



Government
Internal Audit
Agency

Better insights better outcomes

Public Sector Equality Duty

2022 - 2023 report

April 2024



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Equality report

The Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) is committed to fairness, promoting equality and diversity in everything we do. We continue to focus on creating a healthy, safe and inclusive working environment for our people to thrive and feel they belong.

Taking equality considerations into account in our work is an important and integral part of our approach.

In carrying out our functions we are required to have due regard to and achieve the objectives set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This report reflects these provisions in the Equality Act 2010 as well as organisation's commitment to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities, to publish:

- equality objectives, at least every four years (from 6 April 2012); and
- information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty (from 31 January 2012)

The GIAA last published its equality objectives in October 2023¹. This report sets out how the GIAA complies with its responsibilities under the public sector equality duty to promote and monitor equalities. The report also provides aggregated information relating to our employees and a benchmark that enables us to measure progress and identify priority areas for further research and action.

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/655639b3544aea00dfb2ee4/Equality_Objectives_2021-22.pdf

Eliminate discrimination

Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination (BHD)

The GIAA is committed to eliminating any bullying, harassment and discrimination. In 2022 - 2023, we undertook the following in support of this commitment:

- SupportNet, our internal independent route of support, led an awareness campaign of their existence by attending a number of team meetings to discuss what constitutes bullying, harassment and discrimination and to promote the different support route options available for our people to use.
- Each senior leadership team created local action plans, including a section on tackling bullying and harassment issues in their area.
- Supported the cross government 'Speak Up' Campaign.

People networks

We continue to support our wide range of people networks. The following networks operated within the GIAA during 2022 - 2023:

- DAWN – Disability & Wellbeing Network
- Faith Networks
- Flexible Workers Network
- GEM – GIAA Ethnic Minority Network
- GLEAM - GIAA LGBTQ+ Equality and Allies Members' Network
- Green Network – for those wanting to do more for the environment
- Menopause Matters
- SupportNet – a source of support to others.
- Women in GIAA (WIG)

Each network has a dedicated intranet page that is accessible to all colleagues. The networks play an instrumental role in raising awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues, contributing to GIAA's people policies and acting as a critical friend to the organisation.

In early 2023 we set up bi-monthly meetings for all network chairs to connect together and with the senior diversity and inclusion sponsor and network sponsors. These meetings are used to identify cross network collaboration opportunities and to provide activity updates.

Towards the end of 2022 – 2023, GIAA became a member of the Business Disability Forum which helps us access best practices, resources, and expertise in creating inclusive workplaces for employees with disabilities. We have maintained our status as a Disability Confident Employer at Level 2 of the Disability Confident scheme. Throughout 2023 - 2024, the DAWN network will focus on achieving Disability Confident Leader level 3.

Gender pay gap report

Our GIAA gender pay gap figures for the 2022 - 2023 financial year are included in HM Treasury's Gender Pay Gap Report 2023², which was published on 30 November 2023 as part of the 'Transparency day' initiative, along with reports from other main government departments.

In 2022 – 2023, the GIAA's mean gender pay gap increased by 0.9 percentage pay points to 11.1% compared to 2021 - 2022. The median gender pay gap also increased by 2.5 percentage pay points to 14.3%.

The GIAA has implemented a long term gender pay gap action plan to help target areas that previous analysis determined were the main contributors to the gender pay gap including talent attraction, management and retention, reward and recognition. It is important to note that actions taken are long term measures so we do not expect to start seeing positive impact until they have been embedded.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hm-treasurys-gender-pay-gap-report-2022-to-2023>

Advance Equality of Opportunity

The GIAA is committed to reducing the inequalities faced by people with a protected characteristic by offering opportunities to develop and progress in their roles and careers. In 2022 - 2023 we offered the following:

Mentoring

Catapult is a mentoring scheme led by the Ministry of Justice, which aims to support colleagues from less privilege backgrounds to realise their full potential by helping to build confidence, realise aspirations and aid progression through connections with mentors. In 2021, GIAA signed up to the scheme for the first time and in 2022 we signed up for the second time with 5 mentees and 3 mentors taking part.

Progression Sponsorship Scheme

In 2022 – 2023, we started to scope out the design of the Progression Sponsorship scheme with a view to rolling it out later in the year. Taking a data driven approach we identified an under-representation of ethnic minority employees at grades 7 and above and designed the scheme to help reduce this gap.

Foster good relations

Communications

Through our communications channels, we have continued to focus on increasing the visibility of diversity and inclusion activity across the GIAA.

- We have created and published a number of internal communications videos to make our messages more accessible.
- GIAA has celebrated/commemorated the following days:

Deaf Awareness week, Dementia Action week, Mental Health Awareness week, Windrush day, Autistic Pride day, Carers week, Pride month, Pride evolution of language, Schizophrenia awareness day, World Suicide Prevention day, International Week of Happiness at Work, Bi visibility day, National Inclusion week, Black History month, World Menopause day, Childrens' Grief Awareness week, Wear it Pink day, Grief Awareness week, Chanukah, World Prematurity day, International Stress Awareness week, Interfaith week, Carers Right day, Diwali, International Mens' day, Advent, Holocaust Memorial day, Time to talk day, World Cancer day, LGBT History month, International Womens' day, Lesbian Visibility week, Easter reflections and Ramadan.
- We launched inclusion discussions, facilitating 43 structured conversations in teams across the agency.
- We arranged our first 'all agency' conference since the Covid 19 pandemic with people joining simulatenosly from several locations across the country. This brought together the whole organisation, to network, hear from senior leaders, and learn more about the strategic direction of the agency whilst also having the opportunity to contribute and share their thoughts and views. The conference also included a presentation on the importance of Allyship, forming part of our strategic approach to build a healthy, safe and inclusive culture.
- We engaged with our people to inform our People and Culture Strategy for the next four years. Our strategy articulates the strategic direction for our people and throughout 2022 – 2023 the strategy was reviewed and relaunched for the next four years. We took a consultative approach to hear from our people, receive their feedback and take on their views. This was achieved via feedback sessions which were set up at different locations across the UK. Sessions were engaging, interactive and creative with the use of lego and collages to inspire different ways of thinking.

Governance

Diversity and inclusion is governed by our People Committee (a sub-committee of our Executive Committee) that provides strategic direction on all people matters including diversity and inclusion. It has delegated responsibility for decisions relating to approaches in equality, diversity and strategic direction on people matters and consultation of views.

Our people

Overall workforce

The data presented here shows GIAA’s workforce by protected characteristic as at 31 March 2023.

We had an average of 456 full time equivalent people employed by the GIAA as at the end of March 2023.

The following table shows workforce composition by gender, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation. The data includes positive declarations only and excludes declarations of ‘prefer not to say’ or where information was not provided or is not held.

| Total proportion of people who identify as Female across all grades % | Total proportion of people who identify as Male across all grades % | Total proportion of people who identify as being from an ethnic minorities across all grades % | Total proportion of people who identify as having a disability across all grades % | Total proportion of people who identify as either Lesbian/gay/bi /other across all grades % |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| 54.4 | 45.6 | 25.2 | 14.0 | 5.7 |

Diversity data by grade

The following six tables illustrate the diverse make up of our organisation by grade as percentages in relation to the protected characteristics as at 31 March 2023 when we employed 456 full time equivalent people. The data excludes declarations of ‘prefer not to say’ or where information was not provided or is not held. Please note, there is a table at the end of this document that explains the job banding used in the GIAA and some of the acronyms used below.

All tables read across from junior grades at AO through to senior staff at SCS and the percentage are of the total. For example, of the total number of 16-24 year olds who work for GIAA, 50% of them work at HEO grade.

A table showing the proportion of our workforce in each age category within each grade

| Age | AO/EO % | HEO % | SEO % | Grade 7 % | Grade 6 % | SCS % |
|------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 16-24 | 50 | 50 | | | | |
| 25-29 | 28 | 62 | 3 | 7 | | |
| 30-34 | 12 | 24 | 26 | 35 | 3 | |
| 35-39 | | 26 | 15 | 38 | 15 | 6 |
| 40-44 | | 27 | 27 | 27 | 13 | 6 |
| 45-49 | | 8 | 41 | 28 | 18 | 5 |
| 50-54 | 4 | 15 | 33 | 23 | 15 | 10 |
| 55-59 | 6 | 15 | 33 | 24 | 17 | 5 |
| 60-64 | | 17 | 39 | 31 | 10 | 3 |
| 65 + | 10 | 40 | 30 | 10 | | 10 |

A table showing the proportion of our workforce who are male and the proportion who are female within each grade

| Gender | AO/EO % | HEO % | SEO % | Grade 7 % | Grade 6 % | SCS % |
|--------|------------|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Female | 7 | 25 | 33 | 21 | 10 | 4 |
| Male | 2 | 17 | 27 | 32 | 16 | 6 |

A table showing the proportion of our workforce from an ethnic minority within each grade

| Ethnic Minority | AO/EO % | HEO % | SEO % | Grade 7 % | Grade 6 % | SCS % |
|-----------------|------------|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Ethnic minority | 50 | 34.3 | 24.4 | 16 | 11.9 | 9.5 |
| Un-declared | 0 | 13 | 41 | 25 | 9 | 13 |
| White | 3 | 19 | 29 | 29 | 15 | 5 |

A table showing the proportion of our workforce with a disability within each grade

| Disability | AO/EO % | HEO % | SEO % | Grade 7 % | Grade 6 % | SCS % |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Disabled | 5 | 27 | 34 | 19 | 11 | 3 |
| Not disabled | 5 | 20 | 29 | 27 | 14 | 5 |
| Un-declared | 6 | 19 | 31 | 28 | 7 | 9 |

A table showing the proportion of our workforce by sexual orientation within each grade

| Sexual Orientation | AO/EO % | HEO % | SEO % | Grade 7 % | Grade 6 % | SCS % |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Hetero-sexual | 4 | 21 | 30 | 27 | 14 | 4 |
| LGBO* | 15 | 33 | 19 | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| Un-declared | 4 | 19 | 37 | 24 | 6 | 11 |

*GIAA employees are invited to record their sexual orientation as 'heterosexual/straight', 'Gay or Lesbian', 'Bisexual' or 'Other'. The term LGBO refers to employees who report belonging to one of these last 3 groups.

A table showing the proportion of our workforce by religious belief within each grade.

| Religion | AO/EO % | HEO % | SEO % | Grade 7 % | Grade 6 % | SCS % |
|--------------|------------|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Agnostic | 10 | 19 | 38 | 29 | | 5 |
| Atheist/None | 4 | 21 | 17 | 30 | 22 | 7 |
| Christian | 4 | 22 | 31 | 25 | 12 | 5 |
| Hindu | 9 | 27 | 36 | 18 | | 9 |
| Muslim | 11 | 18 | 39 | 21 | 11 | |
| Other | | 43 | 57 | | | |
| Sikh | 11 | 33 | 44 | 11 | | |
| Undeclared | 4 | 17 | 41 | 27 | 7 | 4 |

Grade structure

There are nine pay grades within the GIAA that follow the grade structure used across the civil service. The different grades are shown in the table below

| GIAA Grade | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| AO | Administrative Officer |
| EO | Executive Officer |
| HEO | Higher Executive Officer |
| SEO | Senior Executive Officer |
| Grade 7 | Grade 7 |
| Grade 6 | Grade 6 |
| SCS 1 | Deputy Director |
| SCS 2 | Director |
| SCS 3 | Director General |

Recruitment

We have sought to continue to attract, retain and develop diverse talent through innovative recruitment strategies, using social media, employee advocacy and targeted candidate packs. Our recruitment practice is inclusive, ensuring adverts are checked for language and include positive statements. All roles are open to reasonable adjustments to support the recruitment process. We highlight our work life balance benefits, including flexible working, in all of our job adverts. We continue to use name-blind job applications.

To expand our pool of applications we place all adverts on government's 'Find a Job' website which links to candidates who are claiming benefits due to a disability. The GIAA also participates in the Disability Confident Scheme which enables us to ensure all candidates who apply under this scheme and meet the minimum requirements of the role they have applied for are offered an interview.

All members of recruitment panels are required to complete Civil Service Expectations training. Interview panels consist of three people and are as diverse as possible, with mixed gender being a minimum requirement.

We apply an inclusive induction approach with built-in regular check-in points with new starters to promote networking and encourage feelings of belonging.

Returners Programme

In September 2022, GIAA launched a programme for people returning to the workplace following a career break of at least 18 months. We offered these returners a six-month opportunity to experience internal audit within the agency, and offered additional support with the practical and the psychological challenges of returning to work after a long break. Eight people joined the programme, and five of them secured a permanent role within GIAA at the end of their six-month placement. Those who left the agency at the end of the programme had built new skills and audit experience for their CVs and any future employment.

Corporate induction

The corporate induction supports our new hybrid working principles and the delivery of GIAA's strategy and mission of 'better insights, better outcomes'.

It is designed to be interactive and engaging, aiming to provide a warm welcome. The induction introduces colleagues to:

- The culture, mission and strategy of GIAA;
- Their role and responsibilities as a civil servant;
- Understanding the different parts of GIAA;
- GIAA's commitment to diversity and inclusion and our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 as an agency and as an employer within the Civil Service;
- Policies, information and systems;
- The support available for colleagues throughout their employment at GIAA.

New employees benefit by understanding what the organisation expects from them, how GIAA works and how they can align with our goals. The corporate induction is delivered virtually, meaning all colleagues get the same experience regardless of location to make the experience similar for all colleagues.

Learning, development and skills and apprenticeships

GIAA is committed to developing a strong learning and development culture and people are at the centre of our values.

The Civil Service apprenticeship strategy is just one of several steps the government has taken to grow the number of apprenticeship opportunities offered in the UK. The GIAA offers apprenticeships up to and including level 6 graduate and level 7 post graduate. During 2022 – 2023, approximately 8% of our workforce were undertaking apprenticeships, exceeding the government's commitment for 5% of the civil service's headcount to be apprentices by 2025. The government's strategy also includes a diversity and inclusion measure: the proportion of apprentices from lower socio-economic backgrounds should remain at or above the Social Mobility Commission benchmark. However, the GIAA does not currently hold data on this recently introduced measure.

Each year, the GIAA invests in a programme of learning for both national apprenticeship week and learning at work. These programmes promote the value of apprenticeships and the importance of learning and connecting with others, as well as targeting any skills gaps across the agency.

Coach and Focus

GIAA reviewed its performance policy and process with the view to design and deliver a new approach in April 2023 called Coach and Focus. The focus of the review was to ensure the approach we take gets the best from our people, and recognise and values their contributions. Coach and Focus aims to achieve this by providing a performance management structure to support and develop all our people whilst building better connections between managers and their staff. Coach and Focus aims to cultivate a culture of coaching style conversations so the conversation becomes learning itself and improves user experience by prioritising people over process.

Coaching Group

To complement and support our new performance management approach, we have a group of 15 fully qualified coaches who offer both one to one coaching to any individual who requests it, and team coaching for managers and their employees. The coaching group has members from all grades, roles and teams to reflect the diversity of the agency.

Learning at work week

The theme of the week was 'Learning Uncovered' and with the support and endorsement of our Chief Executive we chose this week to highlight the value of 'shadowing' different areas of the organisation, meetings, other professions and colleagues. Employees were encouraged to spend up to two hours shadowing a work area different to their own as part of their development and to expand their knowledge.

We also ran a development opportunity for AO Business Administration apprentices. The project reflected a 'Dragon's Den' style activity with each apprentice completing a nine month project based on a business need of GIAA. This project encouraged participants to network with senior leaders providing the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills, and behaviours which they would not usually have the opportunity to in their every day roles. This was the second year we ran the 'Dragon's Den' project and again it ended with a set of insights and recommendations for the Chief Executive to consider and the agency to take forward.

'Working through cancer' training

We offered the opportunity for all employees to attend training to develop skills and provide the tools to have conversations to support colleagues who have caring responsibilities, a disability or who are working through cancer or any illness. The training was delivered by Macmillan and following this, six employees volunteered to be trained as a trainer to continue to deliver the training across the Agency.

Skills and learning frameworks

GIAA developed a set of skills and learning frameworks for all roles and grades across the Agency which identified both technical and generic skills required for a particular role and signposted to the learning (both training courses and experiential learning) to build those skills and address any gaps. Progress can be recorded on a Learning Passport which an individual can download and keep with them as they move between roles and line managers, and they can use the passport to assess skills, and as the basis for their regular development discussions.

Health and wellbeing

GIAA is committed to supporting our people's wellbeing – physical, mental and financial - and aims to deliver this priority by:

- Promoting the range of wellbeing support in different ways to maximise take-up;
- Developing and trialling new and innovative wellbeing tools, recognising that we access and use support in different ways;
- Promoting healthy lifestyles;
- Continually improving the GIAA wellbeing offering;
- Developing GIAA wellbeing and mental health strategies and action plans (aligned with Civil Service wellbeing priorities);
- Early intervention for the prevention and management of musculoskeletal disorders .
- Continuing to meet quarterly with our Trade Unions representatives.

Supporting mental and physical health

We operate a hybrid working approach which allows colleagues the flexibility of some home working alongside attending an office location.

We also ensure colleagues who require workplace adjustments are fully supported and equipment is provided if required.

All our people have access to our Wellbeing Hub which provides a one stop shop for practical advice and support. The Hub includes six wellbeing categories which are financial wellbeing, mental health support, learning resources, physical wellbeing, relationships and support services. Each category contains information and signposting.

All our people across the agency have access to an Employee Assistant Programme (EAP). The EAP offers a complete support network of expert advice and compassionate guidance 24 hours per day, seven days a week, covering a wide range of issues which include:

- Life support: access to counselling for emotional problems and a pathway to structured therapy sessions at your convenience;
- Legal information: for issues that cause anxiety or distress including debt management, consumer, property or neighbour disputes;
- Bereavement support: the offer of qualified and experienced counsellors who can help with grief plus legal advisors to help with related legal matters;
- Medical information: qualified nurses are on hand to offer support on a range of medical or health-related issues offering practical information and advice; and
- Online cognitive behavioural therapy.

All our people have access to an occupational health service provided by Health Management Ltd (HML). They are there to give line managers medical advice about their employees' health and/or disability and how this relates to their work. HML can help with cases that could otherwise result in sickness absence or to help facilitate a return to work following long term sickness absence. They can also advise on a range of other issues such as stress, attendance management and specialist workstation assessments.

All our people across the agency have access to the **Department for Work and Pension's** Access to Work Mental Health services programme, which is delivered by Able Futures. Able Futures can provide nine months confidential, no cost advice, guidance and support from mental health professionals to help people cope with work while they manage a mental health condition such as anxiety, depression or stress.

We also have a cohort of employees who are fully qualified Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA). They are a point of contact for anyone at GIAA who is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. This interaction could range from having an initial conversation through to

supporting the person to get appropriate help, including in an emergency situation. Our MHFAs also promote mental health awareness, with blogs and webinars, supporting key awareness days/weeks in the wellbeing calendar.

We encourage all our people to engage with the charity Mind and take part in their Workplace Wellbeing Index survey. Taking part allows employees to provide feedback about mental health in the workplace providing the opportunity to have their voice heard. Mind then provide GIAA with detailed analysis to help us improve mental health in the workplace.