
Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018

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Introduction

- 1.1 This document details the information that the Scottish Fiscal Commission must publish as required by sections 5 and 6 of The Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018¹. This relates to encouragement of applications by women (section 5), and the duty to take steps towards achieving the gender representation objective (section 6). The report is for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023, and the next report will be published in April 2025.
- 1.2 The Act also specifies that an appointing person (in the case of the Scottish Fiscal Commission this is Scottish Ministers) is required to report as required by sections 3 and 4 of The Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. This relates to:
- whether or not the gender representation objective had been met at date of publication
 - information on the number of vacancies which arose for non-executive board members during the period of the report
 - for each vacancy
 - how many competitions were run to fill the vacancy
 - how many applications were received and the percentage of applications from women
 - whether an appointment was made and, if so, whether a woman was appointed
- 1.3 It has been agreed that this report will cover both what Scottish Ministers are required to report on and Scottish Fiscal Commission reporting requirements.
- 1.4 Further information on the work of Scottish Fiscal Commission can be found on its website², in particular in the following documents:
- Corporate Plan 2022-2025³
 - Business Plan 2023-24⁴
 - Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022⁵
- 1.5 Should you require further information in relation to the activities or operations of the Scottish Fiscal Commission, please contact the Commission at:

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Regent Road
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Background

- 1.6 The Scottish Fiscal Commission is the independent fiscal institution for Scotland, and the only sub-national fiscal institution which produces its own fiscal and economic forecasts which are used as

¹ The Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 – Statutory Guidance, April 2022 ([link](#))

² Scottish Fiscal Commission website ([link](#))

³ Corporate Plan 20122-2025 ([link](#))

⁴ Business Plan 2023-24 ([link](#))

⁵ Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2022 ([link](#))

the official forecasts. In most countries equivalent organisations scrutinise or certify the Government's own forecasts.

- 1.7 The Commission is a non-Ministerial Office which means we are part of the Scottish Administration but not part of the Scottish Government. This ensures our operational independence. The Commission is directly accountable to the Scottish Parliament for the delivery of our functions.
- 1.8 The Scottish Fiscal Commission's Governance Board and Senior Management Team are committed to improving how we work as an organisation. As a non-Ministerial Office, the Commission has a responsibility to work in a way which contributes to achieving the requirements of the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. This is reflected in that a gender balance is sought on selection panels, including the two vacancies which occurred within the reporting period.

Sections 3 and 4: The appointment process

- 1.9 Information required under sections 3 and 4 is:
- as at 31 March 2023 the gender representation objective had not been met (none of the Commissioners were women)
 - during the reporting period one Chair and one Commissioner vacancy arose
 - there were two vacancy competitions within the reporting period which were ran in tandem for a Chair and Commissioner, details as follow.
 - Chair competition - 4 applications were received of which 50% were from women
 - Commissioner competition - 5 applications were received of which 40% were from women
 - appointments for both Chair and Commissioner were made, neither of whom are women

Section 5: Encouragement of applications by women

- 1.10 With the requirements of section 5 of The Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 in mind, the Selection Panel responsible for the recruitment agreed that the appointment would be advertised in a number of ways:
- Scottish Government Public Appointments website www.appointed-for-scotland.org/
 - Scottish Fiscal Commission website www.fiscalcommission.scot/
 - Scottish Government Public Appointments twitter feed (with retweeting encouraged)
 - Scottish Fiscal Commission twitter feed and email contact list, consisting of 139 individual contacts from Scottish Government and other Government bodies, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, academia (including Fraser of Allander Institute), private sector, journalists and individuals.
- 1.11 In addition, Scottish Fiscal Commission contacted the following organisations which support and promote women in leadership, to increase the profile of the vacancy:
- the 2% club
 - Women on Boards
 - Scottish Changing the Chemistry

- 1.12 Dame Susan Rice, previous Chair of the Commission, recorded a video about the work of the Commission, to encourage applications from women. This was made available on the Commission's website. Information about the appointment was circulated to other contacts, for the appointment to be publicised on their website or other networking routes, such as tweeting or retweeting, including the Committee of Heads of University Departments of Economics. Members of the Selection Panel were invited to disseminate the advert to their contacts or networks.
- 1.13 Commissioners must have forecasting and fiscal and/or macroeconomic knowledge and skills which narrows the pool of potential applicants. The Commission therefore appointed a search consultant to secure applications from a diverse range of high calibre candidates.
- 1.14 The particular requirements set for the search included meeting the requirements of the Gender Representation on Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 as a priority, in particular the need to attract suitably qualified female applicants.
- 1.15 Applications were sought from individuals who would increase the diversity of the Commission in terms of thought and demography.
- 1.16 Looking to future recruitment, the Governance Board has commissioned the Chief Executive to identify ways to broaden the diversity of the Commission at both Commissioner and staff level, including achieving a better gender balance.

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