

# Diversity & Equality Steering Group

Terms of reference



Prepared by Audit Scotland  
February 2009



Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. It provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission. Together they ensure that the Scottish Government and public sector bodies in Scotland are held to account for the proper, efficient and effective use of public funds.

# Contents

## **Introduction**

**page 2**

## **Steering group – terms of reference**

**page 4**

Role

Responsibilities

**page 5**

## **Delivery teams – terms of reference**

**page 6**

Role

Delivery team members

Responsibilities

**page 7**

## **Knowledge, skills and competencies**

**page 8**

Knowledge

Skills and competencies

Planned training

**page 9**

## **Appendix 1. Steering group key objectives**

**page 10**

## **Appendix 2. Steering group membership**

**page 11**

## **Appendix 3. Profile of Diversity & Equality Steering Group members**

**page 12**

# Introduction



We are committed to valuing and promoting diversity and equality.



## Introduction

**1.** Audit Scotland provides services to the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission for Scotland. Together, we ensure that the Scottish Government and public sector bodies in Scotland are held to account for the proper, efficient and effective use of public money. Our corporate plan identifies our five strategic priorities that provide the focus of Audit Scotland's work. They are:

- delivering more streamlined audit in partnership with other scrutiny bodies
- maximising our contribution to the improvement of public services
- increasing the impact of our work
- becoming a centre of excellence for public audit
- improving the transparency of our costs and governance arrangements.

**2.** Based on the seven principles identified by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life, Audit Scotland has also identified four values that underpin everything we do:

- Effective communication
- Quality
- Commitment to learning and improvement
- Respect.

**3.** Recognising these values, we set out a diversity statement that underpins our corporate plan and policies. The main elements of our diversity statement are as follows:

- All staff are entitled to be treated with respect and enjoy equality of opportunity in order that their selection and subsequent development is based entirely on merit. Discrimination will not take

place against any current or prospective member of staff on the grounds of their age or perceived age, civil partnership status, colour, disability, ethnic origin, family responsibilities, gender, marital status, nationality, national origin, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, trans-gender status or work pattern.

- We will put the promotion of diversity and equality at the heart of policymaking and will take a leading role in demonstrating good practice.
- We will actively promote equality of opportunity through circulating vacancy details as widely as possible and a rigorous process of monitoring by our Human Resources department.
- We will raise staff awareness of what equality and valuing diversity means and enable managers to promote and be accountable for equality of opportunity through our Performance Development Scheme and training for all staff.
- We will positively value the different perspectives and skills of staff and make full use of these.

**4.** Understanding issues of diversity and equality is important not only for how we run Audit Scotland itself, but also for working with our clients and stakeholders, all of whom have to consider diversity and equality in the day-to-day delivery of public services. We believe that we can play an important role in promoting diversity and equality, both as an employer, and as a service provider for the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission.

**5.** We are committed to valuing and promoting diversity and are working towards increasing the diversity of our staff, and taking a leading role in

promoting equal opportunities practices and diversity both as an employer and through our audit activity.

**6.** In order to take forward diversity and equality across Audit Scotland, a new delivery infrastructure has been established. The new infrastructure has been designed to help mainstream diversity and equality within the organisation and ensure a coordinated corporate response to this agenda.

**7.** In the following sections we outline the delivery infrastructure together with terms of reference for a Diversity & Equality Steering Group (DESG) and for delivery groups in each business area. The different roles and responsibilities of the steering group members are also outlined with some indication of the skills and competencies members are likely to require.

February 2009

# Steering group – terms of reference



DESG will champion the organisation's strategy on diversity and equality.



**Role**

1. The DESG will champion and steer the organisation’s strategy on all matters relating to diversity and equality. This includes ensuring effective design and delivery of Audit Scotland’s and the Accounts Commission’s equality schemes and action plans. The DESG will also hold business groups to account, through their delivery teams, for their progress in mainstreaming diversity and equality in all activity.

2. The DESG will report directly to Audit Scotland Management Team on its activity and progress on its work plan and priorities, and through the management team to the Audit Scotland Board, the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission. [Exhibit 1](#) below sets out the relationships between the DESG, senior management and the delivery teams in each business area.

**Responsibilities**

3. DESG has the following responsibilities:

- To ensure the development, promotion and review of the organisation’s diversity and equality strategy, schemes and action

plans to ensure that diversity and equality is an integral part of Audit Scotland’s, the Auditor General’s, and the Accounts Commission’s work.

- To provide a platform for discussion of all aspects of diversity and equality and their relevance and impact on the organisation’s work.
- To review and re-prioritise equality schemes and action plans in response to internal and external drivers.
- To oversee the development and implementation of appropriate equality impact assessment activity and improvements, and ensure learning is shared across the organisation.
- To ensure compliance with equalities legislation.
- To ensure all relevant stakeholders are consulted and involved in activity that affects them.
- To hold local management teams and delivery teams to account for completing actions and achieving diversity and equality goals.

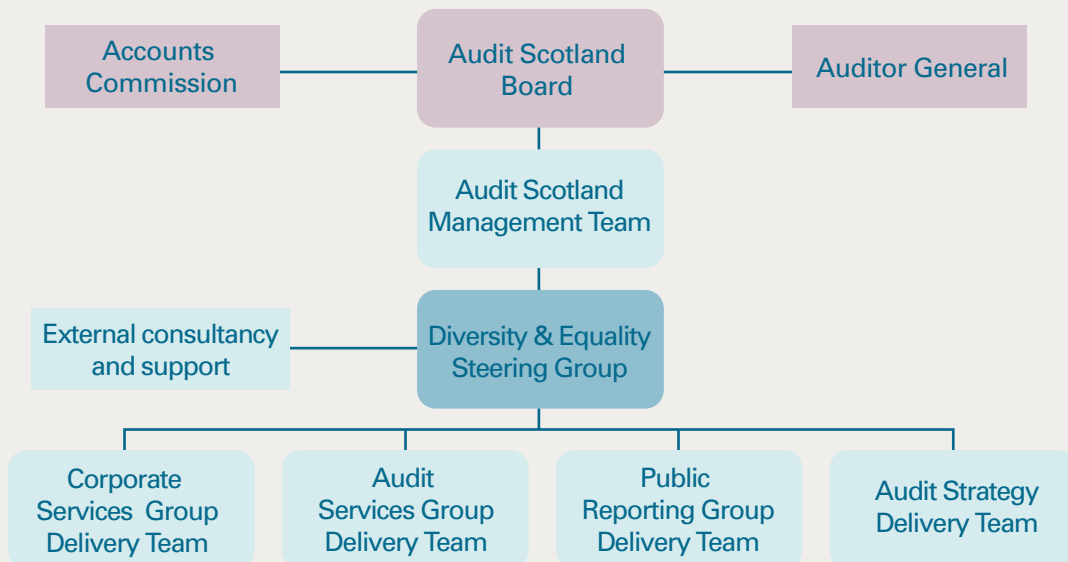
- To keep the board of Audit Scotland, the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission fully informed of developments internally and externally.
- To analyse data and information gained from monitoring, impact assessments and general consultation activity to inform priorities and future practice.
- To ensure there is transparency, sharing of good practice and collaborative working on all diversity and equality activity within Audit Scotland.

4. DESG has been established to provide long-term and continuing support, and leadership, for diversity and equality issues across Audit Scotland and in support of the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General.

5. Key objectives for DESG are set out at [Appendix 1](#) and a detailed work plan has been developed.

**Exhibit 1**

Delivery arrangements



# Delivery teams – terms of reference



Delivery teams will ensure that diversity and equality is mainstreamed.





## Role

**1.** The main role of the delivery teams is to ensure that appropriate action takes place on diversity and equality issues within business groups, ie through the business group's approach and delivery of its work and through the results of that work. It is important that all activity supports achievement of Audit Scotland's values and diversity statement aspirations.

**2.** A senior member of staff from each business group has been designated lead on diversity and equality within their business group, and will also sit on the DESG representing their business group. The business group lead's role is to act as a champion for diversity and equality issues in their respective business area, and hold delivery teams to account for taking forward priorities and actions. The lead will report regularly to their business group management team on actions and progress. Delivery teams will be supported by members of the DESG, who will also act as local champions.

## Delivery team members

**3.** The make-up and numbers of members of the delivery teams will vary across functions and will reflect both the size of the function and the scope of work related to diversity and equality. Integral to this approach is having a fluid pool of skilled individuals to involve in the teams as appropriate. Due to particular responsibilities, with regard to equality impact assessment, there will be an early emphasis on ensuring a sufficient number of individuals have the training and support to conduct impact assessments in their respective areas.

## Responsibilities

**4.** Business group management teams, through the work of their delivery team, have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that equality impact assessment activity takes place at a local level in accordance with the overarching Audit Scotland approach. This involves fulfilling the legal duties relating to race, gender and disability that all public authorities have to comply with. In essence, impact assessment activity is designed to ensure we fulfil our obligations and embrace opportunities in the following areas:
  - promoting equality of opportunity
  - promoting good relations
  - promoting positive attitudes
  - eliminating harassment
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination.

- Act as a gatekeeper for local implementation of the equality schemes and ensure delivery on actions as part of sector and business planning processes.

**5.** Business group delivery teams have the following responsibilities:

- To engage with local business management teams to enable agreement of plans and work activities.
- To report back to the DESG with regard to progress against action plans, promoting developments and raising awareness about emerging issues.

- Take a proactive approach to communicating and promoting local work on diversity and equality both to the steering group and to the wider organisation.
- Encourage all staff to take personal responsibility for considering diversity and equality in their daily work.
- Contribute to, and support cross-organisational activity on diversity and equality including involvement events with people with disabilities and with other equality strands as appropriate.
- Take a temperature check on organisational culture at a local level to assess to what extent Audit Scotland is promoting equality of opportunity and respecting the diversity of employees.

# Knowledge, skills and competencies



We will develop our skills and competencies  
and build our effectiveness.



**1.** DESG and delivery team members will need a range of knowledge, skills and competencies in order to fulfil their responsibilities. Training and support will be available to ensure that all individuals can continuously build their effectiveness.

### Knowledge

**2.** DESG and delivery teams will be supported to develop their knowledge so that they:

- know the key equality strands and main differences between them
- understand how different equality strands may be impacted by the work of Audit Scotland
- understand the key elements of diversity and equality legislation
- understand the business case for promoting equality and paying attention to diversity.

### Skills and competencies

**3.** DESG and delivery teams will develop their skills and competencies so that they:

- recognise own biases and assumptions about others and how they impact on perceptions and interactions with others
- have the ability to relate diversity to their work and overall business strategy
- can listen objectively to complaints about harassment, inappropriate remarks and behaviour
- are comfortable with different cultures and elements of difference
- model and encourage open communication and effective teamwork

- can support and actively endorse the goals of diversity projects or initiatives
- can communicate with people of all cultures in ways that build trust and respect
- can coach and develop others to achieve diversity goals
- are highly influential and inspire others to follow their lead.

### Planned training

**4.** To support this, training is in place or planned to June 2009, as follows:

- Development of a reference pack to provide an overview and essential background reading.
- One-to-one mentoring with consultant expert.
- Seminars on specific topics as part of scheduled DESG meetings.
- Delivery of equality impact assessment training.
- Attendance at conferences on diversity and equality issues.

# Appendix 1.

## Steering group key objectives

Objective 1	Embed the new diversity and equality infrastructure
Objective 2	Deliver programme of equality impact assessments across Audit Scotland's activities.
Objective 3	Develop and publish Single Equality Schemes
Objective 4	Develop approach to consultation and involvement
Objective 5	Develop relationships with external stakeholders
Objective 6	Improve internal communication of diversity and equality developments
Objective 7	Develop external communication of diversity and equality work
Objective 8	Maximise role as audit body by promoting equality through the audits we perform
Objective 9	Establish a formal reporting schedule to meet legislative requirements

# Appendix 2.

## Steering group membership

The steering group is made up of senior managers and specialists from across Audit Scotland. The current membership includes the following individuals:

Role	Current membership
Chair of steering group	Lorna Meahan
Management team	Diane McGiffen
Corporate Services Group lead	James Gillies
Audit Strategy lead	Paul O'Brien
Audit Services Group lead	Bob Kirkwood
Public Reporting Group lead	Angela Canning
Practitioner and specialist members	David Blattman, Kirsty Whyte, Cathy MacGregor, Elaine Boyd and Jennie Mathieson
PCS representative	Asif Haseeb

# Appendix 3.

## Profile of Diversity & Equality Steering Group members

The following table outlines the common and different focus and responsibilities of steering group members.

	Chair	Senior MGT/ Business Group leads	Practitioner/ specialist members	Union reps	Secretary
Advocacy	Act as overall organisation diversity champion including representing Audit Scotland externally where appropriate	Championing and promoting all aspects of diversity and equality in internal and external work	Promoting all aspects of diversity and equality in internal and external work	Promoting all aspects of diversity and equality in union activity	Promoting the meetings schedule to interested third parties.
		Acts as champion for one of the individual equality strands or other areas of focus as appropriate (eg, communication, consultation)	Acts as champion for one of the individual equality strands or other areas of focus as appropriate (eg, communication, consultation)	Champions union engagement in key diversity objectives	Monitors external events, conferences and activities and organises attendance for steering group members as appropriate
		Leads the delivery team in their business area and ensures an effective link into the steering group.			
	Proactively identifies good practice approaches to promoting equality and valuing diversity both internally and externally and promotes these across the organisation	Proactively identifies good practice approaches to promoting equality and valuing diversity both internally and externally and promotes these across the organisation	Proactively identifies good practice approaches to promoting equality and valuing diversity both internally and externally and promotes these across the organisation	Proactively identifies good practice approaches to promoting equality and valuing diversity both internally and externally and promotes these across the organisation	Proactively identifies good practice approaches from the union experience and shares these with the steering group

	Chair	Senior MGT/ Business Group leads	Practitioner/ specialist members	Union reps	Secretary
Strategy	Oversees the organisation's strategic approach to promoting equality and managing diversity and recognises and optimises opportunities to mainstream good practice across the organisation	Develops the organisation's strategic approach to promoting equality and managing diversity by recognising and optimising opportunities to mainstream good practice at a local level	Develops the organisation's strategic approach to promoting equality and managing diversity by recognising and optimising opportunities to mainstream good practice at a local level		Keeps up to date with group members activity and priorities, and alerts the chair regarding emerging issues
Action	Sponsors and contributes to the development of exemplar equality schemes and action plans	Contributes to, and ensures ongoing development of exemplar equality schemes and action plans	Contributes to, and ensures ongoing development of exemplar equality schemes and action plans	Contributes to, and ensures ongoing development of exemplar equality schemes and action plans	Produces and publishes the schemes and action plans following input from steering group members
	Oversees the delivery of an appropriate consultation and involvement strategy	Contributes to, and ensures delivery of an appropriate consultation and involvement strategy	Contributes to, and ensures delivery of an appropriate consultation and involvement strategy	Contributes to, and ensures delivery of an appropriate consultation and involvement strategy	Organises the logistics of consultation events as appropriate
Monitoring & review	Holds individual members to account for delivery and reviews quality assurance of equality impact assessments	Ensures management and delivery of action plans, including quality assurance of equality impact assessments conducted at a local level	Quality assurance of equality impact assessments conducted at a local level	Provides a check and balance by linking back group activity to the diversity and equality remit of PCS	Provides reminders and prompts for due dates on actions
		Participates in investigation panels where required to review alleged cases of bullying, harassment and discrimination if required			Keeps confidential notes and minutes as required

	Chair	Senior MGT/ Business Group leads	Practitioner/ specialist members	Union reps	Secretary
Communi- cation	Ensures ideas and developments are effectively communicated to internal and external stakeholders	Ensures ideas and developments are effectively communicated to internal and external stakeholders	Ensures ideas and developments are effectively communicated to internal and external stakeholders	Ensures ideas and developments are effectively communicated to internal and external stakeholders	Keeps records of meetings, actions agreed and distributes to relevant parties
	Manages approval of progress reports and annual diversity reporting with Audit Scotland Board and the Accounts Commission board	Ensures progress updates and reports are produced to fulfil internal and external reporting requirements, including content for the annual report, board reports and progress updates required by external bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission	Generates progress updates and reports to fulfil internal and external reporting requirements, including content for the annual report, board reports and progress updates required by external bodies	Informs the group of PCS-wide diversity and equality activity and how it may support the organisations goals	Formats reports and coordinates sending to relevant parties for approval



# Diversity & Equality Steering Group

## Terms of reference

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