



Government
Internal Audit
Agency

Better insights, better outcomes

Public Sector Equality Duty

2024/25 report

February 2026



Contents

Equality report	3
Eliminating discrimination	4
Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment (DBH)	4
People networks.....	4
Embedding equality considerations	5
Gender Pay Gap report.....	5
Mentoring	5
Fostering good relations	6
Governance	6
Our people	7
Diversity data by grade	7
Recruitment	11
Recruitment Data	11
Recruitment processes	11
Learning, development, skills, and apprenticeships	12
Coaching group	12
Health and wellbeing	13
Supporting mental and physical health	13
Annex 1	15
Grade structure	15

Equality report

The Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) is committed to fairness and 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 for, and achieve the objectives set out in 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.

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; and
- information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty

The GIAA last published its equality objectives in October 2023.

This report sets out how the GIAA complies with its responsibilities under the public sector equality duty (PSED) to promote and monitor equalities. The report also provides aggregated information relating to our employees and provides a benchmark that enables us to measure progress, identify priority areas and develop action plans.

Eliminating discrimination

Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment (DBH)

The GIAA remains committed to eliminating any discrimination, bullying, harassment. In 2024/25, a bespoke Behaviour Matters mandatory training session was rolled out to 435 employees with objectives to:

- raise awareness of what constitutes poor behaviours (microaggressions) and what good behaviours, compassion and kindness looks like
- encourage self-reflection - *'what does it feel like to be on the receiving end of me'*
- increase the confidence of people to 'speak up' if they experience Bullying and Harassment (B&H) or, they witness B&H
- increase the confidence and competence of line managers to create a psychologically safe space
- increase the confidence and competence when dealing with B&H concerns
- raise awareness of speak up routes
- increase the number of people 'speaking up' - reporting their experiences and concerns of Bullying and Harassment (B&H).

A post training evaluation indicated that, participants described themselves as feeling more confident and competent across all training objectives and understood the pathways for reporting concerns after attending.

Further to this, 29 employees were trained as psychological safety ambassadors to lead activities on cultivating psychological safety.

The Agency plans to develop further activities during 2025/26 to support the elimination of poor behaviours from its workforce and will continue promoting psychological safety.

People networks

We continue to support our wide range of people networks. The following networks operated within the GIAA during 2024/25:

- DAWN – Disability and Wellbeing network
- Faith network
- Flexible Workers network
- GEM – GIAA Ethnic Minority network
- GLEAM - GIAA LGBTQ+ Equality, Allies and Members' network
- Green network – for those wanting to do more for the environment
- Menopause Matters
- Women in GIAA (WIG)
- Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)
- SupportNet – a source of support to others

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. They each play an integral part in progressing the Agency's inclusion agenda through providing fellowship, support, and networking opportunities for their members; support members with their career progression and personal development; and identify good practice and opportunities for improvement at GIAA.

The networks each contribute to policy development, for example HR policies, operational changes and plans, and training delivery.

In 2025/26, GIAA will undertake a review of the current people networks to ensure that they are delivering within the intended objectives.

Embedding equality considerations

As part of our duty to ensure that our policies do not lead to unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations, work has been progressed with Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) and building assurance processes through the Agency's People Committee including the monitoring of completed EIAs.

Gender Pay Gap report

We are committed to transparent reporting. Our gender pay gap data is published as part of His Majesty's Treasury's (HMT) Gender Pay Gap report. The report for 2024/25 was published on 16 December 2025 on the HMT site. GIAA will continue to work through the action plan and continue to address any imbalances to show progression and 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 2024/25 we offered the following:

Mentoring

Catapult is a mentoring scheme led by the Ministry of Justice, which aims to support colleagues from less privileged backgrounds to realise their full potential by helping to build confidence, realise aspirations and aid progression through connections with mentors. GIAA has actively participated within this scheme since 2021. In 2024/25 we continued to offer this opportunity to both mentors and mentees and held bite-sized introductory sessions led by senior leaders in GIAA.

In addition to Catapult, GIAA also offers internal mentoring to anyone who requests it.

Fostering good relations

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. Our People Committee also acts as a consultative and decision-making forum, inviting views and perspectives from our people networks.

Communication

Our communication platforms are widely used by people diversity networks to celebrate occasions and events and raise awareness of issues; providing the opportunity for others to learn about the different communities, cultures, and lived experiences of each other.

GIAA continues to promote, celebrate and mark a diverse range of events such as Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day, Windrush Day, Mental Health Awareness week, National Inclusion week, Black History Month, LGBT+ history month, Pride month, Advent, Christmas, Diwali, Easter, Eid, Hanukkah, and Ramadan.

Our people

Overall workforce

The data presented here shows GIAA’s workforce by protected characteristic as of 31 March 2025.

490 people with a full time equivalent of 455.21 were employed by the GIAA as at the end of March 2025.

Table 1 displays 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 employees who identify as female across all grades	Total proportion of employees who identify as male across all grades	Total proportion of employees who identify as being from an ethnic minority across all grades	Total proportion of employees who identify as having a disability across all grades	Total proportion of employees who identify as either lesbian/gay/bi/ other across all grades
54.08%	45.92%	21.00%	9.00%	4.90%

Diversity data by grade

Tables 2 to 7 below illustrate the diverse make up of our organisation by grade as percentages in relation to the protected characteristics as of 31 March 2025. Unless stated 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 included as Annex 1 which explains the job banding used in the GIAA and some of the acronyms used.

All tables read across in columns from Administrative Officer (AO) through to Senior Civil Servants (SCS) and the percentages relate to the total for each row. For example, of the total number of 25–29-year-olds who work for GIAA, 48.0% of them work at Higher Executive Officer (HEO) grade.

Table 2 shows, for each age group, the percentage* of employees within each of the pay grades

Age	AO/EO	HEO	SEO	Grade 7	Grade 6	SCS
16-24	100%					
25-29	16.0%	48.0%	20.0%	16.0%		
30-34	10.5%	18.4%	42.1%	28.9%		
35-39		10.3%	37.9%	31.0%	20.7%	
40-44		14.0%	31.6%	33.3%	17.5%	3.5%
45-49		13.9%	32.9%	29.1%	17.7%	6.3%
50-54	2.6%	15.6%	31.2%	23.4%	16.9%	10.4%
55-59	2.1%	21.3%	23.4%	25.5%	20.2%	7.4%
60-64	4.6%	7.7%	35.4%	33.8%	13.8%	4.6%
65 +		28.0%	48.0%	20.0%	4.0%	

*The total of the percentage values for each row may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Table 3 shows, for each defined gender category, the percentage* of employees within each of the pay grades

Gender	AO/EO	HEO	SEO	Grade 7	Grade 6	SCS
Female	4.5%	18.9%	37.7%	22.6%	12.1%	4.2%
Male	1.8%	15.6%	25.3%	33.3%	17.8%	6.2%

*The total of the percentage values for each row may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Table 4 shows, for each defined ethnic category, the percentage* of employees within each of the pay grades

Ethnic Minority	AO/EO	HEO	SEO	Grade 7	Grade 6	SCS
Ethnic minority	8.2%	23.7%	36.1%	24.7%	5.2%	2.1%
Undeclared		18.5%	44.4%	18.5%	11.1%	7.4%
White	2.4%	15.3%	28.9%	29.8%	18.0%	5.6%

*The total of the percentage values for each row may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Table 5 shows, for each defined disability category, the percentage* of employees within each of the pay grades

Disability	AO/EO	HEO	SEO	Grade 7	Grade 6	SCS
Disabled	5.5%	25.5%	30.9%	21.8%	12.7%	3.6%
Not disabled	2.6%	15.8%	30.7%	28.7%	17.0%	5.3%
Undeclared	4.3%	18.3%	37.6%	26.9%	7.5%	5.4%

*The total of the percentage values for each row may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Table 6 shows, for each defined sexual orientation category, the percentage* of employees within each of the pay grades

Sexual Orientation	AO/EO	HEO	SEO	Grade 7	Grade 6	SCS
Heterosexual	2.9%	16.4%	31.2%	29.1%	15.8%	4.7%
LGBO**	8.3%	20.8%	33.3%	20.8%	12.5%	4.2%
Undeclared	3.7%	21.0%	35.8%	22.2%	9.9%	7.4%

*The total of the percentage values for each row may not total 100.0% due to rounding

**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.

Table 7 shows, for each defined religion category, the percentage* of employees within each of the pay grades

Religion	AO/EO	HEO	SEO	Grade 7	Grade 6	SCS
Agnostic	7.4%	22.2%	25.9%	37.0%	3.7%	3.7%
Atheist/none	3.1%	14.8%	27.3%	23.4%	25.0%	6.3%
Buddhist				100%		
Christian	2.7%	17.1%	29.4%	29.9%	14.4%	6.4%
Hindu	10.0%	30.0%	40.0%	10.0%		10.0%
Muslim	7.4%	14.8%	40.7%	29.6%	7.4%	
Other		20.0%	40.0%	40.0%		
Sikh	9.1%	9.1%	63.6%	18.2%		
Undeclared	1.1%	20.4%	38.7%	25.8%	10.8%	3.2%

*The total of the percentage values for each row may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Recruitment

The Agency continues 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 with 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 continue to 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. In 2024/25, we began scoping the introduction of practical assessments at interview stage as a mechanism to encourage candidates with reduced social skills to demonstrate their potential. This work remains in progress.

Recruitment Data

The GIAA ran a total of 39 recruitment campaigns with 5853 applications started on the Civil Service Jobs portal. 39% of these applications were from those describing their gender as male compared to 40% of applications from those describing their gender as female. 3% of applicants preferred not to state their gender whilst 18% omitted this information from their application.

For applications where ethnicity was declared at application stage, 42% were from a White background compared to 16% from Asian/Asian British and 16% from a Black, African, Caribbean/Black British background.

9% of applications were from candidates who described themselves as having a disability.

Recruitment processes

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 regular check-in points for new starters with their manager and peers to promote networking and encourage a sense of belonging. To enhance this, in 2025/26 the Agency will look to develop regional communities across its workforce to enable more opportunity for collaborative networking and relationship building.

Learning, development, 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 postgraduate.

During 2024/25, 5.71% of our workforce were undertaking apprenticeships, exceeding the government's commitment for 5% of the civil service's headcount to be apprentices by 2025. Colleagues based within the devolved nations (Wales and Scotland) are subject to a different apprenticeship levy process. To ensure that all GIAA employees (regardless of location) have parity of learning opportunities, GIAA funded access to equivalent learning opportunities.

The Agency apprenticeship programme continues to hold the 'Investors in People' Gold level of accreditation until August 2026. In 2025/26, GIAA will undertake a review of apprenticeships in relation to our strategic aims and priorities to explore opportunities for entry pathways and career development into GIAA and the Internal Audit Profession.

Coaching group

The GIAA has a group of nine 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.

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 with our Trade Unions representatives.

Supporting mental and physical health

GIAA operates a hybrid working approach which allows employees the flexibility of some home working alongside attending an office location.

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

All our people have access to our Mental Health and Wellbeing pages which provide a one stop shop for practical advice and support.

All our employees 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
- 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
- online cognitive behavioural therapy
- an Active Care service that supports those who are absent from work with stress and anxiety, this early intervention provides the employee with guidance, advice and relevant support through the EAP
- a wellbeing referral process to provide employees with 'in the moment' wellbeing support as well as help and signposting with next steps.

All our employees have access to an occupational health service provided by Medigold. They provide people managers with medical advice and recommendations regarding their employees' health and/or disability and how this relates to their work. Medigold 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.

GIAA also has 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. Our MHFAs also promote mental health awareness, with blogs, supporting awareness days and weeks in the wellbeing calendar.

In 2023 and 2024 the Agency participated in the Mind Workplace Wellbeing Index. In 2023, GIAA achieved a Bronze Award. After implementing the actions recommended by Mind, our index score improved, and in 2024 we were awarded a Silver Award. This recognition demonstrates that GIAA has made clear progress in supporting employee mental health, taking action across key areas and showing positive impact over time. We remain committed to continuing this work and implementing further recommendations.

As part of our mandatory learning programme, employees receive training on mental health in the workplace. In addition, our people managers complete dedicated Mental Health for People Managers training. Both training sessions are delivered on a two-year-year cycle.

Annex 1

Grade structure

There are nine pay grades within the GIAA that follow the grade structure used across the civil service. The different grades and descriptors are shown in table 8 below.

Table 8

GIAA grade	Grade descriptor
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



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