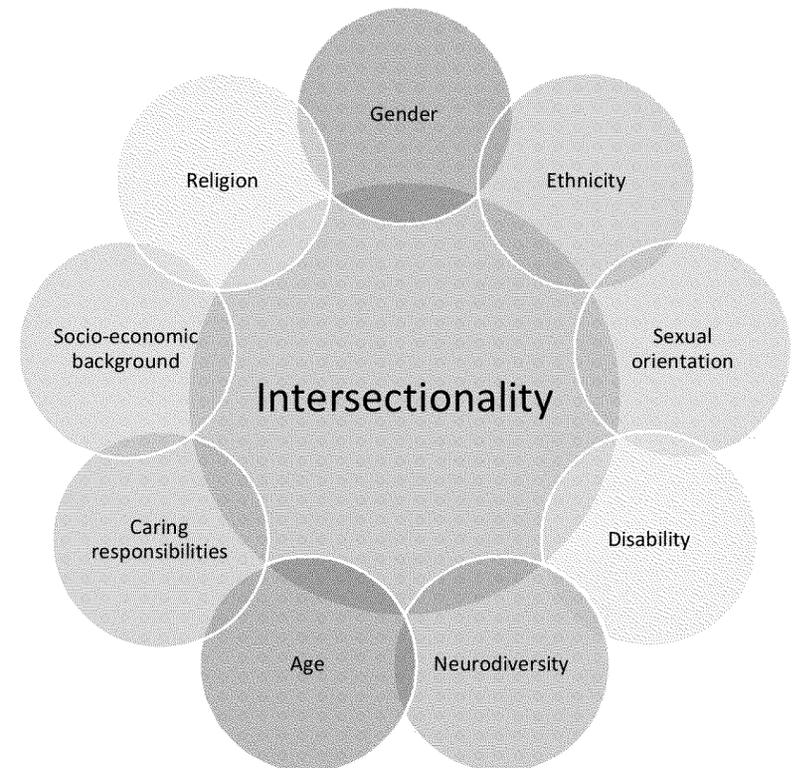
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Low perceptions of inclusion amongst some intersecting under-represented characteristics

Key combinations of diversity characteristics driving lower experiences of inclusion:

- *Gender x Disability/Neurodiversity*
  - Whilst both genders with a disability show low experiences of inclusion, men with a disability or who are neurodivergent score lower than women with either of these characteristics
- *Gender x Ethnicity*
  - Whilst for Asian women and white women, ethnicity does not appear to be driving different experiences of inclusion, women from Black, mixed, multiple or other ethnicities score lower than men in these categories.
  - Asian men score lower than Asian women or white men.
- *Gender x Sexual orientation*
  - Lesbian/gay women, and bisexual men score lower than their straight counterparts

Gender*	Has a disability	Does not have a disability	Neurodivergent	Not neurodivergent	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Straight
All	0.38	0.66	0.45	0.65	0.60	0.60	0.63
Women (0.65)	0.46	0.73	0.52	0.72	0.51	0.63	0.70
Men (0.59)	0.29	0.68	0.40	0.67	0.63	0.50	0.64

Gender*	Asian	Black	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic background	White
All	0.56	0.47	0.38	0.38	0.65
Women (0.65)	0.67	0.45	0.29	0.34	0.68
Men (0.59)	0.47	0.52	0.52	0.43	0.62

*responses for non-binary or prefer to self-describe gender and/or sexuality not shared as < 10 respondents
Note: Those highlighted in red score at least 20% below the average of 0.59, i.e., < 0.47.

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Low perceptions of inclusion amongst some intersecting under-represented characteristics (cont.)

Key combinations of diversity characteristics driving different experiences:
- *Ethnicity x Disability/Neurodiversity*
  - Individuals with a disability/who are neurodivergent, and are from a diverse ethnic background score lower than their white counterparts
- *Ethnicity x Sexual Orientation:*
  - Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB+) individuals from a diverse ethnic background score lower than white LGB+ people
- *Ethnicity x Caring responsibilities*
  - Respondents of all ethnicities other than white register a below average score for primary caregivers

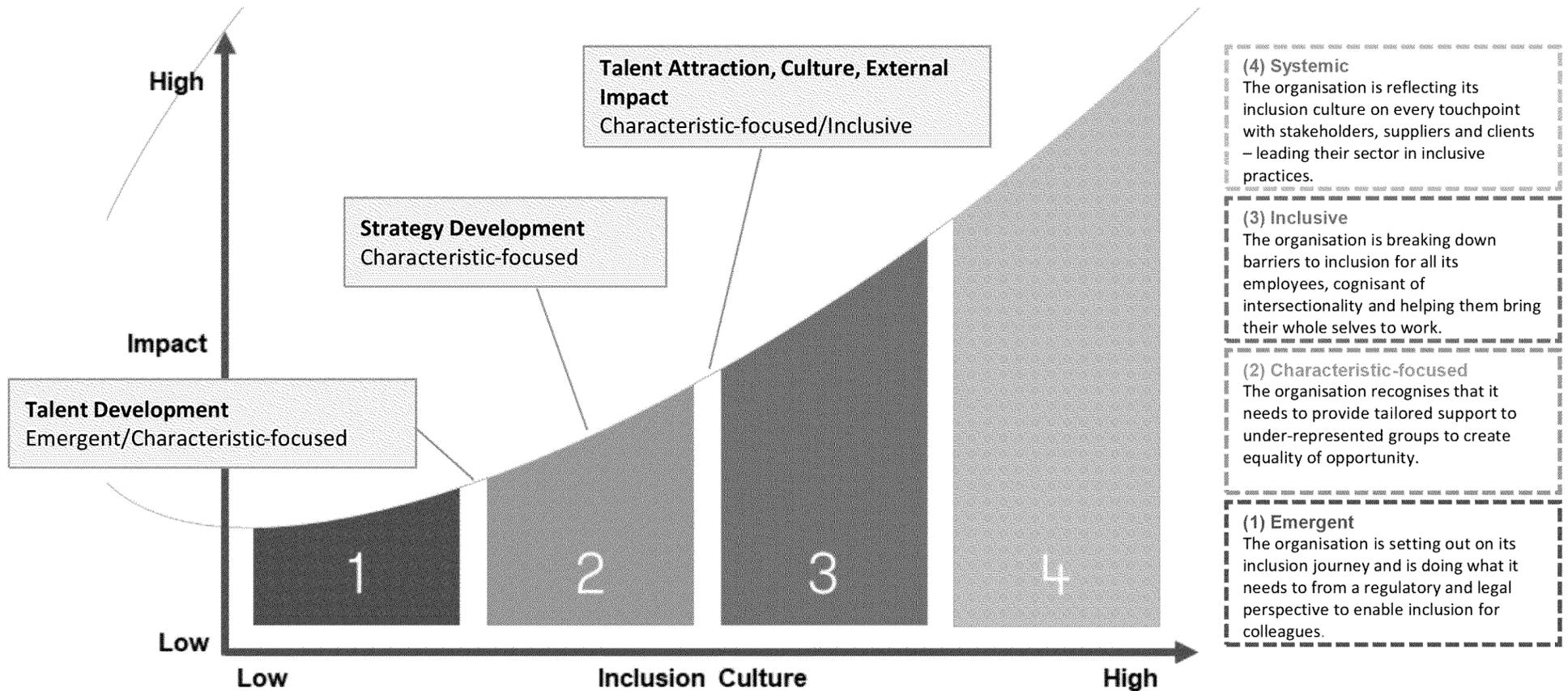| Ethnicity	Has a disability	Does not have a disability	Neurodivergent	Not neurodivergent	LGB+	Straight	Primary carers	No caring responsibilities
All	0.38	**0.66**	0.45	0.65	0.60	0.63	0.59	0.62
Asian	0.28	**0.66**	0.01	0.68	< 10 people	0.58	0.51	0.61
Black	0.39	0.54	< 10 people	0.56	< 10 people	0.48	0.34	0.57
Mixed or multiple ethnicities	< 10 people	0.45	0.76	0.35	< 10 people	0.40	0.49	0.29
Other ethnic groups	< 10 people	0.46	< 10 people	0.39	< 10 people	0.38	0.37	0.37
All diverse ethnic backgrounds*	0.27	0.56	0.27	0.56	0.31	0.53	0.47	0.53
White	0.44	0.77	0.48	0.68	0.65	0.65	0.66	0.65

*Diverse ethnic background includes Asian, Black, mixed or multiple ethnicities, and other ethnic groups.
Note: Those highlighted in red score at least 20% below the average of 0.59, i.e. < 0.47.
Results have not been disclosed where there are fewer than 10 people with these characteristics to ensure anonymity.

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Inclusion Maturity Assessment – by factors

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Your Inclusion Maturity – by factors

Talent Attraction, Culture, External Impact
Characteristic-focused/Inclusive

Strategy Development
Characteristic-focused

Talent Development
Emergent/Characteristic-focused

(4) Systemic
The organisation is reflecting its inclusion culture on every touchpoint with stakeholders, suppliers and clients – leading their sector in inclusive practices.

(3) Inclusive
The organisation is breaking down barriers to inclusion for all its employees, cognisant of intersectionality and helping them bring their whole selves to work.

(2) Characteristic-focused
The organisation recognises that it needs to provide tailored support to under-represented groups to create equality of opportunity.

(1) Emergent
The organisation is setting out on its inclusion journey and is doing what it needs to from a regulatory and legal perspective to enable inclusion for colleagues.

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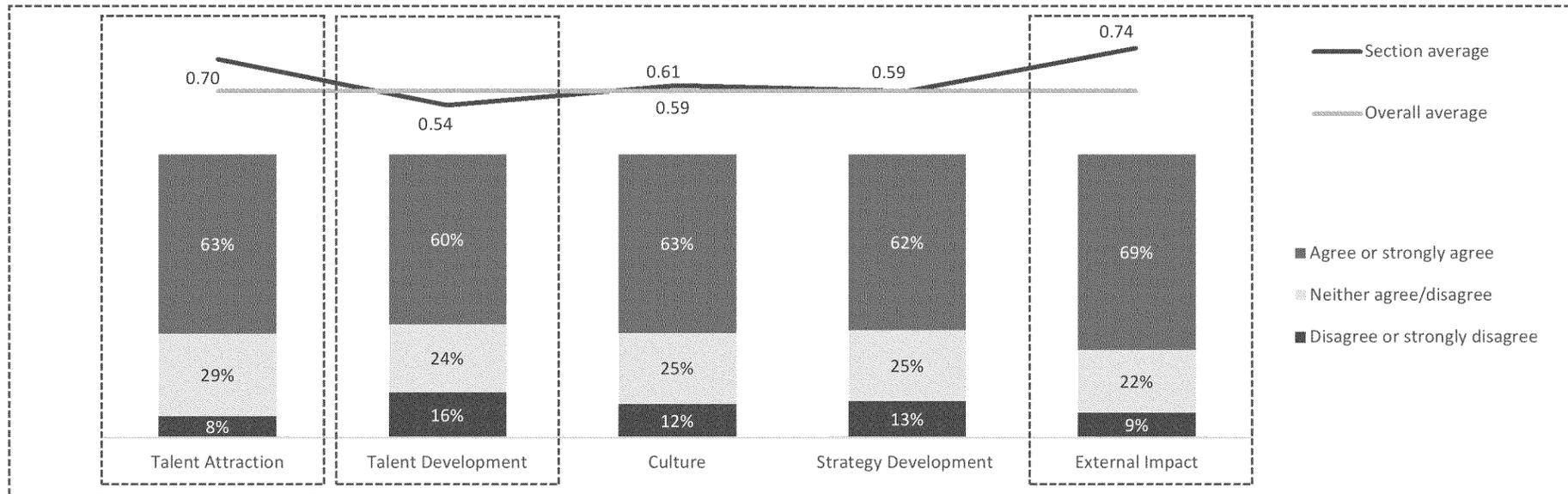
Employee lived experiences of inclusion

External Impact has the highest proportion of positive responses, while Talent Development has the lowest

The employee inclusion score of 0.59 is driven by robust employee lived experiences in the areas of External Impact and Talent Attraction, which exceeds the overall POL average by 25% and 16% respectively. On the other hand, Talent Development scores the least, falling 8% below average, with the highest percentage in disagreement or strong disagreement. In contrast, both Strategy Development and Culture align closely with the overall average, at 62.5% of employees expressing agreement or strong agreement with positive lived experiences for these factors.

	Talent Attraction	Talent Development	Culture	Strategy Development	External Impact
Section average	0.70	0.54	0.59	0.61	0.74
Overall average			0.59		
Agree or strongly agree	63%	60%	63%	62%	69%
Neither agree/disagree	29%	24%	25%	25%	22%
Disagree or strongly disagree	8%	16%	12%	13%	9%

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Employee lived experiences of inclusion

Amongst employees, varied lived experiences of Inclusion are seen across functions

Supply chain scored the lowest in all sections apart from External Impact, identifying this function as a key focus area for future interventions. Employees in Strategy & Transformation, CFO, and Technology & Enterprise Cloud Transformation responded with consistently above average experiences of inclusion, and the successes demonstrated in their higher scores should be reviewed for lessons learnt which can be applied across the organisation.

Employee lived experiences by functions

Response count %	82%	93%	102%*	59%	95%	61%	31%	51%	83%	54%	57%	33%

Bar chart values: Commercial 0.63; Corporate Affairs and Comms 0.56; CFO 0.72; Legal, Compliance & Governance 0.56; People 0.53; Retail - Central 0.60; Retail - DMB 0.64; Retail - Supply Chain 0.46; Strategy & Transformation 0.77; Technology & Enterprise Cloud Transformation 0.71; Post Office overall 0.59; Payzone* 0.93

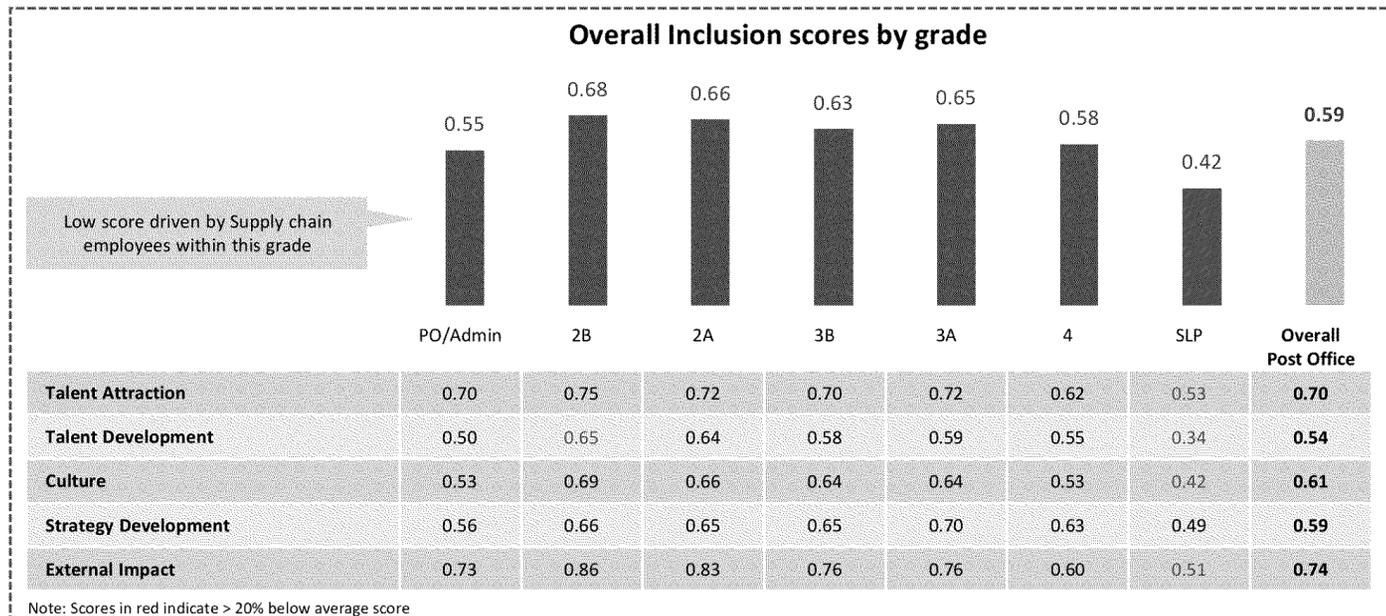|	Commercial	Corporate Affairs and Comms	CFO	Legal, Compliance & Governance	People	Retail - Central	Retail - DMB	Retail - Supply Chain	Strategy & Transformation	Technology & Enterprise Cloud Transformation	Post Office overall	Payzone*
Talent Attraction	0.66	0.68	0.74	0.64	0.73	0.66	0.81	0.61	0.80	0.75	**0.70**	0.93
Talent Development	0.54	0.44	0.66	0.48	0.48	0.54	0.63	0.38	0.67	0.67	**0.54**	0.89
Culture	0.72	0.69	0.76	0.57	0.52	0.59	0.60	0.49	0.80	0.74	**0.61**	0.97
Strategy Development	0.61	0.49	0.70	0.58	0.51	0.62	0.57	0.47	0.84	0.66	**0.59**	0.90
External Impact	0.74	0.53	0.85	0.74	0.53	0.79	0.79	0.64	0.92	0.78	**0.74**	1.22

*Figures in % represent response count percentage by function; CFO registers over-reporting – as employees self-selected on this category, this may have resulted in some errors; results for Payzone results have been separated and shared in a separate report owing to different policies/procedures. Note: Scores in red indicates > 20% below POL average score for the factor, green is > 20% above average score for the factor

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Employee lived experiences of inclusion

SLP register lowest overall inclusion scores

SLP scores the lowest, especially around Talent Development and Culture, where low scores are being driven by employees disagreeing that there are equal opportunities for progression, and appropriate allocation of responsibilities and decision making. There is also a significant variance observed between functions in terms of scores for SLP, indicating that there are function-specific challenges that need to be investigated. This has been explored further under analysis by factors.

Overall Inclusion scores by grade

Bar chart values: PO/Admin 0.55, 2B 0.68, 2A 0.66, 3B 0.63, 3A 0.65, 4 0.58, SLP 0.42, Overall Post Office 0.59

Low score driven by Supply chain employees within this grade (annotation pointing to PO/Admin)

	PO/Admin	2B	2A	3B	3A	4	SLP	Overall Post Office
Talent Attraction	0.70	0.75	0.72	0.70	0.72	0.62	0.53	**0.70**
Talent Development	0.50	0.65	0.64	0.58	0.59	0.55	0.34	**0.54**
Culture	0.53	0.69	0.66	0.64	0.64	0.53	0.42	**0.61**
Strategy Development	0.56	0.66	0.65	0.65	0.70	0.63	0.49	**0.59**
External Impact	0.73	0.86	0.83	0.76	0.76	0.60	0.51	**0.74**

Note: Scores in red indicate > 20% below average score

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Talent Attraction

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Talent Attraction: Summary of themes

Talent Attraction covers perceptions around the application process, expectations of cultural fit, and experiences of inclusive practices throughout the application process.

POL performs strongly around Talent Attraction with a strong intent to hire diverse talent and values which are well understood and reflected during the application process. Candidates align with the brand's stated values and register a strong sense of belonging and fit with POL. This is reflected in the well-above average scores in this section, especially for those having joined in the last three years. However, gaps are observed in translation of values from recruitment and selection stages to onboarding, where lived experiences differ greatly even within demographicsLack of internal controls to ensure that fair and transparent recruitment processes are being followed, especially for the leadership, are also impacting experiences of employees in this area.

Themes

Strong perceptions of belonging and cultural fit on the back of POL values

Positive perceptions around alignment with employer brand, but experiences differ once onboarded

Mature recruitment and selection policies but weak implementation/compliance

Wider perception around biased hiring processes and lack of transparency

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Triangulated assessment summary

Inclusion Maturity Assessment:
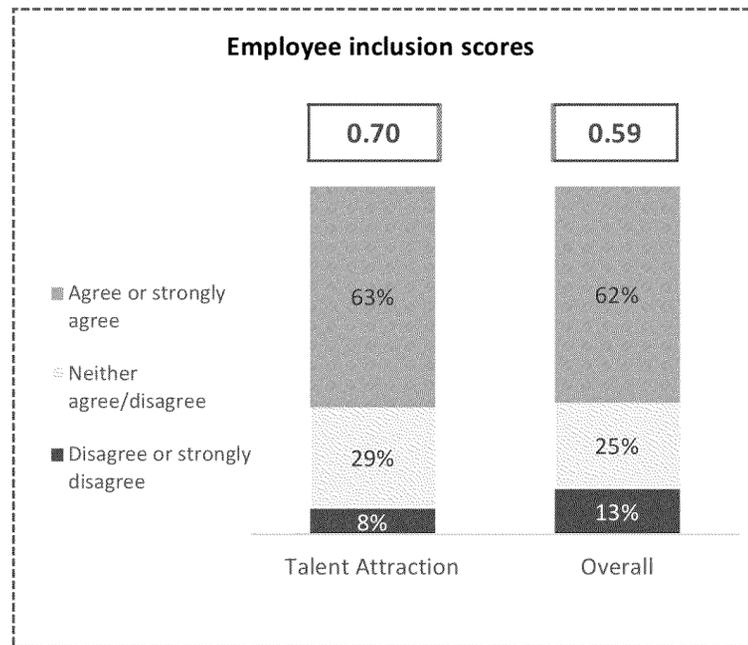**Characteristic Focused / Inclusive**

We saw evidence of POL of moving towards an inclusive approach, demonstrated by high scores from respondents who joined the organisation in the last three years. However supporting processes need further development and embedding.
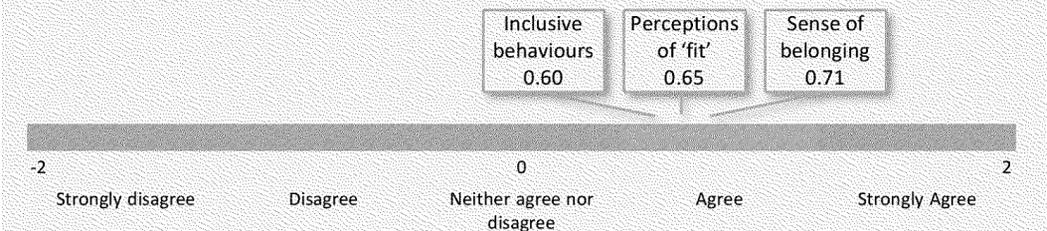

Area	Maturity
Policies, Processes, Governance	✓ ED&I considered through characteristic focused approach to designing recruitment and selection policy ✓ Dashboard providing key demographic and diversity overviews maintained and shared with GE ✗ Lack of a clearly defined candidate journey, which embeds access requirements through to onboarding ✗ No internal controls to ensure policies and processes being complied with consistently and at all levels
Inclusion Insights - Survey - Interviews - Focus Groups/1:1s	✓ Strong perceptions of inclusion through the applicant process - employees register a strong 'sense of belonging and fit' during application process ✗ Mixed perceptions around stated values translating into what they experience after joining ✗ Whilst leadership is committed to eliminating bias, employee lived experiences revolve around biased hiring processes
Diversity and demographic Insights	✗ Data not used effectively to inform recruitment strategy ✗ Diversity data does not reside with the talent acquisition team to help inform their approach

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Employees align with employer brand, however experiences post onboarding differ

Talent Attraction is the second highest scoring factor – 19% higher than average perceptions of inclusion with a score of 0.70 on a scale of -2 to 2. In their responses, employees have indicated they expected to 'fit in' when applying to work at POL, however, once onboarded, a significant proportion register different lived experiences.

Employee inclusion scores

	0.70	0.59
Agree or strongly agree	63%	62%
Neither agree/disagree		
Disagree or strongly disagree	29%	25%
	8%	13%
	Talent Attraction	Overall

*Figures in text box represents average score

POL registers its second highest score in Talent Attraction, with an average of 62.5% responses in agreement or strong agreement with feeling included. Primarily led by feelings of belonging, support through the application process, and a sense of 'fit'.

Inclusive behaviours	Perceptions of 'fit'	Sense of belonging
0.60	0.65	0.71

-2		0		2
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

However, clear dissonance is observed between how applicants perceive the organisation's values and culture to be during the recruitment process and their perceptions post coming into the organisation. With a score of 0.52, on *"My recruitment experience reflected the organisation's values and culture as I understand them now"*, this is the only area of Talent Attraction with a lower-than-average score.
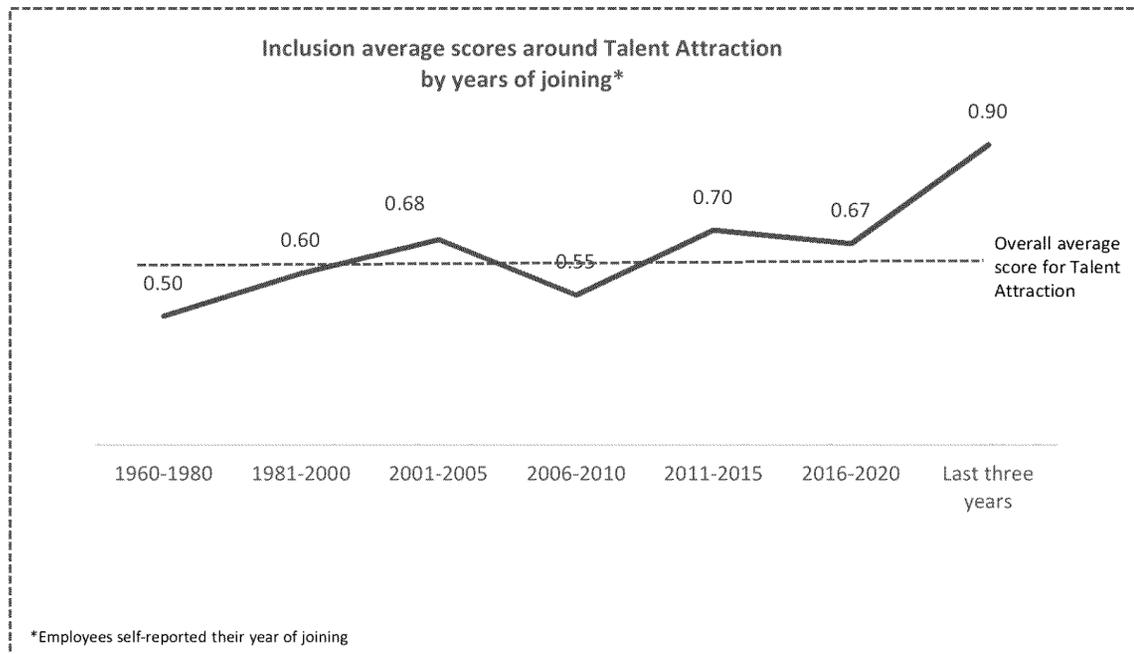
"My first impression of the Post Office was very good and very positive. The story changed however when I progressed to the on-boarding stage."

"If I'd known how toxic the actual culture was, I'd never have progressed with the interviews."

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Attraction capabilities have improved over the years

Whilst there is a general trend of rising scores in this space, general experiences of inclusive practices being adopted through the attraction stage has improved significantly in the last three years when compared against 2016-2020.

Inclusion average scores around Talent Attraction by years of joining*

0.50 — 0.60 — 0.68 — 0.55 — 0.70 — 0.67 — 0.90

Overall average score for Talent Attraction

1960-1980   1981-2000   2001-2005   2006-2010   2011-2015   2016-2020   Last three years

*Employees self-reported their year of joining

Steady increase in lived experiences around with the highest score in last three years on the following questions:

"I feel supported to be the best version of me through the application process"
74% agree or strongly agree

"I felt the people involved in my recruitment valued my unique perspective"
82% agree or strongly agree

"I felt that I could succeed here before I applied"
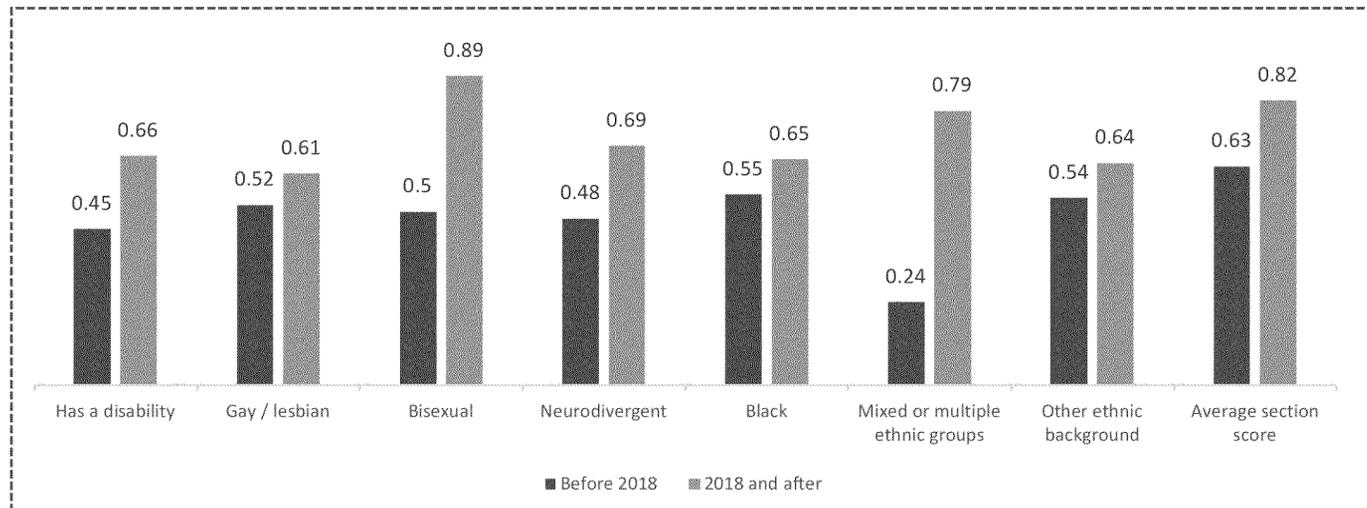*77% agree or strongly agree*

"I felt I would fit in when I applied to work here"
80% agree or strongly agree

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However, scores vary for under-represented demographics

When scores for employees with under-represented characteristics are split by year of joining, there is a pronounced increase in scores between people who joined pre and post 2018. This could indicate improvements in recruitment processes in bringing in diverse talent in an inclusive manner.

However, scores remain lower on average for these under-represented groups, and this is primarily driven by a disconnect between perceptions during recruitment, and experiences once an individual has joined the organisation. This was particularly supported by focus groups for those with a disability, who shared challenges of not being able to access the support they required during onboarding, despite being well supported during the application process.

Chart data (Before 2018 / 2018 and after):
- Has a disability: 0.45 / 0.66
- Gay / lesbian: 0.52 / 0.61
- Bisexual: 0.5 / 0.89
- Neurodivergent: 0.48 / 0.69
- Black: 0.55 / 0.65
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: 0.24 / 0.79
- Other ethnic background: 0.54 / 0.64
- Average section score: 0.63 / 0.82
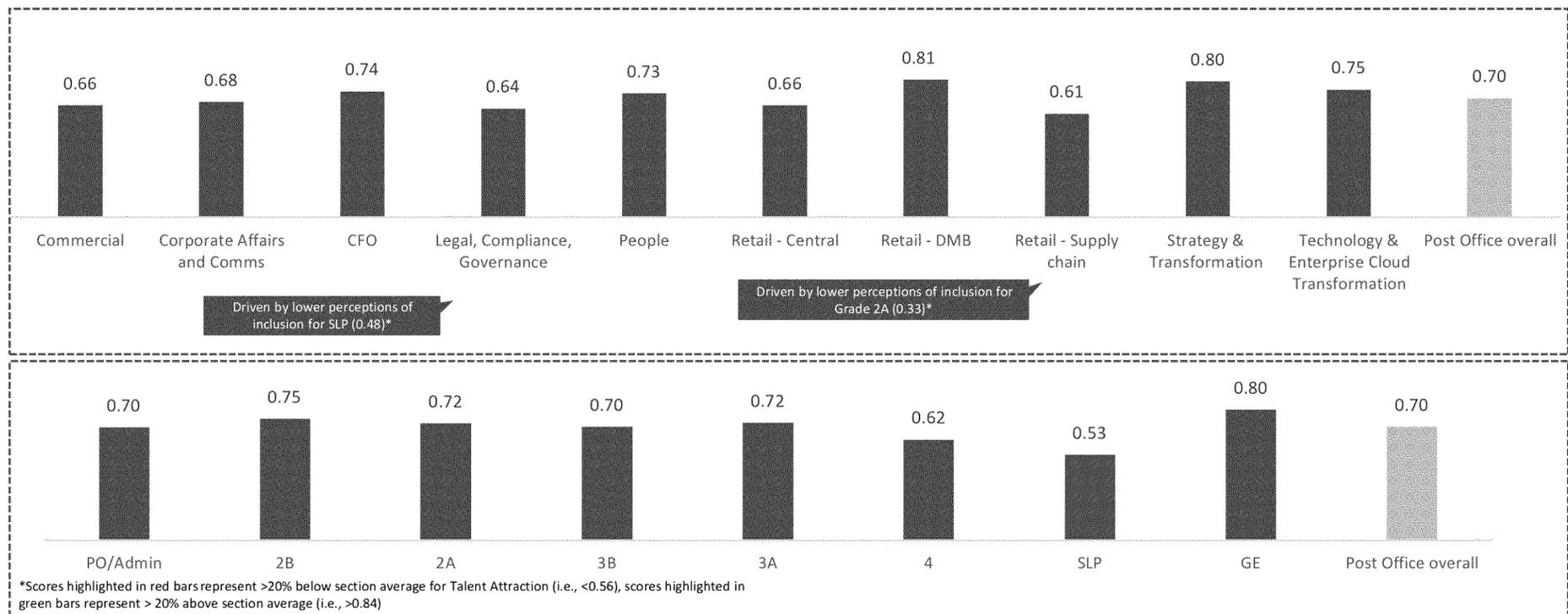
Legend: ■ Before 2018 ■ 2018 and after

"The TA and interview panel were extremely positive throughout the process, and enabled me to present the best version of me"

"If you are disabled at the Post Office you have to fight for the support you need and are entitled to, there is no proactive support"

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Lived experiences also vary by grades and functions

Whilst Talent Attraction has higher scores on average, functions and grades where scores are below average should be considered separately to understand what targeted interventions may be required to address poorer perceptions of inclusion. Similarly, success from higher scoring functions should be reviewed to see what lessons can be learnt.

Commercial	Corporate Affairs and Comms	CFO	Legal, Compliance, Governance	People	Retail - Central	Retail - DMB	Retail - Supply chain	Strategy & Transformation	Technology & Enterprise Cloud Transformation	Post Office overall
0.66	0.68	0.74	0.64	0.73	0.66	0.81	0.61	0.80	0.75	0.70

Driven by lower perceptions of inclusion for SLP (0.48)*

Driven by lower perceptions of inclusion for Grade 2A (0.33)*

PO/Admin	2B	2A	3B	3A	4	SLP	GE	Post Office overall
0.70	0.75	0.72	0.70	0.72	0.62	0.53	0.80	0.70

*Scores highlighted in red bars represent >20% below section average for Talent Attraction (i.e., <0.56), scores highlighted in green bars represent > 20% above section average (i.e., >0.84)

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Well-defined policies with inconsistent application

Objectives around attracting diverse talent are clear, however the implementation, monitoring, and adoption of data to revise/update internal recruitment strategies and approaches is inconsistent. Furthermore, internal controls to ensure processes are consistently followed are weak or non-existent, and alignment with ED&I principles during recruitment is dependent on the hiring manager from the business.

Focus area	Successes	Challenges	Maturity Assessment
Policies, Processes, Procedures • Recruitment & Onboarding Policy • Manager guides and training • Induction toolkits	• Activities and responsibilities of different teams involved in the process clearly defined • Thorough pre-onboarding checklists for managers	• No narrative on how it aligns with the overall ED&I objectives – lost opportunity to drive the focus on the agenda for hiring managers/recruiters • Lack of processes/structure to monitor managerial accountability • ED&I goals not included in the Induction toolkit to showcase how values can be translated into action	• Strong policies and documentation of approach but missed opportunities to fully embed the agenda in the Attraction, Selection, and Recruitment of diverse talent
Candidate sourcing, Recruitment and Selection	• Multiple channels being used to attract talent – diverse pool • Stated values are showcased well	• No clarity on what a "candidate journey" looks like • Diversity data is not effectively tracked end-to-end • Missed opportunity on showcasing ED&I objectives in job descriptions • No consistent approach to candidate and hiring manager feedback mechanism • Current processes do not mandate inclusive hiring practices be applied • Lack of oversight by TA	• Adopted practices and activities relating to recruitment and selection are at an early stage of maturity • While the focus on hiring diverse talent exists, there is no clear roadmap to implementation

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Lack of trust in the leadership owing to perceptions of biased hiring processes

There appears to be a significant gap between the design of recruitment and selection processes and how they are implemented by the business, especially within the leadership. There have been numerous mentions of "biased hiring", "nepotism", "lack of transparency in the hiring process", reports of unfair/by-passed hiring practices that have been raised in focus groups, one-to-ones and qualitative survey responses. This appears to be due to limited internal controls and monitoring from the central Talent Acquisition team. This directly links to perceptions of inclusion, and employees trust in the organisation and its leadership, as evidenced in the feedback from the focus group sessions.

"There is a lot of nepotism at the Post Office… hiring is often based on 'who you know' not 'what you know' "

"Friends of current members of the organisation have been recruited"

"There is a lot of favouritism involved in the selection process"

"The management creates roles for mates and appoints them (…) It's an absolute joke"

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Talent Development

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Talent Development: Summary of themes

Talent Development covers lived experiences around employees' progression, performance management, fairness of pay and rewards, and managers role modelling inclusive behaviours.

Whilst Talent Development scores below average, the gap between the overall average score and Talent Development is not as large as we typically see. Low scores are driven by lack of confidence in merit-based progression, and a general perception that opportunities to progress are limited, especially for under-represented demographics. There is a perceived lack of transparency around how performance is assessed, and whilst employees share positive experiences around supportive line managers, there are lower scores around seeing leaders and managers challenging behaviour which isn't inclusive.

Themes
Effective people management by line managers
Limited trust in merit-based progression and rewards
Lack of career pathways and progression framework
Poor representation in senior leadership and GE
Perceptions of unfair performance assessment process

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Commercial in confidence

Triangulated assessment summary

Inclusion Maturity Assessment:
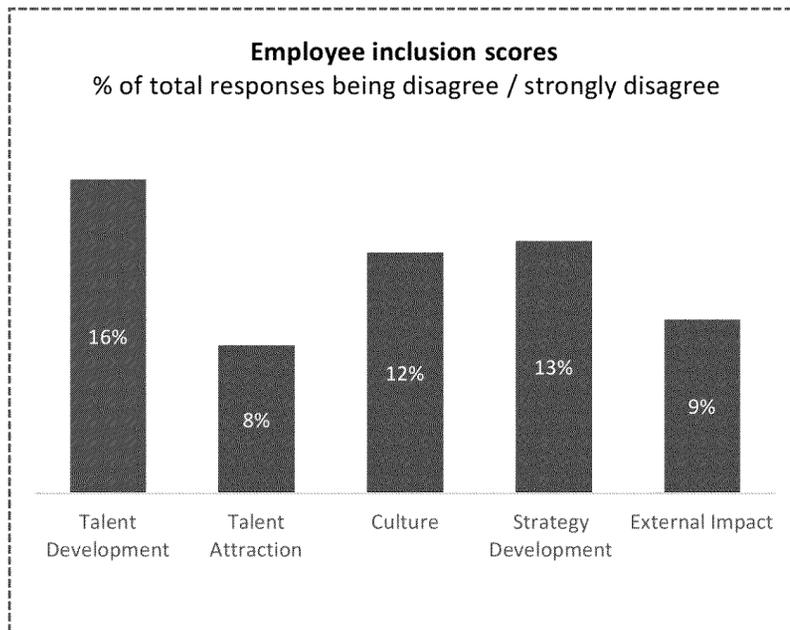**Emergent / Characteristic Focused**

High scores around people management are indicated by confidence of employees in the inclusivity and support of their line managers. However, lack of clear pathways to developing talent internally and creating equal opportunities for success and progression places Talent Development as an area of focus for POL.
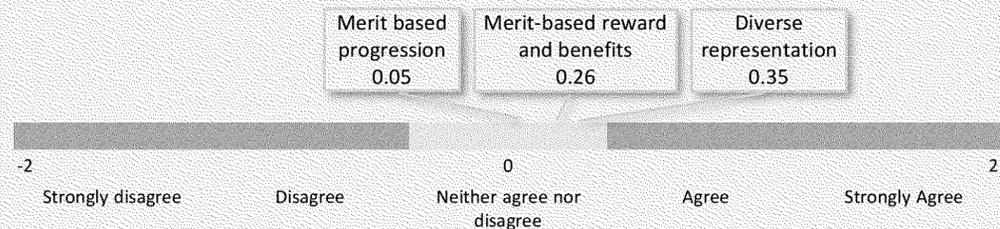

Area	Maturity
Policies, Processes, Governance	✗ Lack of career pathways and roadmaps for employees across grades ✗ Focus on learning and development opportunities is increasing, however, adoption is not tracked effectively yet
Inclusion Insights - Survey - Interviews - Focus Groups/1:1s	✓ Strong perceptions around effective management and support from line managers ✗ Low perceptions of development and growth opportunities ✗ Lack of trust in the organisation to support employees of all demographics to progress ✗ Lack of trust in the organisation to follow through with actions due to minimal diverse representation in the leadership ✗ Lack of effective guidance to employees on implementing their personal development plans
Diversity and demographic Insights	✗ Poor representation as grades progress – particularly for under-represented demographics ✗ Low perceptions around opportunities to progress after a certain grade ✗ Varied experiences of inclusion across demographics

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Statements relating to Talent Development have the greatest proportion of disagreement

Talent Development is the lowest scoring factor for POL – 8% lower than average perceptions of inclusion, with a score of 0.54 on a scale of -2 to 2. In their responses, employees have low scores in relation to equal opportunities to progress in the organisation, being assessed transparently on their performance, and being able to see the organisation's commitment to representation in action.

Employee inclusion scores
% of total responses being disagree / strongly disagree

16%	8%	12%	13%	9%
Talent Development	Talent Attraction	Culture	Strategy Development	External Impact

16% of responses are in disagreement or strong disagreement with feeling included in this area. Primarily led by well below average scores in merit-based progression, rewards, and diverse representation as grades progress.

Merit based progression 0.05	Merit-based reward and benefits 0.26	Diverse representation 0.35

-2   0   2

Strongly disagree   Disagree   Neither agree nor disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

Concerns around fairness of progression are at the forefront, with employees voicing their concerns in internal POL surveys, our Inclusion Insights survey, focus groups and 1:1s.
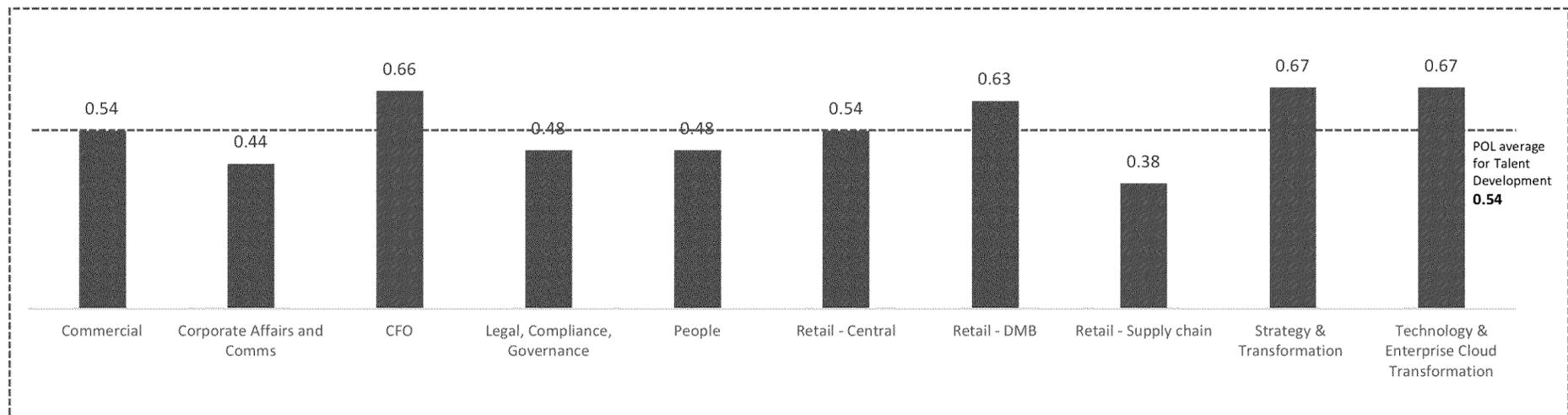
"Unfortunately, hard work, being innovative, excellent attendance does not lead to progression at the Post Office"

"Empty promises of progression and development. Never comes to fruition"

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Poor perceptions of fairness and transparency around progression (1 of 2)

Experiences vary across functions, with four out of ten scoring lower than POL average for Talent Development, driven by a lak of diversity as grades progress, and poor experiences around merit-based progression and rewards. Across functions, SLP scores significantly lower for representation, followed by grade 4 – further evidence of perceptions that progression is limited past a certain grade.
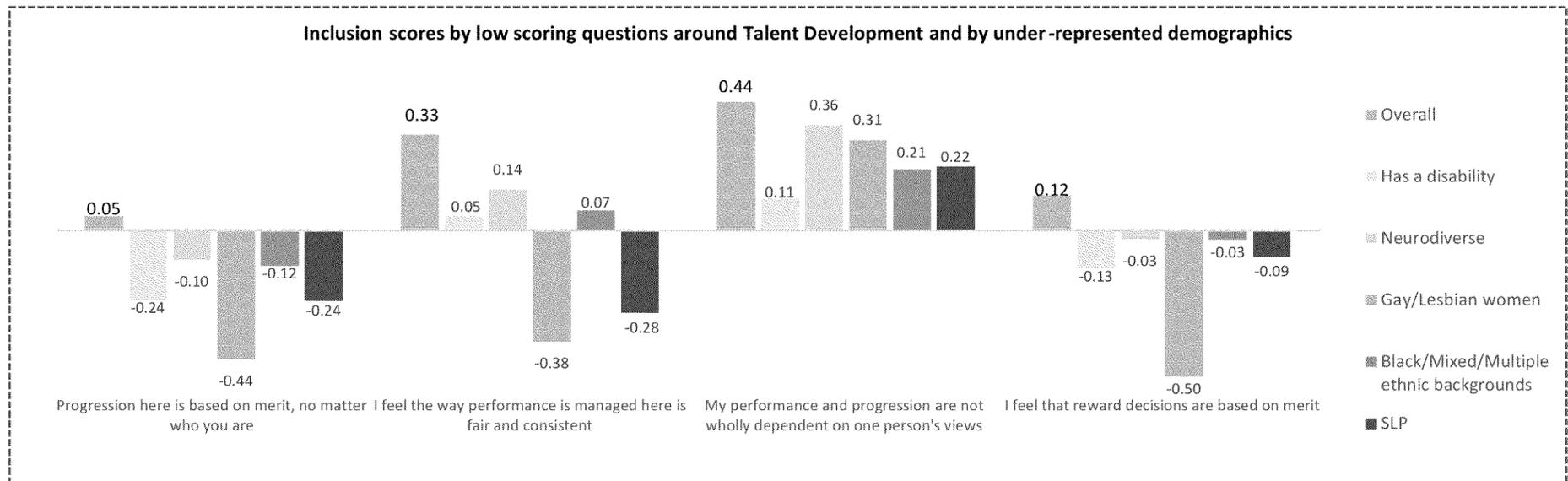
Functions scoring above average register considerably high scores around the inclusivity of line managers, driving their scor upwards.

	Score
Commercial	0.54
Corporate Affairs and Comms	0.44
CFO	0.66
Legal, Compliance, Governance	0.48
People	0.48
Retail - Central	0.54
Retail - DMB	0.63
Retail - Supply chain	0.38
Strategy & Transformation	0.67
Technology & Enterprise Cloud Transformation	0.67

POL average for Talent Development **0.54**

*Scores highlighted in red bars represent >20% below section average for Talent Development (i.e., <0.43), scores highlighted in green bars represent > 20% above section average (i.e., >0.65)

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Poor perceptions of fairness and transparency around progression (2 of 2)
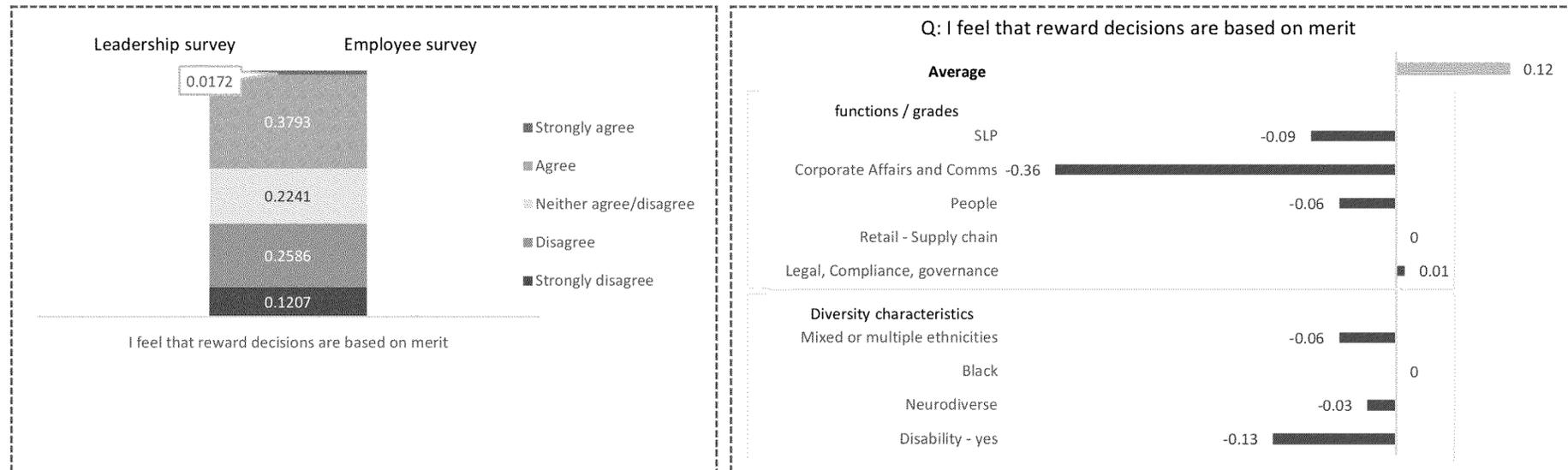
Scores around progression, and fair and consistent performance management are significantly below average. Perceptions of merit-based progression sees the lowest score of 0.05 on a scale of -2 to 2, with only 29% in agreement or strong agreement. While perceptions around this area of talent development are visible across the organisation, they vary considerably by demographics and are much lower for those with under-represented characteristics and the SLP.

Inclusion scores by low scoring questions around Talent Development and by under-represented demographics

Legend:
- Overall
- Has a disability
- Neurodiverse
- Gay/Lesbian women
- Black/Mixed/Multiple ethnic backgrounds
- SLP

Categories (x-axis):
- Progression here is based on merit, no matter who you are
- I feel the way performance is managed here is fair and consistent
- My performance and progression are not wholly dependent on one person's views
- I feel that reward decisions are based on merit

Data labels: 0.05, -0.24, -0.10, -0.44, -0.12, -0.24, 0.33, 0.05, 0.14, 0.07, -0.38, -0.28, 0.44, 0.11, 0.36, 0.31, 0.21, 0.22, 0.12, -0.13, -0.03, -0.50, -0.03, -0.09

**Question highlighted represent >20% below section average for Talent Development (i.e. <0.43)

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Varied experiences around merit-based rewards between departments, and demographics

Scores on this topic vary by department and grades and is particularly low for employees with under-represented characteristics. This misalignment is further validated through feedback from focus groups and 1:1s where employees have openly expressed their concerns regarding fairness of reward systems. Interventions should include specific focus on these demographics to ensure root causes are being addressed.

Leadership survey   Employee survey

0.0172

0.3793

0.2241

0.2586

0.1207

I feel that reward decisions are based on merit

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree/disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q: I feel that reward decisions are based on merit

	Value
Average	0.12
functions / grades	
SLP	-0.09
Corporate Affairs and Comms	-0.36
People	-0.06
Retail - Supply chain	0
Legal, Compliance, governance	0.01
Diversity characteristics	
Mixed or multiple ethnicities	-0.06
Black	0
Neurodiverse	-0.03
Disability - yes	-0.13

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Perception of low transparency around progression

There is a significant perceived lack of trust in the organisation to develop progression pathways and ensure transparency in the performance management process. Wider perceptions are that progression is dependent on the connections one has within the organisation or the ED&I objectives for the year, and furthermore that opportunities to progress are only limited up to a particular grade.

"There does seem a culture of people being cherry picked for progression with individuals being offered opportunities that are not advertised to others"

"There are no upward paths... No career progression paths"

"promotion, recognition and pay rewards at POL are unfortunately not based on merit"

"Development/Progression is geared towards meeting ED&I targets... can't challenge... Groupthink has taken over our leaders"

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While experiences with line managers are positive, it differs by functions, and with the senior leadership

Employees across departments generally respond positively in response to statements relating to the inclusivity of their line manager, with 80% in agreement or strong agreement with the statement 'I feel that my manager values me for who I am'. An outlier to this is Supply Chain, where perceptions of line managers being advocates for them is far lower, as seen below.

Furthermore, focus groups and 1:1s indicate that whilst experiences with line managers are largely positive, this does not translate to the rest of senior management/GE where feedback indicated a lack of trust and confidence in the leadership.

Q: My manager is an advocate for me and my career progression

Post Office overall	0.80
Technology & Enterprise Cloud Transformation	1.05
Strategy & Transformation	0.94
Retail - Supply chain	0.45
Retail - DMB	0.82
Retail - Central	0.82
People	0.84
Legal, Compliance, Governance	0.85
CFO	0.96
Corporate Affairs and Comms	1.14
Commercial	1.00
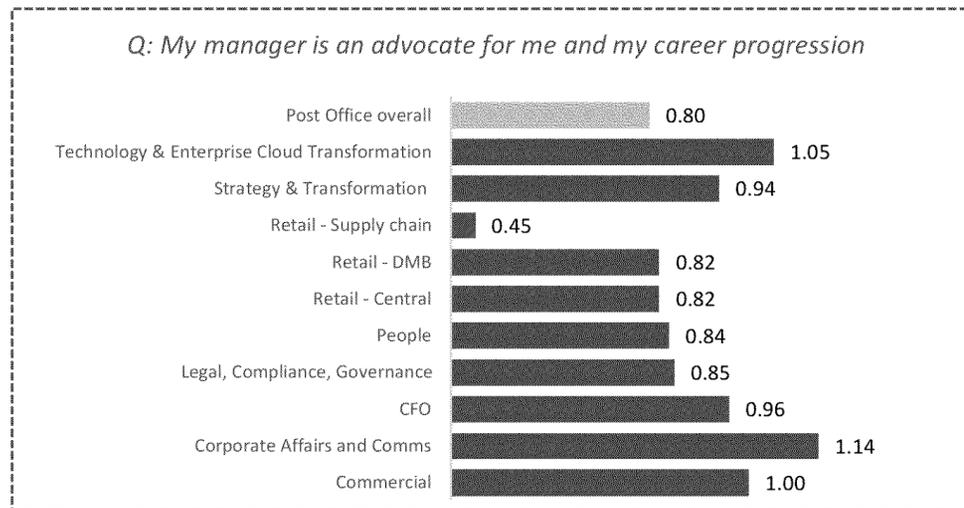
"My manager is sympathetic and helps massively but the business itself and its policy give me anxiety"

"My direct manager is extremely supportive however the Senior Mangers above don't seem to be, which is a huge barrier"

"My manager has been wholly supportive of my development; outside of this, it is hard to relate to senior management in the business"

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Lower confidence in diversity of those who progress

Inclusion Insights survey responses, inputs from interviews, focus groups and 1:1s, all indicated that a key barrier to trust in the ED&I agenda is the perceived lack of diversity in leadership roles. This is especially true for under-represented demographics, and more senior grades (SLP in particular).
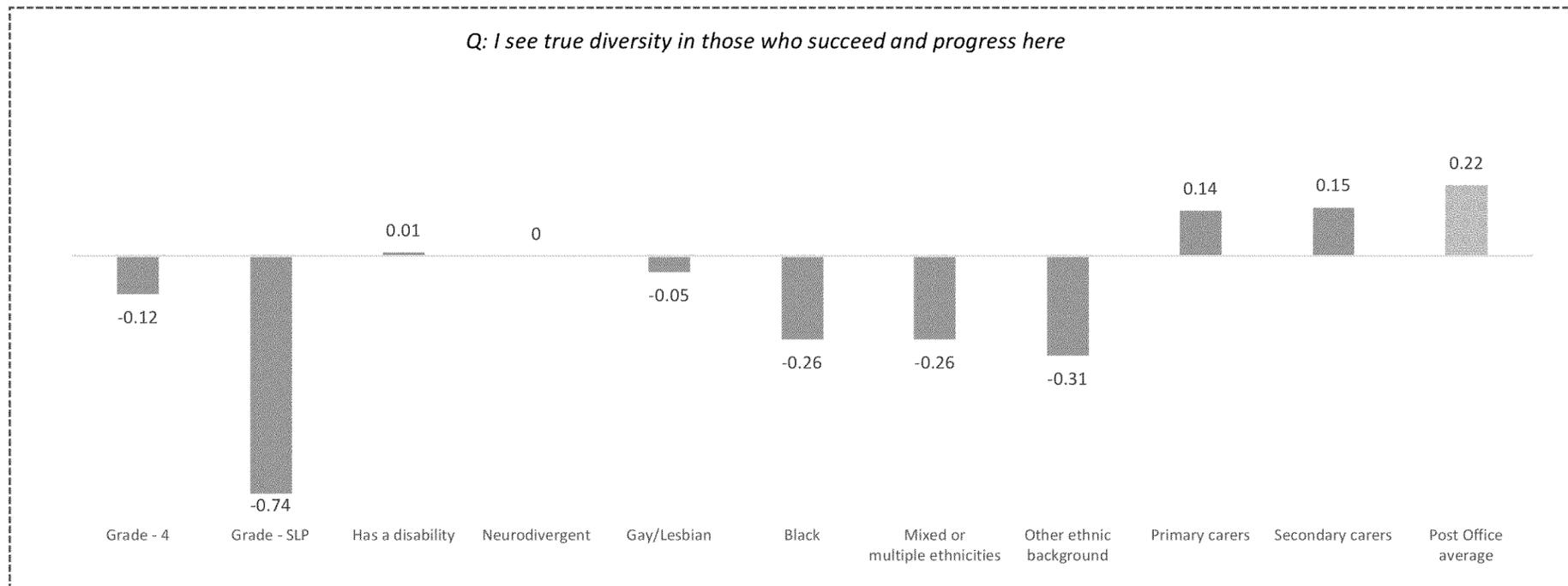
Q: I see true diversity in those who succeed and progress here

Category	Score
Grade - 4	-0.12
Grade - SLP	-0.74
Has a disability	0.01
Neurodivergent	0
Gay/Lesbian	-0.05
Black	-0.26
Mixed or multiple ethnicities	-0.26
Other ethnic background	-0.31
Primary carers	0.14
Secondary carers	0.15
Post Office average	0.22

*Scores only highlighted for demographics and characteristics scoring >20% below average for this question

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Culture

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Culture: Summary of themes

Culture covers lived experiences around psychological safety, sense of belonging, ways of working, and role modelling of inclusive behaviours.

Survey results, interviews, focus groups and 1:1:s indicate positive lived experiences on the back of recent ED&I initiatives being implemented and positive experiences with managers. The HR policies are well-designed and targeted, however, in practice they are not consistently applied, and their benefits are not being experienced by all employees. Furthermore, those with underrepresented characteristics register considerably lower levels of psychological safety, and less inclusive experiences around fairness of roles and responsibilities and interactions with leadership.

Themes
Largely flexible ways of working
Positive perceptions around inclusive behaviour demonstrated by line managers
Low fairness regarding allocation of roles and responsibilities by grades
Lack of visible role modelling by the leadership
Low psychological safety while approaching leadership

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Triangulated assessment summary

Inclusion Maturity Assessment:
Characteristic-focused/Inclusive

We saw evidence of the strong intent and well-designed approach to building an inclusive culture at POL. However, gaps are seen in implementation around areas of policy compliance, low psychological safety for those with under-represented characteristics, and limited role modelling of inclusive behaviours by leadership, which act as barriers to achieving the desired culture.
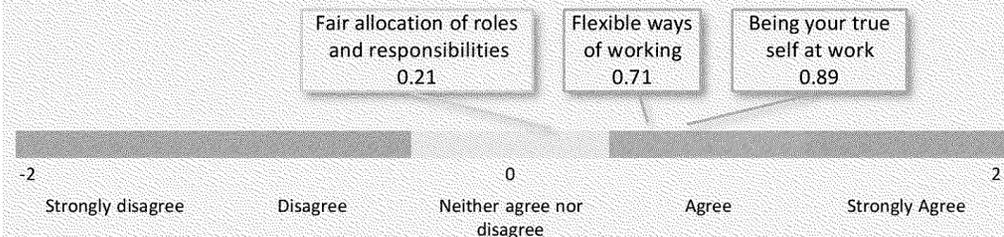

Area	Maturity
Policies, Processes, Governance	✗ Well-designed policies for employee support; caters to different demographics and under-represented groups, but not consistently or appropriately applied in practice ✓ ED&I activities such as 'Let's talk about…' received positive feedback ✗ Poor experiences with Occupational Health provider and associated processes not fit for purpose
Inclusion Insights - Survey - Interviews - Focus Groups/1:1s	✓ Employees generally feel comfortable with the ways of working and register a high level of trust in managers supporting employees with flexible ways of work as required/relevant ✗ Lower confidence in allocation of roles and responsibilities through the organisation ✗ Lower scores around being able to speak up/raise concerns – limited psychological safety ✗ Less prevalence of inclusive behaviours being adopted to ensure employees across demographics are being involved in (relevant) decision making processes
Diversity and demographic Insights	✗ Higher than average scores registered by LGB+, secondary and primary carers, but overall, almost all under-represented demographics score <10% below average

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63% of respondents in agreement of statements indicative of an inclusive culture

Leading with inclusive ways of working, supportive working relationships with line managers, and alignment of individual and organisational values for employees, Culture scores 0.61 on a scale of -2 to 2. However, psychological safety, especially regarding leadership and wider practice of inclusive behaviours, scores lower.
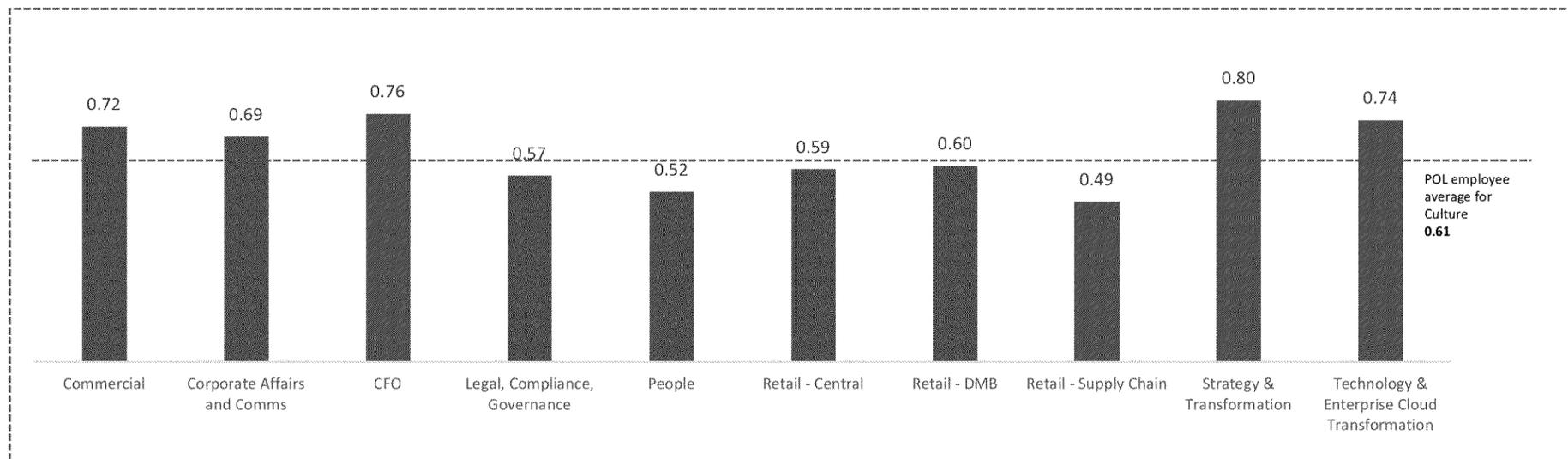
Employee inclusion scores

| 0.61 | 0.59 |

- ▪ Strongly agree or agree
- ▪ Neither agree not disagree
- ▪ Strongly disagree or disagree

	Culture	Overall
Strongly agree or agree	63%	62%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	25%
Strongly disagree or disagree	12%	13%
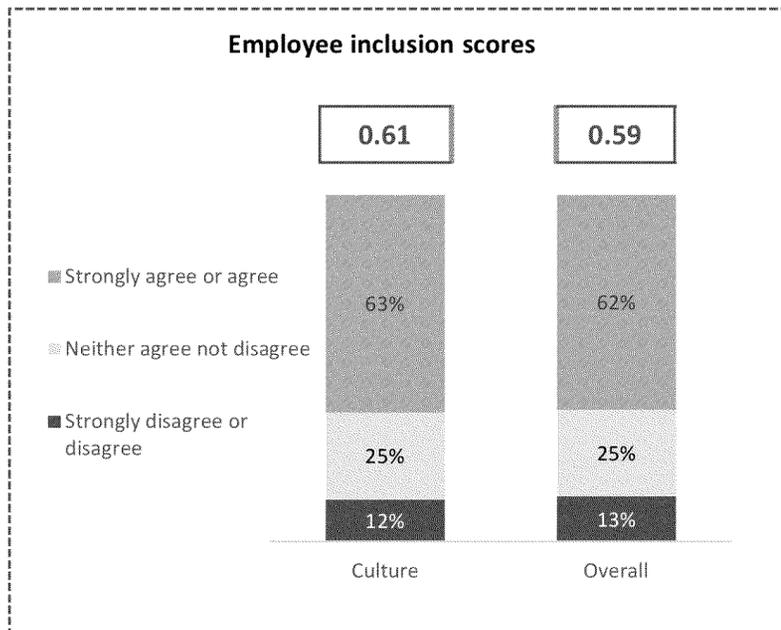
Culture registers relatively high scores around flexible working practices with employees feeling comfortable being their full selves at work and accommodating access requirements. These perceptions, however, differ by demographics which is explored further in this section. There is less confidence in fair allocation of responsibility, and trust in decision making processes.

Fair allocation of roles and responsibilities	Flexible ways of working	Being your true self at work
0.21	0.71	0.89

-2	0	2
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Furthermore, as explored later, there is a lack of trust in the leadership to challenge behaviour which isn't inclusive, and a significant proportion of employees are not comfortable speaking up/voicing their concerns to the leadership. Qualitative feedback substantiates this with employees openly expressing this issue.

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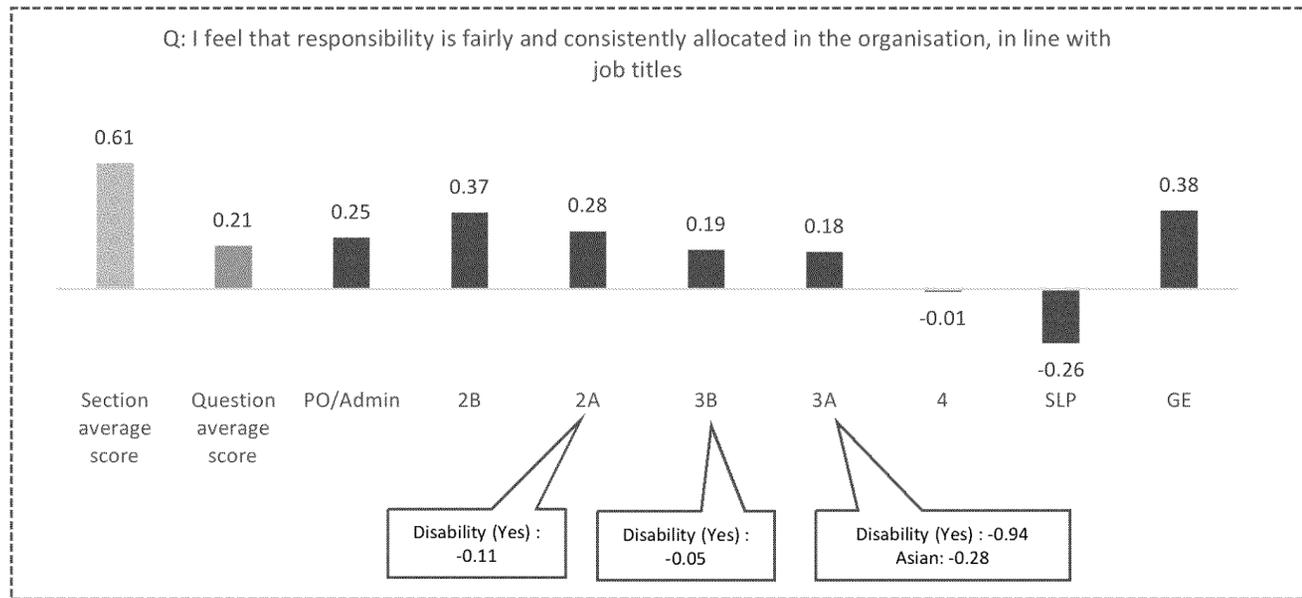# Experiences of Culture vary by functions

Below average scores for Culture seen in Supply Chain and People are driven by low scores around fair allocation of roles and responsibilities, low psychological safety, and lack of role modelling by the leadership. Any interventions addressing these concerns should focus specifically on these functions, as well as incorporating any lessons learnt from higher scoring teams, such as Strategy & Transformation.

Function	Score
Commercial	0.72
Corporate Affairs and Comms	0.69
CFO	0.76
Legal, Compliance, Governance	0.57
People	0.52
Retail - Central	0.59
Retail - DMB	0.60
Retail - Supply Chain	0.49
Strategy & Transformation	0.80
Technology & Enterprise Cloud Transformation	0.74

POL employee average for Culture **0.61**

*Scores highlighted in red bars represent >20% below section average, scores highlighted in green bars represent > 20% above section average

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Low perceptions of fairness in allocation of roles and responsibilities, particularly for senior grades

Grades 3B and above register lower than average scores in this area, with grade 4 and SLP significantly below average. Through a diversity lens, the scores are much lower for employees with a disability/employees of a diverse ethnic background. However white respondents in SLP, who generally score higher than people from diverse ethnic backgrounds in this grade, also scored low for this question, indicating that perceptions of unfairness in allocation of responsibilities is a consistent experience across this grade.

Q: I feel that responsibility is fairly and consistently allocated in the organisation, in line with job titles

0.61	0.21	0.25	0.37	0.28	0.19	0.18	-0.01	-0.26	0.38
Section average score	Question average score	PO/Admin	2B	2A	3B	3A	4	SLP	GE

Disability (Yes) : -0.11

Disability (Yes) : -0.05

Disability (Yes) : -0.94
Asian: -0.28

"Responsibility is often unfairly weighted onto individuals and grades"

"There is a great disparity between roles at the same grade and their responsibilities"

*Scores only highlighted for demographics and characteristics with > 7 people

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Lack of psychological safety from under-represented groups

Responses indicate low levels of psychological safety to be able to speak up and raise concerns across the board. In-particular employees with under-represented characteristics registered lower and varied scores on being able to speak up/raise non-inclusive practices, as indicated by below average scores. This was also reflected by outputs from focus groups, where there was a pervasive lack of trust that mechanisms to raise issues were truly anonymous and would result in a fair and satisfactory outcome.

Chart 1 – values:
- Section average score: 0.61
- I know how to raise that I don't feel included without feeling afraid of negative repercussions for me: 0.47
- I feel comfortable approaching more senior people in the organisation to ask questions or share my views: 0.57
- I see my leaders and managers challenge people acting in a way that could make others feel like they can't be themselves at work: 0.18

Similar perceptions across demographics

Chart 2 – I know how to raise that I don't feel included without feeling afraid of negative repercussions for me:
- Has a disability: 0.14
- Neurodivergent: 0.16
- Mixed/multiple ethnicities or other ethnic background: 0.22
- Asian: 0.34
- Black: 0.32
- Average: 0.47

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Varied perceptions on leaders' role modelling inclusive values and beliefs by demographics

While employees have indicated alignment with core values and beliefs of the organisation, it is not evidently role modelled by the leadership, as indicated by a score of 0.40 in this area. Moreover, this perception is much lower for those with under-represented characteristics.

The core values and beliefs are championed by our leaders

Section average score	Question average score	Has a disability	Neurodivergent	Asian	Black	Mixed or multiple ethnicities	Other ethnic background
0.61	0.4	0.14	0.2	0.23	0.32	0.22	0.16

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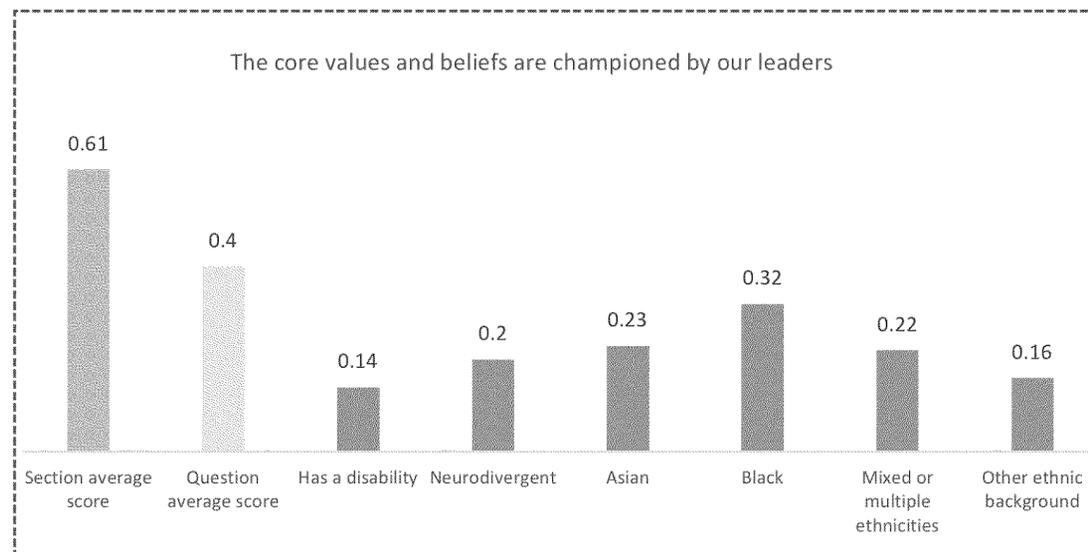
Strong HR policies, but compliance is not monitored

Policy review indicates strong, well-written policies, largely inclusive across demographics (apart from neurodiversity). While policies are people-oriented, the compliance and action taken on the back of the policies is not monitored effectively, leading to varied (and poor) lived experiences, especially for employees with under-represented characteristics.

Focus area	Successes	Challenges	Maturity Assessment
HR Policies: overall	• Clearly defined, well-articulated, and caters across demographics • Employee and manager roles and responsibilities clearly defined	• Monitoring compliance and turn-around time on requests • Awareness beyond desk-based employees • Reasonable adjustments and Dignity at Work policy misses Neurodiversity • No contact details provided for employees to reach out to, for questions, concerns, escalation if any	• Mature approach on designing policies • Less developed approach and processes to monitor and oversee compliance
Process to access support through Occupational Health		• Poor lived experiences for employees across demographics in dealing with Occupational Health services • No structure/process to ensure non-disclosure of sensitive information without employee consent • Issues raised with respect to inappropriate labelling of requests around disability	• Processes appear not to be designed or operating in an inclusive way

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Strategy Development

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Strategy Development: Summary of themes

Strategy development covers experiences and perceptions around embeddedness of ED&I strategy, purpose, and vision of the organisation around inclusion.

POL's intention towards driving ED&I across the organisation is evident to the leadership as well as the employees- leadership acknowledges the value-add to the organisation's growth and performance, and employees are aligned and engaged with the purpose of the organisation. However, there is a disconnect between what is 'stated' and its translation into action. The leadership fails to implement and practially drive the agenda forward and this is reflected in employees' lived experiences around leadership accountability. Furthermore, the ED&I approach focuses more on building diversity, rather than creating an inclusive environment for everyone to thrive, leading to the root causes of the lack of diversity not being effectively addressed.

Themes
Confidence in the organisation's purpose around ED&I
Well-regarded ED&I awareness initiatives
Lack of a clear ED&I strategy across the business
Low trust in the leadership to drive ED&I agenda
Lack of a clear (aligned) objectives for network groups, network chairs, GE members to drive the agenda

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Triangulated assessment summary

Inclusion Maturity Assessment:
Characteristic Focused

POL has a clear intent around driving ED&I, however there are gaps in the way it is embedded across the business. Being seen as a 'people objective', the strategy currently focuses on meeting diversity objectives, rather than viewing inclusion holistically.

Area	Maturity
Policies, Processes, Governance	× ED&I targets are defined, but these are not clearly linked to activities or objectives which can be implemented and embedded across the organisation × Lack of strategic accountability 'at the top' leading to lack of trust in the leadership
Inclusion Insights - Survey - Interviews - Focus Groups/1:1s	✓ Employees feel strongly aligned with the focus of ED&I and the organisation's intent ✓ There is a high level of understanding of the organisation's purpose and how it aligns with their role × However, clear gap in delivering on the agenda - wider perception is "ED&I at POL is only on paper, nothing changes" × Low levels of trust in the leadership to drive change
Diversity and demographic Insights	× There is a focus on just improving diversity, rather than inclusion as an overarching strategic objective, and a means to creating more diversity

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ED&I agenda takes a characteristic-focused approach

Overview:

A review of current agenda and strategy (18-month plan) documents reveals a diversity-focused approach to ED&I, with a clear intention, targets and a roadmap. However, accountability has not been assigned, and neither has responsibility to relevant supporters of change (network groups, people team etc).

While awareness building activities are well-designed and well-regarded by employees, due to the lack of accountability mechanisms, ED&I is not considered a priority at the top resulting in a lack of trust and confidence in the leadership's commitment to driving change. This is reflected in outputs from the Leadership survey, which indicated mixed feelings as to the strategic importance of ED&I.

Key EDI Commitments for 2022

Network	EDI Team	Diversity Targets 2024	GE/SLG
Increase membership, advocacy and allyship of community groups through attendance at events, participation in group meetings.	To deliver process and policy improvements in recruitment and development practices following an end to end audit	Gender - 50% Ethnicity – 14% LGBT – 5% Disability - 5% Representation across all levels. Percentages to be reviewed once census information is released.	To be decided

The British Retail Consortium Diversity & Inclusion Charter
- Our CEO will be accountable for Diversity and Inclusion in our business and will appoint an Executive with ownership for D&I
- We will ensure there is no bias in the recruitment process and will undertake a transparent process of audit
- We will take positive action that supports open career opportunity and progression and will undertake a transparent process of audit
- We commit to Contributing data on our diversity in the workplace which will feed in to the BRC Better Jobs dashboard
- We commit to create a respectful, inclusive work environment within which every employee has the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the company's vision and values
- We believe supporting equity in the workplace is the responsibility of all line managers
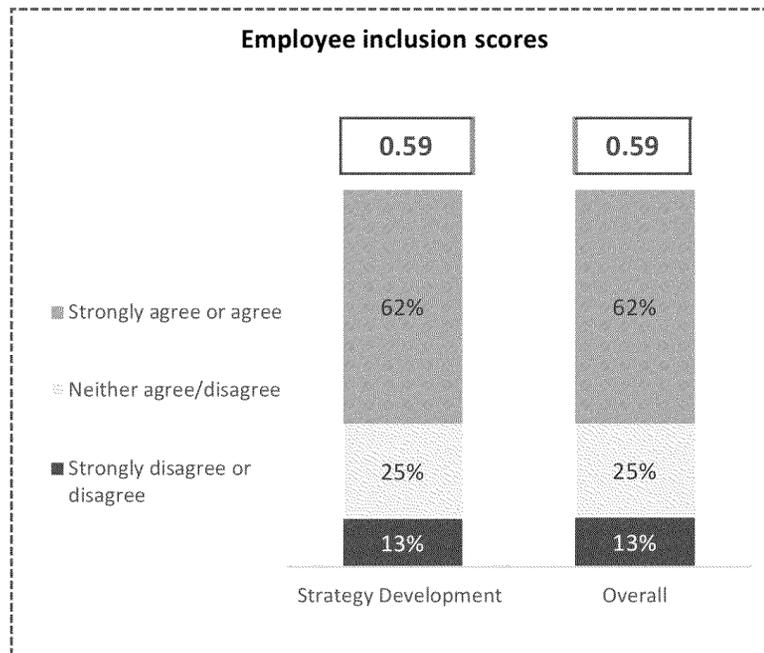
The Race at Work Charter
- Appoint an executive sponsor for race.
- Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress.
- Commit at board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying
- Make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers.
- Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression

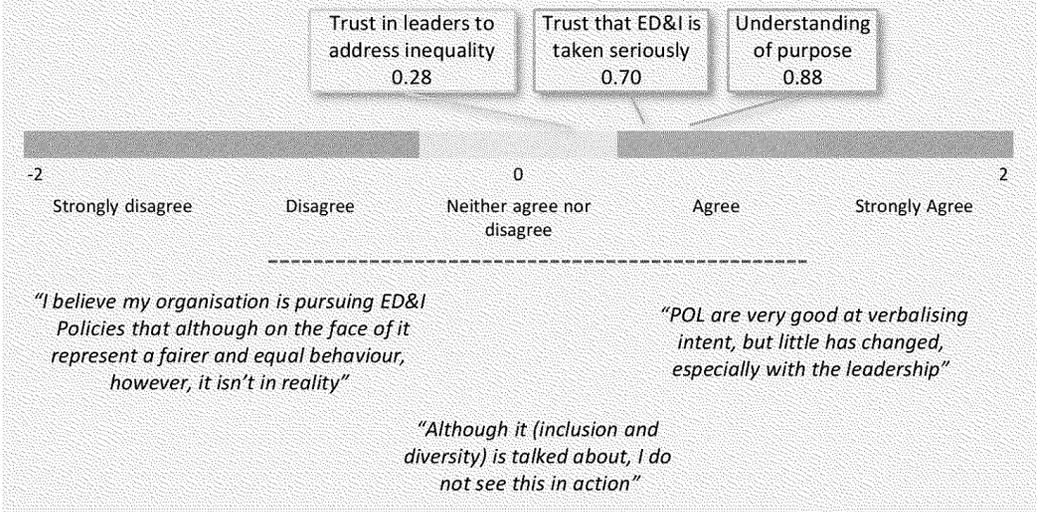Source: Post office ED&I commitments 2022 (GE deck)

Focus area	Wins	Challenges	Maturity Assessment
ED&I strategy and supporting documents	• Strong commitments to improve diversity across the organisation, supported by targets • Well-regarded initiatives by the ED&I team to drive awareness around inclusion and diversity in the workplace	• No overarching strategic objectives • Lack of leadership accountability • Lack of clear objectives for change owners (network groups, people team, leadership) • Seen as a 'tick-box' exercise by employees	• Characteristic focused approach working well to drive specific commitments however fails to be impactful in driving ED&I across the organisation

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Employees exhibit low trust in the organisation and the leadership to deliver change (1 of 3)

Employee perceptions around Strategy are at par with overall POL average – with 62% strongly agreeing or agreeing with inclusive lived experiences. This is largely driven by positive perceptions around the ED&I intent and purpose, however, as shown in other areas, lower scores are seen in relation to trusting the organisation, especially the leadership to deliver on the intent.

Employee inclusion scores

	0.59	0.59
Strongly agree or agree	62%	62%
Neither agree/disagree		
Strongly disagree or disagree	25%	25%
	13%	13%
	Strategy Development	Overall

Employees feel strongly aligned with the purpose of the organisation and are engaged to support on this agenda, however trust in leadership to identify barriers to inclusion and address this is very low.

Trust in leaders to address inequality 0.28	Trust that ED&I is taken seriously 0.70	Understanding of purpose 0.88

-2   0   2

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |

"I believe my organisation is pursuing ED&I Policies that although on the face of it represent a fairer and equal behaviour, however, it isn't in reality"

"POL are very good at verbalising intent, but little has changed, especially with the leadership"

"Although it (inclusion and diversity) is talked about, I do not see this in action"

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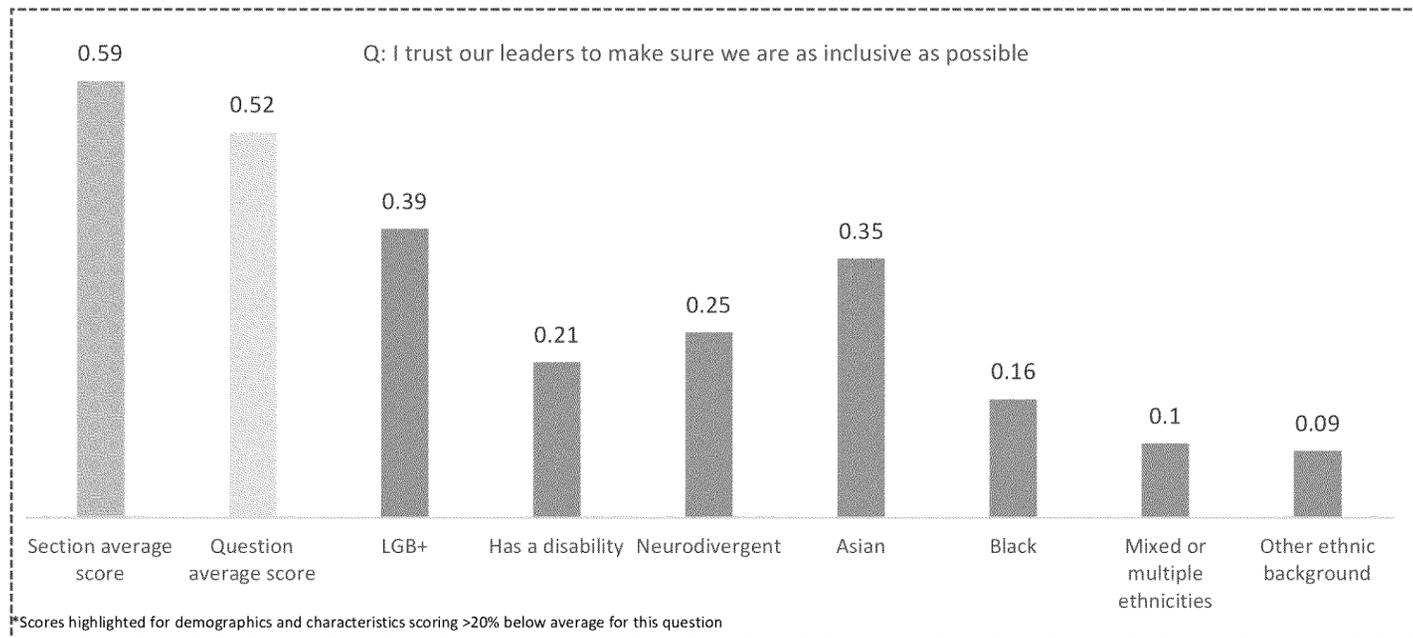# Employees exhibit low trust in the organisation and the leadership to deliver change (2 of 3)

Trust in the organisation that ED&I is taken seriously is much higher than trust in leaders specifically, but there is significant variance between functions, indicating differences in experiences. Trust in leaders around the ED&I agenda is lower across the board, but decreases further for more senior grades, with SLP and GE registering a particularly low score in this area.
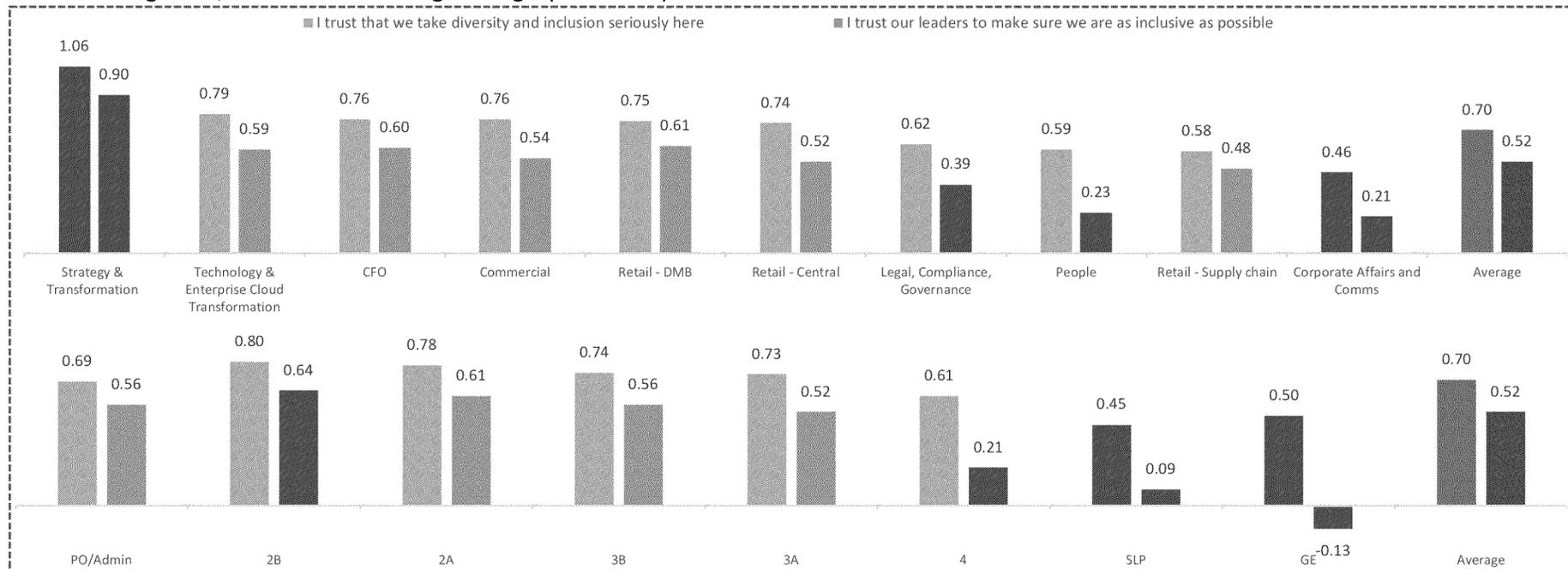
*Scores highlighted in red bars represent >20% below question average, scores highlighted in green bars represent > 20% above section average

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Employees exhibit low trust in the organisation and the leadership to deliver change (3 of 3)

The trust in leadership to drive inclusion at the workplace is low across under-represented demographics. This demonstrates the need to target these demographics when looking to rebuild trust that leaders are committed to ED&I.

Q: I trust our leaders to make sure we are as inclusive as possible

Section average score	Question average score	LGB+	Has a disability	Neurodivergent	Asian	Black	Mixed or multiple ethnicities	Other ethnic background
0.59	0.52	0.39	0.21	0.25	0.35	0.16	0.1	0.09

*Scores highlighted for demographics and characteristics scoring >20% below average for this question

"I have no trust in the organisation and our leads to be able to change in the near future... it makes me uncomfortable as a minority"

"We have a million policies and strategies in place but it won't change if it doesn't change at the top"

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Strong support for network groups from employees, however lack of clear objectives limit progress

Employees largely feel very positive regarding the work done by the network groups in driving awareness, providing support and resources to employees. Insights from interviews with Network Leads and focus groups reveal however that their impact is being limited by lack of clarity around their purpose and how it is supposed to align to the ED&I goals and agenda of the organisation. They also operate in silos, and there is no framework to support their collaboration.

"There are high expectations from us, but not enough support"

"There is a parent child relationship where the business in the parent and the networks are the child... no one at the top takes it seriously"

"There is no clear ED&I strategy in the business. There are so many committed and passionate individuals and groups (network). I think the organisation genuinely want to be inclusive but don't know how to"

"We set our own objectives, there is no oversight"

Key challenges

- Network role and purpose within the wider ED&I agenda has not been defined

- Ways of working between the organisation and networks have not been formalised, leading to differences in expectations

- Objectives which are not aligned to the ED&I goals of POL

- No framework for relationships with each other which would help break down the 'characteristic' approach to ED&I

- The role of the chairs is time intensive, but this investment and the resulting value they are driving is not feeling recognised

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External impact

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External Impact: Summary of themes

External Impact covers perceptions of inclusivity when engaging external stakeholders, and alignment between POL values and the organisations you work with.

This area registers the highest score for POL at more than 25% above average, driven by strong employee perceptions around the organisation's commitment to driving inclusion externally, and the subsequent impact created externally. A focus area that emerges aligns with a common theme observed earlier – trusting the leadership to drive this externally. There is also a gap regarding a process to ensure alignment between internal and external approaches to ED&I.

Themes

Positive lived experiences and perceptions regarding employees exhibiting inclusive behaviours externally

Trusting organisation's intent and focus to create positive external impact

Low trust in leadership to drive inclusive practices externally

Alignment of external and internal communications strategy

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Triangulated assessment summary

Inclusion Maturity Assessment: Characteristic-focused/Inclusive

Employees indicate higher levels of trust that POL has adopted inclusive practices when engaging externally with customers and suppliers, as indicated by above average scores in this area. However, this same level of trust is not extended to leadership. Furthermore, there are no supporting processes to ensure alignment and consistency between external messaging and approach and the experience of employees.

External Impact

Area	Maturity
Policies, Processes, Governance	✗ No communications strategy, and therefore no clear structure to ensure external and internal communications are aligned in relation to ED&I
Inclusion Insights - Survey - Interviews - Focus Groups/1:1s	✓ High average scores on all External Impact questions, especially in relation to colleagues' engagement externally ✓ Positive perceptions around organisation's focus on ED&I while engaging externally ✗ Lower confidence in leadership to drive this effectively through external engagements ✗ Lack of established process to actively engage Postmasters and customers with ED&I agenda and strategy
Diversity and demographic Insights	✗ Less variance in experiences/perceptions in this area compared to the others ✗ Employees who are disabled/neurodivergent register much lower trust in the leadership to ensure external engagements are centred around inclusion

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POL's approach to external engagement seen as inclusive, but low trust in the leadership to deliver

Highest across all factors, 69% of employees agree or strongly agree on POL's approach to external engagement and impact being inclusive, scoring 0.74, on a scale of -2 to 2, in this area. This is led by employees' lived experiences around treating customers, clients, and suppliers in an inclusive manner. However, like in other areas, the trust in the leadership to follow and deliver on this commitment scores low.

Employee inclusion scores

	External Impact	Overall
Score	0.74	0.59
Agree or strongly agree	69%	67%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	18%
Disagree or strongly disagree	9%	14%

Employee lived experience		Leadership perception	
"Colleagues in my organisation treat customers, clients, suppliers in an inclusive manger no matter what their background"	0.93	"We provide a service which is inclusive to all our Postmasters/customers/end users"	0.25
"I trust my leaders to make sure that organisations that we work with are aligned to our commitment to inclusion"	0.62	As a leadership team, it is important to us that we have procedures in place to ensure that we engage with clients, partners, and suppliers who have inclusive practices	0.75

With a score of 0.75, the leadership acknowledge the need to have procedures in place to ensure effective, inclusive external engagement. However, a low score of 0.25 is seen in its perception around inclusive services being provided externally to Postmasters/customers/end users. This is also reflected in sentiments from focus groups and 1:1s where lack of meaningful engagement with Postmasters was referenced.

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Under-represented demographics have higher confidence in POL colleagues than leadership

As seen in other sections, there are specific demographics who consistently score lower in relation to trust in leadership to drive ED&I agenda. People from diverse ethnic backgrounds are also less likely to believe other colleagues will act in an inclusive way, compared to those who disclosed having a disability or are neurodivergent, indicating more deep-rooted feelings of exclusion by peers as well as leadership.

- Colleagues in my organisation treat customers, clients, suppliers in an inclusive manger no matter what their background
- I trust my leaders to make sure that organisations that we work with are aligned to our commitment to inclusion

	Colleagues	Leaders
Has a disability	0.85	0.31
Neurodivergent	0.88	0.42
Asian	0.83	0.53
Black	0.75	0.56
Mixed/multiple ethnicities or other ethnic background	0.57	0.21
Average	0.93	0.62

*Characteristics indicated have registered different experiences compared to other demographics

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However, there is a perception around 'external image over everything else'

Whilst experiences have been positive, there is evidence from focus groups, interviews, and 1:1s, indicating a perception that POLs objectives and work is driven largely by the external image and what it means for the brand. There is no strategy or defined approach to internal or external communications and engagement on ED&I which would define the principles and approach that should be applied in order to build trust and consistently demonstrate the commitment of the organisation. This has resulted in some contradictory messaging. There is also no presence of a strategy to include ED&I in operations externally and introduction and alignment of this to internal strategy will drive progress here.

"We have come to hold our external image above all else…we talk about D&I but aren't good at it… we are confusing and contradictory"

"People outside hold a fairly high view of the Post Office, but it is not reflected internally"

"I only see us making a difference to communities when it makes commercial sense"

Aligning internal and external approaches to ED&I

Feedback from employees indicate that messaging around ED&I seems contradictory at times, due to their own experiences not aligning with what is being said.

It needs to be ensured that external messaging on ED&I reflects the experiences of colleagues, and changes which will positively impact on the experience of under-represented colleagues are prioritised over superficial activities which could be interpreted as 'lip service'

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Next steps

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Future focus area

Below are the key pillars which we built your ED&I roadmap around

Key challenge areas	Theme	High-level recommendation
• Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities across ED&I agenda not clearly defined • ED&I strategy and vision not clearly articulated and communicated. • The engagement and communication approach around ED&I is not controlled or aligned to the ED&I strategy.	1. Roles, responsibility & accountability	Define the roles, responsibilities and governance mechanism around ED&I agenda between networks, ED&I team and the leadership
• ED&I is viewed as a 'people' objective, not an overarching strategic objective • Low trust in leadership to drive ED&I agenda • Leadership not seen to visibly role model inclusive behaviours	2. People processes	Establish consistent people processes aligned with the ED&I team, which embed the principles of inclusion by design, and are supported by robust frameworks to ensure compliance
• Perceptions of unfairness and lack of equal opportunities to progress and succeed • ED&I not embedded across employee lifecycle, and there is no control framework or monitoring in place to ensure compliance with processes.	3. Strategy, communication & engagement	Re-develop your ED&I strategy, and apply a clear and consistent approach to communication & engagement on the ED&I agenda

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Future focus area

The recommendations below will be expanded into a detailed roadmap, to allow for clear prioritisation and analysis

Theme	Recommendations
1. Roles, responsibility & accountability	**Define the roles, responsibilities and governance mechanism around ED&I agenda between networks, ED&I team and the leadership** • Define the roles of key stakeholders in the ED&I agenda, including decision makers, relationships between stakeholders, and accountabilities • Embed accountability mechanisms for the leadership team, and ensure they have the support and tools they need to drive the ED&I agenda • Implement a governance framework to report on KPIs, progress against targets and other key measures of success on a regular basis
2. People processes	**Establishing consistent people processes aligned with the ED&I team** • Ensure that inclusive practices are embedded by design into the employee lifecycle, specifically processes to support recruitment, progression, and succession planning. • Create oversight and monitoring frameworks to support the business in being compliant with policies
3. Strategy, communication & engagement	**Re-Develop your ED&I strategy, and apply a clear and consistent approach to communication & engagement on the ED&I agenda** • Re-develop ED&I strategy to ensure it frames increased diversity as an outcome of a more inclusive culture and aligns with the GE's vision for ED&I at POL. Define goals which support this vision • Prioritise changes which will positively impact on the experience of colleagues over superficial activities which could be interpreted as 'lip service' • Build trust through transparent messaging and demonstrating that feedback from employees is being listened to and addressed • Take control of the narrative around ED&I by clearly communicating what success looks like, and shift the focus to creating an inclusive culture, where a more diverse employee population is one of the outputs

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Key takeaways

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Key takeaways

Talent Attraction

Talent Attraction covers perceptions around the application process, expectations of cultural fit, and experiences of inclusive practices throughout the application process.

POL performs strongly around Talent Attraction with a **strong intent to hire diverse talent** and values which are well understood and reflected during the application process. Candidates align with the brand's stated values and register a strong sense of belonging and fit with POL. This is reflected in the **well-above average scores in this section**, especially for those having joined in the last three years. However, gaps are observed in translation of values from recruitment and selection stages to onboarding, where **lived experiences differ greatly** between and within demographics. **Lack of internal controls to ensure that fair and transparent recruitment processes** are being followed, especially for the leadership are also impacting experiences of employees in this area.

Themes

Strong perceptions of belonging and cultural fit on the back of POL values

Positive perceptions around alignment with employer brand, but experiences differ once onboarded

Mature recruitment and selection policies but weak implementation/compliance

Wider perception around biased hiring processes and lack of transparency

Talent Development

Talent Development covers lived experiences around employees' progression, performance management, fairness of pay and rewards, and managers role modelling inclusive behaviours.

Whilst Talent Development scores **below average,** the gap between the overall average score and Talent Development is **not as large as we typically see.** Low scores are driven **by lack of confidence in merit-based progression**, and a general perception that **opportunities to progress are limited,** especially for **under-represented demographics**. There is a **perceived lack of transparency around how performance is assessed,** and whilst employees share positive experiences around supportive line managers, there are lower scores around seeing **leaders and managers challenging behaviour which isn't inclusive.**

Themes

Effective people management by line managers

Limited trust in merit-based progression and rewards, and perceptions of unfair performance assessment process

Lack of career pathways and progression framework

Poor representation in senior leadership and GE

Perceptions of unfair performance assessment process

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Key takeaways

Culture

Culture covers lived experiences around psychological safety, sense of belonging, ways of working, and role modelling of inclusive behaviours.

Survey results, interviews, focus groups and 1:1:s **indicate positive lived experiences** on the back of recent ED&I initiatives being implemented and positive experiences with managers. The **HR policies are well-designed** and targeted, however, in practice they are **not consistently applied,** and their benefits are not being experienced by all employees. Furthermore, those with under-represented characteristics register **considerably lower levels of psychological safety,** and **less inclusive experiences around fairness of roles and responsibilities and interactions with leadership.**

Themes

Largely flexible ways of working

Positive perceptions around inclusive behaviour demonstrated by line managers

Low fairness regarding allocation of roles and responsibilities by grades

Lack of visible role modelling by the leadership

Low psychological safety while approaching leadership

Strategy Development

Strategy Development covers experiences and perceptions around embeddedness of ED&I strategy, purpose, and vision of the organisation around inclusion.

POL's intention towards driving ED&I across the organisation is evident to the leadership as well as the employees – **leadership acknowledges the value-add to the organisation's growth and performance**, and **employees are aligned and engaged with the purpose of the organisation**. However, there is a **disconnect between what is 'stated' and its translation into action**. The **leadership fails to implement and practically drive the agenda** forward and this is reflected in employees' lived experiences around leadership accountability. Furthermore, the ED&I **approach focuses more on building diversity, rather than creating an inclusive environment** for everyone to thrive, leading to the root causes of the lack of diversity not being effectively addressed.

Themes

Confidence in the organisation's purpose around ED&I

Well-regarded ED&I awareness initiatives

Lack of a clear ED&I strategy across the business

Low trust in the leadership to drive ED&I agenda

Lack of a clear (aligned) objectives for network groups, network chairs, GE members to drive the agenda

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Key takeaways

External Impact

External Impact covers perceptions of inclusivity when engaging external stakeholders, and alignment between POL values and the organisations you work with.

This area registers **the highest score for POL** at more than 25% above average, driven by **strong employee perceptions** around the organisation's commitment to driving inclusion externally, and the subsequent impact created externally. A **focus area** that emerges aligns with a common theme observed **– trusting the leadership to drive this externally.** There is also a **gap regarding a process to ensure alignment between internal and external approaches to ED&I.**

Themes

Positive lived experiences and perceptions regarding employees exhibiting inclusive behaviours externally

Trusting organisation's intent and focus to create positive external impact

Low trust in leadership to drive inclusive practices externally

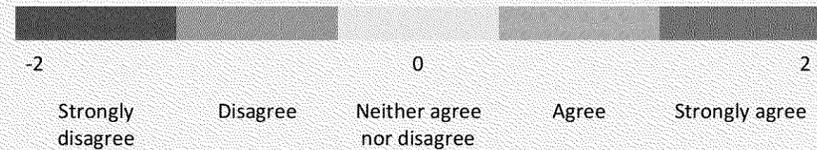Alignment of external and internal communications strategy

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Payzone Bill Payments Ltd

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Our approach through Inclusion Insights

The following outputs are based on data from our Employee Lived Experience survey for Payzone Bill Payments Ltd ("Payzone") employees. We received 28 responses, which corresponded to 33% of Payzone's overall employee population of 85. The survey was split into five factors of inclusion: Talent Attraction, Talent Development, Culture, Strategy Development, and External Impact.

Factor of Inclusion	Focus area
Talent Attraction	Employer brand, recruitment, selection processes, and employees' onboarding experiences.
Talent Development	The approach to talent and career development of the employees, including pathways to progression, learning and development opportunities, rewards and benefits.
Culture	Ways of working, levels of psychological safety, embeddedness of an inclusive environment across demographics, role modelling of inclusive behaviours.
Strategy Development	Communication and embeddedness of ED&I strategy, understanding of organisational purpose, and clarity of vision and goals for ED&I.
External Impact	The approach to driving ED&I externally and alignment with values.

Each question in the survey is assessed on a five-point scale of -2 to 2, with responses ranging from, 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'

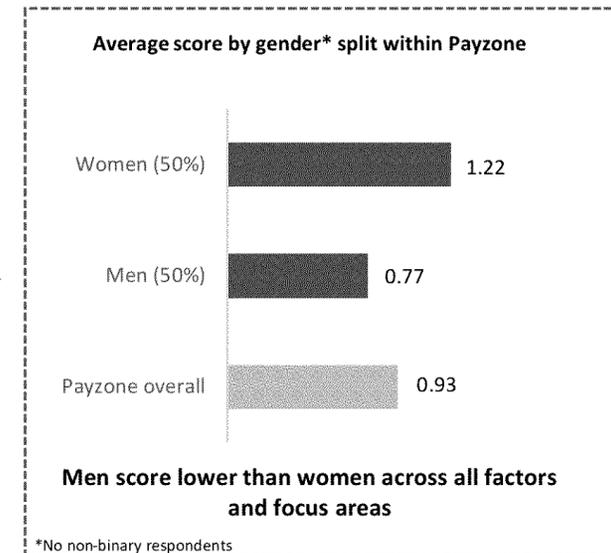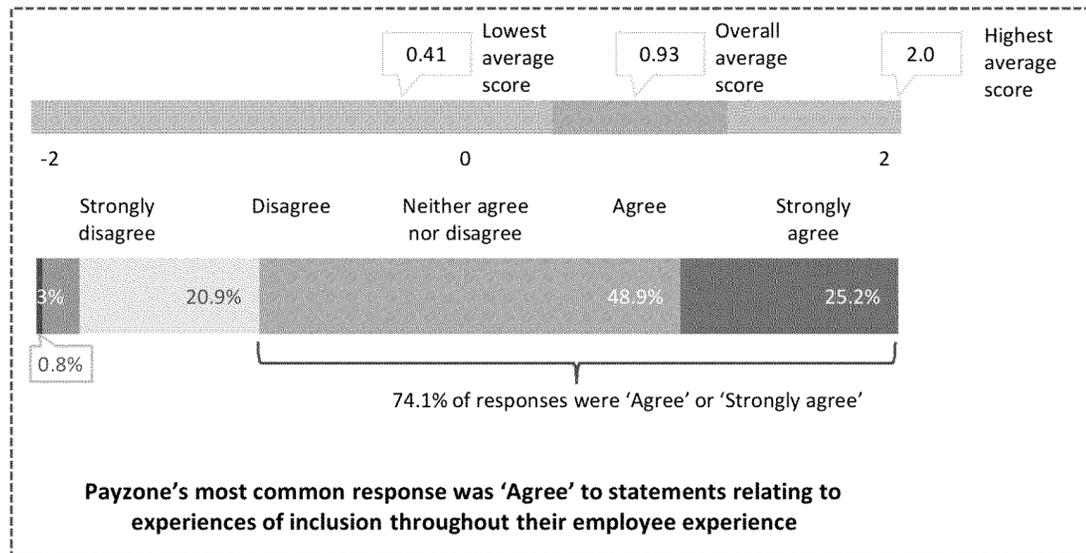| -2	0	2
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree

Agree   Strongly agree

This scoring mechanism helps suitably allocate negative, neutral, and positive sentiments across each question. All questions are positively worded such that 'agreeing' is positive, and indicative of an inclusive working environment. **As such, the higher the average overall score is, the more consistent and embedded the experience of an inclusive working environment.**

Our approach to analysis considers both the most common response, response variance, and the sentiment of the response. This is analysed across demographics, functions, grades, and the five key factors to help identify themes. Free text responses provided are analysed and mapped separately.

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74% of Payzone employees agree or strongly agree with experiences of inclusion

Of the total 1,931 responses we received, Payzone accounted for ~1.5% (28) of the responses, which was 33% of the total reported Payzone headcount (85). Payzone registers a score of 0.93 on a scale of -2 to 2, with a higher proportion of 'agree or strongly agree' responses than all other POL departments. Despite this high average score, there is a variance observed in responses. The highest and lowest average scores are 2.0 and -0.41 respectively, and a quarter of respondents scored more than 20% below average. In addition, when considered by gender the average scores for men are 37% lower than women.

	0.41 Lowest average score	0.93 Overall average score	2.0 Highest average score

-2　　　　　　　　0　　　　　　　　2

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

3% | 20.9% | | 48.9% | 25.2%

0.8%

74.1% of responses were 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'

Payzone's most common response was 'Agree' to statements relating to experiences of inclusion throughout their employee experience

Average score by gender* split within Payzone

Women (50%)	1.22
Men (50%)	0.77
Payzone overall	0.93

Men score lower than women across all factors and focus areas

*No non-binary respondents

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86% agree or strongly agree with statements relating to inclusive approach externally
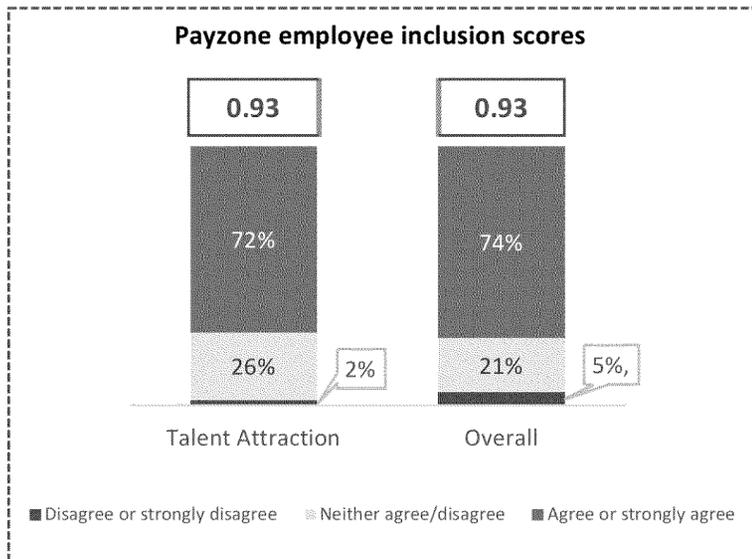
Payzone's overall average score of 0.93 on a scale of -2 to 2 is driven by high overall scores, particularly for External Impact, Culture, and Strategy Development, exceeding overall POL average by 57%. Talent Development for Payzone scores the lowest of all factors at 0.89 with relatively higher proportion of employees in disagreement or strong disagreement to statements indicative of inclusion.
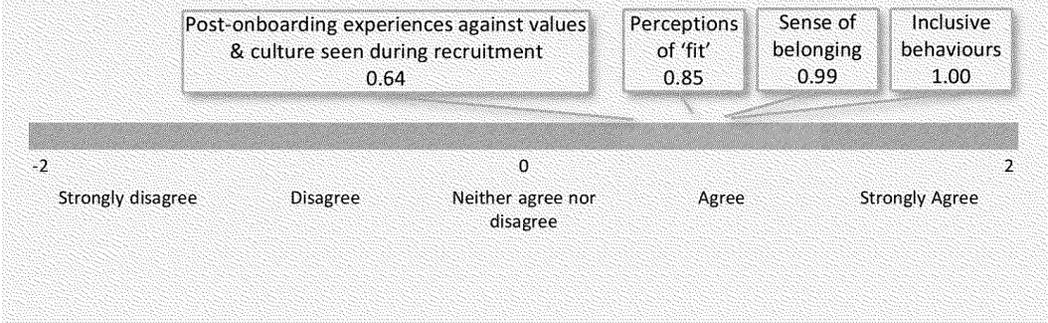

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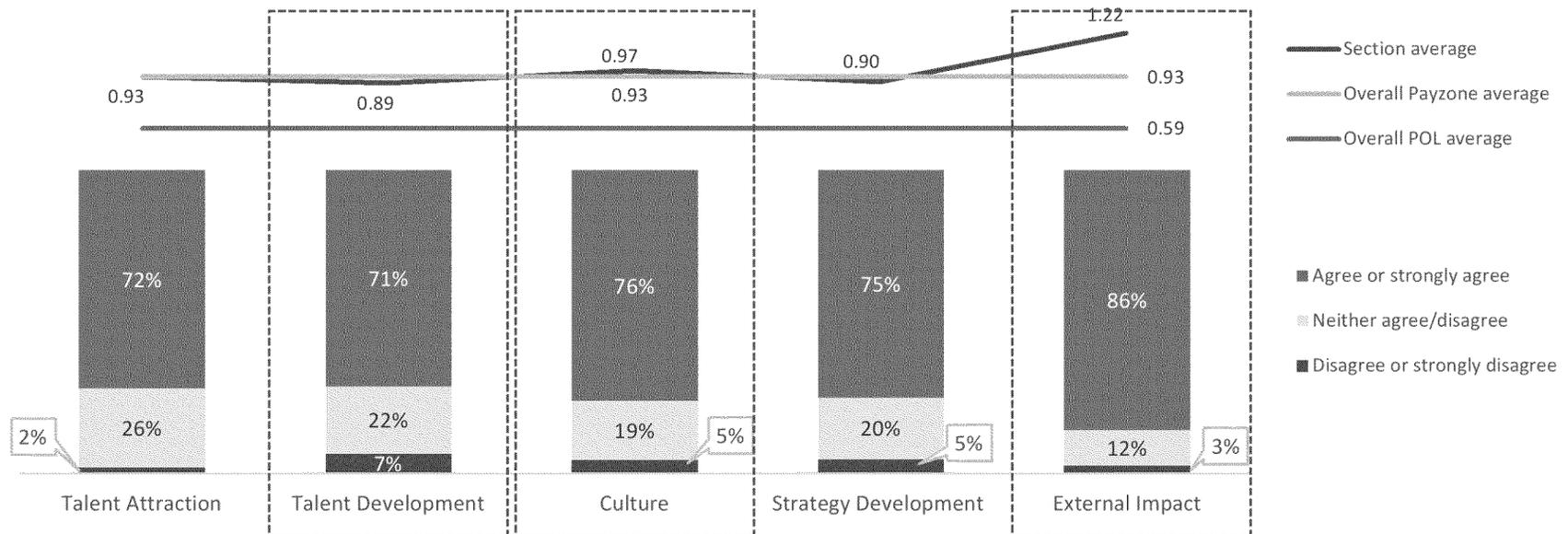
Talent Attraction

Inclusive experience during recruitment, however less confident in inclusive culture post-onboarding

Employees register strong perceptions of fit and belonging early on in their selection stages and agree with Payzone providing sufficient support during the recruitment stages. However, when asked about whether the values and culture showcased is reflected post joining, employees register a considerably below average score.

Payzone employee inclusion scores

	0.93	0.93	
	72%	74%	
	26%	21%	
	2%	5%,	
	Talent Attraction	Overall	

■ Disagree or strongly disagree ▨ Neither agree/disagree ■ Agree or strongly agree

72% responses agree or strongly agree with feeling included during recruitment process at Payzone, primarily led by the support extended through the application process and feelings of belonging and of 'fit'. However, a dissonance is observed between how respondents perceive the organisation's values and culture to be during the recruitment process and their perceptions post coming into the organisation, with this area scoring 31% below average.
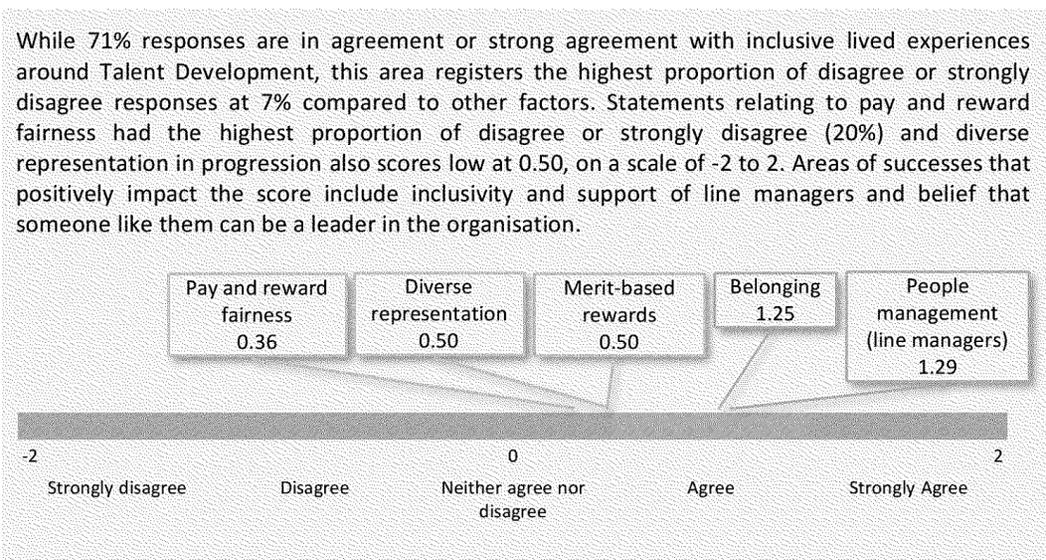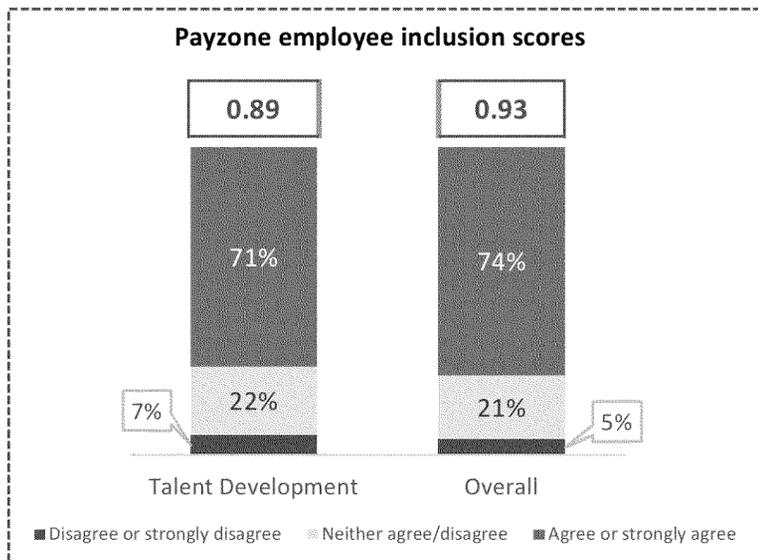
Post-onboarding experiences against values & culture seen during recruitment 0.64	Perceptions of 'fit' 0.85	Sense of belonging 0.99	Inclusive behaviours 1.00

-2	0			2
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Figures in text box represents average score

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Talent Development

Low confidence in fairness of pay and rewards, and limited representation of diversity in those that progress is driving lower scores in this area.

Employees register positive lived experiences around line manager engagement and belonging. However, significantly low scores are registered around fairness of progression, pay and reward.
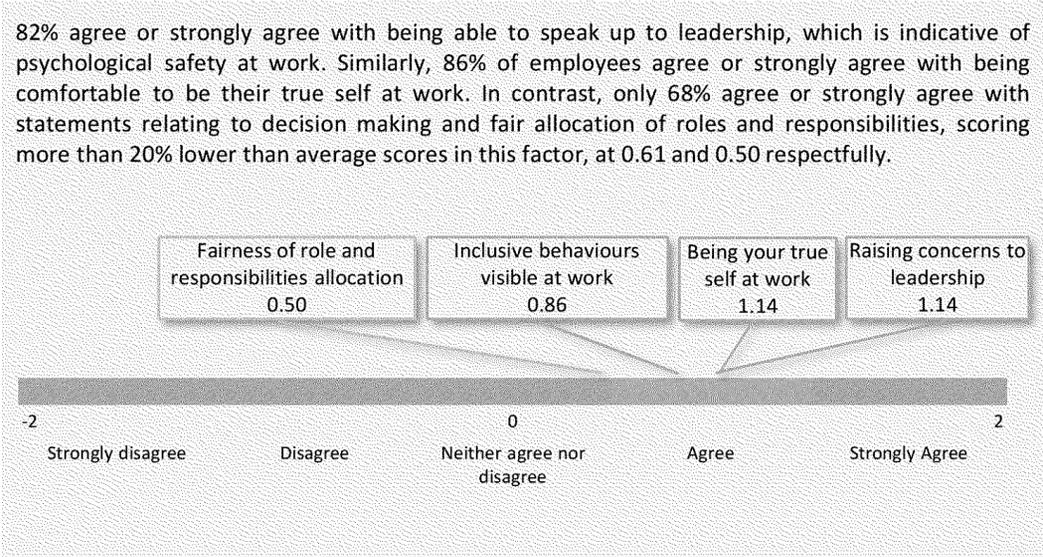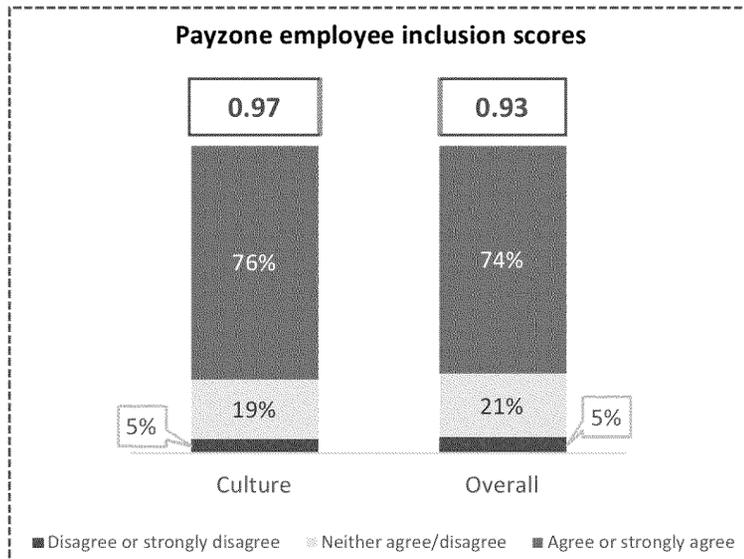
Payzone employee inclusion scores

	Talent Development	Overall
Average score	0.89	0.93
Agree or strongly agree	71%	74%
Neither agree/disagree	22%	21%
Disagree or strongly disagree	7%	5%

Legend: ■ Disagree or strongly disagree ▨ Neither agree/disagree ■ Agree or strongly agree

*Figures in text box represents average score

While 71% responses are in agreement or strong agreement with inclusive lived experiences around Talent Development, this area registers the highest proportion of disagree or strongly disagree responses at 7% compared to other factors. Statements relating to pay and reward fairness had the highest proportion of disagree or strongly disagree (20%) and diverse representation in progression also scores low at 0.50, on a scale of -2 to 2. Areas of successes that positively impact the score include inclusivity and support of line managers and belief that someone like them can be a leader in the organisation.

Pay and reward fairness 0.36	Diverse representation 0.50	Merit-based rewards 0.50	Belonging 1.25	People management (line managers) 1.29

Scale: -2 Strongly disagree — Disagree — 0 Neither agree nor disagree — Agree — 2 Strongly Agree

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Culture

High levels of psychological safety indicated by an inclusive environment and people feeling comfortable speaking up.

Scores indicate that respondents experience high levels of psychological safety and an inclusive work environment, with statements relating to each scoring 1.14 respectively, on a scale of -2 to 2. However, there are lower scores around perceptions of fairness in the way roles and responsibilities are allocated.
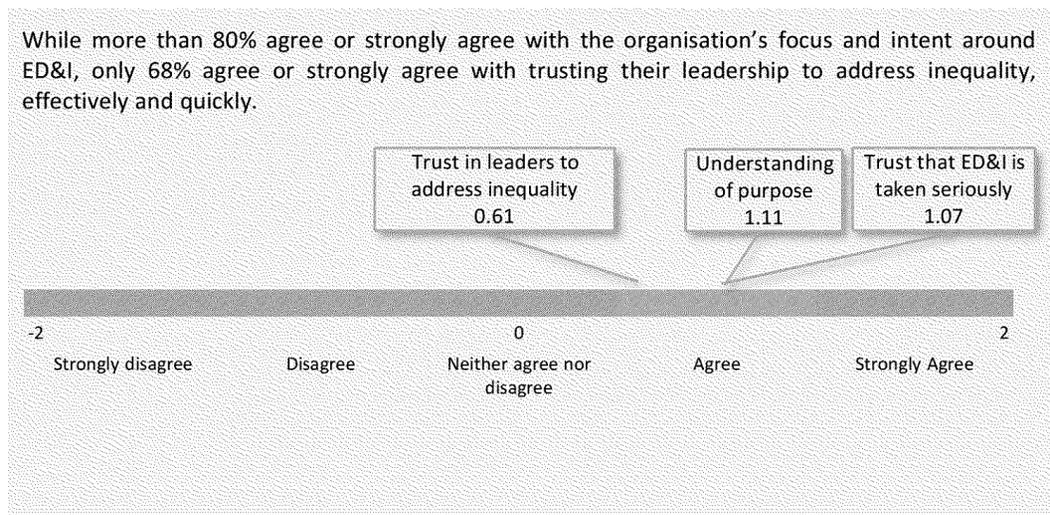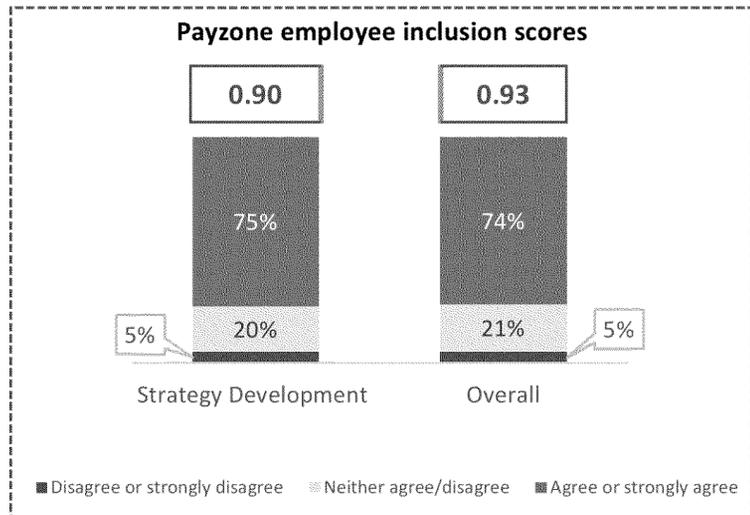
Payzone employee inclusion scores

| 0.97 | 0.93 |

76%	74%
19%	21%
5%	5%

Culture | Overall

■ Disagree or strongly disagree   ▨ Neither agree/disagree   ■ Agree or strongly agree

*Figures in text box represents average score

82% agree or strongly agree with being able to speak up to leadership, which is indicative of psychological safety at work. Similarly, 86% of employees agree or strongly agree with being comfortable to be their true self at work. In contrast, only 68% agree or strongly agree with statements relating to decision making and fair allocation of roles and responsibilities, scoring more than 20% lower than average scores in this factor, at 0.61 and 0.50 respectfully.

| Fairness of role and responsibilities allocation 0.50 | Inclusive behaviours visible at work 0.86 | Being your true self at work 1.14 | Raising concerns to leadership 1.14 |

-2 | 0 | 2

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

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Strategy Development

Strong belief in organisation's intent in relation to ED&I, however, confidence in leadership effectiveness scores lower.

86% of employees agree or strongly agree that they trust the organisation taking ED&I seriously, with score of 1.07 in this area. Furthermore, employees align strongly with the organisation's purpose with 81% agreeing or strongly agreeing with related statements. However, with a considerably lower score of 0.61, there is low confidence in the leadership to be able to address inequality or related concerns when raised.

Payzone employee inclusion scores

	Strategy Development	Overall
Average score	0.90	0.93
Agree or strongly agree	75%	74%
Neither agree/disagree	20%	21%
Disagree or strongly disagree	5%	5%

■ Disagree or strongly disagree   ▨ Neither agree/disagree   ▥ Agree or strongly agree

*Figures in text box represents average score

While more than 80% agree or strongly agree with the organisation's focus and intent around ED&I, only 68% agree or strongly agree with trusting their leadership to address inequality, effectively and quickly.

Trust in leaders to address inequality	Understanding of purpose	Trust that ED&I is taken seriously
0.61	1.11	1.07

-2 → 0 → 2

Strongly disagree   Disagree   Neither agree nor disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

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External Impact

External Impact has the highest average score, driven by a strong trust in the organisation to consider ED&I while engaging externally

86% of employees agree or strongly agree with trusting the organisation to consider ED&I and "do the right thing" while engaging externally, and 78% agree or strongly agree with trusting the leaders to align to this commitment while engaging externally.

Payzone employee inclusion scores

	External Impact	Overall
Average score	1.22	0.93
Agree or strongly agree	86%	74%
Neither agree/disagree	12%	21%
Disagree or strongly disagree	3%	5%
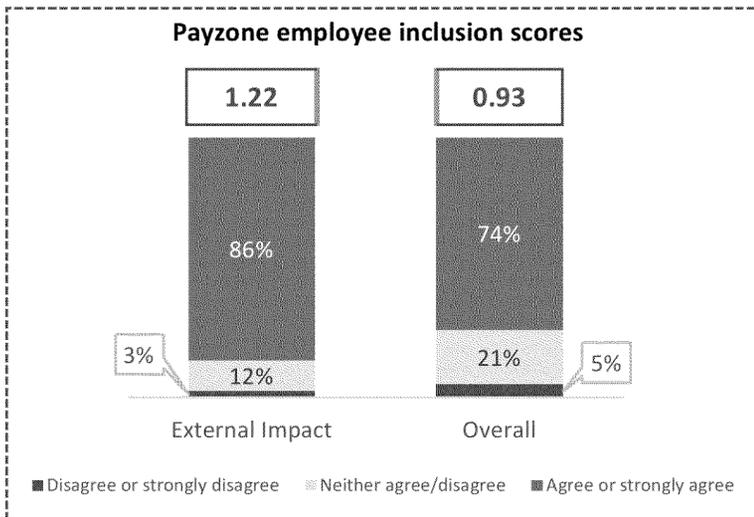
■ Disagree or strongly disagree ▨ Neither agree/disagree ■ Agree or strongly agree

Higher than average scores registered around trusting the organisation to create positive impact externally and engage inclusively externally.

Whilst higher than overall average, trust in the leadership to role model commitment to inclusion while engaging externally scores slightly lower compared to other questions this in this section, with a score of 1.14 on a scale of -2 to 2.

Leadership role modelling	Intent around ED&I impact externally	ED&I in external engagement
1.14	1.25	1.25

-2		0		2
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Figures in text box represents average score

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