



**General Register Office for Scotland**  
*information about Scotland's people*

## **Gender Equality Scheme**

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**Table of Contents**

1. Foreword by Duncan Macniven, Registrar General for Scotland .....	4
2. Introduction .....	5
3. Background.....	6
4. About the General Register Office for Scotland .....	6
5. Priorities 2007-2010 .....	7
6. Key Policy Areas and their impact on Gender Equality .....	7
7. Employment of Staff.....	9
8. Procurement of Goods and Services .....	12
9. Delivery of Services .....	13
10. Publication of Statistics and Related Information .....	14
11. Reviewing the Scheme and Annual Reporting .....	15

## **1. Foreword by Duncan Macniven, Registrar General for Scotland**

The Equality Act 2006 requires public bodies to promote gender equality and eliminate sex discrimination. The Act obliges public bodies, including the General Register Office for Scotland, positively to demonstrate that they treat women and men fairly - similar to the duty to promote race equality under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and disability equality under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

Our fundamental aim is to work with Scottish Ministers to improve the well-being of Scotland and its people by collecting, processing, safeguarding and making available information about Scotland's people in a useful, responsible and efficient way. We produce reliable information which central and local government use to support the planning and provision of improved public services for communities throughout Scotland, including health care, housing, education and transport. We also play an important role with local authorities in overseeing the Registration Service in Scotland.

We will ensure that there is no discrimination towards anyone who accesses our services, and that the information we gather and disseminate is equally balanced by gender. Although we are not a major policy-setting Department, our statistics form a valuable resource that can be used by policymakers and those responsible for promoting and enforcing equality. We will promote gender equality for our own staff and for those who help us deliver services. More generally, we will carry out all our functions with the utmost integrity in terms of gender equality.

As we move ahead with prepare for the 2011 Census and take forward initiatives such as electronic registration of births and deaths we will focus on what more we need to do to reinforce our commitment to equality for all Scotland's people.



**DUNCAN MACNIVEN**

**Registrar General for Scotland**

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 In 2001, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act introduced a positive duty on the public sector to work to achieve race equality, and GROS has its own [Race Equality Scheme](#) published on our website.
- 2.2 In 2005, amendments to the Disability Discrimination Act brought a new public sector duty on disability into effect, and GROS has its own [Disability Equality Scheme](#) published on our website.
- 2.3 In 2006, the Equality Act legislated for a gender equality duty which comes into force on 29 June 2007. This means that the public sector will be subject to a Race Equality Duty, a Disability Equality Duty and a Gender Equality Duty.
- 2.4 The Gender Equality Duty requires public bodies to ensure that their policies and practices as employers, as service providers, as policy makers and as operational organisations address the different needs of women and men.
- 2.5 The Act places a specific duty on GROS (and other named public bodies) to publish this Gender Equality Scheme and set out what we plan to do to promote gender equality. Within this Scheme we are required to state:
- our overall objectives and how these might affect our general duty;
  - what we have in place to measure the impact of our policies and practices on men and woman, and in particular the extent to which they promote equality between male and female staff;
  - what steps we will take to fulfil our obligations; and
  - what arrangements are in place for gathering information on the effect our policies on gender equality and how we will use of that information.
- 2.6 Our business (described in Section 4 below) is such that our main impact on Gender Equality falls in four areas:
- Employment of staff (see Section 7);
  - Procurement of goods and services (see Section 8);
  - Delivery of services (see Section 9); and
  - Publication of statistics and related information (see Section 10).

### 3. Background

3.1 The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to place on all public authorities a general duty to promote gender equality. In carrying out its functions GROS must have due regard to:

- the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; and
- the need to promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

### 4. About the General Register Office for Scotland

4.1 The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) is a Government Department established by Act of Parliament in 1854. We are an Associated Department of the Scottish Executive (SE) and we form part of the Scottish Administration. Our statistical operations form part of the Government Statistical Service and we prepare our main statistical products in line with National Statistics procedures.

4.2 The fundamental **aim** of GROS is to work with Scottish Ministers to improve the well-being of Scotland and its people by collecting, processing, safeguarding and making available information about Scotland's people in a useful, responsible and efficient way.

4.3 To enable us to meet our aim, GROS is organised into four Divisions: Census Division; Demography Division; Registration Division; and Corporate Services Division. The **general responsibilities** of these Divisions are as follows:

#### **Census Division:**

- to make arrangements for taking periodic Censuses of Scotland's population; and
- statistical methodology and geography.

#### **Demography Division:**

- to prepare and publish demographic and other statistics; and
- to maintain the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR) of patients in Scotland.

**Registration Division:**

- to administer civil registration of vital events – births and deaths, plus marriages, civil partnerships, divorces and adoptions and the statutes relating to the formalities of marriage and the conduct of civil marriage; and
- to make available public records about individuals.

**Corporate Services Division:**

- to provide financial, procurement, accommodation, IT, learning and other support for the Department.

**5. Priorities 2007-2010**

## 5.1 Current priorities are:

- to launch the ScotlandsPeople Centre to create a one-stop-shop for genealogy services from GROS, the National Archives of Scotland (NAS) and the Court of the Lord Lyon (CLL). The Centre is scheduled to open in March 2008;
- to develop an e-Registration service as an additional channel alongside registration at local registration offices; and
- to continue planning for a 2011 Census, including working with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), to deliver a Census that meets both Scottish and UK needs.

**6. Key Policy Areas and their impact on Gender Equality****Registration**

- 6.1 The Local Electoral Administration and Registration Services (Scotland) Act 2006 makes the registration process easier and more convenient for the people of Scotland. The provisions of the Act allow us to develop and implement an e-Registration service as an additional channel alongside registration offices. This will increase the choice of method of registration available to informants.
- 6.2 **This should enable registration to be undertaken at a time and place that is most convenient to the individual (female or male) making the registration.**

- 6.3 Local Registration Offices are run by the local authorities. GROS's involvement is limited to prescribing how registrations should be carried out and what information should be recorded in the registers of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships. The operation and staffing of each Registration Office is managed by the appropriate local authority and its Gender Equality Scheme will apply.

### **Scottish Family History Service (ScotlandsPeople)**

- 6.4 The Scottish Family History Service (ScotlandsPeople) is a joint venture between GROS, NAS and CLL. It provides a one-stop-shop for family historians on the web and at the ScotlandsPeople Centre in Edinburgh, which will open in March 2008. In time the ScotlandsPeople resource should also be available at local centres run by local authorities.
- 6.5 **This will enable people (female or male) researching their family history to do so at a time and place that is most convenient to the them. When the Centre is launched it will only open during the day on weekdays, with very limited opening in the evening. But we will assess demand and review this position after a year.**

### **2011 Census**

- 6.6 We continue to plan and develop systems and procedures for a Census in 2011. We are working with the other UK Census Offices, in the light of findings from Census Tests (the Scottish Test was carried out in April 2006), to develop question and form design; enumeration procedures; data capture and coding processes; and statistical processing methods for a Census Rehearsal in 2009. Many of these services will be provided by third parties so a major part of this 2011 Census development programme is the specification, procurement and testing of these services.
- 6.7 **We consult widely on the questions we might ask in the Census and discuss form design and methods of enumeration with special interest and community groups. As with previous censuses we will have particular regard to sensitive questions (eg people who have changed gender).**
- 6.8 **We also ask our customers what types of statistics they want from the data gathered in the Census. Providing Census statistics for each gender is a long-standing standard.**
- 6.9 **We recruit a temporary field force to carry out the Census enumeration. For the 2011 Census this is expected to be in the region of 7,500 people. Recruitment and management of the field force is done by cascading recruitment responsibility down through the three main tiers of field management. We will ensure that there is no discrimination in our recruitment procedures or in the way they are implemented, and will actively promote gender equality in the recruitment exercise.**

## Demographic Statistics

- 6.10 The records that we collect and maintain (eg births, deaths and NHSCR) are the foundation for the information we provide on population, fertility, mortality and migration. We do this in a way that is consistent with best practice in the collection, storage and archiving of information. We publish information on population and households for different geographical areas and work together with the SE to meet customer needs and National Statistics Code of Practice standards. The desegregation of data by gender is now standard practice in the majority of mainstream statistical publications. We are constantly looking at ways to improve the quality of the information we provide and we continue to investigate the potential usefulness of a wider range of administrative and survey sources. This involves experimental work to develop in-house expertise on data matching.
- 6.11 **GROS provides statistics that support and inform policy development for Scotland. Our statistics also help local authorities and other service providers plan service provision. The way that our statistics are presented (often by age and gender) helps to ensure that gender equality issues are fully taken into account when policies are being formulated. For example, we produce projections of the number of households, by age group and household type. In most cases, the figures are broken down by gender (eg one person households are separated into male and female households). The most significant differences are in the older age groups, as women tend to out-live their partners, so older women are far more likely to live alone. We also produce statistics on lone parent families, which are mainly headed by women.**

## 7. Employment of Staff

### Background

- 7.1 To meet the duty to promote gender equality we must eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practices and actively promote gender equality within our workforce. GROS is an Associated Department of the SE. As such, our staff have the same terms and conditions of employment, and we adopt the same Human Resource (HR) policies and procedures (our staff are part of what is called the "SE Main" group, to which all policies and procedures are applied in a uniform manner). Our HR services are provided by the SE or by their agents. For example, SE HR has overall responsibility for our staff recruitment, and staff are recruited into posts based on competencies as defined by the SE. Therefore, the section in the SE's Gender Equality Scheme relating [the SE as an employer](#) applies equally to GROS.
- 7.2 Over the last year, and following a transformation of HR services within the SE, GROS has undertaken some recruitment campaigns independently. These campaigns were conducted in accordance with SE policies and procedures.

- 7.3 GROS staff can take advantage of the SE's various staff networks (eg part-time staff, carers and senior women - the latter tackles the under-representation of women at senior levels within the SE). We are also consulted when policies and procedures are being created or significantly changed.
- 7.4 GROS has a dedicated Development Centre which aims to meet the learning needs of all GROS staff and which holds all their learning records. We also arrange specific learning and development events in-house. For certain learning and development needs we make use of the SE's Corporate Learning Services. Like the SE, we will encourage applications from any groups who may be under-represented in any particular area of development training to ensure there is equality of opportunity across the organisation and make available flexible training opportunities for staff who work a non-standard pattern.

### **Current Status**

- 7.5 We have not taken any coordinated action to promote gender equality separately from the SE. Nor have we been actively monitoring gender information for GROS independent of the central monitoring that the SE does for the whole "SE Main" group. Furthermore, at the moment we do not have direct or easy access to the employment database to carry out our own analyses (eg on diversity).

- 7.6 Nevertheless, we can do some ad hoc analyses from our limited local records. For example, an examination of the numbers of women in managerial positions in GROS gives a positive result. This has been achieved through applying the policies and procedures in place in the SE for the “SE Main” group. Table 1 below provides a comparison between the numbers of females and males in managerial positions (grades B1 to C3) in 2002 and in 2007. It can be seen that the representation of women in senior positions has improved over the 5-year period, though equality has not yet been achieved.

Table 1

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>FEMALES (%)</b>	<b>MALES (%)</b>
<b>B1</b>	2002	56.5	43.5
	2007	63.83	36.2
<b>B2</b>	2002	37.1	62.9
	2007	40.5	59.5
<b>B3</b>	2002	8.3	91.7
	2007	27.3	72.7
<b>C1</b>	2002	0	100
	2007	75	25
<b>C2</b>	2002	0	100
	2007	50	50
<b>C3</b>	2002	0	100
	2007	0	100
<b>SCS</b>	2002	0	100
	2007	0	100

- 7.7 GROS staff take part in an annual Employee Survey run by the SE. However, we consider our own results separately and create our own action plan based on our staff’s opinions. This is our key tool for staff consultation and we can analyse the results by gender.
- 7.8 Annually we consider attendance statistics and gender is one of the categories that we use in our analysis.
- 7.9 We have just completed (May 2007) a series of Dignity at Work training sessions, during which staff were given information about the SE’s policy (which applies to our staff) on bullying and harassment, and their responsibilities as staff members and, where appropriate, as managers. The training covered bullying and harassment based on gender.
- 7.10 Our local trade union representatives were consulted during the preparation of this Scheme. Any future issues raised by the local trade union representatives will be discussed at local Partnership Group meetings and

then considered by our Departmental Strategy and Planning Group (DSPG – our Management Board).

### **Planned Action**

- 7.11 When the SE implements its e-HR system (which we will be part of) **in 2008 we will have direct and easy access to the employment database and will carry out our own analyses. We will also benchmark our findings against the SE, other Agencies and Associated Departments and general public and private sector trends.**
- 7.12 Our analyses will likely be limited to interests specific to GROS as general analyses and benchmarking will be undertaken by the SE for all staff who are part of the “SE Main” group.
- 7.13 **We will continue to analyse Employee Survey results and Attendance Statistics by gender.**
- 7.14 **We will tailor any equality related courses or seminars devised by the SE to GROS needs (as we do for many other courses – eg Dignity at Work). But if we spot the need from our analyses of collated information, we will develop our own courses to meet our specific needs.**

## **8. Procurement of Goods and Services**

### **Background**

- 8.1 GROS follows the SE’s rules on procurement, therefore, the section in the SE’s Gender Equality Scheme relating to [procurement](#) applies equally to GROS. We act in a transparent and proportionate manner and ensure equal treatment and non discrimination in all our procurement activities. Our procurement procedures require that contractors will not discriminate within the meaning of the Equality Act 2006 and that they take all steps possible to ensure that their staff or sub-contractors working on contracts comply appropriately.

### **Current Status**

- 8.2 We are strictly adhering to the SE’s procurement rules and this has been verified by our Internal and External Auditors. Our major procurements relating to two of our major policy initiatives (covered in Section 6 – Scottish Family History Service and 2011 Census) are also being “Gateway Reviewed”.

## Planned Action

- 8.3 The SE will review the standard contract conditions that we use to ensure that they commit our suppliers to comply with all relevant equality legislation. **We will monitor compliance along with other contract conditions.**
- 8.4 **Internal and External Audit will continue to review our procurement procedures and actions to ensure that we are treating potential suppliers equally and awarding contracts on the basis of merit following fair and open competition.**

## 9. Delivery of Services

### Background

- 9.1 GROS delivers services in four broad areas, each one dealing mostly with information provision:-
- Registration services (including the registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships);
  - Records services (including access to our records for official certificates and for family history research);
  - Statistical services (including the publication of population and household statistics and the preparation of bespoke analyses from the information that we hold); and
  - NHSCR related services (including notifying health authorities when patients move).
- 9.2 For some of these services our customers are other public bodies or private organisations which need the information to carry out their functions or business. However, for our Registration and Records services in particular, our main customers are individuals who either contact us in writing, by email by phone, or by visiting local Registration Offices or New Register House in the centre of Edinburgh.
- 9.3 We want to encourage the use of these services and make sure that the way in which we deliver them does not discriminate on gender (or race or disability). To do this we must ensure that the services are equally available over a number of delivery channels. For example, we have invested heavily in creating a digital database of all the public records that we hold. This enables them to be accessed “electronically” over the Internet at a time and place convenient to the customer.

## Current Status

- 9.4 We regularly seek feedback on the services we provide. For example, for our Records services in New Register House, which enables members of the public to access open public records in our search rooms, we do this directly, by means of comment sheets and through customer surveys. Although no gender details are currently recorded, we are aware that the majority of our visiting customers are female.

## Planned Action

- 9.5 **So far we have not included a question on gender in our surveys or on any of our comment sheets, but we will do so in future. We will identify any significant trends relating to gender and act on these accordingly.**
- 9.6 **We plan to provide baby changing facilities within the male and female toilets in the new ScotlandsPeople Centre.**
- 9.7 **Once the Local Electoral Administration and Registration Services (Scotland) Act 2006 has been fully implemented (covered in Section 6), working with local registrars, we will gather evidence on its use in terms of gender.**

## 10. Publication of Statistics and Related Information

### Background

- 10.1 We produce a variety of population and household statistics that support and inform policy development for Scotland. Our statistics also help central government and local authorities, and many other service providers, plan their service provision. Our main publication is the Registrar General's Annual Report (titled The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends) which highlights Scotland's population and the way it changes. We supplement this with other high-level statistics and other related information in the following categories:

- General Population
- Migration
- Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships
- Divorces and Adoptions
- Household Estimates and Projections
- Life Expectancy
- Popular Names
- Electoral Statistics
- Geography

- 10.2 Every ten years we undertake a Census in Scotland. From the Census we produce a vast amount of statistical tables and related analyses concerning the population of Scotland and household spaces. This is by far the richest source of information that we provide and is produced for all major electoral and administrative areas. We also produce detailed statistics for small areas that consist of no more than a few postcodes.
- 10.3 Analysis by gender is a common feature of all the statistics that we produce. Our statistics form a valuable resource that can be used by those responsible for promoting and enforcing equality. Our key population statistics form the denominator for other population related surveys which consider the proportions of male and females.

### **Current Status**

- 10.4 Our statistics were considered as part of the [Gender Audit of Statistics](#) that was commissioned by the SE in March 2007. This was the most comprehensive analysis to date of currently available gender disaggregated statistics, and, where relevant, key research reports and reviews, for Scotland.

### **Planned Action**

- 10.5 **We will continue to collect, analyse and publish gender disaggregated data, to support the development and monitoring of policies that address the different needs of women and men.**
- 10.6 **We will continue to consult widely on the questions we might ask in the Census and discuss form design and methods of enumeration with special interest and community groups.**
- 10.7 **We will also continue to ask our customers what types of statistics they require from the Census.**

## **11. Reviewing the Scheme and Annual Reporting**

- 11.1 We will review this Scheme on an annual basis to ensure that we continue to meet our responsibilities under the Gender Equality Duty 2007. This will require us to work with staff and the users of our services on an ongoing basis to identify any inequalities and barriers which may exist. We will report annually on our evidence gathering and action planning to DSPG.
- 11.2 We will publish a revised Scheme by 29 June 2010.