



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

4 September 2009

Thank you for your request dated 11 August 2009, under the Freedom of Information Act. You asked that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) should disclose:

- a breakdown, by grade, of the number or percentage of male and female staff that work in the FCO;
- information on any gender equality scheme that the FCO runs, how we ensure gender equality in the workplace and what successes these initiatives have had.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office does hold information to answer your request.

On 1 August, the breakdown per grade and the percentage of female staff was as follows:

Grade	Male	Female	% Female
SMS 4	7	0	0%
SMS 3	22	4	15.4%
SMS 2	87	16	15.5%
SMS 1	183	63	25.6%
Total SMS (SCS)	299	83	21.7%
D7	254	97	27.6%
D6	532	288	35.1%
Total D band (Grade 7)	786	385	32.9%
C5 (SEO)	437	164	27.3%
C4 (HEO)	819	478	36.9%
Total C band	1256	642	33.8%
B3 (EO)	726	734	50.3%
Total B band	726	734	50.3%
A2 (AO)	421	557	57.0%
A1 (AA)	90	70	43.8%
Total A band	511	627	55.1%
Totals	3578	2471	40.8%

Our Gender Equality Scheme (GES) sets out how the FCO will take action on the most important gender equality issues within its functions, policies and services and is available on our external website: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/diversity/our-policy>. In line



with forthcoming changes to UK legislation we are currently amalgamating the actions from our GES into a Single Equality Scheme (SES) and Action Plan. This will provide a simpler framework for internal and external stakeholders to be able to evaluate the extent to which we are fulfilling our equality duties.

In addition to our Single Equality Scheme and action plan, we aim to ensure gender equality in the workplace by:

- using Equality Impact Assessments, a means by which we can demonstrate due regard for the promotion of equality and diversity in our policies (mainly corporate) and services;
- having a clear Dignity at Work Policy which underlines our commitment to eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex and promoting equality of opportunity between men and women;
- setting realistic diversity targets for senior female representation in reaching top management jobs and implementing measures to ensure these are met; and
- measuring our progress on achieving gender equality by reviewing SES actions and analysing results from our annual staff survey, which looks at staff engagement levels by gender (including transgender).

We also have a dedicated Board Champion for Gender and a Womens' Network, who together advise and support initiatives relating to all aspects relating to gender. More formally, Chris Bryant is the FCO Minister with responsibility for the FCO's equality agenda. Michael Shearer, Assistant Director for Diversity and Equality, leads this work and is supported by the Diversity Strategy Unit.

Further information about our diversity strategy, copies of our annual reports and details of other activities, including our successes in this area are available at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/diversity/>.

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