

Background

The Equality Act 2010 creates a **public sector equality duty** to:

- Consider how different people will be affected by our activities
- Deliver services which, while efficient and effective, are accessible to all and meet diverse needs
- Have **due regard** for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people (both employees and others) who share a **protected characteristic** and those who do not.

Protected characteristics covered by the equality duty are:

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (embracing ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

This report is part of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)'s response to the Equality Act. It is intended to offer what data is available on the equality impact of the Foreign Office's employment practices and activities. The FCO has not incurred the expense of collecting data specifically for the purpose of publication here.

All data presented represents the best information available in January 2012.

The FCO will publish its equality objectives by April 2012 and will update the data within its equality report at least once a year.

Section 1 – The FCO’s employees

The FCO employs staff in two ways. The UK Diplomatic Service and other British Civil Servants working for the FCO are known as *UK-based staff*. Such staff take a range of jobs during their careers both in the UK and at diplomatic missions abroad. But the majority of the FCO’s employees are hired to perform specific functions at individual Embassies abroad and are known as *locally engaged staff*. It is unusual for such employees to transfer between diplomatic missions or to work in the UK.

Both UK based and locally engaged officers are graded into a hierarchy as follows:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Grade Structure

Generic UK Civil Service Grade	Foreign Office Grades	
	UK Based Staff	Locally Engaged Staff
Senior Civil Service	Senior Management Structure	N/A
Grade 6	D7	N/A
Grade 7	D6	N/A
Senior Executive Officer	C5	N/A
Higher Executive Officer	C4	LE1
Executive Officer	B3	LE2
Administrative Officer	A2	LE3
Administrative Assistant	A1	
Non-Professional functions	N/A	LE4 and LE5

The FCO collects and holds human resources data on a centralised database. The gender of all staff is automatically recorded on this database. Staff are asked to add information about their ethnicity, disability status, sexual orientation and religious belief. Supplying this data is voluntary, but the FCO regularly encourages staff to supply it. To protect the privacy of staff who do not wish to declare any of this personal information, it is possible for individuals to record on the human resources database that they do not wish to declare.

The rates of declaration, including those who have taken the trouble of stating that they do not wish to declare are:

FCO Diversity Data Declaration Rates – UK Based Staff

Protected Characteristic	Percentage of Staff Declaring
Ethnicity	81%
Disability	38%
Sexual Orientation	31%
Religion and Belief	31%

Profile of the Workforce

The FCO employs almost 13,000 people, of whom a third are UK-based staff and two-thirds are locally engaged staff.

Profile of FCO UK Based Staff by Grade and Gender

Grade	Female	Male
Senior Management	22%	78%
D7	33%	67%
D6	37%	63%
C5	32%	68%
C4	44%	56%
B3	52%	48%
A2	61%	39%
A1	55%	45%
Overall	44%	56%

Profile of Foreign Office Locally Engaged Staff by Grade and Gender

Grade	Female	Male
LE1 (most senior)	55%	45%
LE2	66%	34%
LE3	72%	28%
LE4	37%	63%
LE 5	18%	82%
Overall	45%	55%

Percentage of UK-Based FCO Staff from an Ethnic Minority Background by Grade

Grade	Percentage Ethnic Minority
Senior Management	4%
D7	5%
D6	3%
C5	5%
C4	6%
B3	15%
A2	24%
A1	12%
Overall	10%

The Foreign Office began to collect data about the religious belief and sexual orientation of staff in 2011. However the quantity of data collected to date is low and unrepresentative.

Percentage of UK-Based FCO Staff with a Disability by Grade

Grade	Percentage with disability
Senior Management	3%
D7	3%
D6	2%
C5	4%
C4	5%
B3	5%
A2	6%
A1	11%
Overall	4%

Staff Retention

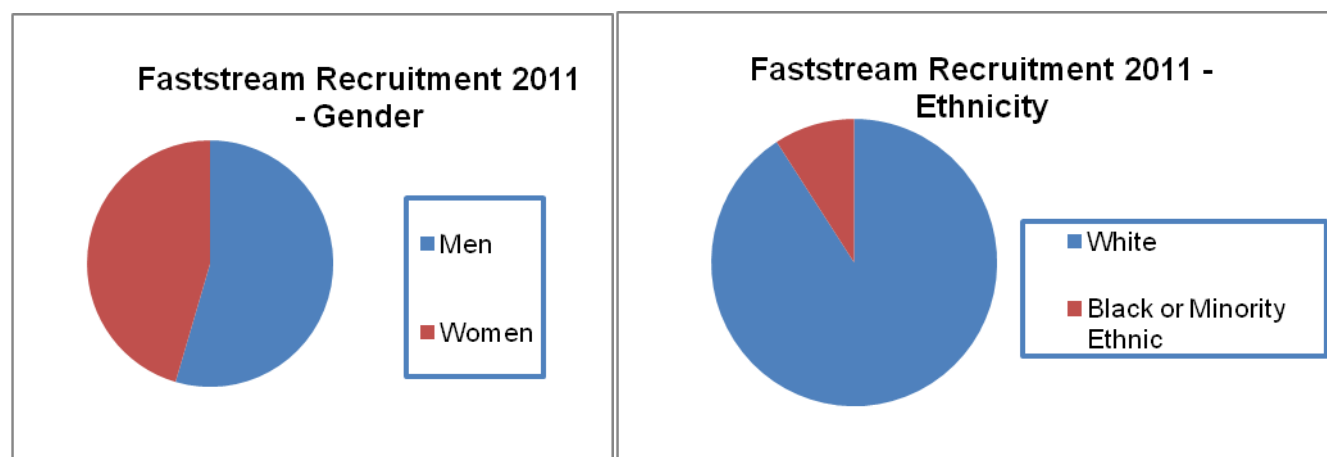
6% of the FCO's UK-based staff left employment in 2011.

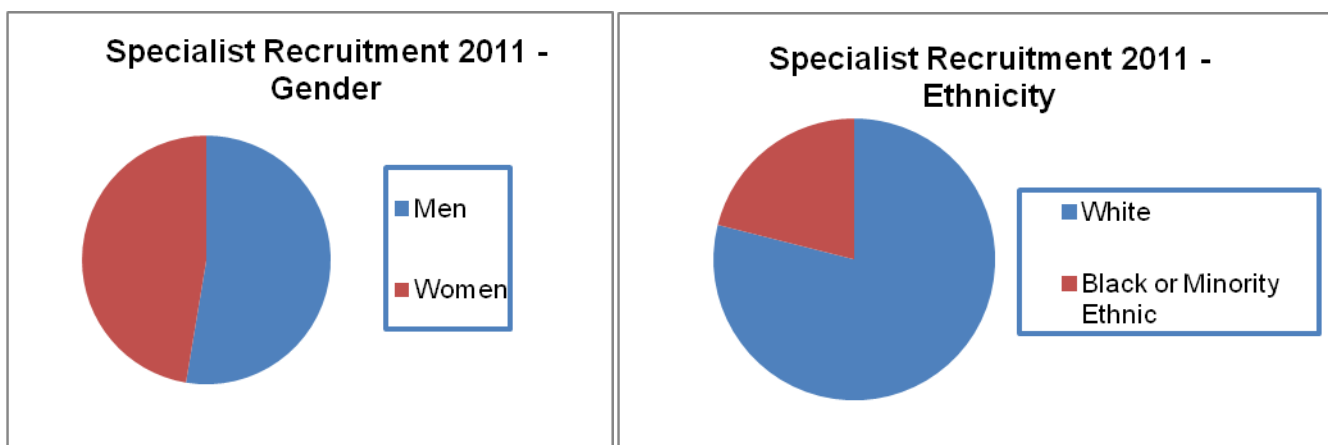
FCO Leavers by Grade and Gender in 2011

Grade	Proportion of women leaving in 2011	Proportion of men leaving in 2011
Senior Management	5%	8%
D7	6%	9%
D6	3%	4%
C5	7%	10%
C4	3%	4%
B3	14%	8%
A2	7%	5%
A1	4%	7%
Overall	7%	6%

Recruitment

The FCO was subject to a recruitment freeze throughout 2011. In practice, recruitment of UK based staff was limited to 41, made up of 22 fast-stream officers and 19 posts requiring specialist skills, such as legal or medical qualifications. The profile of those recruited was:





Learning and Development

The FCO collects data on the gender and ethnicity of those taking part in its learning and development programmes, using both a central staff information database and ad hoc feedback forms. This data is not collated systematically, so it is not possible to report on the gender or ethnic profile of those taking part in learning and development activities.

Equality of Pay

Foreign Office pay is determined by a range of factors including grade of service, performance and length of time in employment.

FCO Average Pay for UK-Based Staff 2011 by Gender

Grade	Average Female Pay	Average Male Pay	% Male Pay Exceeds Female Pay	Pay gap in 2009*
Senior 3&4	£126,492	£134,213	6.1%	10.7
Senior 2	£90,223	£91,015	0.9%	1.1
Senior 1	£67,074	£67,610	0.8%	1.6
D7	£56,717	£58,332	2.8%	3.6
D6	£46,369	£47,648	2.8%	1.7
C5	£35,843	£36,895	2.9%	3.0
C4	£29,100	£29,296	0.7%	1.0
B3	£24,888	£24,531	-1.4%	-1.3
A2	£20,290	£20,100	-0.9%	-2.3
A1	£16,897	£16,841	-0.3%	2.2

*The last full equal pay review was conducted in 2009. 2009 figures are provided for reference

EHRC guidelines state that difference greater than 5% should be investigated and that patterns of difference of 3% or more should be looked into. Based on these guidelines, the pay gap at Senior Management Structure 3 and 4 should be investigated. It is likely that this

gap reflects the fact that no women currently hold any of the relatively small number of the most senior posts, graded at Senior Management Structure 4.

Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

The FCO's staff take part in a cross-Whitehall Staff Engagement Survey every year. The last such survey took place in October 2011.

As part of the survey, staff are asked if they have been discriminated against at work in the last year. A second similar question asks if staff have experienced bullying or harassment.

The results can be broken down by gender, disability status, sexual orientation and ethnicity. However some staff did not supply this demographic data, which means that the disaggregate data appears in some cases (e.g. gender) to be incompatible with the overall results.

The FCO's performance in this area improved between 2010 and 2011.

FCO 2010 and 2011 Staff Survey Results – Proportion Claiming to Experience Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination by Gender, Disability status and Ethnicity

		Discriminated Against		Bullied/ Harassed	
		2011	2010	2011	2010
Overall		14%	18%	13%	14%
Gender	Male	13%	19%	13%	13%
	Female	11%	15%	12%	14%
Disability	Yes	32%	33%	28%	28%
	No	13%	17%	12%	13%
Ethnicity Groups	White	11%	12%	10%	11%
	Black or Minority Ethnic	16%	23%	15%	16%

Section 2 – Regard for Equality within the FCO’s Activities

Foreign Policy

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Rights

The FCO promotes tolerance and non-discrimination against LGBT people bilaterally and through international fora, including the UN, EU, Commonwealth and Council of Europe. We encourage governments to amend punitive laws, in particular those that criminalise homosexuality and changes to gender identity, and take action on individual cases where persecution or discrimination has occurred. Government ministers took every opportunity to raise LGBT rights at all levels during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth in October 2011. LGBT is one of our priorities for our current chairmanship of the Council of Europe.

In June 2010, the Government published “Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality” to guide our future work. It includes an unequivocal commitment to support LGBT rights internationally. The action plan to underpin this strategy was published in March 2011. FCO activities in the action plan are in line with the international commitments made in the strategy and include:

- Using the UK’s political dialogue with other countries to push for the recognition of LGBT rights and advocating for changes to discriminatory practices and laws;
- Working with intergovernmental institutions to further progress LGBT equality worldwide;
- Ensuring our Embassies and High Commissions overseas continue to support civil society organisations and human rights defenders internationally to change laws and social attitudes

Women’s Rights

The FCO works with international organisations and governments overseas to support legislative programmes in other countries to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, to tackle violence against women and to reduce the impact of conflict on women and girls. We are committed to advancing women’s rights internationally, building on the work we are already doing bilaterally with partner countries, and in concert with the UN, EU Commonwealth, Council of Europe and other international fora to identify opportunities to increase our impact.

On 25 November 2010 the Government launched a strategy entitled “Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls” – the first time that a UK national strategy had included international work within its scope. An action plan, to implement the strategy, was published on 8 March 2011. The action plan includes measurable FCO activities against which progress is monitored. Our Embassies and High Commissions also support civil society organisations working to promote and protect the rights of women globally. For example, we are currently supporting a number of projects to address the structural causes of discrimination against women, to ensure their equality before the law and promote their participation in public affairs in accordance with international standards.

Our Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint-initiative with the Home Office. In 2011 there were 1468 instances where the FMU gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage. There were 66 instances involving those with disabilities (56 with learning disabilities, 8 with physical disabilities and 2 with both), and 10 instances involving victims who identified themselves as LGBT. Of the 1468 instances, 78 per cent were female and 22 per cent male.

Minority Rights

We continue to work through international organisations, such as the UN and the EU, to promote and protect the human rights for all indigenous people. Our embassies work with international NGOs and local non-governmental organisations on a variety of UK-funded projects to encourage local communities to participate in the democratic process. Projects of this type have promoted a policy of land restitution in Columbia and secured changes in local regulations to protect fishing rights of indigenous communities in Cambodia. In Guatemala we funded a preventative educational campaign to combat violence against women within indigenous communities, empowering victims to speak out and training community leaders to deal with such violence.

Consular Work

The FCO's Consular Service offers assistance to British nationals in difficulties abroad.

The customer charter of the Consular Service commits to "Be professional, non-judgemental, polite and helpful to you whatever your gender, race, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, religion or belief."

Between January and November 2011 consular staff fielded 1,144,501 requests for help or information.

Approaches to FCO Consular Staff – January to November 2011 – by Type

Nature of Service	Number of Clients
Telephone enquiries during working hours	577,058
Telephone enquiries outside working hours	31,948
Written enquiries	260,695
Customers visiting counters at overseas Missions	274,530
Total	1,144,501

As a result of these various approaches, the FCO's Consular Directorate opened electronic case files on 88,884 customers.

The FCO does not collect data on the diversity (gender, ethnicity or other protected attributes) of those to whom it provides services.