

# Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholder Group: terms of reference

## 1. Status

The Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholder Group (EMESG) is a group, sponsored by, but not part of, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The group comprises a chair and 12 members, appointed as representatives of relevant organisations or as individuals with specific expertise. The group is ultimately responsible to the minister within DWP with responsibility for ethnic minority employment (currently the [Minister for Employment](#)).

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of EMESG is:

- to offer ministers and officials advice on the impact of DWP's services and strategy on the employment/self employment of ethnic minorities
- to provide expert advice on existing and developing services, policies and strategy relating to ethnic minorities across the DWP's key work areas
- to advise on the labour market barriers potentially faced by ethnic minorities across Great Britain and evidence-based solutions that can help to overcome these barriers

EMESG will fulfil its purpose by:

- developing an annual work plan that is agreed by the minister. This will align to priorities across the DWP but may encompass other departments where there are cross government commitments
- building and maintaining strong links with ministers and officials to ensure the advice provided addresses government priorities and adds value to the development of policies and services
- building and maintaining strong links with key ethnic minority organisations, advisory groups, and thought-leaders across the UK to enable members to strengthen their expertise and knowledge base
- reporting progress against objectives on a quarterly basis and carrying out robust evaluation of the advice it provides maintaining a flexible approach which allows it to respond to changing priorities

### 3. How EMESG will deliver

EMESG will provide advice via:

- formal papers
- informal and formal meetings
- recommendations following in-depth activity on policy areas

All advice provided will be confidential.

The group will meet approximately every two to three months.

The chair will aim to provide members with activity that both fits their skills and offers a degree of challenge. The chair will determine whether any agreed activities would be best completed on an individual, small group or full group basis.

### 4. Reporting arrangements

Representatives from EMESG will meet with the appropriate DWP minister and senior officials at regular intervals, to report on progress on the work plan and feedback the responses. Where the group's recommendations or advice is not seen as the preferred route, the chair and representatives will receive constructive feedback from DWP officials.

EMESG will publish an annual report on its website setting out details of its achievements and ongoing activities. The secretariat will provide the chair and members with a draft of the annual report for consideration and approval.

A review undertaken by the sponsor department (DWP) will take place every 3 years, unless there are causes for concern which may trigger a review at an earlier date.

Unsatisfactory performance or continued non-attendance at meetings could lead to a member's removal from the group.

### 5. Sponsorship of EMESG

DWP will be responsible for:

- providing a secretariat to support the group (further information set out below)
- dealing with, in a timely manner, any significant problems arising in the course of EMESG's work, and making interventions where necessary
- reviewing the EMESG's progress against its work plan to highlight any issues, and provide additional support if necessary

### 6. EMESG secretariat

DWP will provide a secretariat to support the work of the group. Duties of the secretariat will include:

- assisting with the development of the work plan and annual report, and supporting progress
- processing claims for members' travel expenses in line with DWP employee policy
- liaising with other government departments, officials and colleagues to gather knowledge and intelligence of priorities and opportunities across government and, where appropriate, ensure these are presented to EMESG
- arranging speakers, papers and presentations as appropriate for all meetings in accessible ways for members providing guidance as appropriate on all issues relating to DWP policies that may affect the work of the group, for example, security procedures, conflicts of interest and travel and subsistence policies
- providing a contact point for members' queries on travel expenses
- maintaining the EMESG website
- minute taking and archiving of records
- day-to-day issues raised via the chair and members

## 7. What the secretariat cannot do

The secretariat cannot:

- arrange individuals' travel or advise on options for travel arrangements
- provide out of office hours support for members

## 8. What EMESG members must do

When undertaking their role, EMESG members must comply with:

- data security requirements – where information provided to members is classified as restricted it is not for further dissemination. Papers containing restricted information produced for EMESG will be clearly marked as such
- DWP expenses guidance
- reporting of conflict of interests.

## 9. What EMESG members cannot do

EMESG members cannot:

- act as an advisory service to individuals seeking support in obtaining their rights – it is not the purpose of EMESG to duplicate the advisory services available through Jobcentre Plus, CAB or other organisations
- commit funds on behalf of the group without the agreement of the secretariat
- advise on areas (or attend events) on behalf of EMESG that have not been agreed by the chair and secretariat

- liaise with the media on behalf of EMESG without the agreement of the chair and secretariat
- share policy-restricted or other information relating to the work of EMESG, its individual members or the DWP outside of the group
- publish work undertaken in the course of their EMESG duties – the chair and secretariat will decide on whether material produced by or for EMESG is suitable for publication, and the most appropriate publication channels
- liaise directly with government officials on behalf of EMESG without the agreement of the chair or EMESG secretariat.

Any member failing to comply with the conditions set out in these terms of reference will be removed from the group.