

Module: LCBB5004 – Managing People

ASSESSMENT 1
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION THROUGH
FLEXIBLE WORKING AT L&Q GROUP

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2022

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L&Q Group - Introduction

L&Q Group (London & Quadrant Group) was founded in 1963 as a housing association, and the 1974 housing act created the opportunities to offer affordable homes and subsidies to develop as a major landlord.

Currently, L&Q is the second largest housing association in UK, and it has more than 105,000 properties and is housing around 250,000 people

In 2003 it was listed as one for the Stonewall's top 100 employers for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans staff and continued this trend

With over 3000 employees in various departments that cover different areas of the business, L&Q is ranked 23 as best workplaces for women and 34 among the superlarge best places to work, and HR Department is working constantly in diversify the workforce through diversity and inclusion.

Moral case study

The company's policy states that any employee can apply for flexi working after 6 months of employment.

After two months of employment, one of the employees working from home asked for flexible working shift pattern, because, as single mother, she needs to be able to take her kids to and from school.

Although her request was not in line with L&Q policies for flexi working, a committee was formed including the HR manager, Planning Manager and her senior. Her particular case was taken into consideration as well as her performance, and she was offered a shift pattern that could accommodate her needs for specific time off to be able to take her children to and from school.

Flexible work arrangements at L&Q Group

- **As one of the biggest housing association which provides homes for people with various needs, its residents satisfaction and comfort is essential, and L&Q has various departments such as maintenance, customer services, housing management, complaints etc**
- **One of the core values of L&Q Group is People and it provides lots of flexible working patterns to ensure that its employees have a great work-life balance, such as:**
 - **Flexible working shifts to cover the needs of its employees and ensure services provided to customers are met**
 - **Special teams to cover out of hours services such as customer service, emergency repairs and dedicated teams to ensure the safety and comfort for vulnerable residents**

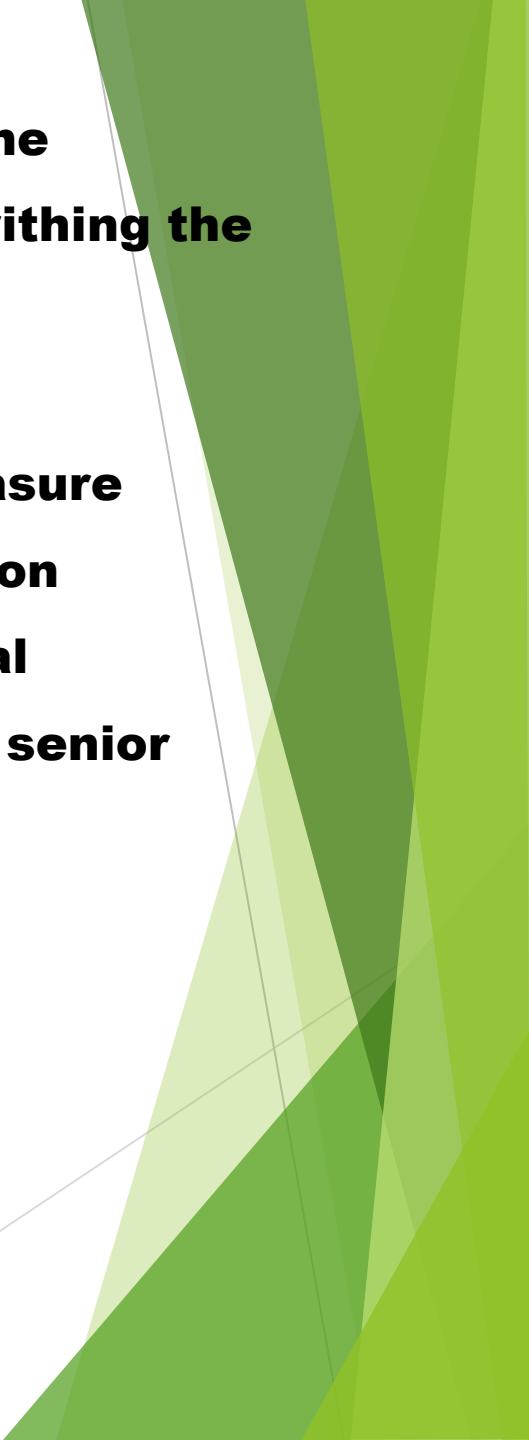
- ▶ **Working from home in some departments, such as Customer Service, Complaints, Income and Tenancy, Planning, by providing necessary IT equipment, as well as the option to work in L&Q offices for any staff member who wish to do so**
- ▶ **In order to promote a healthy work/life balance, L&Q is offering flexible working arrangements to suit members of staff and the needs of the business. After six months' service, any staff member is entitled to request flexible working arrangements – a change to working hours, part time working or job sharing.**

How L&Q Group promotes equality and diversity in workplace

- ▶ **Inclusion is one of the five core values at L&Q, therefore equality and diversity is very important**
- ▶ **Bringing together a diverse range of people also helps getting the best performance in providing great services to its customers**
- ▶ **L&Q encourages its employees to be themselves at work and confident that differences are celebrated through network groups such as**
 - **Inspire - our gender equality network**
 - **Kaleidoscope - our cultural diversity network**
 - **Spectrum - our LGBT+ network**
- ▶ **By proactively promoting anti-hate behaviour, L&Q makes sure that everybody is treated equally and included in the community**

HR role in promoting diversity in workplace

- **HR Department has an important role to play in promoting and ensuring diversity in workplace and it is responsible for current employees, as well as recruiting new ones, to cover the business needs.**
- **Through work from home scheme, HR team is able to recruit people from a wider geographical area, and increase diversity within the company**
- **L&Q offer great career progression and training equally to all its employees, and actively encourage women and representants of minorities to access promotions**
- **A key focus for L&Q is improving the diversity balance at senior level, by hoping to achieve 50% recruitment of women and 30% of recruitment of ethnic minority colleagues to Senior Leadership roles**

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- **The HR team at L&Q encourages members of the community and its residents to apply for jobs within the company by providing adequate training and opportunities for a new career**
 - **L&Q uses the Great Place to Work index to measure colleague engagement and satisfaction, based on characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith and age, along with senior levels within the organisation**

Impact of flexible working arrangement in promoting diversity and inclusion at work

- ▶ **By implementing a series of flexible working arrangement L&Q has a very diverse workforce and the HR team is constantly looking for ways to increase the diversity and inclusion by creating opportunities such as:**
 - ▶ **Single parents are able to fit their schedule with the school runs and care for their children while having a full-time job**
 - ▶ **Employees can have access to higher education through flexi working arrangements**
 - ▶ **By working from home, members of the staff have a better life/working balance**
 - ▶ **Out of hours shifts patterns create opportunities to recruit employees to couldn't work normal shift patterns, i.e. parents sharing childcare or carers**
 - ▶ **Reduced hours working arrangements allow people with health conditions or special needs to stay in work**

Recommendations

- **While L&Q has already in place policies to promote diversity and inclusion among its employees, there are a series of measures that could create new opportunities such as:**
 - **Create and promote apprenticeships among diverse communities**
 - **Promote jobs in various education institutions by conducting seminars and meetings with students**
 - **Organise Recruitment open days**
 - **Participate in job fairs**
 - **Engage more with social media to promote L&Q values and policies**
 - **Work with representants of various communities**

Conclusion

With over 60 years of activity and being a major employer, L&Q centered its policies and core values on creating a great environment for both its employees and residents.

Diversity, equality and inclusion are base principles on which it operates and are constantly promoted among its employees, while encouraging teamwork and equal opportunities for everybody.

L&Q takes pride on some of the awards and accreditations, such as:



References

- ▶ **Armstrong, M. (2006) *Human Resource Management Practice*, 10th edition, Kogan Page, London**
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- ▶ **Syed, J., & Özbilgin, M. (2015). *Managing diversity and inclusion: An international perspective*, Sage, London**
- ▶ ***Working at L&Q*, available at www.lqgroup.org.uk**