

Food Standards Agency

Diversity Report 2020

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Who we are

We are an independent Government department working across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in food. We make sure that food is safe and what it says it is.

Our strategy, Food We Can Trust 2015-2020, focuses on our purpose and mission. It's our job to use our expertise and influence so people can trust that the food they buy and eat is safe and honest. Our strategy recognises that there are growing challenges around food safety, affordability, security and sustainability. Our strategy outlines our purpose and responsibilities, and the roles and responsibilities of others, in meeting these challenges.

Scope of the 2020 report

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'general Equality duty' on public sector organisations to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The 'specific duties' within the Act place a requirement on Public Sector bodies to 'publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the general Equality duty by 31 January 2012, and at least annually thereafter'.

This report presents a high-level summary and overview of equality data, including workforce profiles and monitoring data / information for employment activities.

It relates to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) as an employer. Staff not paid directly by FSA are not included in the analysis, nor are agency staff/contractors.

It has been produced using data held in the FSA's iHR system unless otherwise stated. Diversity declarations are made through self-service.

The information presented covers the period 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020. Any exceptions to this date period are highlighted accordingly.

The report covers a snap shot of data as at 31 October 2020 with a staff headcount of 1265.

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest 1 percentage point; this means that percentages may not always sum to rounded 100% totals.

Introduction

At the FSA we commit to be a workplace where everyone feels that:

- we can be ourselves;
- our unique contribution is recognised, respected, and valued;
- we achieve a healthy work life balance;
- we can find meaning in our work;
- we belong and there is space for us to grow.
- we serve each part of the community in a way that reflects its needs.

Underpinning these commitments are our ASPIRE values.

These will play a key part in driving this vision, delivering our people strategy and making our diverse and inclusive culture a reality for everyone.

Accountable – We take responsibility for our actions and can hold each other to account

Supported – We have the skills, tools and support to carry out our roles effectively

Professional – We are competent and confident in our ability to deliver to the highest professional standards

Innovative – We are agile, dynamic and progressive in our approach to delivering outcomes

Resilient – We adapt quickly and effectively to fast-paced change

Empowered – We can take the initiative and make decisions that improve business delivery

Our 2018 diversity and inclusion strategy set the following objectives:

- attract and retain a diverse workforce
- champion inclusivity across our leadership and management community
- develop and support staff networks in strengthening our diverse and inclusive culture

Progress in 2020 and moving forward in 2021

- Named a Top 30 Employer for Working Families for second consecutive year
- Introduced a diversity-focused Reverse Mentoring Scheme which partners senior leaders with staff who have different characteristics as mentors
- Established a pool of diverse panel members, a list of staff who are invited to participate in recruitment campaigns at all grades
- Embedded our talent approach to ensure that everyone has access to career conversations and learning and development opportunities which are tailored to help them meet their potential and achieve their aspirations
- Published our fourth [gender pay gap report](#) detailing mean and median pay gaps between male and female employees as at 31 March 2020
- Continued to see our fantastic staff networks growing in number with the formal launch of two new networks covering Age and Faith & Belief
- In 2021 we will recruit a dedicated Inclusion Lead at Grade 7 level to accelerate our progress by introducing fresh momentum and best practice to our efforts

Our people – facts and figures

FSA Workforce profile

As at 31 October 2020, there were 1265 permanent and temporary employees in the FSA. This is an increase of 24 employees from 31 October 2019.

Grade profile

The number of staff working for the FSA continues to increase. The percentage of civil servants working at grade Higher Executive Officer (HEO) and above is now 64.8%, up from 42.8% in 2012. The percentage of civil servants working in the most junior grades, Administrative Officer (AO) and Executive Officer (EO) has fallen every year since 2012, from 57.2% to 35.2%.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
AO	3.2%	3.3%	3.4%	2.3%	2.2%	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%
EO	54.0%	53.1%	52.3%	48.9%	47.6%	42.6%	40.3%	36.9%	34.5%
HEO / SEO	31.7%	32.2%	31.5%	35.0%	36.4%	40.5%	41.5%	45.9%	46.9%
Grade 7 / 6	9.5%	9.8%	11.2%	12.2%	12.4%	13.9%	15.4%	14.7%	16.0%
SCS	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%	1.3%	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%	1.9%

Age

The number of under 35s continues to increase, but only marginally. Over 65s also increased in number and there was a reduction in the number of staff aged 35 – 64. If current trends continue, there will be two very distinct generational groups of staff who are likely to have different requirements in terms of employment.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Under 35	13.2%	12.8%	12.7%	12.5%	11.0%	10.3%	13.0%	17.6%	17.9%
35 – 49	50.4%	48.1%	47.0%	45.2%	44.3%	43.2%	40.1%	38.8%	37.9%
50 – 64	34.9%	37.5%	38.8%	40.6%	42.9%	44.3%	44.4%	41.5%	41.3%
Over 65	1.40%	1.60%	1.50%	1.70%	1.90%	2.2%	2.5%	2.1%	2.9%

Gender

The percentage of female employees rose for the fourth consecutive year and is greater than 40% for the first time. The number of females employed has climbed by 9.2 percentage points since 2012.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Female	31.3%	32.4%	33.1%	32.5%	32.3%	34.5%	37.2%	39.4%	40.5%
Male	68.7%	67.6%	66.9%	67.5%	67.7%	65.5%	62.8%	60.6%	59.5%

Almost fifty percent of male employees work in the two most junior grades (mainly as Meat Hygiene Inspectors at EO grade). Seventy eight percent of employees in the two most junior grades are male. The proportion of women in more senior grades (HEO-SCS) is up from 78% to 81%. The proportion of female Senior Civil Servants (SCS) remains the same as the previous year. Female staff outnumber male staff in the two most senior SCS grades.

Grade	AO	EO	HEO / SEO	Grade 7 / 6	SCS
Female	56.0%	21.5%	51.1%	49.0%	45.8%
Male	44.0%	78.5%	48.9%	51.0%	54.2%

Disability

The percentage of staff who have declared their disability status (either as having or not having, a disability) continues to fall and at 67.9% is down 0.8 percentage points from the previous year. Many new starters choose not to disclose this information but will declare other characteristics. Work is ongoing to encourage reporting. 8.3% of staff who declared their disability status stated they had a disability. This was up from the previous year.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Disabled	5.1%	5.6%	6.1%	7.0%	6.9%	6.7%	7.9%	7.9%	8.3%
Not disabled	94.9%	94.4%	93.9%	93.0%	93.1%	93.3%	92.1%	92.1%	91.7%

Declaration rate	92.7%	90.3%	88.1%	83.1%	81.8%	79.6%	77.1%	68.7%	67.9%
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The number of disabled staff grew across all grades, particularly HEO to Grade 6. However the declarations rates for these grades fell.

Grade	AO	EO	HEO / SEO	Grade 7 / 6	SCS
Disabled	-	8.5%	9.2%	8.6%	-
Declaration rate	-	80.8%	59.9%	65.3%	66.7%

Note: Some data is withheld as the percentage is based on fewer than five individuals

Ethnicity

The figures show 91.9% of the workforce had declared their ethnicity. Ethnic minority representation is up from 2019 and at 11.9% is at its highest level since 2015. Of the 11.9% of staff from an ethnic minority background the largest groups are Asian (34.8%) and Black (31.2%).

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Ethnic minority	8.4%	9.2%	10.5%	12.1%	11.2%	10.7%	11.6%	11.3%	11.9%
White	91.6%	90.8%	89.5%	87.9%	88.8%	89.3%	88.4%	88.7%	88.1%
Declaration rate	92.1%	91.3%	90.6%	92.0%	91.7%	92.0%	92.2%	91.8%	91.9%

34.9% of Black staff were in AO and EO grades and 7.0% at Grades 7 and 6, whereas the figure for Asian staff was 20.8% and 14.6% and for Mixed Race it was 15.4% and 19.2%.

Grade	AO	EO	HEO / SEO	Grade 7 / 6	SCS
Ethnic minority	-	8.1%	16.2%	8.9%	-
Declaration rate	87.5%	93.4%	91.6%	88.6%	100%

Note: Some data is withheld as the percentage is based on fewer than five individuals

Sexual orientation

The number of FSA employees recording their sexual orientation continued to increase in 2020, rising by 3.2 percentage points from 2019 (64.5%). Of those recording their sexual orientation, the number of employees identifying as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual increased to 4.4%.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
LGB	2.4%	2.2%	2.5%	2.3%	3.0%	1.7%	2.9%	4.0%	4.4%
Declaration rate	30.0%	35.0%	42.0%	47.0%	50.0%	54.0%	58.9%	64.5%	67.7%

Religion and Belief

The number of FSA employees recording their religion or belief is 53.0%. This reversed the fall from 2019. The number identifying as Christian dropped from 64.6% to 63.0%. 2.5% of staff declared their religion as Islam and 1.0% Sikh. No other religion or belief recorded more than 1% and the number of staff with no religion increased from 15.0% to 16.3%.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Declaration rate	29.0%	33.0%	37.0%	42.0%	44.0%	46.0%	51.9%	50.0%	53.0%

Working patterns

The proportion of FSA employees who worked part-time increased for the first time since 2017 – up to 9.1%. The proportion of full-time employees working compressed hours i.e. less than five days per week also increased from 16.4% to 18%. Almost 40% of part-time staff are Meat Hygiene Inspectors with almost all working reduced hours due to partial retirement.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Part-time	8.4%	8.1%	9.1%	9.6%	10.1%	8.7%	8.3%	9.1%

Leavers / Exits

There were 100 leavers between 1 November 2019 and 31 October 2020.

Reason for leaving	Dismissal	Voluntary redundancy	Resignation	Transfer to OGD	Retirement	Other
Number of leavers	5	7	26	25	14	23

Note: 'Other' includes death in service, career break, loan out, ill health retirement or end of temporary contract.

In terms of leavers' diversity categories, the table below gives a breakdown by gender, disability, ethnicity and age since 2013. The number of non-declarations amongst leavers was lower than the previous year: 10% for ethnicity and 41% for disability.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of leavers	86	142	239	100	105	103	132	100
Female	41.9%	39.4%	42.3%	43.0%	39.0%	40.8%	48.1%	51.0%
Male	58.1%	60.6%	57.7%	57.0%	61.0%	59.2%	51.9%	49.0%
Disabled	6.5%	5.6%	3.9%	16.2%	5.7%	7.7%	8.1%	13.6%
Not disabled	93.5%	94.4%	96.1%	83.8%	94.3%	92.3%	91.9%	86.4%
Ethnic minority	5.1%	8.6%	8.1%	12.9%	12.9%	17.4%	17.2%	16.7%
White	94.9%	91.4%	91.9%	87.1%	87.1%	82.6%	82.8%	83.3%
Under 35	24.4%	14.1%	16.7%	22.0%	22.9%	23.3%	29.0%	29.0%
35 – 49	33.7%	35.2%	41.8%	32.0%	19.0%	28.2%	23.7%	32.0%
50 – 64	38.4%	40.1%	39.3%	42.0%	50.5%	39.8%	39.7%	35.0%
Over 65	3.5%	10.6%	2.1%	4.0%	7.6%	8.7%	7.6%	4%

Discipline and Grievances

From the recorded casework information between 1 October 2019 and 30 September 2020, there was a decrease in disciplinary cases from 19 to 14.

There were 11 grievances recorded, a decrease of 6. Due to the number of cases being low we do not provide information on details of protected characteristics to preserve anonymity.

Recruitment

There were 126 new starters between 1 November 2019 and 31 October 2020.

The percentage of new starters with a disability is at its highest level but the number of new starters not making a declaration continues to be high (62.7%). Ethnic minority recruits increased by 7.1 percentage points in 2019 as did the number of younger people, particularly under 35s.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Female	44.0%	42.0%	53.8%	41.8%	56.1%	53.2%	52.5%	58.7%
Male	56.0%	58.0%	46.2%	58.2%	43.9%	46.8%	47.5%	41.3%
Disabled	0.0%	2.0%	1.9%	4.1%	4.4%	8.9%	9.7%	10.6%
Not disabled	100.0%	98.0%	98.1%	95.9%	95.6%	91.1%	90.3%	89.4%
Ethnic minority	6.0%	13.0%	7.7%	9.5%	14.5%	10.3%	13.3%	20.4%
White	94.0%	87.0%	92.3%	90.5%	85.5%	90.5%	86.7%	79.6%
Under 35	31.0%	31.0%	50.0%	25.0%	33.1%	30.8%	44.2%	44.4%
35 – 49	38.0%	58.0%	40.4%	58.0%	46.0%	30.8%	35.9%	37.3%
50 – 64	31.0%	11.0%	9.6%	17.0%	20.9%	38.4%	19.2%	18.3%
Over 65	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%

Performance Management

The FSA reward and recognition scheme recognises and rewards individuals or teams for exceptional achievements relating to specific tasks or activities, and/or for acting as an outstanding role model in the demonstration of the FSA's Values.

Awards are limited to specific values (£50 vouchers or cash awards of £250, £500 or £1,000). There is no limit to the number of awards an individual may receive but the total amount is capped at £2,500.

In its second year of operation, those of EO grade tended to receive proportionately more awards (unlike the previous year), while HEO and SEO grades received proportionately less in relation to their number in the FSA workforce. Grades 7 and 6 had a proportionate distribution. Ethnic minority staff members tended to receive proportionately less awards, compared to white staff. Unlike 2019, those aged 35-49 tended to receive proportionately less awards, while those aged 50-64 received a proportionate amount. Under 35s received proportionately more. Another difference from last year was that men tended to receive proportionately more awards than women. Part-timers tended to receive proportionately fewer awards than full-time staff.

Equal Pay

FSA pay practice and structure is underpinned by a job evaluation scheme (JEGS) which is used to support fair and consistent decisions about the weighting of job roles and provide the basis of a fair and orderly grading structure. The JEGS scheme is used in respect of posts from the Administrative Officer grade through to Grade 6 – and most evaluations are undertaken when a new post is created or an existing post changes significantly. A separate analytical scheme, Job Evaluation for Senior Posts is used for jobs within the Senior Civil Service grades. An Equal Pay Audit completed in January 2019 found the FSA's pay policies and processes are consistent with good practice and the risk of equal pay claims is low.

Gender Pay Gap

In 2017 the Government introduced world-leading legislation that made it a statutory requirement for all organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. Government departments are covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 that came into force on 31 March 2017. These regulations underpin the Public Sector Equality Duty and require the relevant organisations to publish their gender pay gap data by 30 March 2018 and then annually. The FSA's fourth [gender pay gap report](#) is based on a snapshot of all FSA staff as at 31 March 2020.

Civil Service People Survey

The Civil Service People Survey is an annual survey to measure staff engagement across the Civil Service. As well as an overall organisational action plan, each directorate analyse their own results and involve all team members in designing local actions plans to address the things that matter to them. Analysis of different demographic groups' responses is undertaken to inform the organisational response to the survey. In 2019 the employee engagement score went up 3 percentage points to 67% which is the FSA's highest ever level of engagement and 4 points above the Civil Service engagement index score. FSA is now classed as a High Performing Civil Service department, putting us in the top 25% of all participating departments. All nine key themes in the survey saw increases including 'Inclusion and fair treatment' up 3 percentage points to 81%.

Bullying and Harassment

There was a decrease in reported bullying and harassment at work but the figure (13%) remains higher than other Civil Service organisations (12%). The number of incidents being reported increased by 19 percentage points to 55%. The percentage of people reporting cases is now 4 points higher than the Civil Service figure.

Conclusion

Our diversity and inclusion strategy sets out how the FSA will play our part in making the Civil Service the UK's most inclusive employer.

We are already a leader across government with our innovative approach to flexible working and we want to ensure that the FSA embraces Inclusion to the fullest extent possible too. We continue to draw on a wealth of best practice from across government and beyond and are listening to what our colleagues are telling us. As in all areas of our work, we will use the data available to take an evidence-based approach to set us on a path to greater diversity in our senior management cohort.

Significant effort has gone into delivering our D&I commitments over the past few years, but we recognise that we still have more to learn about our own working culture, attitudes and behaviour.