

# Single Equality Scheme

December 2009 – November 2012

December 2009



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# Introduction

## Statement by the Auditor General for Scotland

Welcome to Audit Scotland's first Single Equality Scheme.

Audit Scotland is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects difference. We believe that as an employer and public body, and in our audit role, we can play a leading part in the promotion and application of best practice in the areas of diversity and equality.

We already strive to do this in a number of ways. We have established a Diversity and Equality Steering Group, our corporate plan includes a strong commitment to equality, and we consider diversity and equalities issues when scoping our national studies and best value audits, and in the performance information we gather.

This Single Equality Scheme draws together and updates previous statements and policies, and moves us onto another level. It makes our current position on diversity and equality clear, sets out what we intend to do both internally and in the way we carry out our work, and explains how we will monitor our progress.

In particular I believe the scheme demonstrates our total commitment to making Audit Scotland a place where diversity and equality are integral to our organisational culture. It is important that the staff of Audit Scotland understand that commitment, and I therefore ask them to read the document and act on it and help us achieve that ambition.



**Robert W Black**

Auditor General for Scotland and Accountable Officer

# Context and commitment

## Purpose

1. Previously we have had in place equality schemes and corresponding action plans for race, gender and disability. We have now developed this Single Equality Scheme covering all equality strands and this forms the basis of our work on improving equality and diversity not only in how we run Audit Scotland, but also for working with our clients and stakeholders. Through this Single Equality Scheme we aim to give further momentum to the equality agenda, and respond more effectively to the anticipated requirements of the Equality Act in 2010.

## Audit Scotland

2. Around 200 public bodies in Scotland spend more than £31 billion of public money each year. This includes the Scottish Government, local councils and NHS bodies. The duty of the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission is to help ensure that public money is spent properly, efficiently and effectively.
3. Our role in Audit Scotland is to provide the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission with the services they need to carry out their duties. The Auditor General is independent, reports to the Scottish Parliament, and is held accountable for Audit Scotland's work. The Accounts Commission is independent of local councils and of government and can make reports and recommendations to Scottish ministers.

## Our vision

4. Our Corporate Plan sets out our vision, objectives and the supporting activities we will carry out over the period 2009 - 2012, and is available at <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk>. Exhibit 1 on page 3 provides a summary of this plan.
5. We are committed to maximising the impact of our work in holding public bodies to account and helping them to improve and providing more evidence each year, and over time, on the impact our work has had. We have set the following priorities for the next five years:
  - deliver more streamlined audit in partnership with other scrutiny bodies
  - maximise our contribution to the improvement of public services
  - increase the impact of our work
  - become a centre of excellence for public audit
  - improve the transparency of our costs and governance arrangements.

## Exhibit 1: Our vision, objectives and supporting activities



6. Based on the seven principles identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, Audit Scotland has identified four values that underpin everything we do:
- Effective communication
  - Quality
  - Commitment to learning and improvement
  - Respect.
7. Recognising these values, we have set out a diversity statement that underpins our corporate plan objectives of '*holding to account and helping to improve*'. The main elements of our diversity statement are set out in Exhibit 2 below.

**Exhibit 2: Extract from Audit Scotland's Diversity Statement**

- All staff are entitled to be treated with respect and enjoy equality of opportunity in order that their selection and subsequent development is based entirely on merit. Discrimination will not take place against any current or prospective member of staff on the grounds of their age or perceived age, civil partnership status, colour, disability, ethnic origin, family responsibilities, gender, marital status, nationality, national origin, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, trans-gender status or work pattern.
- We will put the promotion of diversity and equality at the heart of policymaking and will take a leading role in demonstrating best practice.
- We will actively promote equality of opportunity through circulating vacancy details as widely as possible and a rigorous process of monitoring by our Human Resources department.
- We will raise staff awareness of what equality and valuing diversity means and enable managers to promote and be accountable for equality of opportunity through our Performance Development Scheme and training for all staff.
- We will positively value the different perspectives and skills of staff and make full use of these.

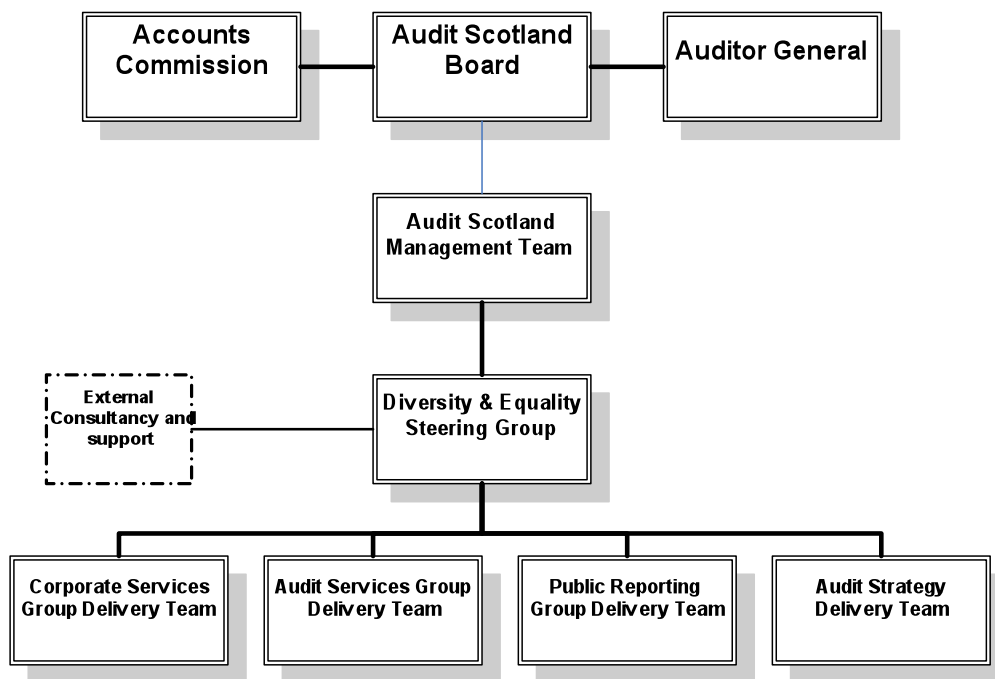
8. We have developed this Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan based on these values.

## Leadership and responsibilities

9. The Auditor General for Scotland is the Accountable Officer and has overall responsibility for our Single Equality Scheme. The Auditor General will work closely with Audit Scotland's Board and the Senior Management Team to oversee our scheme and the delivery of the actions set out within our Equality action plan.
10. We have established new arrangements across Audit Scotland to take forward diversity and equality, including the creation of a Diversity and Equality Steering Group. These new arrangements are designed to help mainstream diversity and equality within the organisation and ensure a coordinated corporate response on equality issues.

11. The Steering Group will report its activity and progress on its workplan and priorities directly to Audit Scotland's Senior Management Team, which in turn reports directly to the Audit Scotland Board, the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission. Exhibit 3 below sets out the relationships between the Steering Group, the Senior Management Team and the delivery teams in each area of our business.

**Exhibit 3: Equality arrangements in Audit Scotland**



## Resources

12. The Diversity and Equality Steering Group steers the organisation's strategy on all matters relating to diversity and equality. This includes ensuring effective design and delivery of Audit Scotland's and the Accounts Commission's equality schemes and action plans. The Steering Group also holds our business groups to account for their progress in mainstreaming diversity and equality in our activities.
13. The Steering Group includes senior leads for each business area together with practitioner and specialist members who have an interest in the subject of equality and diversity and are developing their expertise on individual areas of equalities. The Steering Group has a strategic role but its membership, rooted within different teams based across Audit Scotland, is able to ensure that action and the process of culture change takes place at a local level.
14. In support of the Steering Group there are delivery teams in place across our business groups to ensure that action takes place on diversity and equality issues, both through our approach and delivery of our work and also through the results and reporting of our audit work. Expert advice and support is available on diversity and equality to support the Steering Group.

# Equality Duties

15. As a public body we are legally required to eliminate discrimination and promote good relations, as well as promote equality, in relation to disability, gender, gender re-assignment and race. We have developed this scheme to meet these requirements but also have extended this to address age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and human rights, in readiness for the anticipated requirements of the Single Equality Bill.

## A Single Equality Scheme for Audit Scotland

16. Understanding issues of diversity and equality is important not only for how we run Audit Scotland, but also for working with our clients and stakeholders, all of whom have to consider equality and diversity in the day-to-day delivery of public services. We believe that we can play an important role in promoting equality and diversity more widely, both as an employer, and as a service provider for the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission.
17. Previously we have had in place equality schemes and corresponding action plans for race, gender and disability in response to legislative requirements. We have now developed this Single Equality Scheme covering all equality strands and this forms the basis of our work on improving equality and diversity across all equality strands. The individual schemes are now superseded. By having a Single Equality Scheme we aim to give further momentum to the equality agenda, and this will allow us to respond more effectively to the anticipated requirements of the Equality Act in 2010.

## Legislative Background and Requirements

18. A number of pieces of current legislation place duties on Audit Scotland as a public body to support the elimination of discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. Some of the legislation relates to specific aspects of equality and although there are common areas and requirements there are also subtle differences which we need to take account of when addressing equalities. Our aim in producing the Single Equality Scheme is to level up those requirements across the different equality strands. We have outlined the main public sector duties under current legislation below.

## The Equality Bill

19. The UK Government introduced an Equality Bill in April 2009 and it is expected to become law in Autumn 2010. The Bill aims to improve and strengthen existing laws but also to make the current complex set of discrimination laws much simpler and easier to understand. It is proposed that the Bill will introduce a new streamlined Equality Duty to replace the race, disability and gender equality duties, and which will also cover age, gender reassignment, religion or belief and sexual orientation. It is likely that the Bill will become law in 2010.



20. The UK Government intends that the new single Equality Duty will be more effective than the existing three separate duties because it will streamline processes and help public bodies focus their efforts on outcomes and action rather than on producing plans and schemes.

## **Current public sector duties**

21. There are three specific equality duties on public bodies in relation to disability, gender and race. Each of the equality duties has two elements – a general duty and a specific duty. The general duties differ in some ways but each requires that in relation to each strand of equalities, all public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- **promote equality of opportunity**
  - between disabled persons and other people
  - between people of either gender
  - between people of all racial groups
- **eliminate discrimination**
  - that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
  - that is unlawful under the Equality Act (gender)
  - that is unlawful under the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended
- **promote good relations**

22. The specific duties are the steps we need to take to ensure we are meeting the general duties, and all require the creation of equality schemes and action plans. This includes the development of this scheme and the Equality Action Plan; our monitoring activities; and carrying out equality impact assessments. Audit Scotland is subject to both the specific and general elements of each of the duties.

## **The Disability Equality Duty**

23. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 as amended by the DDA 2005 places a duty on all public sector bodies to promote disability equality. The legislation means we must be proactive in ensuring that people with disabilities are treated fairly. The **Disability Equality Duty** is about promoting equality and embedding equality for all, including people with disabilities, into our culture in practical and demonstrable ways. This means including people with disabilities and disability equality in everything we do.

24. The Disability Equality Duty also requires all public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons in public life, and

- take steps to take account of people's disabilities, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people.

25. The duty is based on the social model<sup>1</sup> of disability which recognises that at present people with disabilities do not have the same opportunities or choices as other people, nor do they enjoy equal respect of full inclusion in society on an equal basis. The poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from attitudinal and environmental barriers.

## The Gender Equality Duty

26. The Equality Act 2006 places a duty on all public sector bodies to promote gender equality. The legislation means that Audit Scotland must be proactive in ensuring that people are treated fairly whatever their gender. In addition to common elements noted above, the **Gender Equality Duty** general duty requires all public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate harassment of persons that is related to their gender, and
- promote positive attitudes towards the needs of people of either gender

27. The Gender Equality Duty aims to make gender equality central to the way that public bodies work. It is designed to address the fact that, despite over 30 years of individual legal rights on sex equality, there is still widespread discrimination – sometimes intentional, sometime unintentional – and persistent gender inequality.

## The Race Equality Duty

28. The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations Amendments Act of 2000) places a duty on all public sector authorities to promote racial equality. The **Race Equality Duty** means we must be proactive in ensuring that people of all racial groups are treated fairly. Again in addition to the elements described at paragraph 21 the Race Equality Duty general duty also requires all public bodies to have due regard to the need to promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

29. The Race Equality Duty is designed to achieve a variety of benefits, including encouraging policy makers to be more aware of possible problems and the need for improvement; improve the delivery of suitable and accessible services that meet varied needs; encourage greater openness about policy making; and increase confidence in public services, especially among ethnic minority communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Audit Scotland considers disability under the Social Model of disability rather than the legal definition provided by the Disability Discrimination Act. The Social Model goes further than the legal definition and was developed by disabled people. We recognise that it is often the barriers in society that exclude people with disabilities, rather than any individual impairment or medical condition.

30. The Race Equality Duty also aims to make the promotion of race equality central to the employment of staff and helps Audit Scotland:

- make our workforce more representative of the communities we serve
- attract able staff from all ethnic backgrounds
- avoid losing or undervaluing staff
- improve staff morale and productivity
- improve the way staff are managed
- help develop good practice, and
- help avoid claims of unlawful racial discrimination.

## **Human rights**

31. The Human Rights Act 1998 came into force in October 2000 and gave effect to the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights. For a public authority, like Audit Scotland, it makes it unlawful to breach the Convention rights, amongst other legal requirements. We aim to ensure that the fundamental human rights enshrined in the Act are protected through our work, and with the partners we work with in the UK and from other countries.

## **Resolving differences**

32. There may be circumstances where differences arise when we are developing policies or improving our activities because of differing beliefs or backgrounds. We expect our staff, our stakeholders and our clients to be treated fairly and with respect, and the values set out within our Diversity Statement will guide and support us in this.

# Supporting activities

33. We are committed to valuing and promoting diversity and are working towards increasing the diversity of our staff, and taking a leading role in promoting equal opportunities practices and diversity both as an employer and through our audit activity.

## Policies and Activities

34. The way in which we develop policies and conduct our activities should reflect our commitment to diversity and equality. We recognise that we must ensure:

- our current policies and procedures do not discriminate, and
- we consider equality fully when we develop new policies and activities.

35. We aim to monitor effectively the impact of the policies, including those in our staff handbook, and take action quickly to address any shortcomings. Our objectives in doing this are to ensure every policy and procedure seeks to promote equality and diversity and that our staff, when using these procedures and policies, embed consideration of equality and diversity into their decision-making.

36. In order to support our core objectives of *holding public bodies to account and helping them to improve* we carry out several different strands of audit activity:

- Best Value audits
- performance audits and performance information
- annual audits
- co-ordination of scrutiny activity in local government, and
- audit procurement and quality assurance.

37. We are building consideration of equalities into each of our functions, with a view to promoting equality and diversity in the bodies we audit. We explain more about this at paragraph 55.

38. Annex A sets out the top policies and activities assessed by our involvement groups, Management Team and the Diversity and Equality Steering Group as being the priorities to focus on in meeting our equality duties using impact assessment. These are our most important activities, which also have the potential to impact on equalities. A programme of impact assessments for these policies and functions is already in place (See paragraph 52 for more information).

## Consultation and Involvement

39. At the heart of the specific duties is the requirement to consult and involve people to assess our progress on achieving our duties including how we have developed this Single Equality Scheme. We

recognise that to improve equalities and eradicate discrimination in Audit Scotland, staff and stakeholders have to be involved not only in identifying potential discrimination but also in developing solutions and reviewing the progress and impact of those solutions.

40. To maximise the benefit from involvement and to make sure that people have the opportunity to contribute fully, we approach it in two ways – involvement of staff to look primarily at our internal policies and activities, and also our external-facing work; and involvement of external stakeholders to assess the policies and activities which affect those outside the organisation. We regularly undertake focus groups and workshops to help ensure that projects and initiatives benefit from the input of a diverse group of staff and managers.
41. The Disability Equality Duty requires public bodies to involve people with disabilities, and we have established mechanisms to achieve this. As part of our former Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009 we identified that there was a limited opportunity to involve people with disabilities internally and we sought to develop a meaningful and longer term process of engagement with a wider range of stakeholders. As a result Audit Scotland has worked with Capability Scotland's Training and Consultancy Team to support us in running involvement events with disabled people.
42. Our consultation and involvement activities have all contributed to developing this scheme and action plan. They include:
  - **Staff involvement**– We ran a staff involvement event in August 2009 to look at the issues of equality in Audit Scotland and how we carry out our work. 31 staff (10 per cent of all out staff) attended the event.
  - **Staff consultation** – We ran an on-line survey for all staff with questions about leadership and strategy for equality; our internal policies and activities; the work we do; training and skills; and attitudes to equality monitoring information. A total of 84.2% per cent of staff responded.
  - **Involvement of people with disabilities** – We held an involvement event on the development of this Single Equality Scheme with Capability Scotland, building on its knowledge of our organisation and our relationship with it.
  - **Consultation with organisations representing different equality strands** – During August and September 2009, members of the Steering Group visited a number of agencies, charities and other organisations that represent each of the equality strands. We sought their advice and insight into how best to develop our scheme and action plan.
43. We intend to widen our involvement activities to include all the strands of equality covered by this single scheme. There are specific actions in our Equality Action Plan to reflect this.
44. Senior management encourage staff and expect line managers to encourage their teams to get involved with equalities within Audit Scotland and in particular as part of our involvement work.

## Training and skills development

45. The value that Audit Scotland delivers is based upon the knowledge and skills of our staff. We can only have an effective, efficient and continuously improving organisation if our staff are properly equipped for the work they do. Our Learning and Development Strategy sets out how we intend to meet those needs and is updated on an annual basis. It brings together individual training plans and business initiatives as well as the corporate level training needs.
46. We believe that all our staff have a role to play in our approach to diversity and equality and we encourage all staff to take personal responsibility for considering diversity and equality in their daily work.
47. All staff have completed on-line training on diversity and equality covering all of the current duties and this is a mandatory step in the induction of new starts at Audit Scotland. All senior managers within Audit Scotland have undertaken our Management Development Programme which includes diversity and equality elements.
48. The Diversity and Equality Steering Group members need a range of knowledge, skills and competencies in order to fulfil their responsibilities. Training and support is provided to ensure that they can build their knowledge and effectiveness.
49. A programme of awareness sessions and full training for staff on equality impact assessments has also been developed and is being rolled out.

# Increasing our impact

50. We are committed to measuring and demonstrating the impact of our work. To support this we have a framework for assessing and reporting on the longer-term impact of our work. It sets out four areas where we expect to have an impact and contribute to improvements:

- assurance and accountability
- planning and management
- economy and efficiency
- effectiveness and quality.

51. We use this framework in developing measures of impact for our corporate plan objectives. We will use this same framework in capturing and reporting progress on the impact of our Equality Action Plan.

## Equality impact assessments

52. We are committed to undertaking impact assessments which incorporate all the equality strands. We are aware that there is a risk in such an approach because there is potential for issues to become 'lost' amid other strands. However, we have put in place mechanisms to ensure that any issues particular to one strand of equalities are properly addressed in any impact assessment process. We have adapted the Scottish Government's impact assessment tool to meet our needs and the unique nature of our role and work in Scotland.

53. Undertaking impact assessments can be resource intensive. To ensure we get as much out of the process as possible, each assessment is led by a senior member of staff and supported by a wider group of staff and members of the Diversity and Equality Steering Group.

54. Annex A to this scheme sets out the policies and activities we have assessed as being our top priorities for impact assessment. We are committed to publishing the results of our impact assessments on our website.

## The impact of our work

55. Other public bodies have the same statutory duties that we have in Audit Scotland and we have a lead role in promoting equal opportunities practices and diversity through our audit activity. We address equality issues through our audit work in a number of ways. This includes:

- **Best Value audits** – Scottish local authorities have a statutory duty to deliver best value and continuous improvement in their services, including equal opportunities. Audit Scotland carries out a programme of Best Value audits on behalf of the Accounts Commission. We have developed an Equalities Toolkit that will support our auditors to assess public sector

bodies' performance, including councils, in relation to equality both at a corporate and at an individual service level.

- Best Value audits of central government and NHS bodies are an area of ongoing development for Audit Scotland. We are working with stakeholders on a proportionate, risk-based approach to Best Value audit and will use the same frameworks as those for local government Best Value audits, including the equalities toolkit, across our audits in the rest of the public sector.
- **Performance audits and performance information** – Our Project Management Framework (PMF) and Diversity Guide (Building Diversity into our Work) helps our auditors to explicitly consider equalities at the scoping stages of every study. Our study briefs are sent for comment to a range of stakeholders, including the main equalities organisations, and we seek specific advice from the most relevant stakeholders for each study. We plan to create more opportunities to promote equalities through the selection of study topics.
- Audit Scotland (on behalf of the Accounts Commission) specifies statutory performance indicators which all councils, police forces and fire brigades must publish. There are specific indicators relating to race, gender and disability.
- **Annual audit** – We use a set of Priorities and Risks Frameworks (PRFs) to help identify risks in individual public bodies, including local authorities and health boards. These help auditors to assess audit risk and decide where to target resources. Equalities are considered as a cross-cutting theme across the key priority and risk areas included in the PRF.

56. We have identified a number of improvements we can make to each of these areas of our work in order to increase the impact. These are in our Equality Action Plan. Other improvements may also be identified from our programme of equality impact assessments.

## Working with other countries

57. In recent years, we have received a growing number of requests for assistance and visits from overseas audit organisations. We have to balance carefully any international activity with our core audit work in Scotland but, where possible, we have tried to respond positively to such requests. We try to help and encourage developing countries and Eastern European states to build their own systems of good governance and public audit. In deciding which countries we will work with we consider the requirements of the Human Rights Act (see paragraph 31).



# Monitoring and review

## Monitoring information

58. We currently collect the following information about our staff:

- gender
- age
- marital status
- race or ethnicity
- disability
- working patterns.

59. We undertake annual monitoring of race, gender, age and working patterns covering key areas such as recruitment, remuneration, learning and development, performance management and grievances. We report the results of this annual monitoring to our Management Team and share it with the Diversity and Equality Steering Group, union representatives and staff, and publish it on our website. If any data suggests unequal treatment between different groups, for example a gender pay gap, we examine it in further detail and take corrective action, where necessary. This work has informed our list of priorities and the Equality Action Plan.

60. We also currently collect information on age, disability, gender, race and religion from applicants as part of our recruitment processes. Our Human Resources team collates this information and reports it at the end of each recruitment campaign. The reports provide figures on the number of applicants at each stage of the recruitment process broken down by different groups or strands. The early stages of our recruitment and selection process are carried out by trained managers who have no knowledge of each applicant's personal data in relation to any aspects of equality.

61. We do not currently monitor transgender status, sexual orientation, religion or faith as part of our monitoring processes but plan to expand our information gathering and reporting arrangements to ensure discrimination does not occur in any of these areas. We will ensure appropriate actions and measures are incorporated into our revised single equality scheme.

## Staff performance development and improvement

62. Using the information Audit Scotland gathers at recruitment we undertake a review of gender, disability, race and age equality concerning staff development and retention. This forms part of the information for our annual Equality Monitoring Report.

63. Our performance appraisals of staff help develop individuals, improve organisational performance, and feed into corporate and local business planning. Performance appraisals are also essential for career

and succession planning - for individuals and for the organisation as a whole. They are important for staff motivation, attitude and behaviour development, communicating and fostering positive relationships between managers and staff. At Audit Scotland, formal performance appraisals are conducted at least annually for all staff and there is clear guidance and training provided for appraisers and appraisees on the operation of the system.

64. Our competency framework, which helps our staff understand the behaviours which we seek to promote in our work, was refreshed during 2008. Staff were invited to participate in the process of identifying our priorities for this project. Equality competencies were introduced and the importance of behaviour and attitudes which support diversity and equality is woven throughout the new competency descriptions. The revised framework is now operational for all staff and managers as part of the performance management and appraisal system. A similar project is now nearing completion for our 25 most senior managers and leaders.
65. Audit Scotland conducts a bi-ennial staff survey which is undertaken through an external agency with individual responses remaining anonymous and confidential. The survey has historically had a high response rate and covers topics such as staff views on management, how we conduct our work and the working environment. We are able to analyse the results within business groups and across different strands such as age, gender etc.

## **Measuring and reporting progress on our Single Equality Scheme**

66. Looking forward, evidence to support assessment of progress against our Single Equality Scheme will come from our staff and stakeholder involvement activity, staff survey results, our annual equality monitoring report, including the summary results from our annual staff appraisal round. Measuring progress on our external facing activities will be more challenging (see paragraphs 50-51) but we will use our external involvement activity and our much broader corporate measuring impact work to capture indicators of progress.
67. Our Diversity and Equality Steering Group will monitor progress on the actions within our scheme on a quarterly basis and report these to our Management Team twice yearly. We plan to expand and develop our annual equality monitoring report to include other aspects of equality and report on progress on our scheme. The summary results of this report will feature in our Corporate Annual Report, which will be the main vehicle for external reporting of our progress on this scheme.
68. Our annual Equality Report will include:
- progress on the actions in our Single Equality Scheme
  - the results of information gathering on all aspects of equalities
  - results of completed equality impact assessments
  - what we have done with the information collected, and
  - the action we are taking based on that information.

## Access to information

69. Our website provides access to information about the work we do and the reports we publish.

This document can be made available in alternative formats. As with all our publications, if you require an alternative format please contact **Audit Scotland, 110 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4LH**

Tel: 0845 146 1010 Fax: 0845 146 1009

[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk)

## Feedback

70. If you wish to offer feedback on this scheme please contact [info@audit-scotland.gov.uk](mailto:info@audit-scotland.gov.uk) or staff can contact their Diversity and Equality Steering Group business lead.

## Review of Scheme

71. We will formally review our whole scheme every three years.

# Annex A: Priority Policies and Activities

Policy or Activity
<b>The Work We Do</b>
1. Forward study programme 2010/2011
2. Review of performance information for Local Government
3. Review of the project management framework for performance studies
4. Development of Quality Framework
5. Approach to Procurement of Audits for 2011/12 – 2015/16
6. Development of Best Value 2 audits in local government
7. Development of shared risk assessments for local government with inspectorates and regulators
<b>Our Policies</b>
8. Implementation of the new staff contribution based pay system.
9. Improvements to our Competency and performance development system
10. IT hardware replacement programme
11. Development of our Property Strategy
12. Implementation of our Electronic Document and Records Management System
13. Development of our Health and Safety policy and procedures
14. Introduction of our electronic working papers system
15. Review of our rotation and ethics policies in Audit Services Group
16. Review of facilities management and support arrangements
17. Recruitment and selection
18. Code of Conduct
19. Bullying and Harassment of staff
20. Flexible working for staff

# Annex B: Equality Action Plan

This Action Plan is reviewed regularly and informed by findings from our impact assessments, monitoring activity and other development work. It will be updated over the lifecycle of the scheme.

## 1. Building equalities into our work

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
1/1	Develop <b>shared understanding of the scrutiny of equalities</b> in public bodies with stakeholders.	<p>There is a clear shared understanding of our roles and responsibilities on the scrutiny of equalities with stakeholders including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Auditor General</li> <li>▪ Accounts Commission</li> <li>▪ Scottish Government</li> <li>▪ Regulators and Inspectorates</li> <li>▪ Equalities and Human Rights Commission</li> <li>▪ Other Sector Groups</li> </ul> <p>This understanding of our roles and responsibilities is communicated to our staff and the expectations of coverage within our audit approaches are clear.</p>	Corporate Management Group	December 2010	All
1/2	Review our <b>project management framework*</b> for performance audits to ensure that it embeds consideration of equalities though the lifecycle of a study.	<p>There is a clear methodology which mainstreams equalities into our approach to studies.</p> <p>Practical guidance and examples are available to staff to consider how they can build in equalities at each stage of their study.</p> <p>Recommendations which promote or improve equalities are more evident in our public reports.</p>	Directors of Public Reporting Group	December 2010	All

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
1/3	Continue to embed equalities into our <b>priorities and risks frameworks</b> for planning annual audits.	Audit staff understand equality issues and the impact decision making in the public sector can have on equalities.	Directors of Audit Services	October 2009 and ongoing	All
		Our annual audits take proper account of risks on equalities as part of wider risk assessment work and consider the impact on our work programmes.  We gather intelligence on progress on addressing equalities across the public sector and use this information in overview reporting and other reports.	Directors of Public Reporting Group	August 2010 and ongoing	All
1/4	Review our <b>forward study programme*</b> with the aim of developing further opportunities for promoting equalities across the public sector.	Our national study programme takes account of issues of equalities as part of the development of themes for future projects.  We create opportunities to promote equalities through the selection of study topics.	Directors of Public Reporting Group	September 2010	All
1/5	Embed the consideration of equalities into our approach to <b>Best Value*</b> audit across the public sector.	The Best Value Equalities Matrix (audit toolkit) is widely used as part of all our audits.  We routinely report on equalities issues through our Best Value audit reports on local authorities or within our annual audit reports for other public bodies.	Corporate Management Group	December 2010	All
1/6	<b>Measure the impact</b> of our work on equalities.	We gather good practice examples and resources to use in our work.  We capture equality impacts as part of wider corporate impact developments.	Corporate Management Forum	Ongoing  Review June 2010	All

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
1/7	Review <b>communication</b> processes for inclusivity.	A completed review and recommendations are implemented which ensure that our communication strategy recognises needs of diverse audiences.	Communications Manager	March 2010	All
1/8	Extend our <b>Corporate Quality Framework</b> and appraisal processes to include consideration of diversity and equality.	Completed reviews and recommendations which ensure that approaches to equality are properly considered in our audit work.	Director of Audit Strategy	December 2009	All

## 2. Reviewing our policies and activities

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
2/1	Develop our <b>involvement</b> activity and establish a group from a wider range of backgrounds.	<p>An internal involvement group is established whose views and experiences influence decisions and priorities.</p> <p>We develop our approach to using external involvement groups or accessing established involvement groups on areas where we are not able to establish internal groups or where wider involvement is needed.</p>	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	March 2010	<p>All</p> <p>Disability Sexual Orientation Race/ Ethnicity Religion or Faith</p>
2/2	<b>External networks</b> are developed with other public bodies to provide wider support and resources for staff.	<p>Staff have access to participate in networks on individual strands across a larger group of staff, for example with NDPBs.</p> <p>We are able to access a wider group of people to develop involvement across a number of equality areas.</p>	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	August 2010	<p>Disability Sexual Orientation Race/ Ethnicity Religion or Faith</p>
2/3	Develop and introduce a <b>corporate project management approach</b> which includes appropriate consideration of equalities and impact.	<p>A corporate project management approach is introduced which embeds equalities with finance, resources, and other considerations.</p> <p>Resources to support consideration of equalities within policy or activity development are embedded within project management processes and mainstreamed.</p>	Director of Corporate Services	March 2010	All
2/4	Strengthen equality and diversity requirements into our <b>procurement and tendering procedures*</b> .	<p>Our suppliers and the audit firms we work with meet the standards we expect of ourselves on equality and diversity.</p> <p>We ensure that all staff involved in procurement use the refreshed guidance.</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Services</p> <p>Director of Audit Strategy</p>	September 2010	All



Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
2/5	Complete planned programme of <b>impact assessments</b> and report on results of assessments on Audit Scotland's website.	Improved external reporting on the outcome of our impact assessments programme.	<p><b>Leads</b> identified for impact assessments responsible for their activity.</p> <p><b>Directors</b> responsible for programme of impact assessments for activities within their business area.</p> <p>Diversity and Equality Steering Group responsible for developing corporate reporting style for impact assessments.</p>	<p>Ongoing until December 2010</p> <p>By December 2009</p>	All
2/6	Review <b>access and facilities in our properties*</b> to ensure these meet the needs of the people who work for us and visitors to our offices.	<p>Improved facilities and access in current properties.</p> <p>Inclusion of access and other provisions as decision criteria in future office accommodation considerations.</p>	Finance Manager	December 2010	Disability Gender Religion/Faith
2/7	Simplify and refine the structure of our <b>Staff Handbook</b> .	<p>Staff can more easily access guidance and policy.</p> <p>There is clearer logic to the structure of the staff handbook.</p> <p>Policies and guidance are rationalised and there is a timetable for review of each policy.</p>	Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager	June 2010 and ongoing	All

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
2/8	Develop our <b>recruitment and selection*</b> processes, including how and where we advertise, to attract more candidates from minority groups.	<p>Increase the number of applicants with disabilities when we advertise externally.</p> <p>Increase the number of applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds when we advertise externally.</p> <p>Diversify our recruitment advertising in mainstream press and specialist publications to make sure we reach wider groups and communities.</p> <p>Understand and take action on any patterns of recruitment, including gender, race, and disability and also consider business group and grade gender profiles.</p>	Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager	March 2010 and ongoing	Gender Disability Race/ Ethnicity Religion/Faith Sexual Orientation

### 3. Developing our information and reporting

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
3/1	Develop regular <b>reporting</b> and monitoring arrangements to assess <b>progress on actions</b> within this Single Equality Scheme.	An assessment of progress on our Single Equality Scheme actions is routinely produced and we report progress regularly to Management Team and Audit Scotland's Board.  We demonstrate progress on our equality action plans to our staff and stakeholders.	Diversity and Equality Steering Group implements process and reporting protocols.  Directors or relevant leads have overall responsibility for contributing on progress in areas they are responsible for.	March 2010	All
3/2	Produce reports on <b>vacancies and recruitment campaigns</b> setting out information and actions on any equality issues.	Information is analysed on past vacancies and the outcome of recruitment and we take prompt action to address any perceived or actual inequalities.	Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager	June 2010 and ongoing	All
3/3	Produce an <b>annual review</b> of progress on our Single Equality Scheme and action plan.	A comprehensive annual Equality Report is produced which provides clear information on our monitoring and review of equality information, progress on impact assessments and this Equality Action Plan.  A summary annual review is also prepared which will be included in Audit Scotland's Annual Report.  We demonstrate progress on our equality action plans to our staff and stakeholders.	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	May 2010	All
3/4	Develop our <b>routine monitoring</b> to examine other areas of equalities.	Through our regular reporting and progress on equalities we are able to demonstrate to staff a clear justification and re-assurance on the handling and collection of information across equality strands.  Routine monitoring examines possible trends across all areas of equalities.	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	December 2010	Disability Sexual Orientation Religion or Faith

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
3/5	Develop <b>benchmarking</b> on areas of equalities with other audit agencies and scrutiny bodies.	<p>We develop a contact list for all of our external contacts on equalities which all staff can access.</p> <p>We take account of good practice in other organisations and learn from this.</p> <p>We develop relationships with equality leads in other organisations and use this to share experiences on equality issues.</p> <p>Our policies and practice reflects our learning from other organisations.</p>	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	September 2010 and ongoing	All
3/6	Supporting <b>knowledge management developments</b> to better manage our knowledge on equalities.	<p>We are better able to share our contacts and information on equalities in the public sector.</p> <p>We gather good practice examples and resources to use in our work.</p> <p>We use this knowledge to inform our future work.</p>	Director of Corporate Services	December 2010	All

## 4. Improving our confidence and skills

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
4/1	Leadership and management development programmes will include training on equalities.	<p>There is clear commitment from senior managers and line managers on equalities in practice.</p> <p>There is visible ownership of equality and diversity issues in business groups and across the organisation.</p> <p>Senior management and line managers are aware of the specific duties placed on Audit Scotland as a public body and what this means for their part of the business.</p> <p>Managers are skilled and competent discussing equality issues in our work.</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Services</p> <p>Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager</p>	August 2010 and ongoing	All
4/2	Emphasis is placed on equalities within new <b>competency framework</b> as part of performance development and improvement developments*.	<p>Values and behaviours are clearly communicated to all staff.</p> <p>Clear expectations of behaviours against which performance can be measured are set out.</p> <p>Everyone understands what behaviours are expected of them.</p>	Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager	October 2009 and ongoing	All
4/3	A programme of <b>awareness raising</b> sessions on aspects of equalities is developed.	<p>Staff have access to lunchtime sessions led by experts on different strands of equalities.</p> <p>Business group leads on equality attend local team meetings to update teams on corporate developments.</p>	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	December 2010	All

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
4/4	<p><b>Training on equalities</b> is developed to focus on areas identified as a priority by staff:</p> <p>Specifically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-line induction training</li> <li>- Recruitment Training</li> <li>- Disability Discrimination Act for Line Managers</li> </ul>	<p>All staff complete up to date on-line training on equalities when they join the organisation.</p> <p>Recruitment training ensures that equality issues are clearly understood</p> <p>Training on the practical requirements of DDA for line managers is offered as part of corporate learning and development plan.</p> <p>Staff have an up to date understanding of equality and diversity issues and know how it affects them in their role with Audit Scotland.</p>	Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager	June 2010 and ongoing	<p>All</p> <p>(DDA training specific to Disability)</p>
4/5	Current training programme on <b>impact assessments</b> and feedback from participants are reviewed and we develop materials and programme for <b>future training</b> .	Training on impact assessments is developed for staff to ensure this is provided regularly and routinely as part of core corporate learning and development programme.	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	March 2010	All
4/6	Provide clear <b>links to advice and support</b> on equality issues.	Staff have access to individuals who have relevant expertise and can provide support on specific area/ strands of equality.	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	March 2010	All
4/7	Improve <b>resources</b> available to staff.	<p>Access to information and support on equalities is signposted clearly on Libro.</p> <p>Information and knowledge banks are developed to support staff on equalities.</p> <p>Practical advice and lessons learned are collated and shared with staff.</p> <p>We gather good practice examples and resources to use in our work.</p>	Diversity and Equality Steering Group	September 2010 and ongoing	All

Reference	Actions	Measuring Success: Outputs and Outcomes	Responsibility	Timescales	Equality Strands
4/8	There are wider opportunities for staff to be involved in corporate projects and working groups.	<p>Allocation of development opportunities is transparent and open.</p> <p>As part of corporate project management approach, resources and contributors are identified at the inception of the project.</p> <p>Performance and contribution to corporate projects is part of the overall performance appraisal for individual staff.</p>	Corporate Management Forum	June 2010	All

\* - an impact assessment is already planned/ underway on the activity