

# S4C Race Equality Scheme

## Purpose

This document sets out S4C's proposals for satisfying the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Act requires that in carrying out its functions S4C should have regard to the need:

- (a) to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- (b) to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

S4C's publication of this document reflects the Act's further requirement that we should set out our policies in this area in a race equality scheme.

## Introduction

S4C has, during the period since its inception, broadcast a large number of television programmes that have reflected the diversity of the community which we serve. These have included programmes in English as well as Welsh, which have reflected different aspects of the lives of ethnic minority communities, in Wales, within the rest of the UK and further afield. S4C is also an equal opportunities employer. In line with the new statutory requirements, this scheme draws together these existing strands of activity which relate to equal opportunities and describes how we intend to build on them.

S4C's race equality scheme extends across all aspects of our statutory and non-statutory functions, including our core responsibility of delivering a comprehensive and high quality Welsh language television service. It sets out how we intend to give effect to the requirements of the Act in the main areas of our business. It describes how S4C proposes to strengthen our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity through a number of new policies, how these policies will be monitored and the manner in which we will publish detailed information on the extent to which they are achieved. Implementation of the scheme will be monitored by the S4C Authority as part of its general oversight of the channel. The Authority will make an annual report on progress in S4C's Annual Report.

## Scope

S4C has assessed the implications of the new legislation across all areas of our business. We believe that our key functions with respect to the duty to promote equal opportunities are:

- (i) Broadcasting – S4C's central statutory responsibility is to broadcast a high quality and varied television service. One of the central aims for the service is that it should reflect the community that S4C aims to serve. It also needs to reflect the diversity of that community. Programmes can also provide opportunities to promote equal opportunities either through their subject matter or through the portrayal of characters drawn from the ethnic minority communities.

- (ii) Employment – S4C is an equal opportunities employer. It does not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or marital status in its recruitment or other employment policies. This scheme provides further details of how S4C proposes to strengthen its commitment in this area.

- (iii) Training and developing talent – S4C supports a range of organisations and initiatives that have been set up to strengthen the audio-visual industry in Wales and, in particular, the independent production sector that supplies our programmes. S4C is anxious to increase the number of ethnic minority recruits into the industry, both in front of the camera and into those jobs involved in making programmes.
- (iv) Knowing our viewers – S4C is under a statutory obligation to research and keep abreast of its viewers’ likes and dislikes. The Channel’s aim is to provide a television service which appeals to Welsh speakers from all backgrounds and across all age groups. S4C will continue to invest in both qualitative and quantitative research into how viewers across all these groups respond to our programmes. The Channel will also investigate the response of viewers from ethnic minority communities in Wales.

## **Scheme Details**

S4C’s detailed proposals for discharging its responsibility to eliminate unlawful race discrimination and promote equality of opportunity are as follows:

### **1. Broadcasting**

S4C’s prime responsibility is to broadcast a wide ranging, high quality television service. It does so via its analogue service which comprises some 37 hours a week of programmes in Welsh combined with the best of Channel 4’s English language output at other times. S4C also broadcasts in Welsh only on the cable and satellite platforms for around 84 hours a week. S4C aims to ensure that the programme service it provides reflects the community which it serves. Members of ethnic minority groups are an increasingly prominent part of that community and S4C is anxious that this should also be a characteristic of its programmes.

S4C believes that television has a powerful role to play in promoting equal opportunities. It can do so across a range of genres, including:

- (a) Factual - Programmes that have members of ethnic minority groups as their main subject can improve the understanding of viewers generally about those groups. Two recent examples of this kind of programme on S4C were *Dyddiadur Ramadan* – Ali Yassin’s month-long Ramadan video diary provided an insight into that Festival by focusing on one person’s experience - and *Crefydd y Cymry* which looked at world religions through the eyes of people who practice a range of different faiths in Wales.
- (b) Drama - Members of the ethnic minority communities are an integral and a growing part of the Welsh speaking community and this needs to be reflected in the fictional communities we portray on screen. Increasing the number of Welsh speaking actors from ethnic minority communities will be a crucial factor influencing our ability to succeed in this area.

S4C proposes to reaffirm its commitment to promoting equal opportunities through both these aspects of the programme service. We will give affect to this commitment through:

- (i) amending our guidelines for producers so as to encourage greater use of Welsh speaking actors from ethnic minority communities. Over time, we would expect this to be reflected in a greater visibility for ethnic minority actors and characters.
- (ii) making a clear commitment towards reflecting in our annual statement of Programme Policy. This might involve programmes dealing with matters that are relevant to the ethnic minority groups, or it could relate to programmes that have members of ethnic minority groups as their main subject. We will report on our achievements in our Annual Report.

## **2. S4C as an Employer**

S4C is an equal opportunities employer. It does not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or marital status in its recruitment or other employment policies. S4C also has a published anti-harassment policy, the aim of which is to provide a working environment where staff are not subjected to intimidation, bullying, threats, discrimination or harassment. S4C does not tolerate bullying or harassment, whether racial, sexual, religious or on grounds of disability or sexual orientation. The S4C policy defines racial harassment as behaviour relating to race, colour, religion, ethnic origin or nationality which is offensive, embarrassing, insulting or intimidating and which causes distress to the victim. The S4C policy recognises that racial harassment can assume many forms and can include physical, verbal or non-verbal abuse which is racially derogatory and which undermines the victim.

S4C recognises that this and all other aspects of its equal opportunities policy will only be successful if those policies are understood and put into practice on a daily basis by staff. Equal opportunities will, therefore, continue to be a central element of the induction training provided to all members of staff. We will also be arranging training for all members of staff to ensure that they understand the full obligations of our equal opportunities policy. S4C also recognises that it will need hard data in order to be able to assess whether its policy is working satisfactorily. S4C, therefore, intends to augment its systems for monitoring the effectiveness of its commitment to equality of opportunity. These will include monitoring the ethnic breakdown of:

- those applying for jobs within the organisation
- staff subject to disciplinary procedures
- any complaints arising from S4C's formal grievance procedure, including grievances arising from annual appraisals
- dismissals and/or other reasons for leaving S4C

S4C is anxious to increase the number of its staff that come from ethnic minority groups. It faces a particular challenge in this regard given that fluency in Welsh is an essential requirement for a significant number of posts within the organisation. As the number of Welsh speakers within the ethnic minority communities increases as a result of education and other policies, S4C would expect this problem to diminish.

In the meantime, S4C will experiment with placing job adverts in ethnic minority publications in order to secure a greater number of ethnic minority applicants.

### **3. Training and Developing Talent**

S4C employs some 200 people directly. The majority of these work at its headquarters in Llanishen. S4C's investment in programmes is, however, also responsible for some 2,000 direct and indirect jobs throughout Wales as a result of its programmes it commissions.<sup>1</sup> The latest census of the audio-visual work force suggest that some 3.5% of those employed by the industry in Wales are numbers of ethnic minority groups. These groups comprise 2.1% of the population as a whole. S4C's ability to directly influence these figures is limited given that individual recruitment decision are the responsibility of the independent production companies. We will, however, be modifying our producer guidelines so that our expectations in this area are set out still more clearly.

S4C is committed to working with other organisations that have a part to play in improving opportunities for ethnic groups. We will continue to co-operate with the industry training organisation Cyfle to develop schemes designed to widen opportunities for young people from ethnic groups to enter the industry. We will report on progress achieved in the Annual Report.

### **4. Research**

S4C needs to know as much as possible about the way our viewers respond to our programmes if we are to be successful. S4C, therefore, accords a high priority to research and analysis. This analysis begins with the quantitative data generated by BARB on the number of people who are watching individual programmes. S4C also tracks viewers' assessment of the quality of those programmes. S4C also makes use of focus groups in gauging the opinions of viewers to different aspects of the service.

S4C's aim is to provide a wide-ranging service which appeals to all tastes and interest. In future we will, however, ensure that our audience research includes research aimed at establishing any distinctive views of those of our viewers who are also members of ethnic minority communities.

### **Monitoring**

All aspects of the policies outlining this scheme will be monitored by the S4C Authority. A general report on progress achieved will be included in S4C's Annual Report.

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<sup>1</sup> Wales Economic Research Unit Report 2001