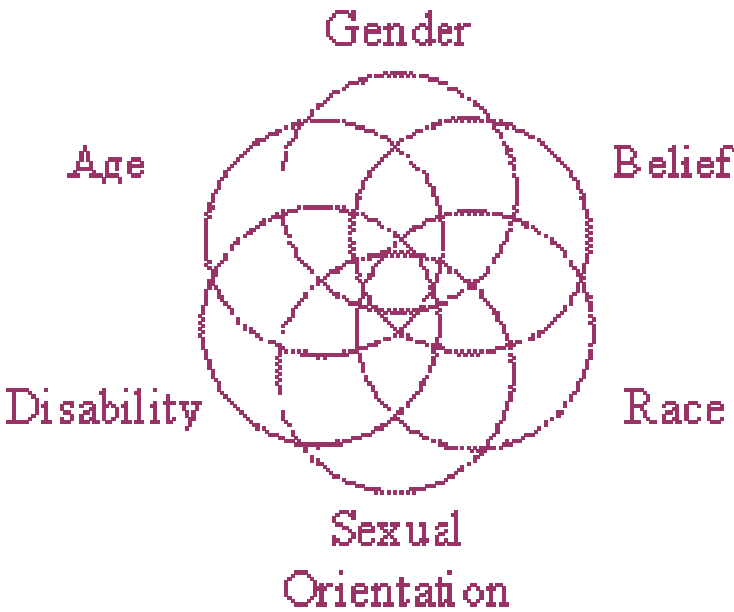


# MRC Gender Equality Scheme

Revised April 2010



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## Introduction

The Equality Act 2006 amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 by placing a statutory duty – the Gender Equality Duty (GED) – on public sector organisations in England to produce a Gender Equality Scheme (GES) by 30 April 2007 and in Scotland by 28 September 2007.

In addition to reporting annually on the actions taken as a result of their GES, organisations are required to review their GES and prepare and publish a revised GES at least every three years. This means that, for organisations in England, a revised GES is required by 30 April 2010 or three years after publishing the original scheme, and in Scotland a revised GES is required by 28 September 2010 or three years after publishing the original scheme.

## Background

The GED came into force in England, Scotland and Wales on 6 April 2007 and requires organisations to consider the impact of their policies and procedures on men and women, including transsexual people, and to take action to combat any identified areas of inequality. The GED has two components:

a **general duty** requiring organisations, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to **eliminate** unlawful sex discrimination and harassment (including that experienced by transsexual people) and to **promote equality** of opportunity between men and women. See **section 1.12** of the statutory code of practice on the gender equality duty for England and Wales (the Code) for an analysis of the meaning of due regard.

a **specific duty** requiring organisations in England and Scotland to publish a GES which should set out an organisation's gender equality objectives, the rationale for those objectives and the actions they will take to consult stakeholders and assess the impact of their policies and procedures on gender equality.

## GES 2010

The GES is a reviewed and updated version of the MRC's 2007 Gender Equality Scheme, which is published on the MRC's external website, and its implementation is driven by an action plan that is reviewed annually.

The 2010 Action Plan is shown in Appendix 2.

The 2007 Action Plan (together with summary of progress) is shown at Appendix 3.

## MRC Commitment

The MRC is committed to the “general duties” of the GED which state that the MRC will:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; and
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women and people of transgender.

The GES will contain detail on how we will fulfil our “specific duties” under the GED, namely information and details on our:

- Gender Equality objectives
- Rationale
- Consultation process
- Collection and use of information
- Gender Equality Impact Assessments
- Publication of the GES
- Monitoring and Review processes

## Scope

Gender equality in this document refers to men, women and trans people. It includes employees, students, visiting workers, Board and committee members and temporary/contract staff involved in pursuing the aims of the organisation on behalf of the MRC.

This document does not cover MRC operations and employees outside the UK who are required to comply with their own national legislation.

All UK employees and other workers must apply the principles listed above and be responsible for not permitting others to practise or incite gender discrimination.

## Terminology

What is transgender or 'trans'?

Trans is an inclusive term for people who identify themselves as transgender, transsexual or transvestite. The word trans can be used without offence to describe people who:

- are undergoing gender transition (commonly referred to as a 'sex change');
- identify as someone with a different gender from that in which they were born, but who may have decided not to undergo medical treatment;
- choose to dress in the clothing typically worn by the other sex.

There are currently estimated to be 5000-6000 trans people in the UK.

What are the issues for the MRC?

Many organisations may never encounter or need to support a trans person among their staff and students. On the rare occasions when an organisation does have a member of staff or a student who is undergoing gender reassignment, a large number of issues will arise, now underpinned by legislation.

The MRC as an employer and a funder has a legal responsibility to protect the rights of trans people, both staff and students, and to ensure individuals do not suffer from any direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment, and are supported in any process of transition.

### Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to another person, and should be distinguished from terminology defining gender identity (such as trans) and biological sex.

### Gender

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of and relations between men and women, while 'sex' refers to biological characteristics which define humans as female or male. These biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive however, as there are individuals who possess both.

### Responsibilities

The MRC Operations Board has corporate responsibility for approving the Gender Equality Scheme and all existing equality schemes.

The GES is

- Owned by the Director of Human Resources
- Guided by the Head of Equality and Diversity and the Equality and Diversity GPC
- Implemented by the Director of Human Resources, the Head of Equality and Diversity and those individuals named in the Action Plan

We undertake to ensure that UK employees, including non-permanent employees, are briefed on the GES and supported in its implementation. Information and training will be provided to employees where considered necessary by management or where requested by an individual, and to others involved in writing policy and conducting impact assessments.

The requirements of the GES and equality values will be included in our training programmes and recruitment processes where appropriate so that all UK employees are made aware of their responsibilities.

Compliance

Non-compliance with our policies, or grant and fellowship terms and conditions, will be taken very seriously and will be addressed under the MRC Disciplinary Policy or revision of collaborative / funding arrangements as appropriate.

### As an employer in the UK with respect to pay

The MRC has an Equal Pay Policy published on the intranet which states that the MRC does the following:

- Incorporates equal pay principles when undertaking job evaluation
- Monitors the impact of pay policies and pay decisions and ensures their consistency with equal pay principles
- Undertakes periodic equal pay reviews
- Provides guidance to managers and all staff involved in recruitment on pay, reward, benefits and equalities issues
- Makes available to employees information about how their pay is determined
- Works in partnership with Trade Unions and keep our workforce informed of pay and reward policy developments.

### As an employer in the UK

We:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent unlawful discrimination and reduce any significant unlawful disparities in treatment between the different genders;

- Welcome applications from all people irrespective of whether they are male, female or transgender for all our UK vacancies. Selection is subject to an individual's ability to fulfil the requirements of the job;
- Ensure that the selection criteria for recruitment, promotion or internal selection are free of gender bias;
- Consult employees working in the UK in the development and implementation of this scheme;
- Do not tolerate harassment for any reason. We are committed to taking action to stop harassing behaviour as soon as it is identified. Any MRC UK employee who believes they are subject to harassment or victimisation is strongly encouraged to raise their concerns, in confidence with their line manager or trade union representative. Individuals who are not part of the intramural programme may raise concerns using the MRC Complaints Procedure, published on the website. (Please refer to our Harassment and Bullying policy on the intranet).
- Monitor the number of men and women who apply for jobs at the MRC and then become employees whilst appreciating that some people may not wish to provide this information to us.

**As a funder of medical research and of the training of medical researchers the MRC will:**

- Review it's funding terms and conditions to ensure that equality considerations (which include gender) are reflected in agreements with research organisations in receipt of MRC funding
- Promote diversity (including gender) within the UK research workforce, working across Research Councils through the Research Councils UK Careers and Diversity Unit. The current strategy can be found at

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/strategy.htm>

**The MRC as a communicator will:**

- Ensure that all information, publicity and advertising undertaken by the MRC promotes a positive attitude towards men and women and does not knowingly discriminate.

**The MRC as a purchaser of goods and services will:**

- Ensure that a statement about equalities (covering gender equality) is included in the UK procurement policy.

**The MRC as an influencer of medical, scientific research will:**

- Challenge, through our impact assessments our structures, processes, policies and practices to promote gender equality
- Continue to work with other research councils to share best practice for equality and diversity implementation e.g. training programmes, equalities monitoring data and impact assessments.

## Consultation process

In the development of this document, the MRC has consulted all UK staff.

The consultation process is outlined in more detail in Appendix 4.

## Information gathering

We will monitor the distribution of women and men in the MRC in the UK through collecting the following information:

- Application responses and success rates
- Numbers of staff in post split by type of job and band
- Numbers of people receiving training
- Numbers of leavers and reasons for leaving
- As stated above, undertake periodic equal pay reviews in accordance with the Equal Pay Policy.

The results of our monitoring will be published on the portal.

## Publication

We publish the GES and Action Plan on the MRC website. Results of our equality impact assessments can be obtained by contacting the Head of Equality and Diversity.

## Review

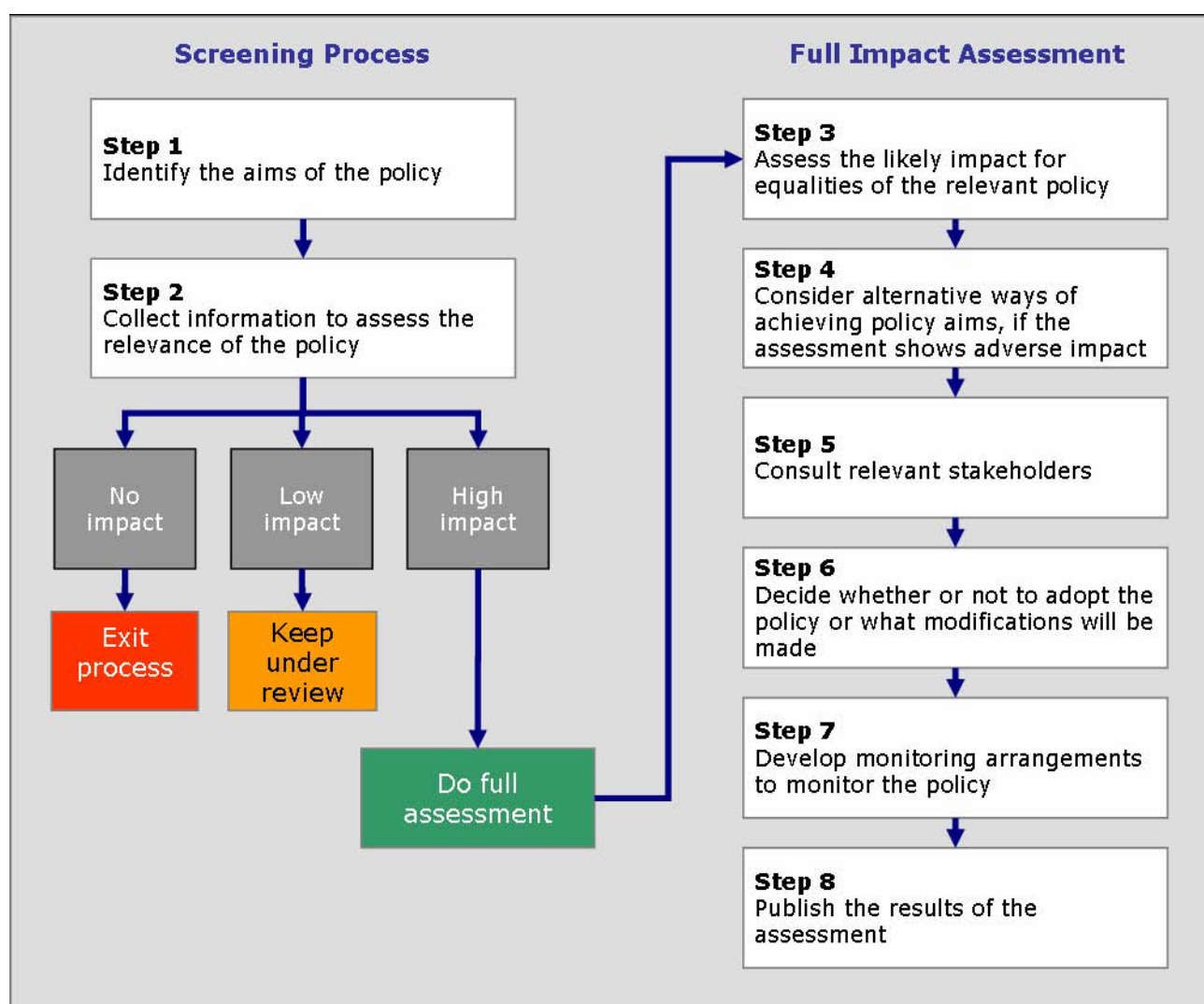
The GES, Action Plan and monitoring will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of Equality and Diversity and the Equality and Diversity GPC with a view to determining progress. The Action Plan will be updated annually and thoroughly reviewed every three years.

## Appendix 1. Impact Assessments

An impact assessment checks whether an existing or future policy affects a particular equalities group adversely. The process can be divided into two parts, the screening process and the full impact assessment.

The screening process is an initial review of a policy to assess its impact as high, low or no impact. For those with high impact, it is then decided whether a full impact assessment needs to be undertaken.

The diagram below shows our Impact Assessment Process, based on that provided by the Equal Opportunities Commission. Impact assessment documentation can be obtained from the Portal, the Corporate Human Resources department and training is available.



GES 2010 Action Plan  
APPENDIX 2

Corporate Governance and RCUK/SSC Responsibilities		
Actions	Measure for success	Responsibility
GES and Action Plan are published on the MRC website.	Scheme published by 30 <sup>th</sup> April	Director of HR
All OB members and Senior Unit Administrators briefed about the GES and Actions Plan.	100% coverage	Director of HR
Relevant individuals informed of their responsibilities to deliver the Action Plan	100% coverage	Director of HR
Monitoring and review processes agreed	Monitoring data - collection format and timings agreed, resource allocated	Director of HR /Shared Service Centre
Director of HR updated following Equality and Diversity GPC	Quarterly updates to the Director of HR	Chair of the GPC
UK employees will have access to the GES via the portal and website and will be invited to training depending on their role and responsibilities	A sample of employees contacted following training to check understanding	Director of HR /SSC
All impact assessment completed on a three-yearly basis and a central list of all "relevant policies" kept	100% coverage	Director of HR
Monitoring data published on annual basis	Published	Director of HR
Review of the Action Plan annually	Reviewed and discussed	Director of HR
Review GES and Action Plan on three-yearly basis	Reviewed and published	Director of HR
CEO and Communication Affairs Group Responsibilities		

CEO and Communication Affairs Group Responsibilities		
CEO and senior staff to publicise and promote the MRC's commitment to gender equality where appropriate and relevant	Ensure comments made by senior staff in their public role provide support for gender equality	Chief Executive and Directors
Support and encourage associate membership status of Athena Swan	Membership achieved	Chief Executive
Update the portal site to promote gender equality	Portal updated with the GES - April 2010  Update the MRC portal site to promote the Women In Science community	Director of HR

Human Resources and Procurement Responsibilities		
Actions	Measure for success	Responsibility
Continued support for the Women in Science community and Women in Science events	Successful events	Director of HR /Trade Unions  WIS community
Continue to work with other Research Councils to share best practice for gender equality	Discussed at quarterly RCEDAG meetings, sharing materials	Director of HR
Undertake regular Equal Pay Reviews	Pay Review completed	Head of Pay and Reward  Director of HR
Work with UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology to engage all available support and resource for the MRC	Successful partnership working	Director of HR
Hold annual cross-council Women in Science event with UK Resource Centre	Event held	Director of HR
Recruitment and training materials in the UK designed to attract a wide range of candidates	Sample of recruitment materials checked	Shared Service Centre
Ensure that the UK Procurement Policy is updated with a statement that covers gender equality	Policy updated by procurement team	Director of Procurement
PDR training is updated when relevant to improve awareness of diversity/equality issues with line managers	PDR training updated	Director of HR  SSC
Encouragement and career guidance given to staff no matter their gender to encourage them to undertake continuing professional development and play a proactive role in managing their careers	Quality assurance of training courses that include career management	SSC
Staff are provided with the opportunity to attend Equality and Diversity training (which would include gender awareness training)	Evaluation of training undertaken to check understanding	Director of HR/Shared Service Centre

Science and Funding Responsibilities		
Actions	Measure for success	Responsibility
The MRC will review its terms and conditions to ensure that equalities considerations (including gender equality) are reflected in agreements with research organisations in receipt of MRC funding	Terms and conditions reviewed	Research Management Group
Initiate project studying destinations data of female students and investigate whether any interventions would be advantageous	Project completed	Director of HR
Adopt and implement the Concordat	Concordat implemented	Research Management Group
Wording added to Board and Panel membership adverts encouraging applications from diverse range of applicants	Wording added	Research Management Group
Relevant science roles advertised on UK Resource Centre GET SET website to encourage more female applicants	Roles advertised	Research Management Group

Summary of Progress – GES Action Plan 2007  
APPENDIX 3

Summary of Progress – GES Action Plan 2007 <u>APPENDIX 3</u>			
Equalities Project Steering Group (EPSG)			
Project Responsibilities			
Actions	Measure for success	Groups also responsible with EPSG for progressing	PROGRESS
All Executive Board members briefed about the gender scheme and actions plans.	100% coverage	Director of HR	Operations Board briefed in September 2008
Gender scheme and action plans are published on the MRC portal and website.	Scheme published by target date	Corporate Affairs Group/ Director of HR	Completed
Representative people nominated to deliver the action plan and impact assessments. Nominations will be made by the Director of human resources and the existing EPSG.	EPSG members recruited and their roles defined.	Director of HR	Revision of Sub Committee Structure  Operations Board briefed in September 2008
Monitoring and review processes agreed	Monitoring data collection format and timings agreed, resource allocated.	Director of HR /Shared Service Centre/	Head of Equality and Diversity working on ongoing monitoring data project
Director of HR updated following subcommittee meetings	Quarterly updates to the Director of HR	Chair of the EPSG/Equalities sub-committees	Action completed

Summary of Progress – GES Action Plan 2007  
APPENDIX 3

Equalities Project Steering Group (EPSG)			
Project Responsibilities			
Actions	Measure for success	Groups also responsible with EPSG for progressing	PROGRESS
UK employees will have access to the schemes and equalities information via the portal and website and will be invited to training depending on their role and responsibilities concerning Gender equalities	A sample of employees contacted following training to check understanding	Director of HR /SSC	Action completed
All impact assessment screens completed, quality checked and published by the 3 subcommittees – 18 policies (i.e. 6 policies each)	All screening reports quality checked and published	Director of HR	EIA progress reviewed and process re-designed
Monitoring data published as discussed on Page 7	Published	Director of HR/ISG	Head of Equality and Diversity working on ongoing monitoring data project
Review of the action plan and working of the EPSG annually	Reviewed and discussed	Director of HR	Ongoing - Head of Equality and Diversity
Reviewing overall scheme and action plan	Reviewed and published	Director of HR	Ongoing – Head of Equality and Diversity
Equalities Subcommittee - Corporate Governance and Communications Responsibilities			
Actions	Measure for success	Groups also responsible with equalities subcommittee for progressing	PROGRESS

Regular updates and consultation with stakeholders, appropriate trade unions, cross council bodies and public as needed e.g. Impact assessments, development of policies/schemes.	Evidence of these communications e.g. email, newsletters, meetings, letters	EPSG Chair	Head of Equality and Diversity now regularly updating TUS
Ensure that all information, publicity and advertising which the MRC undertakes is non discriminatory and promotes a positive attitude towards men and women.	Sample of communications checked by the subcommittee	Corporate Affairs Group Shared Service Centre (SSC)	SSC informed
This subcommittee's allocated impact assessment screens for 2007 are all completed and published	Completed and published	Director of HR/Corporate Affairs Group	EIA progress reviewed and process re-designed
CEO and senior staff to publicise and promote the MRC's commitment to Gender equality where appropriate and relevant	Comments made by senior staff and in policies that provide support for equalities in their public role  Sample of communications checked by the subcommittee by December 2007	Chief Executive and Directors	Ongoing
Update the portal site to promote gender equality.	Portal updated with the gender scheme and consultation process - April 07  Update the MRC portal site to promote the WIS community	ISG Director of HR WIS	Completed
Equalities Subcommittee Human Resources and Procurement			
Actions	Measure for success	Groups also responsible with equalities subcommittee for progressing	PROGRESS

Continued support for the establishment of gender groups e.g. Women in Science Committee	Equalities Statement issued by HR in December 2006	Director of HR /Trade Unions WIS committee	Terms of Reference of WIS Committee revised – actions to be incorporated into GES Action Plan
Continue to work with other research councils to share best practice for equalities implementation e.g. training programmes, equalities monitoring data and impact assessments	Discussed at quarterly RCEDAG meetings. Sharing materials	Director of HR	Head of Equality and Diversity actioned
Undertake the equal pay actions as outlined in this document on page 4 ( also see Equal Pay policy on the portal)	All activities completed as stated  Subcommittee to check with Head of Pay and Reward	Head of Pay and Reward  Director of HR	Equal Pay Survey carried out by The Reward Partnership
Recruitment and training materials in the UK designed to attract a wide range of candidates	Sample of recruitment materials checked by subcommittee	Shared Service Centre	SSC informed of this action
Ensure that the UK procurement policy is updated with an equalities statement that covers gender equality.	Policy updated by procurement team	Director of Procurement	Head of Procurement informed
PDR training is updated to improve awareness of diversity/equality issues with line managers	PDR training updated	Director of HR  SSC	Action completed
Encouragement and career guidance given to staff no matter their gender to encourage them to undertake continuing professional development and play a proactive role in managing their careers.	Quality assurance of training courses that include career management  Implementation of career development programme for MRC research support and administration roles	SSC  Director of HR	Action completed
Staff are provided with the opportunity to attend equalities training (which would include gender awareness training)	Evaluation of training undertaken to check understanding.	Director of HR/Shared Service Centre	Action completed

This subcommittee's impact assessment screening for 2007 are all completed and published	Completed and published	Director of HR	EIA progress reviewed and process re-designed
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Equalities Subcommittee Science and Funding Responsibilities			
Actions	Measure for success	Groups also responsible for progressing along with the equalities subcommittee	PROGRESS
The MRC will review its terms and conditions to ensure that equalities considerations (including gender equality) are reflected in agreements with research organisations in receipt of MRC funding.	Terms and conditions reviewed.	Research Management Group	Completed
This subcommittee's allocated impact assessment screens for 2007 are all completed and published	Completed and published	Director of HR/ Research Management Group	Completed

## Appendix 4. MRC consultation process

In spring 2010 we invited and encouraged stakeholders to comment on the 2007 Gender Equality Scheme (see consultation document on the MRC Portal).

To date, the only response received was a request to add a section to the 2010 GES explaining the difference between the following terminology – gender, transgender and sexual orientation. This section has been added to the 2010 GES.