

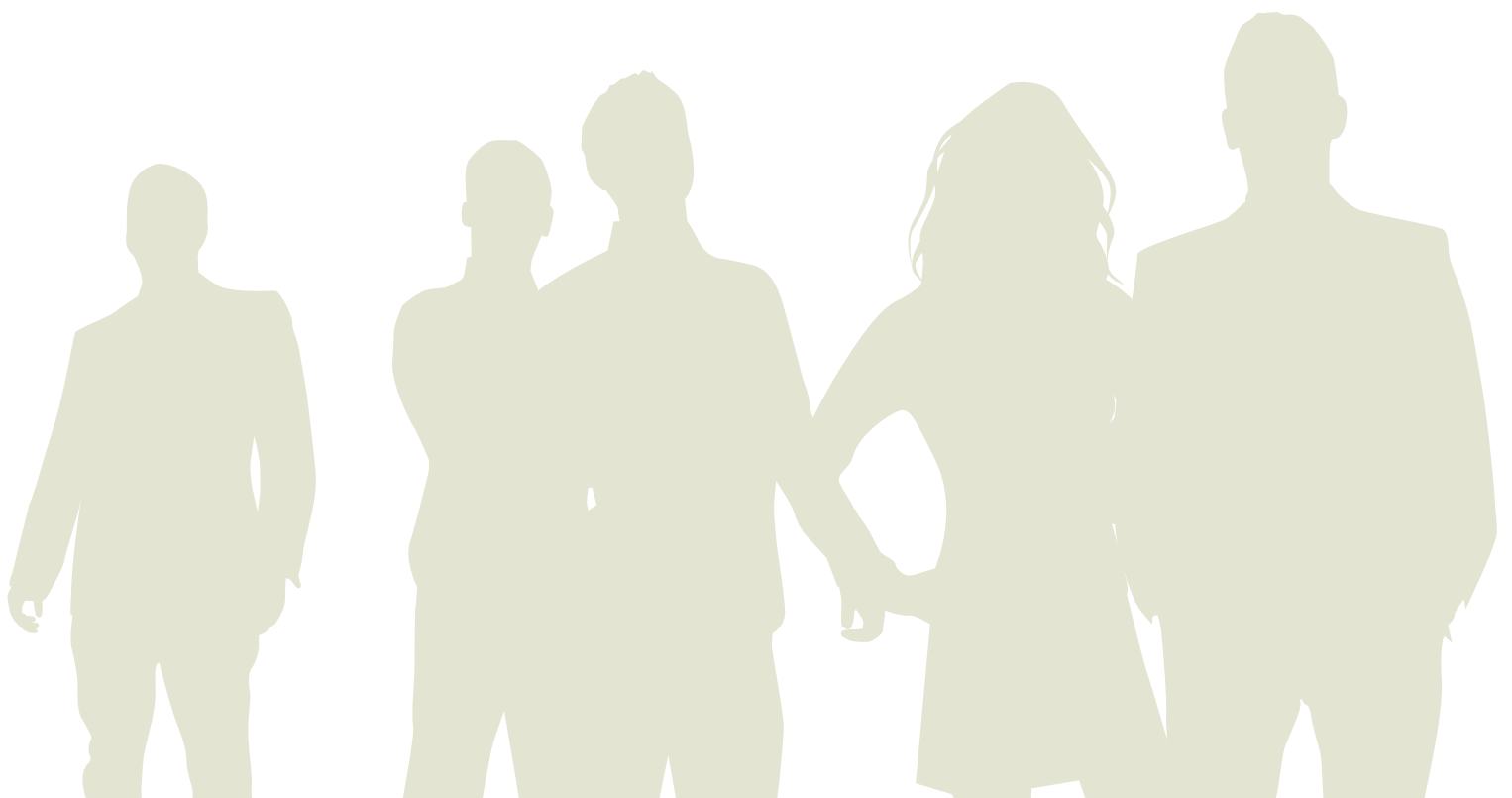
ofgem

Equality and Diversity
**Introduction to our
Equality Schemes**

Equality and Diversity

At Ofgem we recognise the importance of having a diverse team of people in the organisation so that we can meet our duty as a regulator to promote choice and value for existing and future consumers of gas and electricity. In addition to this we want Ofgem to be an accessible and attractive place to work.

We have a strong commitment to equality and diversity, as well as to meet our statutory duty under equality legislation. As part of this duty, we are pleased to publish our three Equality Schemes, which explain what we currently do and how we intend to implement improvements to ensure equality and diversity remain at the heart of our work.



Equality Schemes

Foreword by Chief Executive

Introduction to Our Equality Schemes

Gender Equality Scheme



Race Equality Scheme

Disability Equality Scheme



Foreword by Chief Executive

Welcome to the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets' (Ofgem) Equality Schemes.

Ofgem's principal objective is to protect the interests of existing and future gas and electricity consumers. It is important, therefore, that we take account of the needs and priorities of people from all parts of our community. This commitment to a fair and balanced approach in our work extends naturally into our employment practices.

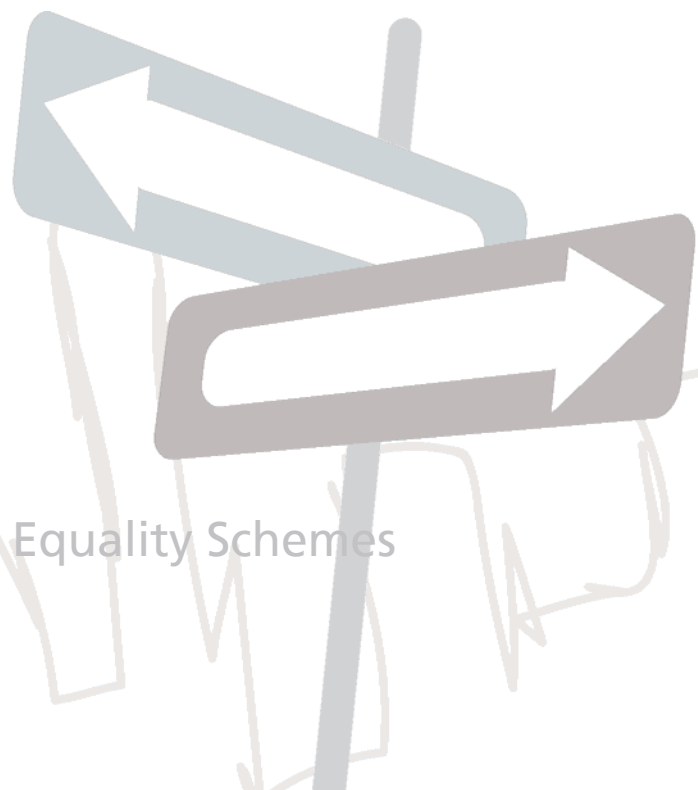
We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and diversity throughout our organisation. We want to further ensure that equality of opportunity remains at the heart of our work. Our own commitment, coupled with the statutory duty placed upon us as a public authority, has enabled us to create our equality schemes on race, gender and disability. These schemes enhance and build on our existing equality initiatives to ensure that promoting equality

and diversity remains an integral part of our work.

You will find details of our role, our external relationships and our equality schemes on our website. Our schemes will be reviewed following the enactment of the Equality Act 2010 and the accompanying action plans will be reviewed annually to take account of the progress we make in meeting our statutory duty and our commitment.



Alistair Buchanan
Chief Executive



1. About Ofgem

Who are we and what do we do

Ofgem (Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) is the administrative body that supports the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority (The Authority) in its role as the economic regulator for the gas and electricity industries in Great Britain. The Authority is a non-ministerial government department created by statute and independent of government to regulate the gas and electricity industries in Great Britain. The remit and statutory duties of the Authority are mainly detailed in the Electricity Act 1989, the Gas Act 1986, the Utilities Act 2000, the Competition Act 1998, the Enterprise Act 2002 and the Energy Acts 2004, 2008 and 2010.

Our principal objective is to protect the interests of existing and future gas and electricity consumers by, wherever appropriate, promoting effective competition. We licence companies engaged in the competitive generation and supply markets and we regulate the monopoly companies which construct, own and operate the gas pipes and the electricity wires that carry energy to our homes and businesses.


We have other duties too which include, but are not limited to:

- helping secure Britain's energy supplies by promoting competitive gas and electricity markets and regulating so that there is adequate investment in the networks;
- helping gas and electricity markets and industry achieve environmental improvements as efficiently as possible;
- ensuring that all reasonable demands for electricity and gas are met; and
- taking account of the needs of vulnerable customers, particularly older people, those with disabilities and those on low incomes.

The Authority consists of non-executive and executive members. Non-executive members bring a range of experience and expertise, from work in industry and social policy to the environment, finance and Europe. Executive members consist of Ofgem's Chief Executive and Managing Directors/Senior Partners.

The Authority determines strategy, takes all major decisions and sets policy priorities.

Ofgem is funded from the licence fees that the energy companies are obliged to pay.



Ofgem is committed to promoting equality and diversity, and to improving our performance.

2. Our Relationships with External Bodies

Our work is often done in partnership and consultation with external stakeholders. Examples include Consumer First Initiative, principles of better regulation and our Impact Assessments which promote a structured approach to policy development and decision making.

Our work is ultimately for the benefit of consumers of gas and electricity so it involves considerable consultation with interested parties and is carried out in the public interest. Relations are maintained with external stakeholders through high-level meetings, consultation exercises and day to day contact among colleagues.

3. Our Equality Schemes

Ofgem is committed to promoting equality and diversity, and to improving our performance. We believe that by attracting diverse talent we can drive positive change in our organisation and improve our overall standing as a regulatory body.

We know that it is not enough just to have an understanding of diversity issues, if we are to drive better performance. We must make sure that diversity and equality is integral to the way we work, as an employer and as an organisation. Our Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that diversity issues are at the heart of our policymaking and our service delivery.

Ofgem has statutory duties to promote race, gender and disability equality. In addition we have a commitment to promote and provide an inclusive environment in regards to religion and belief, age, sexual orientation and working patterns.

Our Equality Schemes set out how we will have due regard to:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination;
- promoting equality of opportunity and good relations for all our people;
- promoting positive attitudes to race, disability and gender equality; and
- monitoring and reporting on our progress against the action plan.

The Disability, Race and Gender Equality Schemes will be reviewed following the enactment of the Equality Act 2010. Each of these schemes includes a plan of what we will do over the next 12 months. These action plans will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect our progress and plan for the following 12 months.

Our Chief Executive and Directors /Partners are responsible for managing the Schemes and the programme of work that flows from them. Our Human Resources Department is responsible for monitoring the Schemes. If you have any enquires about our Equality Schemes, please contact the Human Resources Department on 020 7901 7312 or email hr@ofgem.gov.uk.

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