

Our ethnicity action plan – 1 year on

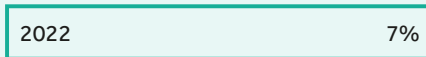
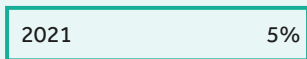
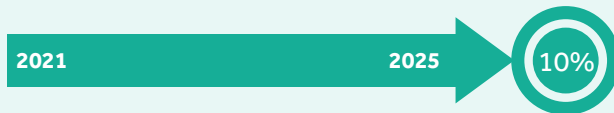
A year ago, we outlined our commitment to improving minority ethnic representation at our firm, publishing [our ethnicity action plan](#), which outlined aspirational targets and actions that we would take.

This is a report on our progress to date, as we continue to work towards becoming more ethnically diverse and ensuring that our firm is a place where all of our people can be themselves and thrive at work.

Our targets

On track

10% minority ethnic partners by 2025



25%

of our London partner promotions were ethnic minorities this year

Proportional retention of minority ethnic lawyers

Over the last financial year our retention of minority ethnic associates was proportional. This is an ongoing target which we must aim to meet year-on-year.

Target achieved

Proportional retention of business services professionals

For the first time, we have had a slightly higher proportion of minority ethnic leavers in business services. Closing this gap is a priority for us this and every year.

Behind target

30% minority ethnic trainees, of whom 10% would be Black each year

From our latest recruitment cycle, 41% of trainees who will join us are ethnic minorities, 19% of whom are Black.

Target achieved

A note about the data:

- All data is as at 1 May 2022, with the exception of the recruitment data, which covers the recruitment cycle from September 2021 to October 2022. The majority of those trainees who have accepted offers will join us in 2024.

What we have done

Supporting access to the profession and finding Black Talent

Black Lawyers Matter Mentoring Programme

We have partnered with Aletto Foundation and Samuel James Partnership to support the Black Lawyers Matter Mentoring programme. The mentoring programme is for the next generation of legal professionals. Mentees are aspiring Black lawyers/legal professionals aged 18+ looking for personalised career support.

As always, mentoring will be mutually beneficial as mentors can benefit from some reverse mentoring, broadening their network and perspectives through their mentee.

Retention, progression and inclusive culture

The Stay Programme – retaining minority ethnic associates and developing their career managers as allies

In summer 2021, we launched a pilot programme aimed at retaining, developing and progressing minority ethnic associates. The Stay Programme was born because we wanted to close our ethnicity stay gap for associates, recognising the imperative role that career managers have on associates' experiences. We worked with author and coach, Caroline Flanagan, to deliver this programme.

Over the course of six months, eleven associates and their career managers participated in our *Stay programme*. Career managers were developing their understanding of minority ethnic colleagues' experiences and learning to be active allies, and more effective career managers. Meanwhile, associates explored their unique value and how to showcase this, gaining the tools they need to overcome challenges and build and leverage relationships.

A key element of the programme was the invitation for career managers and associates to connect on a deeper level, talking about race, ethnicity, backgrounds, motivations, career paths and more.

The Stephenson Harwood Black Talent Programme

We have partnered with Aspiring Solicitors on our Black Talent Programme. The programme aims to increase the number of Black trainees attracted to, and recruited by, the firm. The programme will support Black students through providing mentors, skills development workshops, designated placement opportunities and guaranteed places on an assessment centre for a training contract.

For more details on the programme, including quotes on the importance of this programme from members of our Stephenson Harwood Advancing Racial and Ethnic Diversity (SHARED) network, see [here](#).

Tackling bias in early years recruitment

We have partnered with Rare recruitment to support all those involved in trainee and apprentice recruitment to combat bias. The training blends videos of real candidates at interview, animations, and interactive exercises to help interviewers to gain an insight into their biases and what they can do to tackle them. Hemisphere is a product designed to help interviewers to disaggregate potential from polish. This training includes a significant focus on race and ethnicity.

Since January 2022, Hemisphere training is compulsory for all assessors on our trainee, solicitor apprenticeship and scholarship programmes.



“The main thing I’ve taken away from the programme is that I have been a bit complacent. I thought they weren’t really my issues and that I was quite aware. It made me realise that we all have room for improvement and it’s not someone else’s responsibility.”

Jonathan Proctor, partner



“We need to talk constantly to the associates and not just about the work... so they trust you enough to confide in you on experiences generally.”

Kamal Shah, partner



“I wish this course had been available to me an at early stage of my career. Taking part in the Stay programme has taught me to be more open, to challenge more, and to get my views across.”

Nikki Chu, managing associate

Hear My Name campaign

A name is more than just a name. For many of us, it's an important part of our culture and identity, so colleagues making the effort to learn our names and get them right is important.

Inspired by conversations on our Stay programme, we launched our Hear My Name campaign, highlighting the importance of learning to pronounce people's names correctly as an act of inclusion; anyone who wishes to, can record themselves saying their name and include their Hear My Name badge on their email signature.

Hear our colleague's names below:



Maansi Dewani 



Faiz Nabi 

What's next

Our ethnicity action plan runs to 2025. Systemic change takes time and we are acutely aware that we are early in our journey with much work to do. We remain committed, focusing on continuous progression and transparency. We will continue to report on progress, including voluntarily reporting our ethnicity pay gap each year.

Over the course of the next 12 months, our focus will remain on recruiting, retaining and progressing minority ethnic talent. We will work closely with our business services colleagues, with the aim of ensuring that attrition is proportional this year.

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