

Action Plan – Gender Pay Gap

Although SFE is not currently required to publish statutory Gender Pay Gap information or a statutory action plan because it has fewer than 250 employees, we have chosen to publish gender pay gap information voluntarily as part of our commitment to transparency, fairness and inclusive workforce planning. Our 2026 report shows a gender pay gap that continues to favour women, reflecting the fact that SFE currently has more women than men in higher-paid and senior roles.

This voluntary action plan sets out practical actions for 2026/27 that are intended to help SFE continue to monitor and sustainably manage its gender pay position, support equality of opportunity, and maintain fair, inclusive and transparent employment practices. The plan complements SFE's voluntary gender pay gap reporting and existing equality, wellbeing, flexible working and menopause support arrangements.

For 2026/27, our actions focus on pay governance, inclusive recruitment, flexible work design, retention and wellbeing support, and equitable access to development and progression.

The plan will be reviewed annually by HR, with input from the Staff Forum and relevant senior leaders where appropriate. Progress will be considered alongside SFE's annual gender pay gap review and reporting through normal governance arrangements.

Priority	Action	Owner	Evidence/measure
Governance and reporting	Continue to prepare and publish SFE's voluntary gender pay gap data and narrative, including review of mean and median pay gap, pay quartiles and relevant workforce context	HR/SLT	Annual gender pay gap data and narrative completed, reviewed and approved before publication
Pay and reward	Review pay and reward arrangements to confirm that pay differences within pay bands are appropriate, objectively justified and do not create unintended inequality	HR/SLT	Annual pay/reward review completed; any issues, exceptions or actions recorded.
Inclusive recruitment and flexible role design	Review vacancy wording, job descriptions and person specifications to ensure criteria are proportionate, skills-focused and inclusive. Consider whether vacancies can be offered flexibly, including part-time or term-time arrangements, where compatible with the role	HR/Recruiting managers	Recruitment templates reviewed; flexible options considered and recorded for relevant vacancies; adverts checked for clarity and inclusivity

Recruitment monitoring and positive action	Monitor gender balance at application, shortlisting and appointment stages, especially for specialist and senior roles. Where monitoring evidence shows under-representation, consider lawful and proportionate positive action, such as targeted encouragement to apply, inclusive role design and clearer promotion of career pathways.	HR/Recruiting managers	Recruitment-stage gender monitoring summary reviewed annually; evidence and rationale recorded where positive action is considered
Retention, family leave and menopause support	Promote flexible working, family leave, menopause and returner support, maintaining links with SFE's voluntary menopause support plan, so employees are supported to remain well, included and able to fully contribute at work	HR/Line managers/ Wellbeing Group	Family leave and returner information reviewed; menopause action plan review completed; relevant support routes promoted during the year
Progression and development	Review whether part-time and portfolio staff have equitable access to development, progression and leadership opportunities	HR/SLT/Line managers	Development and participation themes considered by gender and working pattern where data is available and lawful