



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Equality Objectives & Information

2024/2025

January 2025



© Crown copyright 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at: hrcultureandengagement@energysecurity.gov.uk

Contents

Department for Energy Security & Net Zero Equality Objectives & Information	4
Current initiatives	4
External Equality Objectives	5
Enhance energy security	5
Protect billpayers	6
Create economic growth for the UK, and generate and protect jobs	7
Reduce the UK's carbon emissions	8
Internal Equality Objectives	9
The building of an inclusive and collaborative culture where people belong and have the tools to grow and deliver change.	9
We build knowledge to learn, improve and adapt, and we are bold and confident in seeking out feedback and challenge.	10
Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty	10
Assurance arrangements	10
Employee information	11
Requesting further information	16

Department for Energy Security & Net Zero Equality Objectives & Information

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) must, in the exercise of our public functions and as an employer, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, DESNZ has set out the following equality objectives as priorities for how we carry out our public functions (as a public authority) and how we treat our staff (as an employer). We also publish below equality information relating to our public functions and role as an employer and information demonstrating how DESNZ complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

We are taking an evidence-based approach and we regularly review progress against our equality objectives.

Our equality objectives reflect our four key priorities for the upcoming year as we make the UK a clean energy superpower:

- Enhance energy security
- Protect billpayers
- Create economic growth for the UK, and generate and protect jobs
- Reduce the UK's carbon emissions

Current initiatives

To establish our equalities narrative, we undertook an extensive exercise called the “Case for Change” whereby all directorates within the department identified major equality considerations within their work remit – as well as a set of objectives and actions that they would be taking forward. The results of this exercise are the equality objectives that are published within this document.

Since the formation of DESNZ, we have also developed our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, in line with the Civil Service D&I Strategy. We have made good progress, including the establishment of a network of D&I leads to coordinate local activity; building a strong set of DESNZ staff networks; and continued building PSED capability through regular training. We are now beginning development of a multi-year equality, diversity and inclusion strategy in which we will review all existing workstreams and evidence to identify our future priorities.

We are close to achieving our current target of 30% of the DESNZ workforce being based outside of London by 2027. Our efforts are now focused on supporting all our locations to become great places to work through building communities, outreach work and ensuring parity of employee experience. We have established strong and empowered staff networks which are engaged in our governance and supported by senior champions. We also want to promote a culture that encourages and values diversity of thought, where innovative and creative ideas can flourish.

External Equality Objectives

Enhance energy security

Equality Objective 1	
Endeavour that people with different protected characteristics, and people in different parts of the country, are impacted equitably by the system costs and benefits of increasing our energy independence.	
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will support the National Energy System Operator to develop and improve their capability to consider the cross-cutting impacts of their work areas on protected groups.• We will identify and develop policy interventions that will advance equality of opportunity across the currently under-represented protected characteristics so that they are supported and able to engage with flexibility services and smart energy technology, increasing the equality of uptake.• We aim to uphold our equality objectives and obligations under PSED across all parts of the value chain for the Carbon Capture, Utilisation & Storage (CCUS) Programme; and we will consider the impact of the locational aspects of electricity market reform (REMA).

Protect billpayers

Equality Objective 2	Where possible, reduce disadvantages faced by vulnerable energy consumers (including the elderly and those with a disability) when making decisions that affect all consumers, including decisions on domestic energy bills. The development of a strategy to ensure the delivery of our statutory fuel poverty target for England.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will deliver the Warm Home Discount Scheme, which provides more than 3 million rebates off the energy bills for households in or at risk of fuel poverty. • We are currently undertaking a review of the 2021 fuel poverty strategy. We plan to publish this review alongside a consultation seeking stakeholder views on priorities for an updated fuel poverty strategy in due course. We will develop potential new commitments for inclusion in the updated fuel poverty strategy. • In developing an approach to future policy costs on bills, we will ensure vulnerable and low-income households are considered and that the costs of future policies are shared fairly. • We are considering the impact of gas and electricity price rebalancing options across all energy billpayers. This looks in particular at low-income and vulnerable consumers, including interactions with the government's wider fuel poverty strategy. • We will continue our work with other government departments to ensure data enables better targeting of support, including by suppliers, particularly in the identification and support of vulnerable households. • As part of work to assess how and where the retail regulatory framework might need to be reformed to support innovation in the sector, we are considering the impacts on energy billpayers, in particular low-income and vulnerable consumers.

Create economic growth for the UK, and generate and protect jobs

Equality Objective 3	Promote equal access to employment in the energy sector.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support industry in increasing the proportion of representation across the nine protected characteristics employed in the new CCUS industry by engaging industry through the CCUS Council and the Carbon Capture & Storage Association (CCSA). • Find opportunities to promote Women In Nuclear, leading by example as a department through supporting Women In Nuclear Events, as well as applying gender diversity to public facing events and appointment processes. • Monitor the work of various industry-led bodies as they consider the jobs and skills requirements of the new hydrogen and CCUS sectors, and review recommendations relating to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion in these workforces. In particular, consider the Hydrogen Skills Alliance's work to develop a Hydrogen Skills Strategy; Hydrogen UK's work on a Hydrogen Supply Chain Strategy; the CCUS council's workstream on the CCUS supply chain; the work of the Green Jobs Delivery Group; and the Hydrogen Energy Association's initiative to form an early careers/transitioning professionals' forum. • Ensure equality is embedded across Great British Energy's programme. GBE will work with DESNZ HR to build PSED capability and capitalise on opportunities to promote equality throughout our work and processes.

Reduce the UK's carbon emissions

Equality Objective 4	Ensure that the transition to net zero is fair and affordable, and does not negatively impact disadvantaged groups (in particular women, children, ethnic minorities, indigenous groups, and those with disabilities).
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will monitor the impact of our domestic climate action and clean energy policies, and any inequalities which arise, to assess the need for targeted support for disproportionately impacted groups. • We will advocate for gender equality in the global energy transition, particularly through our membership and support of the Clean Energy Ministerial Equality in Energy Transitions Initiative and the Equal by 30 Campaign. • We will strengthen the gender-responsiveness and inclusivity of UK climate finance for both adaptation and mitigation. We aim to encourage an increase in the proportion of climate finance that has gender equality as a principal or significant objective as defined by the OECD Development Assistance Committee Gender Equality policy marker. • For new and existing International Climate Finance programmes, we will encourage delivery and monitoring and evaluation partners to take a Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) sensitive approach, ensuring that programmes deliver positive outcomes for people and nature.

Internal Equality Objectives

The building of an inclusive and collaborative culture where people belong and have the tools to grow and deliver change.

Equality Objective 1	Implement evidence-backed interventions to develop diverse talent and build strong talent pipelines, so that there are opportunities for career development for people with underrepresented protected characteristics, regardless of where staff are based. This includes supporting increased representation of women, ethnic minority staff and disabled staff at senior grades.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress towards departmental goals to increase representation of women, ethnic minority staff and disabled staff at senior grades.• Seek to increase baseline diversity data completion rates to at least 80% across all characteristics.• Explore avenues and job platforms to reach diverse pools of candidates, in line with our representation goals and departmental diversity data.• Develop the DESNZ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to enable the department to draw on a diverse range of experiences, skills and backgrounds and to embed an inclusive workplace culture.

We build knowledge to learn, improve and adapt, and we are bold and confident in seeking out feedback and challenge.

Equality Objective 2	Work strategically to foster collaboration and to support the building of a robust departmental equality evidence base for policy development.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will develop the Departmental Analysis Repository Tracking tool, which will enable learning by collecting data and reviewing Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) analysis in Business Cases and Impact Assessments, e.g. data collected on protected characteristics, and assist policy teams to better assess their PSED duties/support providing data where there are gaps.• We will make the most of lessons learned to ensure that learning is shared appropriately and ensure our repository of data, resources, and best practice is refreshed and socialised regularly.• We will work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to consider as wide a range of viewpoints as possible using consultation and other engagement to build a strong evidence base of equality impacts.

Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty

Assurance arrangements

The ultimate responsibility for meeting the requirements of equalities legislation in policy and decision-making lies with Ministers. They are supported by the policy and corporate services teams in the department that undertake the equality analysis process, who are in turn supported by the Culture and Engagement team in HR by raising awareness and capability among staff through training modules and signposting to authoritative guidance (e.g. from the Government Equalities Office and the Equality and Human Rights Commission). The department also has information and further guidance on meeting the equality duties on the intranet available to all staff. We will continue to improve the capability and understanding of the Public Sector Equality Duty in the department to make better policy decisions that have equality considerations at the centre.

There are two lead senior civil servants responsible for raising the awareness of embedding equality considerations into the department's decision-making process. They regularly report into the governance boards (e.g. Executive Committee, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee) on the department's progress on embedding equality considerations into all policy and corporate services workstreams.

We are also working to explore additional local opportunities to embed PSED governance. We aim to build a comprehensive local picture which can feed into group-level reporting, senior boards and forums.

When working on policy, our officials are expected to look at the impact each option might have on people sharing any of the nine protected characteristics. They also consider the need to avoid or mitigate against any negative impact on any group.

Ministers are advised of the impact that the proposed options may have on various groups of people, and this is considered when a policy decision is made.

We seek input from external stakeholders to gain a broader insight into our decisions. We will continue to build and develop our relationships with stakeholders and the public, including those that represent groups with protected characteristics, to improve how we carry out our public functions.

Directors and Director Generals are required to review compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and progress of Equality Objectives on a quarterly basis, to which all senior civil servants contribute.

We aim to continue to improve the department's assurance processes to ensure PSED is considered throughout the policy development process, and it is clearly set out how we have paid due regard to PSED.

Employee information

We want our department to reflect the diversity of the population we serve and are setting out this information to meet our legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010. We routinely monitor our diversity data to measure our progress in ensuring DESNZ in an inclusive workplace, and to identify areas for improvement.

All equality information relating to our employees is published via DESNZ's annual reports, which can be found via the link here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/desnzs-annual-report-and-accounts-2023-to-2024>

The data presented in this report shows information relating to DESNZ employees. We assumed the following principles during analysis and data presentation:

- percentages have been rounded to the nearest one percentage point - this means percentages may not sum to exactly 100%
- headcount includes permanent and fixed-term appointees employed by DESNZ (including employees out on secondment or loan and all types of absence or special leave)
- for some of our analysis, SCS grades may be grouped together - SCS refers to employees at grade: permanent secretary, director general, director, deputy director

- all other grades are represented as follows: grade 6 (G6), grade 7 (G7), senior executive officer (SEO), higher executive officer (HEO), executive officer (EO), administrative officer (AO)

Sex

Table 1 shows the representation of employees by sex and responsibility level. There is a higher proportion of female employees at grades G7, G6 and SCS. Information on the Gender Pay Gap is published annually. The Gender Pay Gap report can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/desn-z-gender-pay-gap-report-and-data-2024>

Table 1: DESNZ employment - headcount and proportion by sex and responsibility level

Grade	Female	Male
SCS	90 (42.9%)	120 (57.1%)
G7 or G6	1,000 (48.5%)	1,060 (51.5%)
HEO or SEO	1,080 (51.9%)	1,000 (48.1%)
EO or EA	150 (57.7%)	110 (42.3%)
Total	2,320 (50.3%)	2,290 (49.7%)

Ethnicity

Table 2 shows the representation of employees by ethnicity and responsibility level. The highest proportion of ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities) is at AO and EO grades.

Table 2: DESNZ employment - headcount and proportion by ethnicity and responsibility level

Grade	Ethnic minorities	White	Prefer not to say	Not known
SCS	20 (9.1%)	160 (72.7%)	10 (4.5%)	30 (13.6%)

Grade	Ethnic minorities	White	Prefer not to say	Not known
G7 or G6	320 (15.5%)	1,400 (68.0%)	90 (4.4%)	250 (12.1%)
HEO or SEO	450 (18.0%)	1,180 (57.0%)	60 (2.9%)	380 (18.4%)
AO or EO	70 (20.0%)	140 (51.9%)	10 (3.7%)	50 (18.5%)
Total	860 (18.6%)	2,880 (62.3%)	170 (3.7%)	710 (15.4%)

Religion

Table 3 shows representation of employees and their religion or belief (including lack of belief) by responsibility level. The highest proportion of employees with declared religion or belief is at AO and EO grades.

Table 3: DESNZ employment – headcount and proportion by religion or belief and responsibility level

Grade	Declared religion	No religion	Prefer not to say	Not known
SCS	110 (50.0%)	60 (27.3%)	20 (9.1%)	30 (13.6%)
G7 or G6	1,040 (50.5%)	580 (28.2%)	190 (9.2%)	250 (12.1%)
HEO or SEO	1,080 (52.2%)	450 (21.7%)	140 (6.8%)	400 (19.3%)
AO or EO	160 (59.3%)	40 (14.8%)	20 (7.4%)	50 (18.5%)
Total	2,390 (51.7%)	1,130 (24.5%)	370 (8.0%)	730 (15.8%)

Disability

Table 4 shows the proportion of employees by disability status and responsibility level. The highest proportion of employees with declared disability is at AO and EO grades.

Table 4: DESNZ employment – headcount and proportion by disability status and responsibility level

Grade	Declared disability	Declared no disability	Prefer not to say	Not known
SCS	20 (9.5%)	140 (66.7%)	10 (4.8%)	40 (19.0%)
G7 or G6	190 (9.3%)	1,410 (68.6%)	100 (4.9%)	350 (17.1%)
HEO or SEO	220 (10.6%)	1,230 (59.1 %)	90 (4.3%)	540 (26.0%)
AO or EO	30 (11.5%)	140 (53.8%)	10 (3.8%)	80 (30.8%)
Total	460 (10.0%)	2,920 (63.5%)	210 (4.6%)	1,010 (22.0%)

Sexual orientation

Table 5 shows the proportion of employees by sexual orientation and responsibility level. The highest proportion of employees who declared they are LGBO (lesbian, gay or bisexual or other sexual orientation) is at HEO and SEO grades.

Table 5: DESNZ employment – headcount and proportion by sexual orientation and responsibility level

Grade	Heterosexual	LGBO	Prefer not to say	Not known
SCS	150 (71.4%)	10 (4.8%)	20 (9.5%)	30 (14.3%)
G7 or G6	1,470 (71.7%)	180 (8.8%)	170 (8.3%)	230 (11.2%)
HEO or SEO	1,330 (63.9%)	220 (10.6 %)	140 (6.7%)	390 (18.8%)
AO or EO	170 (65.4%)	20 (7.7%)	20 (7.7%)	50 (19.2%)

Grade	Heterosexual	LGBO	Prefer not to say	Not known
Total	3,120 (67.8%)	430 (9.3%)	350 (7.6%)	700 (15.2%)

Caring responsibilities

Table 6 shows the proportion of employees by caring responsibilities and responsibility level. The highest proportion of employees that declared having caring responsibilities is at SCS grades. Caring responsibilities are not a protected characteristic but may be associated with characteristics that are protected.

Table 6: DESNZ employment – headcount and proportion by caring responsibilities and responsibility level

Grade	Caring responsibilities	No caring responsibilities	Not reported
SCS	50 (22.7%)	70 (31.8%)	100 (45.5%)
G7 or G6	240 (11.6%)	680 (32.9%)	1,150 (55.6%)
HEO or SEO	190 (9.1%)	770 (36.8 %)	1,130 (54.1%)
AO or EO	20 (7.7%)	90 (34.6%)	150 (57.7%)
Total	500 (10.8%)	1,610 (34.7%)	2,530 (54.5%)

Age

Table 7 shows the proportion of employees by age and responsibility level.

Table 7: DESNZ employment – headcount and proportion by age (in years) and responsibility level

Equality Objectives & Information

Grade	16-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and over
SCS	0 (0.0%)	50 (22.7%)	100 (45.5%)	60 (27.3%)	10 (4.5%)
G7 or G6	410 (19.9%)	900 (43.7%)	430 (55.6%)	250 (12.1%)	70 (3.4%)
HEO or SEO	860 (41.3%)	660 (31.7 %)	300 (54.1%)	190 (9.1%)	70 (3.4%)
AO or EO	110 (40.7%)	50 (18.5%)	30 (57.7%)	50 (18.5%)	30 (11.1%)
Total	1,380 (29.8%)	1,660 (35.9%)	860 (54.5%)	550 (11.9%)	180 (3.9%)

Requesting further information

We are committed to being transparent about how we respond to our statutory equality duties. If you would like to find out more about how the department met its equality duties, please contact us at hrcultureandengagement@energysecurity.gov.uk, or get in touch with us at:

55 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HP
United Kingdom

This publication is available from: www.gov.uk/desnz

If you need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email alt.formats@energysecurity.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.