

# Equality Mainstreaming

Progress report

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## Foreword

Welcome to Food Standards Scotland's (FSS) Equality Mainstreaming progress update for 2024. This report outlines our current position and progress towards achieving the equality outcomes set in 2022. It also presents our approach to embedding equality and diversity throughout FSS going forward.

As a consumer protection body, equality and inclusion is a key component of our organisation. Our primary role is to protect **all** consumers from food safety risks and to promote healthy eating to the Scottish public. It is important that we ensure our services are accessible by, and of benefit to, everyone.



In June 2022 we launched our People Strategy with equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) flowing through each of our four People Pillars. To measure our progress, we have introduced a set of interim Equality Outcomes and established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group to ensure we remain accountable.

We are constantly working to improve the accessibility of the service FSS provides. We believe accessibility is not just about meeting regulatory requirements; it's about ensuring every individual, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate and engage with our organisation. We develop an abundance of guidance, advice and research that has the potential to reach a wider audience when we make sure that accessibility is embedded into our work.

I'm particularly proud that in 2023 FSS held its first Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference during National Inclusion Week. Organisations such as 50:50 Future, a diversity and inclusion consultancy; Four Pillars, a charity supporting Grampian's LGBTQ+ community; North East Sensory Services; Henpicked, industry leaders in menopause workplace training; and the Scottish Men's Shed Association, presented to staff. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive for this first event, and FSS is looking at how we can continue to offer events like these, not only for staff based out of Pilgrim House, but for those working in the field and from home.

We pride ourselves on being an organisation that values a diverse workforce of skilled, committed and engaged colleagues and we are determined to continue to provide equal opportunities across the range of services we deliver. We endeavour to learn from the lessons of the past and use them to help shape the organisation over the next two years.

We have made an ongoing promise to continue reviewing our key services to ensure they are consistent with our dedication to equality, and our commitment to being a world leading consumer protection agency.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Ogle'.

Geoff Ogle  
Chief Executive

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## 1. Introduction

This is the Equality Mainstreaming Progress Report 2024 produced by Food Standards Scotland. This report covers our progress made against the interim Equality Outcomes. The report will set out a summary of our workforce data and monitoring information on employment activities as well as looking at how delivery of our functions impacts on those with protected characteristics. The report also sets out EDI outcomes which we will work towards achieving and how we will continue to embed EDI across the organisation in order to meet both the general and specific duties as required.

## 2. About Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

**To protect the health and wellbeing of consumers we have three objectives as set under the Food (Scotland) Act 2015:**

- **To protect the public from risks to health which may arise in connection with the consumption of food**
- **To improve the extent to which members of the public have diets which are conducive to good health**
- **To protect the other interests of consumers in relation to food**

Food Standards Scotland was established on 1 April 2015 as the new public sector food body for Scotland. We are a non-Ministerial Office, part of the Scottish Administration, alongside, but separate from, the Scottish Government. FSS is part of the Scottish Government Main Bargaining Unit and as such employees receive the same terms and conditions as Core Scottish Government.

We have a unique role in government, working independently of Ministers and industry, to provide impartial advice based on robust science and data. Our remit covers all aspects of the food chain that impacts public health, aiming to protect consumers from food safety risks and promote healthy eating. Our vision is to have a safe, healthy and sustainable food environment that benefits and protects the health and well-being of everyone in Scotland.

In 2021 we published our three year [2021 – 24 Corporate Plan](#) which outlined concrete actions against the ambitions of our strategy. Our new 2024 – 26 plan describes how we will build on the achievements of our first nine years, whilst aligning our five strategic outcomes to a set of core values and guiding principles. These values and principles contribute to the Scottish government's National Missions for Scotland (equality, opportunity and community). People across the organisation are our greatest asset and we rely on well trained, skilled and motivated individuals and teams working collaboratively to achieve results.

## Our values and behaviour culture

We will deliver our strategy through the following set of values and guiding principles. These will underpin the approaches we will take to attain our mission and achieve our outcomes and vision for Scotland's food environment.

Integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality shape the behaviour of the Civil Service, and our 'team FSS' internal values compliment this and guide how we do things and treat others.

The six team FSS internal values, all of equal importance, are:

- We are diverse and all have a role to play
- We are dynamic and adapt to change
- We innovate through ideas and challenge
- We respect all voices when making decisions
- We collaborate with others to deliver for Scotland
- We support each other to achieve our best



These form our conduct in the workplace and influence how we interact with our colleagues and partners.

## 3. Public sector equality duty

The Equality Act came into force from October 2010 providing a modern, single legal framework with clear law to better tackle disadvantage and discrimination. The Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 set out a single equality duty and statutory specific duties for listed public bodies in Scotland. Listed organisations, including Food Standards Scotland, must meet these duties in order to ensure positive and real change for people with protected characteristics.

### 3.1 The General Equality Duty

The general equality duty requires us, in the normal course of our work, to take account of the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Equality Act explains that the second need (advancing for equality of opportunity) involves, having due regards to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different to the needs of other people
- encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

### **3.2 The Scottish Specific Duties**

The Scottish Specific Duties Regulations came into force on 27 May 2012. The public sector equality duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but only regarding eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.

Public authorities subject to the specific equality duties are required to:

- report on mainstreaming the equality duty
- publish equality outcomes and report progress
- assess and review policies and practices
- gather and use employee information
- publish information on board diversity and succession planning
- publish gender pay gap information
- publish statements on equal pay
- consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- publish required information in a manner that is accessible
- [the Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#)
- [the Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2015](#)
- [the Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2016](#)

### **3.3 Equal Pay Statement**

Food Standards Scotland is an equal opportunities employer. All staff should be treated equally irrespective of their sex, marital/civil partnership status, age, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, working pattern, employment status, gender identity (transgender), caring responsibility, or trade union membership, and receive equal pay for doing equal work or work of equal value. Food Standards Scotland will operate a pay and reward system which is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias.

All Food Standards Scotland staff are now on the Scottish Government Main (SGM) bargaining unit terms and conditions of employment. Food Standards Scotland staff are paid in accordance with SGM pay grades and SGM employment policies. Any pay bargaining is conducted as part of the wider SGM group.

The Scottish Government aims to avoid unfair discrimination in its pay and reward system, to reward fairly the skills, experience and potential of all staff and act as a model employer for other organisations in Scotland. This equal pay policy statement has been agreed with the Council of Scottish Government Unions. Equal pay policy applies at every level of the Scottish Government irrespective of working pattern and work continues to ensure greater balance across grades.





## Mainstreaming equality

[foodstandards.gov.scot](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot)

## 4. Mainstreaming equality

As a competent and enforcement authority we understand the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) as an organisational priority. We are committed to improving our policies and practices in order to combat discrimination at all levels. We aspire to not only to have a diverse workforce representative of Scotland, but to provide an inclusive and accessible service to the Scottish population.

We understand that we can always be improving our approach to mainstreaming equality, with this in mind we created a working group established in November 2022 to oversee and progress the identified EDI actions. The group is made up of representatives from across the organisation and is chaired by a member of the senior leadership team. This ensures that every area of the organisation has a voice that will be heard. The purpose of the group is to:

- Work to promote and further equality, diversity and inclusion across Food Standards Scotland. Members of the group will take action to drive and deliver equality and diversity activities and actions derived from Strategic and Corporate Plans, and monitor progress of these as identified in the Equalities Mainstreaming Action tracker.

FSS introduced our new People Strategy in June 2022. Equality and Diversity is a golden thread which runs through the four Pillars of our People Strategy and is a key aspect of the employee experience at FSS. We will continue to promote equality, diversity and inclusion across our workforce in line with our organisational values of being Inclusive and Open and Customer Focused.

### 4.1 Equality Outcomes

| Equality Outcomes   | Measures of Success  |
|---|--|
| <b>Outcome 1 - Workplace culture</b><br>FSS will foster an inclusive culture with equality, diversity and inclusion at its core and provide a fair and inclusive workplace that values the contribution of employees from all backgrounds.  | Hold a minimum of 5 EDI events per year<br><br>An increase in the percentage of employees reporting FSS as committed to creating an inclusive workplace<br><br>A reduction in the percentage of employees reporting discrimination due to a protected characteristic by 2026 |
| <b>Outcome 2 - Inclusive Communication</b><br>FSS will work to ensure the service and information we provide is suitable and accessible to all users.<br>We aim to connect with all consumers across Scotland promoting a positive food culture where food is safe and authentic. | Website publications all meet legal requirements for public sector bodies in terms of accessibility<br><br>An increase in the number of BSL videos viewed on the FSS website   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Outcome 3 - Workforce diversity</b><br/>FSS will work collaboratively with Scottish Government towards increasing the diversity of our workforce, so that it is representative of the communities we serve across Scotland.</p> | <p>Maintain a minimum level of 50% women in leadership roles (C1 and above)</p> <p>Improvement in self-reporting of EDI information</p> |
|---|---|

## 4.2 Outcome 1

**FSS will foster an inclusive culture with equality, diversity and inclusion at its core and provide a fair and inclusive workplace for employees from all backgrounds, which values their contribution.**

### Self-reporting equality and diversity information

FSS has taken a proactive approach to encourage employees to report EDI information via our HR system eHR. A section has also been added into our employee induction packs encouraging employees to self-declare EDI information on eHR.

Since the Equality mainstreaming report was published in 2022, FSS has adopted the SG Employee Passport and launched to our employees in March 2023. The passport is a self-reporting tool aimed at supporting the individual needs and circumstances of our employees, enabling them to function at their best and foster meaningful discussions with their line manager to support in the implementation of reasonable adjustments. FSS HR launched the passport at a staff Wellbeing Event in March 2023 with further hybrid sessions offered in conjunction with colleagues from the Workplace Adjustments team in Scottish Government.

### People Survey

FSS continues in its commitment to participating in the annual Civil Service People Survey which provides insights into Employee Engagement. As of 2022 a section on EDI has been included, giving employees an opportunity to provide EDI information on an anonymous basis. This has enabled FSS to gather additional data on EDI parameters within our workforce. This has given us greater scope to identify and address areas that require improvement and provided an opportunity to measure the outcomes of our actions.

### Healthy Working Lives

FSS Healthy Working Lives group achieved a Gold Award in 2020, and has maintained this level consistently up to 2022. Following a decision by Public Health Scotland the award programme was disbanded on 31 March 2023.

In a demonstration of FSS senior leadership commitment to employee wellbeing and in that the Employee Experience is a key pillar of our People Strategy our Healthy Working Lives team has been retained and actively working to maintain the high standard of wellbeing activities it has achieved in the past. Over the last 2 years they have played a key role in organised the following activities including:

- key note speakers on a range of wellbeing topics



- social events to encourage socialisation and inclusion across the workforce
- share and promote health and wellbeing materials and topics via dedicated MS Teams channel



### **NDPB Equality Forum**

FSS continues to be an active participant and FSS HR team provides representation at each NDPB quarterly forum meeting. The forum gives us an opportunity to share knowledge and good practice and gain insight and support from across the Scottish Government's delivery bodies network to action meaningful change.

### **EDI library**

Following suggestions from the EDI working group we have created a library of information available displayed in our Head Office. This has helped to disseminate EDI information across the wider workforce, information that had previously only come to the HR team. Publications include leaflets on wellbeing and EDI topics and information on channels of support available to employees.

### **Grievance policy**

The action was added in 2020 as part of our commitment to equality and diversity. The refreshed grievance policy and procedure was launched in early 2022, replacing the Fairness at Work policy. HR gave a presentation at both a Head Office and Field staff meeting to ensure all employees understood the new policy and had the opportunity to ask any questions. The policy is now fully embedded into our ways of working.

## **STEM ambassadors**

We have currently two STEM ambassadors at FSS. FSS staff have taken part in STEM events for both primary and secondary school pupils, including providing information about their qualifications and career paths. The Science team will be engaging with stakeholders to deliver conferences talks and to volunteer on conference organising committees.

## **Wellbeing hour pilot**

As agreed in the supplementary pay award for 2022 – 2023, colleagues working at bands A-C within FSS are able to use one hour of their normal weekly hours to undertake activities to improve their physical and mental wellbeing. The hour is pro-rated for part time staff and available in addition to standards breaks. The pilot was introduced for an initial period of 12 months. Separate arrangements for the wellbeing hour were implemented for our operational delivery staff.

Introduction the Wellbeing hour pilot was promoted by FSS HR and the guidance has been included in the induction packs for new starts.

The pilot will end on 31 September 2024, as FSS will move to a 35 hour working week as agreed in the most recent pay award without reduction of pay. FSS is committed to ensuring staff are supported in this transition to a shorter working week and that benefits gained from the wellbeing hour are maintained.

## **EDI professional development**

We encourage all of our employees to extend their knowledge of EDI. The HR team delivers regular training and presentations on EDI topics as well as providing access to e-learning modules. A mandatory training module on 'Inclusive Culture' was introduced to ensure all of our employees have an understanding of what Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is and the core themes around creating an inclusive culture. In addition to this we promote relevant external learning opportunities, conferences and courses including:

- Menopause conference 2023
- FSS Response to Health, Sport and Social Care Committee call for evidence on inequalities (march 2022)
- Weight stigma workshops by Frameworks UK (several, most recently January 2024)
- Attendance at Nutrition Society Conference on dietary inequalities (28-29 March 2023)

## EDI and wellbeing days

As part of our commitment to promoting EDI across the organisation FSS introduced dedicated EDI events, consisting of a number of speakers and health professionals delivering talks and, health and wellbeing support over the course of a day. In 2023 we held our inaugural EDI day, this was held as an in person event with a number of guest speakers from different organisations, the event was open to all employees across the organisation. The day was well attended and received positive feedback.



We also held our 'Breathing Space' day in 2024, this again consisted of a number of speakers however the event was run remotely, giving employees the flexibility to attend sessions on an ad hoc basis. This event was also a success, however did not have the additional benefit of social interaction that the in person event had.

### 4.3 Outcome 2

**FSS will work to ensure the service and information we provide is suitable and accessible to all users. We aim to connect with consumers across Scotland, promoting a positive food culture where food is safe and authentic.**

#### Accessibility and Inclusive Communications Team

Formed in the final quarter of 2023, this internal group has representation from across the organisation and aims to embed accessibility practices into all aspects of FSS's work and to ensure we comply with the relevant legislation. The [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#) legislation describes the WCAG 2.2 AA Accessibility standard that should be met.



The team also works to ensure FSS's output is inclusive and representative of the diversity of people in Scotland.

## **Consumer engagement**

FSS recognises the importance of communicating our advice, using appropriate messaging, through a range of channels to reach the intended audience and ensure understanding. We make sure written materials are in plain English, and that audio or visual resources are available where appropriate. For video assets, subtitles, closed captions are added and, for some larger campaigns, BSL translated versions are created. As part of our yearly campaign aimed at encouraging consumers to take a vitamin D supplement, we produced content translated into seven different languages to include in our stakeholder [toolkit](#).

FSS consistently monitors and evaluates consumer attitudes via our Consumer Tracker which can help us assess the impacts of our work on communities, including those with protected characteristics.

## **Employee advocacy**

Our Communications and Marketing team work closely with our employees to ensure that they have an appreciation of external engagement. All staff are emailed with information about marketing campaigns.

The key communications priorities are outlined at the weekly tactical meeting that all staff are invited to attend and HO meeting

## **Equality impact assessments**

FSS recognises the importance of considering the perspectives of those with protected characteristics when implementing new policies and practices. To help deliver this commitment we have made Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) a mandatory consideration for all new projects.

These assessments help us improve outcomes, transparency, and accountability. In the past two years, we've updated our EQIA process, shared it on our intranet, and created a checklist for all staff to use. Additionally, senior managers have received training on how to do EQIAs and when to use them, ensuring their quality and validity.

An accessibility audit of the FSS website was completed to make technical changes to help compliance with the Public Sector Accessibility Regulations.

## **Stakeholder engagement**

FSS works collaboratively with other organisations, to help to ensure that engagement efforts are inclusive and reach intended audiences.

We partnered with a number of organisations as part of our Campylobacter Campaign, aimed at increasing awareness of the bacteria campylobacter and the danger it poses to those aged over 65. In particular, we visited Bield retirement housing facilities to promote the campaign guidance to residents.

We also produce toolkits for stakeholders to share on their own channels to help increase the reach of our key messaging. For example, for our [Eat Well, Your Way](#) resource, which features advice for cost effective ways to eat healthier.

## **Digital accessibility**

We must ensure that everything we publish is accessible, not just because we have a duty to ensure that everyone in Scotland can understand the information we produce but also because it is a legal requirement. Web content must consider all users, both internally and externally.

We are committed to designing content in a way that helps all users access it, ensuring that nobody is excluded.

The Website & Digital Team recently evaluated the accessibility and usability of the FSS website as part of the discovery phase of a longer-term project to refresh the site. A website audit and representative user research was conducted to ascertain user needs and experiences navigating the site, specifically for users of assistance technology.

## **Staff training**

In February 2024, we published internal guidance for creating accessible documents, along with a publications checklist to help ensure all our documents meet the Public Sector Accessibility Regulations.

When commissioning research or work from another organisation staff are reminded to include accessibility in the process if one of the outputs is a report and to clarify with any suppliers that they understand the requirements and our legal obligations.

## **Social media output**

Social media activity for International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

Blog from Heather Kelman, reflecting on first year in post as Chair of the Board, published on website for International Women's Day.

Two key outputs in 2023/24 were: a feature on three of our food safety scientists in Equate CareerHub which connects employers with women who are studying, working, or looking to work in a STEM role: Looking beyond 'Academia vs. Industry' - Equate Career Hub, and a presentation by our head of science at the Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS) retreat for post graduate research students on 11 March 2024 to raise awareness of the work of FSS, and opportunities for scientists across government.

### **4.4 Outcome 3**

**FSS will work to ensure the service and information we provide is suitable and accessible to all users. We aim to connect with all consumers across Scotland promoting a positive food culture where food is safe and authentic.**

## **Trainee Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHIs) and Trainee Feed Officers recruitment**

The meat processing industry has historically been male dominated and our Operations division, especially our team of Meat Hygiene Inspectors has



predominately been made up of males. Since 2020 we have been working on increasing the number of younger and female recruits into our Operations division. We introduced two trainee roles, Trainee Meat Hygiene Inspectors in 2021 and Trainee Feed Officers in 2022, this has allowed us to widen our recruitment pool and encourage younger candidates to apply. Successful candidates are given fully funded training to become fully qualified MHI's and Feed Officers. Female's currently make up 13% of the total number of MHI's in FSS, although this has fallen since 2022, we have run limited recruitments and promoted female MHI's into management positions. We recognise we have further work to do to encourage a more diverse range of people to apply for roles within our Operational Delivery division and will continue to expand our recruitment reach across multiple platforms to help us attain a diverse workforce.



### **Spotlight: Sally Glennie - Trainee MHI programme**

“My biggest fear before starting the job was the mainly male environment I would be working in but my mind was soon put at ease as everyone was very welcoming. I particularly enjoyed getting started on using my knife and getting properly stuck into the job, although I did enjoy the theory side too as I learned a lot whilst doing my research.

“During my training I got a huge amount of support from my mentor, the assessor and all the Official Veterinarians (OV) and Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHI) that I was in contact with. The OVs and MHIs were extremely patient and helpful whilst I was learning, everyone was very encouraging and willing to show me and let me have a go at the practical – even though I’m left handed, this proved challenging but nothing I couldn’t overcome with support!

“Since I qualified as an MHI. I have gone on to achieve my HACCP 4 with a Credit Pass, I have completed Animal Welfare Officer training and I’m currently undertaking Unannounced Inspection training. I’m the Health and Safety representative in my base plant and have completed various Health and Safety training including the IOSH working safely course. I am currently working on the CAVA assessor training course and once successfully completed I will be able to assess future tMHIs.

“I enjoy my job and the diverse range of activities that come with it, such as sampling and interventions – it’s not always on the line carrying out post mortem inspection. It is a great job with lots of opportunities and the first step on a rewarding career path.”

### **Fair and open recruitment**

We work in conjunction with Scottish Government to recruit fairly and equally across all of our advertised job roles. We advertise our vacancies across a multitude of different platforms such as local industry publications, industry specific career fairs, universities, social media platforms and online job sites, helping us reach a diverse candidate pool. In line with employment legislation and best practice FSS is committed to equality of opportunity in employment. We understand the importance of ensuring no candidate is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, to help us achieve this, equality information is not shared with recruiting managers.

We encourage hiring managers to build a gender balanced panel and to include colleagues from a range of backgrounds, characteristics and experiences as this helps give a more thorough assessment of role suitability and can provide different perspectives on a candidates performance.

Panel members are encouraged to complete training modules on inclusive recruitment and disability equality for line managers in addition to the mandatory e-learning course on inclusive culture, ensuring they have the knowledge and understanding to make unbiased decisions. To further tool up our hiring managers and panel members we arranged in house training in 2023 to raise awareness on good practice and Neurodiversity in recruitment.

### **Flexible working**

We offer flexible working from day one across all of our vacancies and actively support women back into following a break in their careers. Hiring Managers must consider all requests from successful candidates for working part-time or on a job-share basis in all posts.

### **Disability Confident employer**

In 2021 as part of our commitment to supporting people with a disability we worked towards becoming part of the disability confident scheme, we succeeded in reaching Level 2 Disability Confident Employer in July 2021. Our inclusive approach to disability starts with recruitment where we offer guaranteed interviews and reasonable adjustments at interview. We aim to make FSS a place that a person with any disability feels welcome and can perform to the best of their ability, we provide work place adjustments through our employee passport scheme and have implemented further support mechanisms including our Employee Assistance Service in order to provide equal opportunities to all.

### **Career Ready programme**

Recognising the importance of developing young talent from under-represented backgrounds FSS has supported the Career Ready mentoring programme since 2018. In both 2022 and 2023 we supported 2 mentees and we are currently supporting a further mentee this year. The programme has been beneficial for both the mentees, who receive one to one mentoring throughout the programme and a 4 week period of work experience, and the mentors who have the opportunity to improve their coaching and management skills. The programme is well supported by senior leaders within FSS and we offer the opportunity of becoming a mentor to employees of all grades.

### **The Young Scotland Programme**

The Young Programme exists to develop the communication skills and broaden the horizons of people in the early stages of their working lives. FSS has engaged in a rolling programme funding 2 people per year to take part. It's been a really valuable programme that helps support young people into the next phase of their lives. The programme has improved equal opportunities across our organisation by supporting younger colleagues and colleagues in the early stages of their career, leading to a more engaged workforce.

### **Spotlight: Young Scotland Programme - Lori Hanlon**

“Last year I successfully secured a place on The Young Scotland Programme - initially, I wasn't going to apply as I thought it was for 'young' people however it is actually for anyone at the early stages of their civil service career, so don't let the name of the programme put you off as age certainly isn't important!

The aims of the course are to develop communication skills, broaden your horizons and inspire confidence so over the next few days, we took part in a variety of different tasks including a 90 second challenge, a 'show and tell', debates on daily press articles and a number of fun group challenges. One of the main elements of the course is the presentation (argument) you have to research, write and submit in advance – this can be on a topic of current interest or controversy. If I am completely honest, this is the part that I really wasn't looking forward to, not so much the research and writing, but the idea of presenting it in front of a room of complete randoms. However, DO NOT let this put you off, 99% of those attending the course felt the exact same, plus you have plenty of time to prepare in advance and when you get there, you can rehearse and get plenty of advice from the coaches. Also, by the time we did the presentations, everyone had built bonds and were all willing one another to do well.

Throughout the week, we were treated to a number of guest speakers who shared their extraordinary life experiences. One of the speakers on my course was a man called Timothy Cho who had escaped from North Korea as a teenager so it was eye opening, emotional and very powerful.

On the final night, there was an award ceremony and dinner where everyone received their certificates and a number of individual awards were handed out, I actually received an award for my presentation (that I was having a meltdown over 2 days earlier!!)

Overall, I had a brilliant experience and would honestly recommend anyone at the early stage of their career to apply for the course this year. It is informative, interesting and great fun. I have been able to build on skills I already had and push myself out of my comfort zone!”

### **Modern Apprenticeship scheme**

To encourage young workers to join FFS we have identified roles that are suitable for the Modern Apprentice scheme. Modern apprenticeships offer equal access to training and employment opportunities, increasing the diversity of our workforce.

Employing Modern Apprentices has helped us to develop staff to close skill gaps. We have previously recruited a Modern Apprentice into our IT team who remained with FSS, now in a promoted B2 post. In 2024 we recruited another Modern Apprentice into our IT team. We will continue to consider all A3 posts for the scheme.

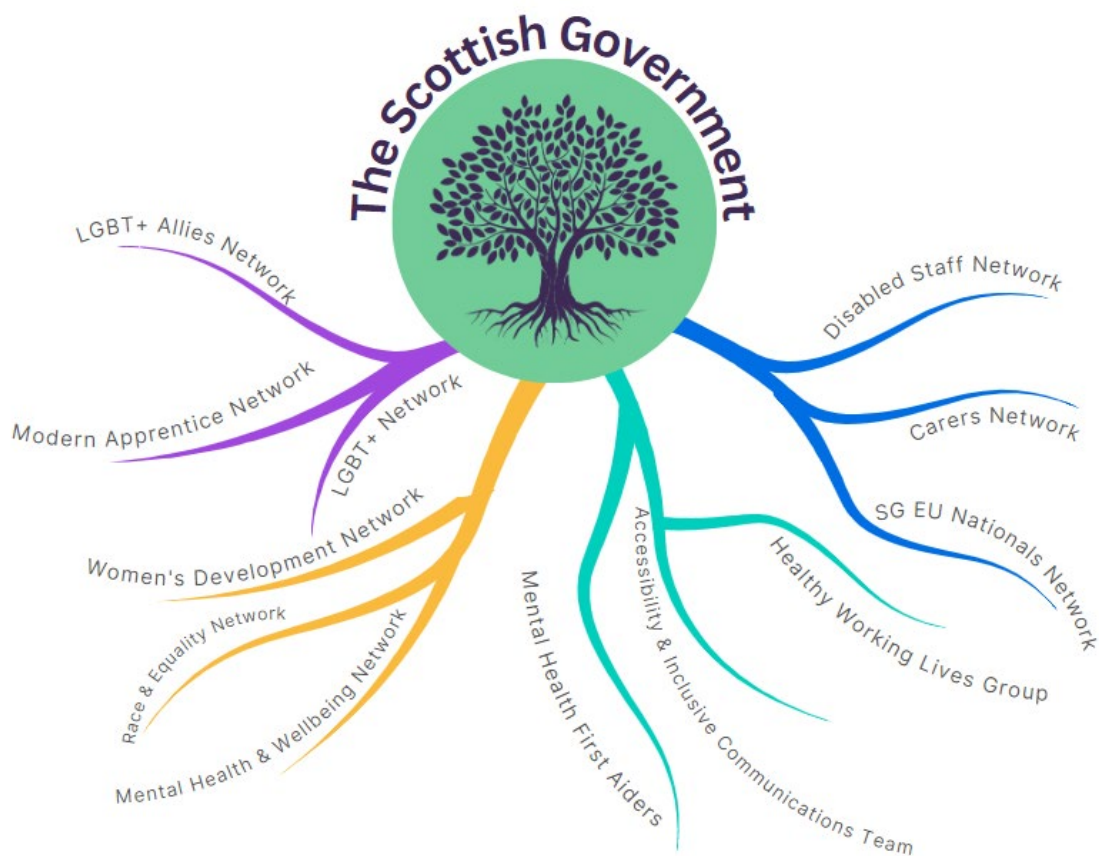
## 5. Staff Networks

In our partnership with Scottish Government, FSS staff have access to a fantastic community of both in house and Scottish Government led staff networks.

With over 20 diversity focused networks of an extremely broad scope, this online community based support and information forum is an integral element in how we embed equality, diversity, and inclusion into the everyday working lives of our staff.

Staff networks are accessible to all FSS staff via Viva Engage, our internal social media platform, where a Facebook style approach is utilised to make staff networks sociable as well as accessible and engaging. Networks welcomes anyone who has an interest, that can benefit from membership, or add value to the group. You may be an active member of the specific protected characteristic group or simply, you are an ally.

As of March 2024, 38 members of staff are actively engaged in 1 or more of the available staff networks. That's 12.5% of FSS' s 302 members of staff actively participating in equality, diversity and inclusion based discussions, events and information sharing partnerships across FSS, SG main and the wider SG bodies daily.



We asked staff anonymously what their experience has been like as part of a Staff Network or internal group. Some of their responses are presented below.

“Really good so far. I feel like this is the way forward for accessibility at FSS and has already made a big difference.”

“Fantastic! Networks provide social spaces where colleagues can chat with likeminded people but also seek advice on more serious topics and issues from people with lived experiences.”

“Excellent. Very informative and a great sense of community. Lots of lived experience and helpful advice available.”

“Very useful to stay in touch with colleagues with similar interests or are affected by similar issues. Overall, very positive.”

“The Staff Networks are an invaluable source of information for me in my role to share with colleagues various initiatives and events.”

“Fantastic way to make friends! Networks improved my social experience at work.”

“I got the chance to know colleagues from other nationalities that work within the SG and to get involved in projects that are very different from your day-to-day work.”

“Very positive, it's good to make a positive difference within the culture of the organisation.”

“Overwhelmingly positive.”

“It's been a positive experience being part of the HWL and AIC groups. I feel like I'm really contributing to the wellbeing of staff and creating a more inclusive environment.”

“Useful source of information and support.”

Our participation in facilitating access to staff networks allows us to achieve success in our outlined equality outcomes. Networks help us champion employee contribution, giving employees a safe space to have a trusted and confidential voice – valuing their contributions. Networks evidence just one of the many ways we work collaboratively with Scottish Government to increase the support for our diverse workforce and represent the different communities we serve across Scotland.

A full list of all currently active staff networks and the work they do can be view in the [Staff Networks Overview](#) section on Saltire.





## Our workforce

[foodstandards.gov.scot](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot)

## 6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data

The following datasets cover the period from April 2022 to March 2024 (Current reporting period).

### 6.1 Disclosure control

To prevent calculation of suppressed values by differencing, in some instances secondary data suppression was necessary. Where possible, data suppression has been avoided by grouping categories in some manner. Where the only small counts in a table refer to the 'prefer not to say' category, no data suppression is done. Where data suppression has been applied or category grouping has been carried out in any table, an explanatory note is provided.

### 6.2 Data source

Statistical data presented in this report came from data held on the Scottish Government HR System. For any further information related to presented data please contact [HR MI Team Mailbox@gov.scot](mailto:HR_MI_Team_Mailbox@gov.scot).

In order to not to disclose confidential information about members of staff, data suppression was applied to counts of less than 5 (an percentage values as well). If the numbers of both female and male staff within a pay grade were 5 or over, data suppression was not applied.

Information provided in this report on the protected characteristics has been provided by employees on a voluntary basis. Some information held in the system is complete, whilst others are less well populated.

### 6.3 Workforce data

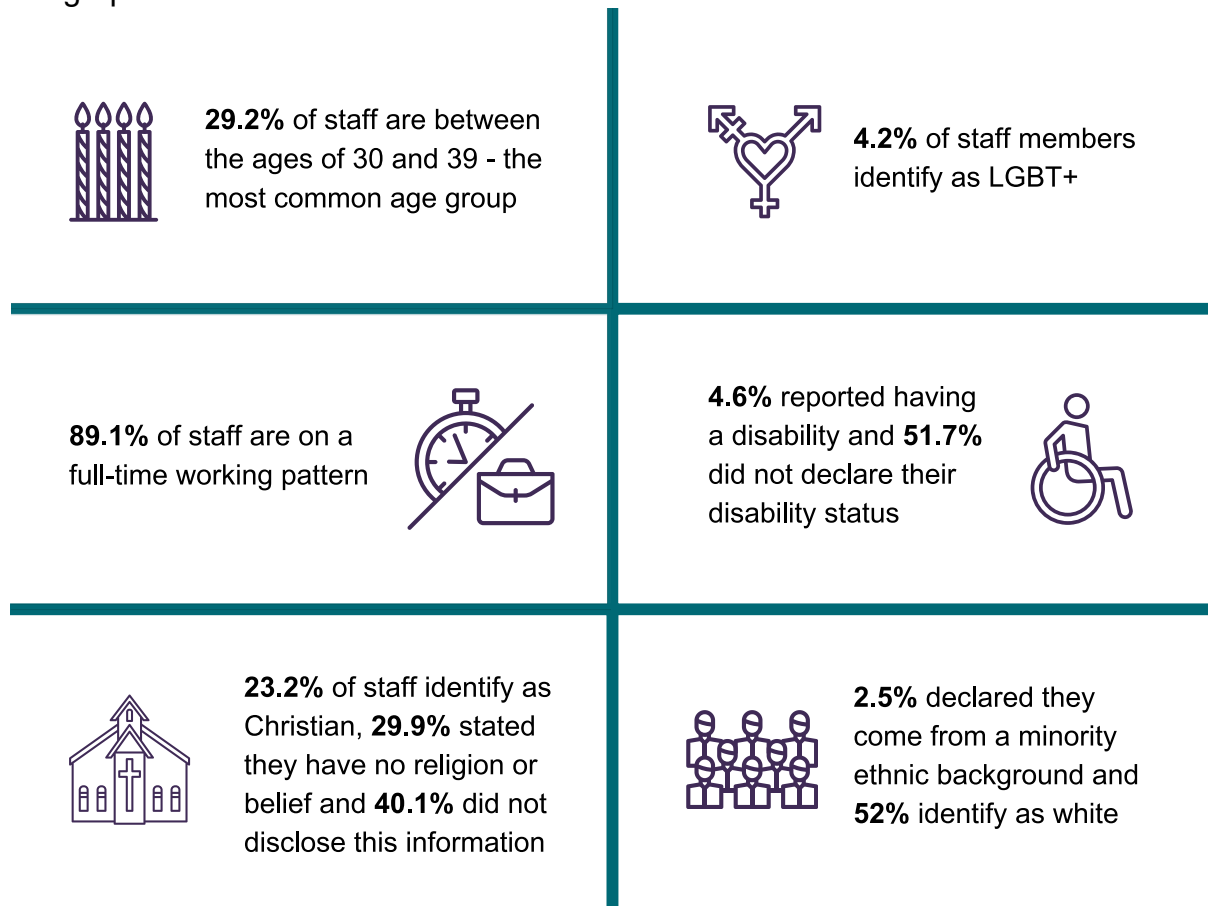
We have a statutory responsibility to carry out monitoring on the protected characteristics of our workforce. This allows us to identify any gaps or issues in our recruitment and employment practices and procedures and to find ways to try to address these.

|                          | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|
| Number of staff employed | 306  | 307  | 294  |

*\*Note: This is the headcount figure as a as at 31 March for each year as reported by the SG MI Team and does not include agency temps or contingency staff currently working at FSS.*

## At a glance

### Infographic 1:



Below is a summary of the main points from the latest FSS workforce EDI data (Infographic 1).

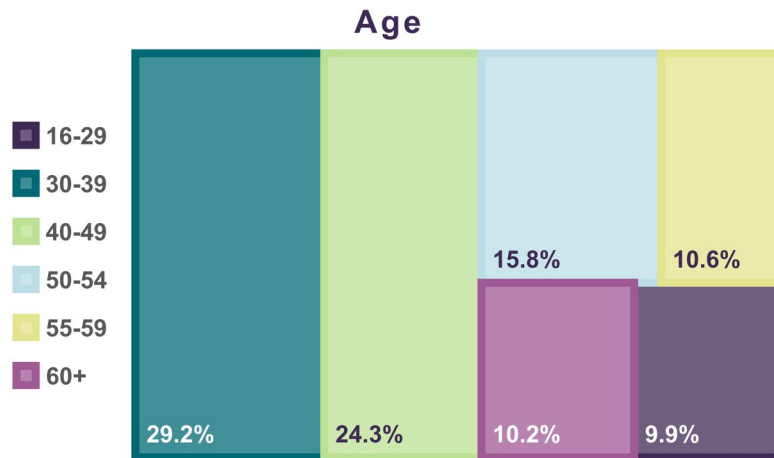
- In March 2024, the most common employee age group (29.2%) is 30-39.
- In 2023, 6% of the Scottish Government's workforce identified as LGBT+, while 4.2% of FSS staff did. Due to underreporting, the actual percentage in FSS may be higher, with 40.5% undisclosed.
- 89.1% of FSS staff work full-time, while only 10.9% work flexibly or part-time.
- Gender distribution in FSS is almost equal, with 52.8% identifying as male and 47.2% as female.
- Over half of the staff (51.7%) have not disclosed their disability status, impacting the accuracy of disability representation. Actions to address this are detailed in section 8.1.
- 4.6% of staff reported having a disability.
- 2.5% of staff declared they come from a minority ethnic background, whilst 52% identify as white. 40.8% did not declare this information.
- 23.2% of staff identify as Christian, 29.9% stated they have no religion or belief and 40.1% did not disclose this information
- 6.8% of staff identified with a religion other than Christianity or preferred not to say.

Full table versions of the data above can be found in Appendix 1.



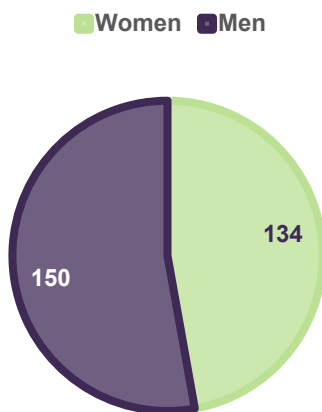
## Data breakdown

The following data shows Food Standard Scotland's workforce diversity statistics as of March 2024, with figures below 5 omitted to comply with confidentiality policies.



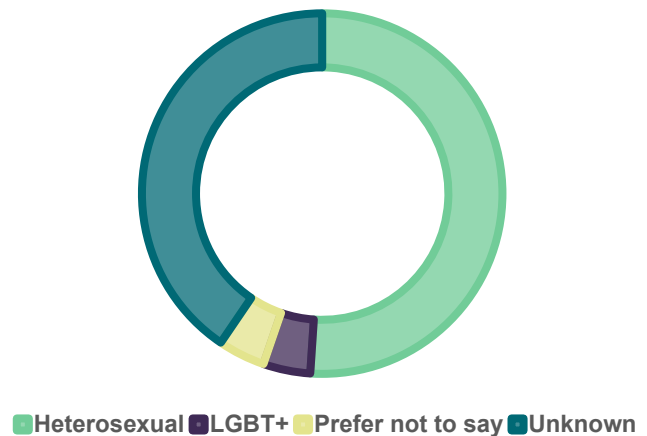
The most common employee age group (29.2%) is 30-39.

### Gender



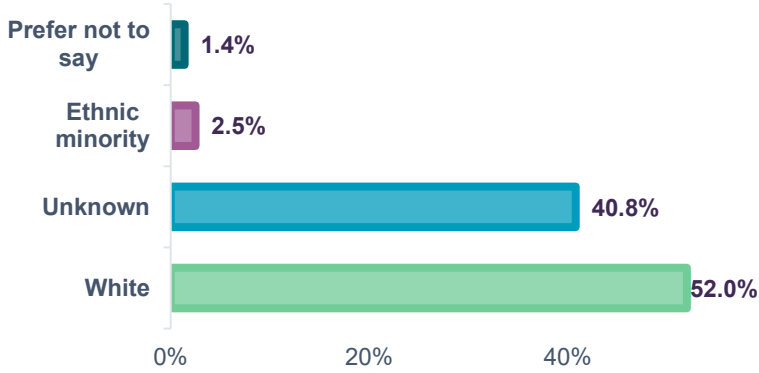
Gender split in FSS is almost equal, with 52.8% male and 47.2% female.

### Sexual orientation



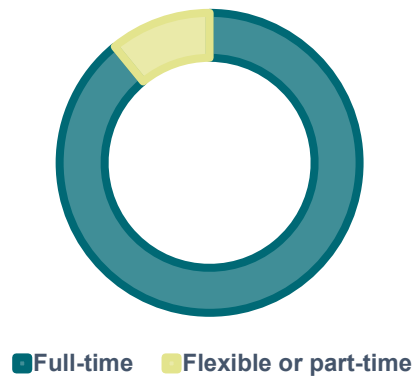
4.2% of FSS staff identify as LGBT+, compared to 6% in the Scottish Government in 2023.

### Ethnicity



2.5% of staff declared they come from a minority ethnic background, whilst 52% identify as white. 40.8% did not declare this information.

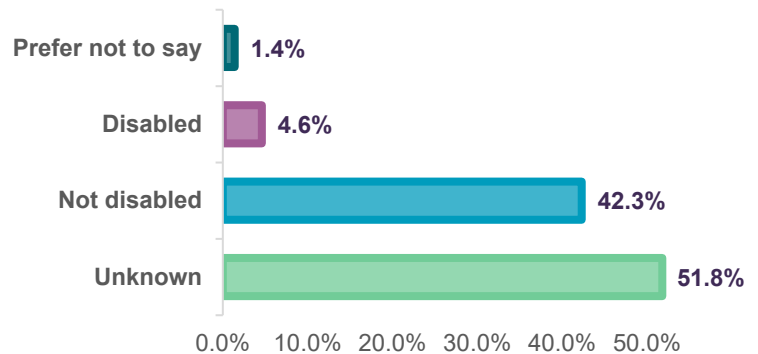
### Working patterns



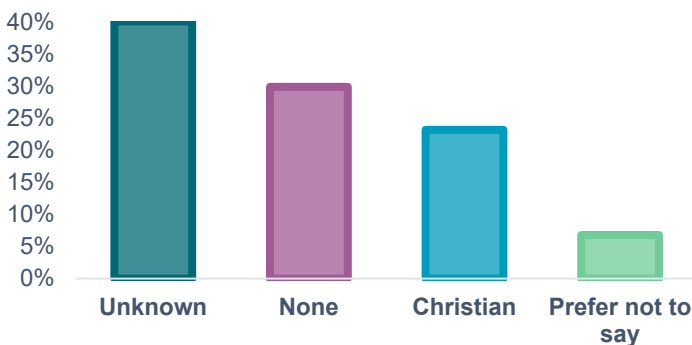
89.1% of FSS staff work full-time, while only 10.9% work flexibly or part-time.

### Disability status

Over half of the staff (51.7%) have not disclosed their disability status, impacting the accuracy of disability representation. Actions to address this are detailed in section 8.1. 4.6% of staff reported having a disability.



### Religion



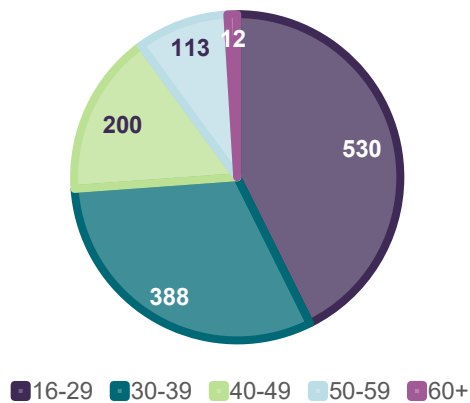
23.2% of staff identify as Christian, 29.9% stated they have no religion or belief and 40.1% did not disclose this information 6.8% of staff identified with a religion other than Christianity or preferred not to say.

## 6.4 Recruitment data

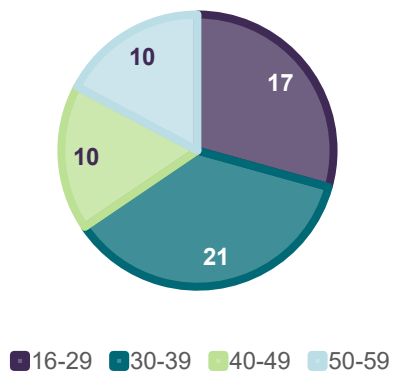
The data shows recruitment statistics for Food Standards Scotland from March 2022 to March 2024, with figures below 5 condensed to comply with policy and protect confidentiality. It reflects the number of individuals receiving job offers from the organization.

Full table versions of the data below can be found in Appendix 1.

**No. of candidates by age**

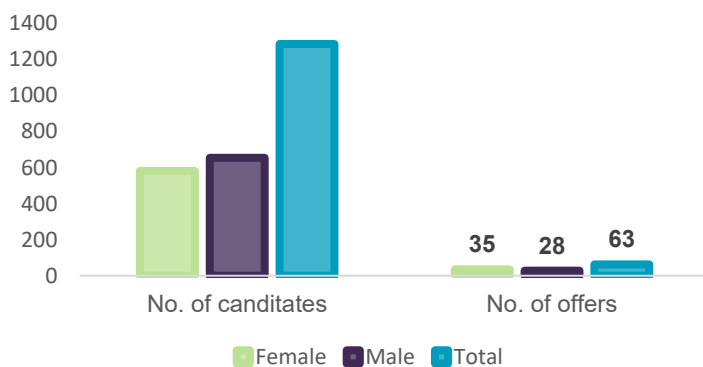


**No. of offers by age**

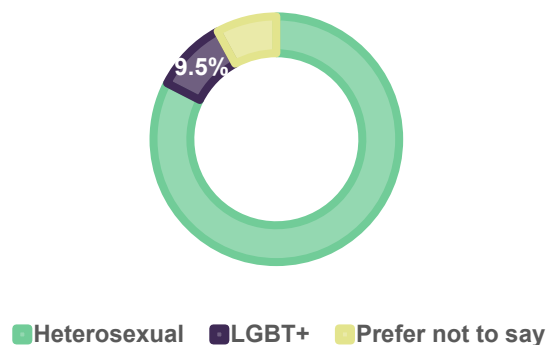


The highest number of individuals recruited were in the 30-39 age group.

**Gender**



**Sexual orientation**

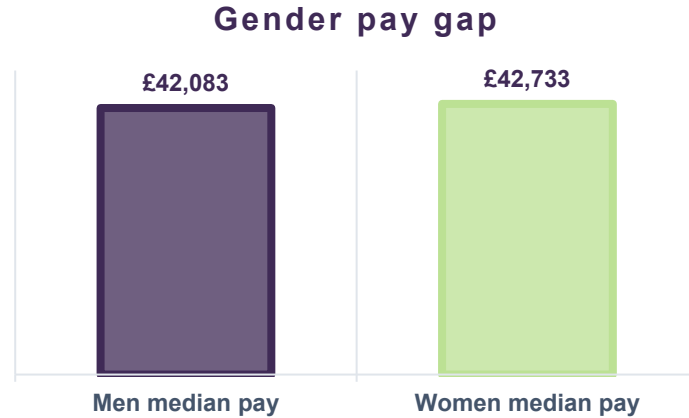


During the reporting period, FSS recruited 35 females and 28 males. Data from other, PNTS & unknown has been compressed.

In 2023, 6% of Scottish Government workforce declared themselves as LGBT+. At FSS, 9.5% successful candidates identified as LGBT+ during the reporting period.

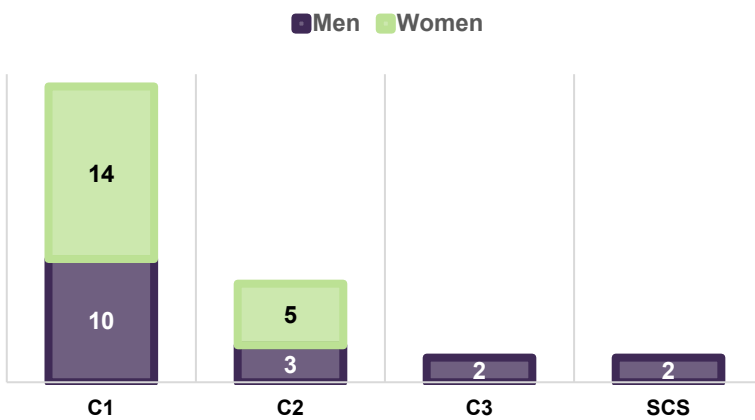
## 6.5 Women in leadership

The below data outlines Food Standard Scotland's Women in Leadership & Gender Pay Gap statistics as of March 2024.



Food Standards Scotland is an equal opportunities employer and you can read more about equal pay at Food Standards in our Equal Pay Statement, section 3.1.

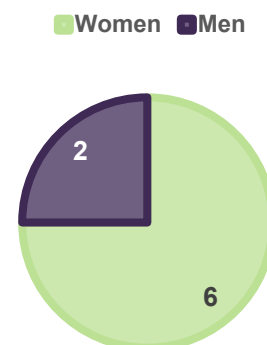
### Gender split by band



Restructuring in 2022 led to the establishment of an Executive Management Board and a temporary senior leadership team. Gender balance remained consistent at C1 and C2 levels but decreased in the senior leadership team following the departure of the female deputy CEO, resulting in an all-male team.

In contrast, the FSS Board demonstrates strong female representation, with 75% female members.

### The Board



## 6.6 Civil Service People Survey

### At a glance

Infographic 2:



Below is a summary of the key findings from the latest FSS Civil Service People Survey data (Infographic 2).

Of the 72% of FSS employees who responded to the survey in 2023:

- 90% reported being treated with respect in the workplace
- 83% agreed that FSS is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace
- 83% felt that FSS respects individual differences
- 84% reported that they felt included and were treated fairly at work
- 90% recorded that they had not been discriminated against in the past 12 months

Table versions of the data above can be found in Appendix 1.

## 7. Progress against outcomes

Over the last 4 years the FSS headcount has remained steady, with less than 10% change since 2020 currently sitting at 294 employees, with a split of 49% females and 51% male.

### 7.1 Workforce by Diversity Breakdown

#### Women in leadership

FSS prides itself on having a diverse Board. The Board has remained at 8 members, consisting of 6 females and 2 males. Since the 2022 report the Board has appointed a new female chair. FSS is committed to creating a truly diverse Board with a breadth of skills and experiences as well as diversity across age, ethnicity and gender.

Since 2022 FSS has restructured its leadership team. The leadership team consists of grades C1, C2, C3 and SCS. Employees at C2 grade are now part of the Executive Management Board, along with the Head of Finance at C1, with the senior leadership team consisting of two senior leaders at C3 level (for a temporary trial period), a Deputy director and the CEO.

As of March 2024 the Executive Management Board is made up of 6 females and 2 males. There are more females at both C1 and C2 grades. There are currently no females in the Senior Leadership Team.

As an organisation, FSS continues to strive for equal opportunities for women across the leadership roles. We successfully introduced a series of workshops for senior leaders lead by Taylor Clark in 2022, going forward FSS will introduce an in house senior leadership training programme and will provide ongoing coaching for senior managers. As part of FSS's approach to talent management a training programme for junior managers was introduced in 2022, these sessions are aimed at Employees working at B2 and B3 grades with the aim providing employees with the tools required to become successful managers.

The Senior Leadership Team recognises the importance of having a diverse leadership team and women are actively encouraged to sign up for the relevant development opportunities as well as being encouraged to apply for leadership roles when vacancies arise.

#### Workforce by age

The age split across the FSS workforce has largely remained the same since 2022, with noticeable changes occurring in 16-29 year olds and 50-59 year olds. The number of 16-29 year old working for FSS has fallen by 5.5% and we have seen an increase in 50-59 year olds from 7.8% to 10.6% of the total workforce since 2022.

The employment rate of young workers (16-24 year olds) has been falling since 2018 ([Employment - Labour Market Statistics](#)), so we would expect to see a fall in the 16 – 29 year old group. However FSS recognises the importance of encouraging young workers in to the civil service and will continue to push initiatives such as the Career

Ready Mentor and Modern Apprenticeship programmes to support and encourage young workers to remain with FSS.

The majority of the FSS workforce is aged between 30 and 49 years old, this is in line with the total Scottish labour force.

### **FSS workforce by gender**

The gender split across FSS sits at 49% women and 51% men as of March 2024, the percentage of women in FSS has increased from 47.7% in 2022. We continue to have a disproportionate number of men (69.7%) compared with women (30.3%) working at the B1 grade. As in previous years this is due to the high percentage of B1 workers being MHI's who are predominantly men. The gender split in the Operational Delivery division is being addressed as per the actions under Equality Outcome 3.

### **Gender Pay Gap**

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 states that we have a duty to publish gender pay gap information. Food Standards Scotland defines the gender pay gap as the difference in mean full time equivalent earnings for men and women. The mean is the sum of basic salaries for each person divided by the number of people.

The gender pay gap in FSS has fallen from 2.9% since 2022 to -1.5% as of March 2024 showing that based on mean wage, women are currently paid more than men in FSS, this is lower than the Scottish average of 1.7 ([Gender pay gap in the UK](#)). However, when broken down by grade men earn more than women across grades B1 to C1, with the biggest differences occurring at B1 (2.6%) and C1 (2.4%). The data from grades A3/4 and C2 has been compressed and we have no women currently in the SCS band.

Food Standards Scotland, has a duty to ensure that where men and women are undertaking work of an equal value (i.e. within the same pay range) they are paid a similar annual salary within the pay band. FSS HR Team will continue to work with our colleagues in SG HR Shared Services to ensure that processes for recruitment, selection and promotion, are free from gender bias, this in turn will ensure that we have continued stability in our gender pay gap figures within Food Standards Scotland.

### **Workforce by religion**

40% of the FSS workforce have not declared their religious status and as a result of low reporting numbers in the 'Other religion' and 'PNTS' categories (6.8%) it has been difficult to understand the full picture of religion across the organisation. The percentage of people reporting as Christian (23.2%) and None (29.9%) has remained very similar to the figures recorded in 2022.

We will work to encourage more employees to self-declare their religious status in order for FSS to gain a better understanding of faith and belief across the organisation.

## **Workforce by ethnicity**

40.8% of FSS employees have not declared their ethnicity. Of those choosing to report their ethnicity the majority have reported as White (55.5%), with 2.5% reporting as from an Ethnic Minority. Those reporting as from an ethnic minority has increased by 0.2% since 2022, although this is a small decrease it has moved away from the downward trend seen from 2018 to 2022.

FSS HR team will continue to encourage employees to self-declare equality and diversity information via the FSS/SG HR system, using the opportunity of moving to the new Oracle Cloud system in October 2024 to promote self-declaration across the organisation.

## **Workforce by Sexual orientation**

The majority of the FSS workforce declared their sexual orientation declared as Heterosexual (51.1%). Those declaring as LGBT+ has increased to 4.5% from 3.3% in 2022, although this is a small increase it is encouraging to see. 40.8% of employees have chosen not to declare their sexual orientation, as in other categories we aim to increase the percentage of staff declaring their information in order to gain a better understanding of sexual orientation across the organisation.

## **Workforce by Disability status**

Of those reporting in this category 42.3% declared themselves as 'Not Disabled' and 4.6% declared themselves as 'Disabled'. The majority of people (51.8%) have chosen to not to declare their disability status. Total declaration has increased by 2.3% since 2022. People declaring themselves as disabled has fallen from 5.2% since 2022. Encouraging people to self-declare is particularly important in this category to ensure FS can out in the correct support where needed. As such FSS will promote and encourage employees to self-declare any disability on the HR system.

## **Working patterns**

89.9% of FSS employees are on a Full-time work pattern, remaining similar to 2022 (89.5%). FSS remains committed to offering flexible part time and fulltime working options to all current and new employees.

## **7.2 Recruitment breakdown by Protected Characteristic**

In this Equality Mainstreaming Progress Report the data presented reflects the number of people who were extended an offer of recruitment to work with Food Standards Scotland across the protected Characteristics –Age, Disability, Ethnicity, Gender, Marital/Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation.

During the reporting period between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, there were 1286 applications and 63 offers made, this is a significant decreased on figures reported between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (2579 applicants and 144 offers made), due to budget constraints recruitment has been limited over this reporting period.



## **Recruitment breakdown by Age**

The reporting groups have changed since the last reporting period. The age group 16-19 years and 20-29 years have been merged into one group, now 16-29 years. Data from the 60+, PNTS and Unknown categories was compressed but is a total of 5 people.

96.7% of applicants declared their age, giving a good representation of recruitment across the age groups. The majority of successful candidates were aged 16-39 years of age (60.3%), with 30-39 years (33.3%) being the most common category, a change from the last reporting period where the age group 20-29 years was the most common.

## **Recruitment breakdown by Gender**

Of the 63 successful candidates during the reporting period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 35 (55.6%) an increase of 4.9% compared with the last reporting period where 50.9% of successful candidates were women.

## **Recruitment breakdown by Disability**

Disability data for successful applicants was compressed, so it has not been possible to provide an analysis for this group. Of the total applicants (1286) from the current reporting period only 55 declared themselves as disabled (2.4%), this has reduced from 3.3% of total applicants declaring as disabled in the previous reporting period.

## **Recruitment breakdown by Ethnic group**

Of the 63 successful candidates 5 (7.9%) candidates who declared themselves as an Ethnic Minority in the current reporting period. The data for successful candidates in this group was compressed in 2022, so a comparison cannot be made. 34.8% of total applicants declared themselves as an ethnic minority, this has over doubled since the last reporting period where only 14% of total applicants declared as an ethnic minority.

## **Recruitment breakdown by Religion**

The majority of the successful candidate data was compressed for the current reporting period, with only the data for those recording no religion available (68.3%). The percentage of successful candidates declaring no religion has increased significantly since the previous reporting period when 29.2% of successful candidates declared no religion.

Of total applicants during the current reporting period 32.8% declared as Christian, whilst 43.4% declared no religion and 15.7% declared as 'Other Religion'. The group declaring 'Other religion' has increased by 9.1% from the previous reporting period. With little change in those reporting as Christian or no religion.

## **Recruitment breakdown by Sexual Orientation**

Of the 63 successful candidates in the current reporting period 82.5% reported as being Heterosexual, 9.5% as LGBT+ and 8% PNTS. Those reporting as LGBT\_ has increased by 4.6% since the previous reporting period. 100% of successful

candidates chose to declare their sexual orientation during the current reporting period, compared to only 55.6% declaring in the previous reporting period.

### **Recruitment breakdown by Socio Economic Background**

During the current period reporting on recruitment breakdown by Socio Economic Background (SEB) has been introduced. Description of the categories can be found here: [The National Statistics Socio-economic classification](#). Due to low reporting numbers the successful candidate data in the following groups was compressed; Intermediate, Never worked and Unclassified.

33.3% of successful candidates fell into the High category, 19% fell into the Routine category, 1.5% of successful candidates PNTS and 38.1% had an Unknown SEB. No comparison can currently be made due to no historical data.

### **7.3 Inclusion Data**

#### **Use of BSL Videos**

During the current reporting period we've had 1,145 views on BSL content and 43.3% of those views have been on the FSS website.

#### **Use of Recite Me tool**

We are unable to collect data on the usage of the screen reader tool on the FSS website as it is operated by a third party. Digital accessibility training resources indicate that the majority of screen reader users operate their own built-in browser tools when accessing web content and therefore would be less likely to use the basic Recite Me tool on the site. Screen reader users have been included in the research for the website refresh and findings from the discovery phase will inform the any changes relating to the tool.

#### **Number of EDI events held**

Over the last 12 months 2 EDI events have been carried out, the EDI and Wellbeing day and the Breathing Space day. As this was a new measure for this year we have limited recorded data. Going forward FSS will aim to hold a minimum of 5 EDI events per year considering the Protected Characteristics during the planning of each event.

#### **Civil Service People Survey Statistics (CSPS)**

In 2023 the CSPS introduced an Inclusion category of questions, the data below has been extracted from the 2023 CSPS.

In 2023 FSS achieved an engagement score of 72% from a response rate of 89%, this was the 8<sup>th</sup> highest engagement score across Scottish Government and is above the civil service benchmarking score of 65%. This not only shows we have an engaged workforce but gives us confidence that data we use from the survey is relevant and a good representation of our organisation. Campaigns such as our 'Stamp It Out' campaign against bullying and harassment have helped us maintain a high engagement score.

The results from Inclusion and Fair treatment theme of the 2023 CSPPS show that overall FSS staff feel that they are treated fairly (84%) and with respect (90%) in the workplace. Further to this 83% of the workforce felt FSS is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, with 90% of FSS Employees declaring that they had not been discriminated against in the past 12 months. Of the 10% of employees who reported discrimination 5% of those reported discrimination due to a protected characteristic.

Although these outcomes are positive, there is room for improvement and FSS is committed to eradicating discrimination from the organisation.

## **8. Looking ahead**

### **8.1 Outcome 1: Actions**

- To further embed EDI our culture we will introduce EDI champions, Each champion will lead on a protected characteristic. Champions will meet monthly as part of the current EDI working group. Each champion will lead on projects relevant to the protected characteristic they champion.
- As part of the Scottish Government's main bargaining unit we will embed the incoming EDI strategy into FSS. Once the strategy is introduced we will tailor it to the specific needs of FSS.
- We will further promote the Employee Passport and encourage all employees to self-declare EDI information. We will use the roll out of the Oracle Cloud system to highlight the importance of providing up to date information to ensure we are supporting colleagues at all times.
- Our menopause guidance has been recently updated, going forward we will introduce a menopause champion as part of our EDI working group.
- We will continue to hold annual EDI and wellbeing events as a way of providing training, information and support in all areas of EDI.

### **8.2 Outcome 2: Actions**

- As part of the website refresh, we will digitalise the publications section to significantly improve accessibility and usability. Improving access to publications will make it easier for users and stakeholders to engage with FSS guidance and services.

### **8.3 Outcome 3: Actions**

- The renewal of our Disability Confident Employer status is due this year, in line with our approach of striving for a more inclusive workforce we are working towards level 3 Disability Confident Leader.
- The Introduction of Oracle cloud in October 2024 will give us further opportunities to promote the benefits of declaring EDI information and keeping self-declared information up to date.
- We will continue to support young people in our organisation through initiatives such as Modern Apprenticeships, Career ready mentoring and the Young Scotland Programme.
- We will continue to provide training to hiring managers and panel members to ensure fair and equal recruitment opportunities for all candidates.
- We will work in collaboration with Scottish Government to ensure our vacancy adverts are reaching potential candidates across Scotland targeting minority and under-resented groups through the use of alternative advertising methods.

## **8.4 Staff networks**

As we move through the next phase of the current equality mainstreaming cycle, we aim to increase FSS staff participation in networks as outlined below:

- Inclusion of staff network promotion in FSS onboarding process. For example, as part of HR inductions, HR Co-ordinators will utilise this opportunity to highlight networks existence and sell membership benefits to new employees.
- FSS HR will seek more opportunities to collaborate with SG staff networks. Specifically, we will continue to invite staff networks to attend FSS equality, diversity, inclusion, and wellbeing events where network champions can attend and promote membership.

FSS HR will invite staff networks to attend FSS Head Office and Field all staff meetings. This opportunity allows network champions to present membership, benefits and support which can be gained from network.

## Appendix 1 - Workforce diversity data

### Workforce breakdown by age group

| Age group            | 16-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 | 60+   |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| % of total Employees | 9.9%  | 29.2% | 24.3% | 15.8% | 10.6% | 10.2% |

At March 2024, our mid way point in the current mainstreaming cycle, the majority of FSS staff are between the ages of 30 - 39. Data in our Recruitment by Protected Characteristic reflects this, with 30-39 year olds being the highest age bracket recruited between 2022 and 2024.

### Workforce breakdown by gender

| Gender               | Female | Male  |
|----------------------|--------|-------|
| % of total Employees | 47.2%  | 52.8% |

Sex split across FSS is fairly even, with males marginally higher. 52.8% of FSS identify as male and 47.2% female.

### Workforce breakdown by disability status

| Disability Status    | Disabled | Not Disabled | Prefer not to say | Unknown |
|----------------------|----------|--------------|-------------------|---------|
| % of total Employees | 4.6%     | 42.3%        | 1.4%              | 51.8%   |

The majority of staff (51.7%) currently have not declared their disability status.

### Workforce breakdown by ethnicity

| Ethnicity            | Ethnic minority | White | Prefer not to say | Unknown |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|-------------------|---------|
| % of total Employees | 2.5%            | 55.5% | 1.4%              | 40.8%   |

We are unable to obtain a true representation of the current ethnic minority split due to 40.8% undeclaring.

With the majority of our workforce declaring themselves as white (52%) we continue to work to increase ethnic minorities within FSS.

## Workforce breakdown by religion

| Religion                    | Christian | None  | Unknown | Compressed |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------|---------|------------|
| <b>% of total Employees</b> | 23.2%     | 29.9% | 40.1%   | 6.8%       |

*\*Compressed data includes the following reporting groups: Prefer not to say and Other Religion*

We aim to increase of declaration of religion to give us a better understanding of faith and belief across the organisations. 6.8% of our organisation declared themselves as other religion or Prefer not to say but the breakdown was compressed due to low reporting numbers.

## Workforce breakdown by sexual orientation

| Sexual Orientation          | Straight | LGBT+ | Prefer not to say | Unknown |
|-----------------------------|----------|-------|-------------------|---------|
| <b>% of total Employees</b> | 51.1%    | 4.2%  | 4.2%              | 40.5%   |

6% off Scottish Governments workforce declared themselves as LBGT+ and in FSS 4.2% staff identify as LBGT+ in 2023.

## Workforce breakdown by working pattern

| Working Pattern             | Full Time | Part Time |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>% of total Employees</b> | 89.1%     | 10.9%     |

9.1% of FSS Staff work a Full-Time working pattern. With only 10.9% of staff working flexibly and part time.

## Gender pay gap – based on mean salaries

| Gender                    | Male       | Female     |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Mean annual salary</b> | £42,083.00 | £42,733.00 |

## Senior Leadership breakdown by grade and gender

| Grade | Female | Male |
|-------|--------|------|
| C1    | 14     | 10   |
| C2    | 5      | 3    |
| C3    | 0      | 2    |
| SCS   | 0      | 2    |

Since 2022 we have had a re structure of our leadership team which now comprises Executive Management Board (C1's & C2's) and a temporary senior leadership team consisting of two C3's and two senior civil servants.

Our female/male split has remained stable at C1 and C2 level but has fallen in the senior leadership team as of January 2024 when our female deputy CEO left the

organisation - we currently have no females in our senior leadership team. In our Board however, females lead the way with 75% identifying as female.

## Recruitment breakdown by protected characteristics

### Recruitment breakdown by age

| Age                          | 16-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | Compressed |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| No. of Successful Candidates | 17    | 21    | 10    | 10    | 42         |

Between March 2022 and March 2024, FSS recruited the following numbers in each age range. The most common age range was between 30-39.

### Recruitment breakdown by gender

| Gender                       | Female | Male |
|------------------------------|--------|------|
| No. of Successful Candidates | 35     | 28   |

During the reviewed period, FSS recruited 80% more female staff compared to males. With 35 females being hired compared to 28 males. Data from other, Prefer not to say & unknown has been compressed.

### Recruitment breakdown by ethnicity

| Ethnicity                    | Ethnic minority | White | Prefer not to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------------------|
| No. of Successful Candidates | 5               | 57    | 1                 |

New recruits from ethnic minority groups made up 8.6% of new staff between March 2022 and March 2024. The number of unknown staff has been compressed for confidentiality purposes.

### Recruitment breakdown by religion

| Religion                     | None | Compressed |
|------------------------------|------|------------|
| No. of Successful Candidates | 43   | 20         |

The majority of data gathered for Recruitment by Religion has been compressed. Data shows only for those who stated having no religion as over 40 people.



## Recruitment breakdown by sexual orientation

| Sexual Orientation           | Heterosexual | LGBT+ | Prefer not to say |
|------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------------------|
| No. of Successful Candidates | 52           | 6     | 5                 |

The majority of candidates declared themselves as heterosexual. 6% of Scottish Government workforce declared themselves as LGBT+ in 2023. Currently 9.5% successful candidates identify as LBGT+.

## Recruitment breakdown by socio-economic background (SEB)

| Socio Economic Group         | High | Prefer not to say | Routine | Unknown | Compressed |
|------------------------------|------|-------------------|---------|---------|------------|
| No. of Successful Candidates | 21   | 1                 | 12      | 24      | 15         |

The data presented displays FSS's socioeconomic diversity in recruitment. As a member of the wider Scottish Government, we are driven to provide fair and equal recruitment opportunity to the Scottish public as well as international candidates from all economic backgrounds. The compressed data consists of those declaring Intermediate, Never Worked and Unknown.

Descriptions for the classifications are as follows: 'High' is 'Professional background or higher socio-economic background', and 'Routine' is 'Working class background or lower socio-economic background'.

## Inclusion Data

### 2023 Civil Service People Survey Statistics (CSPS)

- In 2023 FSS achieved an engagement score of 72%
- 90% of FSS Employees recorded that they had not been discriminated against in the past 12 months
- 84% of FSS employees reported that they felt included and were treated fairly at work
- 90% of FSS employees reported as being treated with respect in the workplace
- 83% felt that FSS respects individual differences
- 83% agreed that FSS is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace