Our role

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Equal Opportunities Committee inquiry into race, ethnicity and employment. We are Scotland’s skills body, focused on contributing to the delivery of the Scottish Government’s Economic and Skills Strategies. Our services are further shaped by the Scottish Government’s Career Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) Strategy and the recent refresh of the Youth Employment Strategy, which aligns with the recommendations of the Commission on Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce (DSYW).

We will continue to contribute significantly to a Scotland that values skills, realising the potential of its people and businesses to build a competitive, inclusive and resilient economy.

We have ambition to:

- Increase equality of opportunity for all in the delivery of our services;
- Engage with employers to enable them to better recruit the right people with the right skills at the right time;
- Work with partners to help employers have high performing, highly productive, fair and equal workplaces;
- Through Careers, Information Advice & Guidance, ensure people have the right skills and confidence to secure good work, progress in their careers and achieve their full potential.

Context

It should be noted that one of the key challenges to understanding outcomes in relation to ethnic minority communities¹ in Scotland is the lack of available data. Small sample sizes mean that it is not always possible to provide detailed breakdown for ethnic minorities. Ethnicity in survey data is also self-reported and in some cases individuals may not be willing to disclose their ethnicity or feel that the available categories do not reflect their particular ethnicity.

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¹ We use this term in its widest sense, including Eastern Europeans and travellers.
Broad analyses that compare ethnic minority groups with that of the White Scottish / UK population very often conceal wide variations within ethnic minority groups. Netto et al (2011) state that qualitative studies are an important source of information about minority ethnic communities, given their relatively small size in Scotland.

Recent decades have seen the number of ethnic minority groups increase in Scotland, reflecting the range of new migrants, with ethnic minorities tending to have a younger age profile. Evidence suggests that those from ethnic minorities perform well at school and progress to Further and Higher Education in larger numbers than the rest of the population – although there are variations across and within ethnic groups (see Figure 1).²

This is not matched in labour market outcomes. In 2014 in Scotland, the employment rate for people from minority ethnicity groups was 60.1 % compared to an overall employment rate of 73.2 %.³

There are differences in employment rates across ethnic minority communities; A8 migrants⁴ have higher job rates whilst employment levels are particularly low among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, and especially women (Netto et al 2011).

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² SLDR (2013-14)
⁴ A8 = Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia

* Please note not all leaver destinations are included

The reasons for lower employment rates are complex and include:

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- Discrimination within the labour market;\textsuperscript{5}
- Cultural issues – for example the propensity for fewer women to seek employment in some communities; preferences for further and higher education routes which delays entry to the labour market for some groups;
- Language and literacy issues.

Economic activity is concentrated in certain types of sectors and occupations in Scotland, with a significant proportion of Asian people in the wholesale and retail, and hotel and restaurant sectors and A8 migrants in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs. Self-employment is high among the visible minority ethnic communities and Gypsy/Travellers but low among A8 migrants (Netto et al 2011).

We have made a commitment to building our own capacity as an organisation to furthering the equalities agenda through a series of measures including:

- Board and Senior Management Equality champions;
- An Equalities Advisory Group – this is chaired by our Board member equality champion and comprises representatives from partner organisations and key SDS staff. Members provide expert advice and support on the needs of, and barriers facing, protected groups and ensures that this is given appropriate consideration as part of any service developments. It also shares best practice on how to engage and involve representative groups. BEMIS, The Scottish Refugee Council and Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) representatives are members of the group;\textsuperscript{6}
- An Equality Management Group – comprising managers across the organisation to drive forward the equality agenda;
- Recruitment of two members of staff who are embedded within BEMIS to improve community engagement;
- Mandatory equalities induction for new staff and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for existing staff;
- Strengthening equalities considerations embedded within project approval documentation and progress reports,
- Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on products and services at design, and during implementation, if delivered over an extended period (e.g. Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) and the Employability Fund (EF));
- Producing and maintaining an Equality Evidence Review which informs our approach to our equalities work;
- Incorporating equality issues in all SDS research. Due to small sample sizes, ethnic minority groups may not be adequately included in survey results or customer

\textsuperscript{6} Also: Stonewall Scotland, Close the Gap, Glasgow Disability Alliance, Engender, Capability Scotland, Scottish Transgender Alliance, Scottish Throughcare & Aftercare Forum, Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living
feedback and in recognition of this, targeted research has been undertaken with BME customers;
- Stimulating the debate on equalities skills issues – e.g. the Equality & Human Rights Commission has agreed to present on ‘(In)Equality in the Labour Market’ at our Skills in Focus event later this year. This will include input on skills issues faced by ethnic minority groups.

We have identified two priority areas – equality outcomes - relating to services we fund, or deliver directly, as follows: 7

1) ensuring that young people from ethnic minority groups (and disabled young people) in school have the career management skills to make positive and sustained transitions to learning or work; and

2) improving participation in MAs and the EF by those from ethnic minority groups communities (and disabled people together with an improved gender balanced occupational participation).

We publish Equality Mainstreaming Reports on our website which detail our activities in support of these outcomes.

1. Employment Support and Advice

(a) What provisions are in place to help people from ethnic minorities to access employment support and advice.

A range of support measures are in place from partner organisations to provide employment support and advice. These include:

- Job Centre Plus (e.g. DWP recognises the need to support people into work who are beginners in English and provides mandatory ESOL to job seekers of a specific level8);
- Social Work Services;
- Citizens Advice Bureau;
- Local Authority Employability Services (e.g. the Highland Council Employability Service which helps those disadvantaged or disengaged from society to prepare for, gain and sustain employment opportunities9, the North Lanarkshire’s Working Employability Service10 and the Glasgow City Council Bridging Service11).

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7 https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/651851/equality_and_diversity_mainstreaming_report.pdf
8 Access 3
9 http://hi-hope.org/directory/listing/highland-council-employability-service
10 http://www.northlanarkshireworking.co.uk/
11 https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=7535&p=0
Scottish Government, through its refreshed employability strategy, *Working for Growth*, makes clear that it expects Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) to continue to consider the need for specific research-based interventions and to regularly review the effectiveness of their approaches when supporting those from ethnic minorities.\(^\text{12}\) The Employability Learning Network, which aims to support LEPs and wider stakeholders to improve the way that employability services are delivered throughout Scotland, has developed a Toolkit to assist employability partnerships to better help people from minority ethnic communities to enter and progress in the labour market.\(^\text{13}\)

Our specific role in providing employment support and advice relates to our all age Careers Information Advice and Guidance service which is delivered as follows:

- Face-to-face in schools, and in our public or partner centres by Career and Work Coaches;
- By telephone through our contact centre; and
- Through our on-line, 24 hour web service My World of Work.

Equality of access to this advice is a core principle and our Equality Impact Assessment for CIAG\(^\text{14}\) identified measures to assist those from ethnic minority groups to access our services. Actions taken to support our work include:

- Development of a suite of resources to assist in providing support to a diverse range of clients more effectively. This includes an equality and diversity section on the staff intranet; our ‘Equality Toolkit’ – which offers advice on topics such as how to sensitively handle day to day working situations relating to customs, cultural differences and working with interpreters; and specific guidelines on developing partnership agreements for schools-based careers coaching which provide specific advice on considering the needs of ethnic minority pupils. This has helped to strengthen partner arrangements to better identify young people from ethnic minority groups who need targeted face-to-face CIAG support to realise their full potential;
- Continuous Professional Development which has focused on ensuring that staff have a good understanding of the influence of different cultures in career choice and promoting confidence to support individuals who wish to choose a ‘non traditional’ option.


\(^{13}\) [http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/315700/working_with_minority_ethnic_clients_to_promote_and_progress_racial_equalities_-_a_toolkit_for_employability_partnerships_and_projects_-_march_2014.pdf](http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/315700/working_with_minority_ethnic_clients_to_promote_and_progress_racial_equalities_-_a_toolkit_for_employability_partnerships_and_projects_-_march_2014.pdf)

\(^{14}\) [http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/842094/ciag_service_modernisationequality_impact_assessment_sept_2013.pdf](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/842094/ciag_service_modernisationequality_impact_assessment_sept_2013.pdf)
Monitor and evaluating uptake of CIAG services by ethnic minority groups to ensure that needs are being met and engage with partners and stakeholders who support ethnic groups;

Discussion currently in progress with the Scottish Refugee Council to consider developing staff resources to raise awareness of the barriers faced by refugee clients and to implement the actions identified in the Scottish Government’s New Scots Integration strategy;

A research project with senior school pupils from ethnic minority groups to gather their views on our CIAG services.¹⁵

Our school-based services are targeted – in agreement with school staff - on providing support for those who need it most. Therefore, while ethnic minority groups are not targeted for support as a whole, ethnic minority groups are provided with support where it has been identified that they would benefit from it. Our recently published Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming Report (2015-17)¹⁶ highlights that those from ethnic minority groups accessed our school services marginally less than other groups (84.1% vs 85.2%).

For out of school support, we aim to ensure our local SDS centres are as welcoming as possible for all groups: our public access centre signage promotes positive equality and diversity messages. We actively promote our services to, and work in partnership with, organisations representing ethnic minorities. This can include running CV workshops or interview advice sessions on their premises, with their staff. We also provide translators to enable individuals to access our services.

We have sought specifically to raise the profile of our web service, My World of Work, with ethnic minority groups as follows:

- **Reviewing the accessibility of content** – focus groups are held on a quarterly basis with our Equalities Advisory Group members and other equality organisations to review the content and identify actions required to improve accessibility. This has ensured that ethnic minority client case studies are used throughout the site and equality messages are mainstreamed;

- **Awareness Raising** – we have utilised the reach of partner agencies to deliver capacity building sessions on the use of My World of Work as an important employment and career advice tool. Sessions included Shakti Women’s Aid and Roma Groups;

- **My World of Work for Parents** – given the influence that parents and carers have over young people’s career decisions, we have developed this web service to provide resources for them. There is ongoing stakeholder engagement with ethnic minority representative organisations including parents involved in

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¹⁵ This research has recently commenced and is ongoing.

¹⁶ [http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/1344738/equality_and_diversity_mainstreaming_report.pdf](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/1344738/equality_and_diversity_mainstreaming_report.pdf)
Gathered Together: a project delivered by BEMIS and the Parent Teacher Council;

- **Case Studies** - a working group has been established with BEMIS and our communications staff which meets regularly to review positive case studies and discuss how best to promote positive role models.

(b) What provisions are in place to recognise and address the lower employment rates among some ethnic minority groups compared to others?

A range of provision is in place which recognises and addresses the lower employment rates amongst some ethnic minority groups. For example the Scottish Refugee Council Holistic Integration Service offers pre-employability and employability support, and Jobs & Business Glasgow offers support to the residents of the Roma Community to develop work related skills which will help them to be successful in their future careers.17

As well as the actions supporting CIAG services outlined earlier in this submission, we are taking a number of actions to tackle the particular challenges faced by specific minority groups and these have been determined through engagement with key stakeholder and community organisations. We are focusing on addressing both longer term cultural and attitudinal issues relating to young people and their key influencers as well as those held by employers. This includes funding to trial different approaches to engaging ethnic minority groups, primarily in MAs and pre-employment training programmes, in geographical areas where there is a population of ethnic minorities. Where pilots are successful, we will look at how they could be replicated across Scotland. Some examples are outlined below.

- **Rathbone** direct action project worked in Tayside and Fife to promote MAs. They achieved 30 MA starts through a combination of community engagement with partners and events, promotional material and cold-calling to community employers which led to other community contacts. More information on the project is in answer to 3(c).

- **Yusuf Youth initiative** is a community based group in Dundee engaged to raise awareness of and increase participation in the EF and MAs by ethnic minority young people. They developed linkages and protocol with the SDS CIAG team in Dundee to facilitate greater partnership working; worked with Rathbone to develop a sustainable referral pathway to EF and MAs and with NHS Tayside to expand their reach. This resulted in three people being directed to the EF, six to apply for an MA and engagement with 20 young people at three half-day surgeries about the EF and MAs.

- **Amina Muslim Women’s Resource Centre** works to enhance policy makers’ understanding of the Muslim community and address barriers preventing Muslim

17 [http://www.jbg.org.uk/roma-project/](http://www.jbg.org.uk/roma-project/)
women from accessing services and participating in society. We raised awareness of the EF, MAs, as well as CIAG with 50 women. We linked Amina with a large training provider to facilitate discussion on how they could best work together to support women into and through the EF and MAs.

- **BEMIS** – our engagement with BEMIS began last year and led to the development of a partnership project which began in June 2015. Our aim is to raise awareness and understanding of MAs amongst ethnic minorities by building referral network routes, raising capacity and confidence within training providers and raising visibility of MAs through targeted campaigns. It aims to target 200 young people, engage with 60 ethnic minority organisations and encourage a minimum of 100 applications to MAs. Two secondees have been appointed to BEMIS to take forward this work.

- **Training Provider Get Connected Events** – CPD workshops and awareness raising seminars were held, with the aim making better connections between equality agencies and our contractor base, and to share good practice in engaging those from ethnic minorities. In total, eight events and four webinars were delivered and attended by 254 participants from across the training provider network;

- **Foundation Apprenticeships** – offered in the school senior phase, these give pupils the opportunity to take part in work-based learning while in full-time education, boosting their employability skills and increasing their chances of moving into the workplace upon leaving school. As part of this, we have been working closely with employers to improve diversity in their recruitment from schools and colleges. The programme should offer the opportunity for ethnic minorities to become more aware of the value of, and to pursue, work-based learning routes (as outlined earlier, evidence shows a preference for FE & HE). The promotion of positive role models from the programme will form part of the approach;

- **Equalities Challenge Fund** – this will be launched in the coming weeks, the focus of which will be to embed, sustain and promote good practice in supporting equality, diversity and inclusion in MAs and the Employability Fund. We will seek bids for projects to support under-represented groups within MAs. We anticipate that we will gain more insight into the recruitment and sustainment of individuals from ethnic minorities through this initiative. Projects are expected to complete by March 2016.

(c) are there any innovative approaches being taken to address the challenges some people from ethnic minorities may experience in trying to access employment advice and support?

Our experience of working with ethnic minority groups has highlighted the importance of making connections between our services and communities. This fosters trust and the development of other relationships and key contacts. By
working in partnership we will continue to adopt tailored and varied approaches to support engagement with our services.

2. Recruitment, Retention and promotion

(a) What evidence is there that discrimination in recruitment, retention and promotion is an issue in Scottish workplaces?

A 2009 study by DWP into discrimination in recruitment\(^\text{18}\) provides evidence within the British labour market overall. It found that people from an ethnic minority background had to submit 16 job applications to receive a positive response; white candidates had to submit nine.

Data from the Citizenship Survey 2009/10 at the UK level found that 7% of ethnic minority groups believed they had experienced discrimination by being turned down for a job because of their ethnicity compared with 1% of White people. Black Caribbean people were most likely to report experiencing this form of discrimination (10%) compared to 4% of Indians and 4% of Chinese/Others.\(^\text{19}\)

Individuals from an ethnic minority background were more likely to believe they had experienced discrimination due to their race when seeking promotion. Black African (9%), Black Caribbean (8%), Indian (5%), Chinese/Other (4%) and Pakistani (3%) people were more likely to feel they had experienced discrimination on the grounds of their race than White people (1%).

In terms of discrimination in progression, the same survey suggests that Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black Caribbean women face particular discriminatory barriers in the workplace. They struggle to get jobs (and progress within them), despite rising achievement in school and having a clear ambition to succeed.

Evidence suggests that ethnic minority groups are more likely to encounter racial discrimination in the private sector (35%) than the public sector (4%). In order to protect themselves from discrimination, one research project reported that 1 in 6 ethnic minority individuals apply online for a job because they believe that this will decrease their chances of being discriminated against.

Further research from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) found that small workplaces were more likely than large organisations to have no employees from a non-white ethnic group. Using data from the Workplace Employment Relations Study 2011 they found that 78.8% of small workplaces had


\(^{19}\) http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/triennial_review/how_fair_is_britain_-_complete_report.pdf
no employees from a non-white ethnic group compared with 57.1% for large organisations.\(^{20}\)

All MAs are employed. In order to explore employers’ use and views of MAs and assesses the benefits and impact that they bring,\(^{21}\) we carried out a survey of 2500 businesses who had employed MAs.\(^{22}\) As part of this we asked whether they monitor the recruitment and selection of MAs by their cultural or ethnic background. On average, only 16% of employers reported undertaking this type of monitoring, though companies with over 100 employees are more likely to monitor diversity (35%). These findings reflect the sentiment of the EHRC report.

We publish statistics for the uptake of MAs by ethnicity on an annual basis.\(^{23}\) We contract yearly for MAs meaning that quarterly updates would not be reflective of uptake by specific ethnic minority groups for the contracting year, given small numbers (note that Sosenko and Netto (2013) found that interpretation of Scottish data on ethnicity in MAs is difficult due to a high number of apprentices not declaring their ethnicity). A complete capture of the data is therefore reported at year end. We are however looking into how we could provide more regular, meaningful data which would be helpful for partners and stakeholders in monitoring the uptake of MAs.

There are issues in relation to under-representation in MAs; the percentage of MA starts who wish to report which racial background they are from is 1.4%. According to the Annual Population Survey\(^{24}\), 2.1% of 16 to 24 year olds in employment in Scotland report as being from an ethnic minority background, rising to 3.2% of all 16 to 64 year olds in employment.

Although our aim is for MAs to match the percentage of those from ethnic minorities in employment, policy and post-16 choices may be contributory factors to the uptake of MAs by this group. We are required to prioritise apprenticeship places for young people aged 16-24 and to allocate at least 50% of apprenticeship start places each year to 16-19-year-olds, and 70% to 16-24-year-olds (in 2014-15 52% of starts were 16-19 and 80% were 20-24). Also, as explained previously, evidence suggests that those from ethnic minorities prefer to go into FE & HE rather than an MA. The research we are undertaking with ethnic minority school pupils in the senior phase will help us to better understand their career influences and choices, and assist us in developing approaches to encourage the uptake of MAs. We are also comparing the data held on our different customer databases to determine whether there are any

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\(^{20}\) [http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/publication_pdf/Briefing_11_Eq_policies_and_emp_rels_in_SMEs.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/publication_pdf/Briefing_11_Eq_policies_and_emp_rels_in_SMEs.pdf)

\(^{21}\) [We undertook a previous MA Employer survey in 2012](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/597653/ma_empsurv_finalwthcovers.pdf)

\(^{22}\) [March 2015](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/1353990/modern_apprenticeship_statistics__quarter_4__2014-15.pdf)


\(^{24}\) [September 2014](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/1353990/modern_apprenticeship_statistics__quarter_4__2014-15.pdf)
variations in self-declaration of ethnicity. This should help us build a more complete picture of the numbers in MAUs who come from an ethnic minority group.

(b) What are the barriers that lead to unequal outcomes (including lower rates of employment and employment segregation)?

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) looked at in-work poverty, ethnicity and workplace communities in 2013. They found that low-paid workers from ethnic minority groups faced a number of barriers in addition to those faced by all ethnicities. Employees from ethnic minority groups believed prejudice and stereotyping prevented them from accessing development opportunities - for example, training courses that might lead to promotion. They also felt they were further disadvantaged by a lack of transparency in information on training opportunities. Employees from ethnic minority groups but born in the UK faced under-recognition of their skills and experience, while recent migrants encountered non-recognition of their overseas qualifications.

A recent report by JRF (2015) presents findings of the ethnic differences in the types of jobs that working people occupy. It also includes an analysis of how dominance in occupational sectors varies by ethnic group and gender. It identifies that some ethnic minority groups are over-represented ('segregated') into certain occupation types. It suggests that where these are low-skilled, this could be a reflection of a low level of qualifications, the (in) existence of social networks, as well as discrimination from other forms of employment or stereotyping into particular jobs. The JRF analysis of occupational segregation by gender reveals that men's occupational segregation was highest among the African and Pakistani groups and lowest among the White Irish and Other White groups. Women's occupational segregation was highest among the White Gypsy/Irish Traveller and African groups, and lowest among the Caribbean and Other Black groups.

Their evidence also suggests that men from ethnic minority groups tend to be more occupationally segregated than women. For example, African, Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi and Caribbean men are more concentrated in particular occupations than women, whereas White/Gypsy/Irish Traveller, Chinese, White Irish and Other White women experience greater levels of occupational segregation than men.

Data from an earlier JRF study (Netto et al 2011) also reveals there are variations in employment across ethnic minority communities. Employment rates are high among A8 migrants and particularly low among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, especially women (Netto et al 2011).

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27 Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2013), In-work poverty, ethnicity and workplace cultures.
Asylum-seekers and refugees are among the most disadvantaged of all the ethnic minority communities in Scotland. Employment of refugees is low even for those with transferable skills and with good English language capabilities. The Scottish Refugee Council’s research identified that employment for women was even lower than for men, and that for those who found employment, they are concentrated in a narrow range of relatively low skilled and low paid sectors of the economy, despite a wide range of skills and experiences (SRC and SG 2013).28

*Working with Ethnic Minority Clients: A toolkit for employability partnerships and projects* (2011)29 Glasgow Works publication explores this issue further and outlines several reasons why ethnic minorities are disadvantaged in the labour market. The evidence found that employer discrimination puts ethnic minority job seekers at a disadvantage. It also uncovered that some ethnic minority groups have lower levels of education and skills than the overall Scottish population, and are less proficient in English. Language proficiency was recognised as an important factor in determining ethnic minority employment opportunities.

For Scotland, the 2011 census shows that people from minority ethnic groups reported lower levels of proficiency in spoken English compared to the population as a whole. ‘White: Polish’ group reported the lowest proportion (71%) of people who were able to ‘speak, read and write English’, with a further 14% who could speak, but not read or write.

Further reasons for disadvantage in the labour market indicate that ethnic minorities are less likely to claim benefits and this can limit their access to mainstream employability support. The findings from the Glasgow Works (2011) research also indicated that this may be a result of family pressure and the reluctance to register as unemployed.

### 3. Promoting Positive Action

**(a) what measures are being taken to tackle workplace discrimination and segregation?**

Many organisations are undertaking measures to tackle workplace discrimination and segregation in Scotland, such as:

- The STUC (One Workplace Equal Rights project);30
- Unison (one of their key objectives in relation to fighting racism is to tackle racial discrimination in the workplace);31

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28 Scottish Refugee Council and Scottish Government (2013), *New Scots: Integrating Refugees in Scotland’s Communities*


30 [http://www.oneworkplace.org.uk/](http://www.oneworkplace.org.uk/)

• WSREC (the Living Equality project, funded through Scottish Government, assists Public, Private and Voluntary Sector organisations with the advancement of the Public Sector Equality Duty);\(^{32}\)

• Scottish Government and ethnic minority organisation partners have produced a guide to help employers and individuals address racial discrimination issues in the workplace;\(^{33}\)

• The UK government’s Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholder Group launched ‘Know yourself’, a free online toolkit for employers including an interactive tool examining intrinsic bias.\(^{34}\)

We are also undertaking a range of activities – in addition to those outlined above – that aim to improve uptake of MAs through our contracted training providers including:

• Promotion of the business benefits of diversity to employers. For example we recently delivered a presentation and led a discussion on this at a sub group of the Centre for Engineering Education and Development, and we are further considering how best to promote these messages through our employer engagement channels as part of the Fair Work Agenda;

• Establishment of an equalities helpline for training providers;

• Provision of an Equality Toolkit on our web service for employers, Our Skillsforce, containing advice for employers on how to benefit from diversity in the workplace. It informs employers about creating a culture of respect for all employees and the legal context of equality and diversity.\(^{35}\)

• Equalities training for our Employer Engagement Team, enabling them to cascade best practice information to the employers they engage with throughout Scotland;

• Conducting an equalities-based training needs analysis with training providers to ascertain what further CPD we can offer them to address any specific equalities issues;

• Considering how to support employers to understand any unconscious bias that may be held.

(b) is there a need for a scheme that recognises positive action taken by employers?

We are supportive of activities that recognise the positive action being taken by employers as evidence of their commitment to a diverse workforce. This could act

\(^{32}\) http://wsrec.co.uk/index.php/projects/living-equality
\(^{33}\) www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/.../Dignity_and_Fairness.pdf
\(^{34}\) http://raceforopportunity.bitc.org.uk/tools-case-studies/toolkits/five-5-points-progress-toolkit-know-yourself-unconscious-bias-tool
\(^{35}\) http://www.ourskillsforce.co.uk/news/equality-toolkit-for-employers/
as an incentive for both individuals as well as employers. We are also considering what elements can be included within our procurement of services, through reviewing best practice approaches with the EHRC and Scottish Government.

(c) What are the examples of good practice that have improved outcomes, and if so what has been key to their success

Evidence to date from our own funded activities suggests that an understanding of different cultures as well as making connections on the ground with communities, where word of mouth is an important channel for promoting positive messages, can lead to further trust and connections which improve awareness and uptake.

The Rathbone project, outlined in 1 (b), has seen positive outcomes. Best practice examples included the development of marketing and promotional material for use in recruitment, community and employer engagement (including case studies), building on existing relationships with community groups and employers, and becoming involved with community events to raise the profile of EF and MAs. Best practice from this project has been shared with our other contracted training providers. It is a simple model, implemented through careful targeting and strong networking and relationships. Rathbone intend to replicate this project in other geographical areas and specific sectors.

Conclusion

We hope that this has provided the Committee with an overview of the evidence we have gathered in relation to ethnicity and employment, as well as innovative pilot projects, examples of good practice and positive action which we hope can be successfully implemented Scotland-wide. We look forward to following the Committee’s investigation into this important issue.

Skills Development Scotland
8 July 2015