

Equality and Diversity action plan

This action plan supports our equality and diversity vision, published in 2013. It lists a number of objectives, measures and actions that we commit to. It is a working document and will be refreshed from time to time. The next formal review will take place no later than April 2015.

Version 1.0

Document Control Summary

Title	MRC Equality and Diversity Action Plan
Electronic file reference (network or intranet)	Minerva - Corporate HR/Policy Review
Status	Working Document
Version No.	1.0
Date of this Document	10 April 2014
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Approved by (Names, titles and date)	Ted Smith Director of Human Resources
Next Review Date	April 2015
Analysis of the effects on equality completed on	28 March 2014

Action Plan

This Action Plan is a living document which will be used to assess progress towards improving equality and diversity and meeting our key strategic priorities. We formally commit ourselves:

A Leadership

Objective 1	As an organisation that promotes and values equality and diversity, we will continue and improve the visibility and high-level leadership and support for E&D at Council, Boards, Institute, Unit and Head Office Directorate levels, by:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on E&D will reported directly to the MRC Operations Board twice a year • E&D will be reflected in the performance objectives and in the end of year appraisals for Directors • Director’s Annual Statements of Internal Control (DASIC) will require E&D to be addressed and we will follow-up on limited assurance scores • Annually publish E&D data on the composition of MRC Council and our boards and panels • Improve diversity representation on Boards and Panels • Bi-annual meetings between the Head of Equalities and Equality Champions • Quarterly meetings between the Head of Equalities and TUS E&D Working Group • Regular corporate communications to all employees on E&D from the CEO, Group HR Director and Head of Equalities
Measures	Annual E&D report
Timescale	Annual
Owner(s)	Group HR Director and Corporate Affairs Group Director
Objective 2	As an employer, we will work with employees and associate workers at all levels, up to and including the MRC Council, to ensure that everyone understands the value of equality and diversity in the workplace and their role in making the MRC a truly inclusive organisation, by:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training our employees in equality and diversity • Offering courses to recruiting managers on selection skills training which includes consideration of bias and how to manage it • Developing a network of “Equality Champions” across the organisation from a representative employee base, who are conversant with equality and diversity issues, to act as points of contact
Measures	Appropriate training made available to employees and managers to ensure that all employees are aware of the benefits of having a diverse workforce and of their responsibilities for promoting equality and diversity across the MRC. Equality Champion network established
Timescale	Ongoing

Owner	Group HR Director
Objective 3	As an organisation that promotes and values equality and diversity , we will seek to streamline and simplify to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of equality and diversity, by
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with other Research Councils to collaborate, benchmark and share best practice for equalities implementation, e.g. common cross-council E&D policies & guidance, training programmes, equalities monitoring data and impact assessments We will actively champion a common equalities plan and objectives across the Research Councils
Measures	<p>Implementation of harmonisation cross-council E&D policies, with common supporting guidance about protected characteristic groups and relevant MRC policies and guidance where required.</p> <p>Developed common. Research council-wide training programmes</p> <p>An agreed set of cross-council E&D reports that are easy to produce and include accurate and reliable data</p> <p>Participation in Research Councils' Equality & Diversity Action Group (RCEDAG) and other relevant RCUK initiatives</p>
Timescale	Ongoing
Owner	Group HR Director

B Diversity

Objective 4	As an employer , we will strive to ensure that we recruit the best people, irrespective of membership of any minority group, by:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforcing MRC Recruitment and Selection policy and relevant sections on equalities and diversity Taking positive action where appropriate to encourage more women to apply for scientific leadership roles with us, given their under-representation in the workforce Taking positive action to guarantee an interview to job applicants with disabilities providing that they meet the essential requirements of the person specification
Measures	<p>Evidence of continued working with Shared Service Centre and other Councils to ensure recruitment and selection processes are fair, transparent, free from bias and that selection is subject to individuals being able to fulfil the requirements of the job</p> <p>Appropriate positive actions, where necessary, from lessons learnt in the Athena SWAN research institutes project and possible subsequent Athena SWAN accreditations</p> <p>Appropriate positive actions, where necessary, from results of Staff Survey</p>
Timescale	Ongoing
Owner	Group HR Director

Objective 5	As an employer , we will enable people to contribute fully and to develop to their full potential, irrespective of membership of any minority group, by:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhering to our 100% completion target of all Personal Development Reviews, to include the opportunity for all employees to discuss their learning and career aspirations. Specifically target potential female scientific leaders in the existing workforce, and encourage their career development Reinforcing our flexible working policies Provide appropriate guidance and wellbeing support to employees and making reasonable adjustments to enable employees with disabilities to participate fully in working life and contribute to their full potential
Measures	Evidence of completion of all PDRs Evidence of training take-up Evidence of increased promotion for females in the scientific cadre
Timescale	Ongoing Reasonable adjustment guidance published October 2012
Owner	Group HR Director
Objective 6	As an employer , we will ensure that we fully engage with and retain talented employees, irrespective of their membership of any minority group, by:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse and take action to address levels of commitment from Staff Survey 2012, broken down by 'protected characteristic' Enhance Staff Survey 2013, depending on outcomes of Staff Survey 2012 Uphold principles of MRC's harassment procedures and stop harassing behaviour as soon as it is identified Ensure equal pay principles continue to be a key part of job evaluation Encouraging networking of employees in the protected groups and promote positive relations between all employees
Measures	Evidence of staff survey results Evidence of decreased turnover where appropriate Evidence of effective conflict resolution Evidence of robust pay policies and procedures
Timescale	Ongoing, staff survey results due in early 2013
Owner	Group HR Director
Objective 7	As an organisation that promotes and values equality and diversity , we will assess the implications of major activities against each of the protected characteristic groups by:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that equality implication of structures, policies, procedures and practices are considered and evidenced in key

	<p>meetings and management decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) of the MRC's structures, policies, procedures and practices to promote equality
Measures	<p>Guidance to reinforce the importance that equality implication of structures, policies, procedures and practices are considered and evidenced, including through of EqIAs</p> <p>Harmonised cross-council EqIA guidance and templates</p> <p>Updated EqIA training and guidance available to all employees</p> <p>Delivery of common EqIA of any harmonised cross-council HR policies</p>
Timescale	<p>Ongoing reinforcement</p> <p>As and when required</p>
Owners	All Directors

Objective 8	As a purchaser of goods and services, we will work with colleagues in the RCUK Shared Service Centre to
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the promotion of equality and diversity and elimination of discrimination and harassment is integrated into appropriate procurement policy, services, agreements and contracts
Measures	Annual review with SSC of how the promotion of equality and diversity and elimination of discrimination and harassment is integrated into appropriate procurement policy, services, agreements and contracts
Timescale	By end March each year
Owner	Finance Director

3 Communication, knowledge & understanding

Objective 9	As a communicator of science and promoter of public engagement, we will:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to ensure that all information, publicity and advertising which MRC undertakes is non-discriminatory and promotes a positive attitude towards people regardless of their membership of any protected characteristic group. Continue to ensure that all information we disseminate to the public via the internet complies with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines' AA standard of accessibility, as a minimum. Guarantee consideration of requests, on an individual basis, to translate corporate information should this be required for people with disabilities. Ensure that (as far as practicality and safety allow) public events hosted on our sites are accessible to everyone regardless of membership of any protected group
Measures	<p>Reinforced guidance on publicity and advertising</p> <p>Evidence of continued working with cross-council to encourage SSC to further improve the accessibility of Oracle recruitment</p>

	Corporate information to employees and public identifies facilities for alternative formats Completed EqIAs on facilities used for public events
Timescale	By end June 201 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
Owner	Corporate Affairs Group Director

Objective 10	As an organisation that promotes and values equality and diversity , we will ensure that employees, stakeholders, collaborators and the public understand our ongoing commitment to equality and diversity by:
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform employees of any equality and diversity related developments by publishing regular articles in MRC Life • Maintain an Equality and Diversity pages on the Portal and external MRC internet site to promote our policies, developments, reports, news items and other diversity related information • Consult and involve representatives of protected groups in the further development of this Vision, through various discussions, road-shows and through employee wide consultation website • Publish any relevant awards that we achieve and articles we publish on E&D • Include a diversity related strap line on recruitment adverts
Measures	Up-to-date external MRC website Evidence of internal communications Evidence of recruitment advertising practice
Timescale	Ongoing
Owner	Group HR Director

Amendment history

Version	Date	Comments/Changes
1.0	10 April 2014	Development and launch of action plan