

A helpful ebook from CHAS



# The Fairness, Inclusion And Respect (FIR) Growth Assessment

Designed as an industry-wide initiative to make workplaces in the construction industry better for everyone, the Fairness, Inclusion and Respect (FIR) Growth Assessment offers construction companies the tools and resources to create fair and more inclusive workplaces.

To find out more visit  
[www.chas.co.uk](http://www.chas.co.uk)



As the UK's leading provider of compliance and supply chain risk management services, **CHAS** understands the importance and urgency of building more inclusive workspaces.

Our **Fairness, Inclusion and Respect (FIR) Growth Assessment** enables organisations in the built environment and construction sectors to reap the business benefits of a fairer, more inclusive and respectful working environment. FIR is a specialised assessment designed to make workplaces in the UK construction industry better for everyone and would be suitable for contractors working on large construction infrastructure projects like HS2, National Highways, Network Rail and Transport for London.

## What Is The FIR Growth Assessment?

Delivered in partnership with the **Supply Chain Sustainability School (SCSS)** and under the endorsement of the **Construction Leadership Council**, the FIR Growth Assessment helps employers in the construction industry to develop and embed the principles of fairness, inclusion and respect into their workplace and business practices. CHAS is one of the first organisations to be authorised to undertake an independent accreditation against fairness, inclusion and respect, which enables organisations to:



Recognise best practices for FIR.



Benchmark your FIR knowledge and maturity against other organisations in the industry.



Highlight areas for improvement.



Access learning resources to support your FIR growth.



Demonstrate to clients, customers and stakeholders that FIR matters to your organisation.



Create opportunities to win more work by meeting client requirements for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.

A CHAS Assessor will produce a continuous improvement plan report with observations and recommendations to support your FIR journey. Your Assessor's findings and outcomes are then externally verified by NOCN – the scheme's awarding body – and your FIR Growth Assessment certificate will be issued. Your certificate will be valid for 2 years.



*HB Projects are proud to be the first company to achieve the new Fairness, Inclusion and Respect Growth Assessment with CHAS. Achieving this certification is a brilliant milestone for the team and demonstrates our ongoing efforts to make the workplace more inclusive, respectful and supportive for our people.*

– Martin Wright, People Director, HB Projects



## Why FIR Matters In The Construction Industry

Every well-run organisation knows there is a social imperative to improving diversity and inclusion in the workplace. But a diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the same diversity we see in greater society is the right thing to do – it also makes perfect business sense.



*Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams were 25% more likely to have above-average profitability than companies in the fourth quartile-up from 21% in 2017 and 15% in 2014.*

– Diversity Wins: How Inclusion Matters - McKinsey & Company, 2020



McKinsey & Company's *Diversity Wins: How Inclusion Matters* report highlights the strong business case for having a workforce that comprises people of different backgrounds, genders, ages, races, beliefs, socio-economic statuses and abilities. Case in point: diverse companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 25% more likely to financially outperform their counterparts in the fourth quartile.

## The State Of Diversity And Inclusion In Construction



15%

of the UK construction workforce is composed of women.

A 2022 research briefing, [Women and the UK economy](#) citing data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), shows that the construction industry ranks 14th among major industries in terms of the number of employed women.



75%

of Asian or Asian British and Black or Black British workers in construction have experienced discrimination.

A 2020 [Building diversity survey](#) shows that more than three in four Asian or Asian British and Black or Black British workers feel that their ethnicity, gender, disability or mental health condition has negatively impacted their chances of promotion.

Unfortunately, the level of diversity and inclusion in construction lags behind other industries. This problem is also a significant factor behind the creation of the Fairness, Inclusion and Respect (FIR) programme.

With continually rising demand for construction work, an ageing workforce, and an unprecedented national skills shortage, attracting new workers and retaining existing talent is now more vital than ever. This is where the FIR Growth Assessment comes in.

By completing the FIR Growth Assessment, CHAS can help you:



Attract, hire and retain a more diverse and inclusive workforce.



Increase employee engagement by building a positive workplace culture.



Leverage diversity and inclusion to drive innovation, collaboration and productivity.



Enhance your reputation by joining an industry-wide initiative.

## How The FIR Growth Assessment Works



*Creating a culture of fairness, inclusion and respect begins with good leadership and a clear vision. A FIR strategy should identify a set of concrete company values on workplace equality, paving the way for actions that ensure all employees feel heard and respected.*

— Alex Minett, CHAS Head of Products and Markets



The FIR Growth Assessment comprises an online questionnaire and multiple interviews with your employees. Your assessment journey typically involves a five-step process.



You will be asked to complete an online questionnaire that evaluates your FIR level and ability to embed FIR principles into your workplace.



You will be required to submit supporting evidence and documentation, such as a copy of your Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy, recruitment statistics and gender pay gap reports.



Your assessment is submitted to a CHAS assessor for verification. Based on your answers, a provisional verification level — on a scale of one to five — is provided to you in writing.



Your assessor will schedule several informal interviews with some of your employees to gather evidence of FIR initiatives being sufficiently communicated and understood in the organisation.



You will receive a written report and your final FIR Growth Assessment level. Your assessor report will highlight existing best practices, areas for improvement and recommendations to help you maintain or achieve a higher verification level.

Upon completing the FIR Growth Assessment, you will be awarded an assessed level of verification in one of five levels, depending on your FIR maturity. You can now use your CHAS verification status to highlight your commitment to diversity and inclusion and pre-qualify for tenders with specific FIR requirements.



## Benefits Of The FIR Growth Assessment

Every well-run organisation knows there is a social imperative to improving diversity and inclusion in the workplace. But a diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the same diversity we see in greater society is the right thing to do — it also makes perfect business sense.



The FIR Growth Assessment is specifically designed to help contractors and clients accelerate the process of developing a culture of fairness, inclusion and respect.

The assessment has been developed with real-world insights from construction firms, contractors and subcontractors. It adapts to all employers in the industry.

The FIR Growth Assessment provides businesses with tools and resources to benchmark themselves against others within the construction and built environment sectors.

The assessment scales to the needs of SMEs and enterprise-level organisations in the built environment and construction sectors.



**Show your commitment to a more diverse, fair and inclusive workplace. Get started with your assessment today**

<https://www.chas.co.uk/chas-fir-accreditation>



CHAS is proud to be appointed as an independent assessor under the Fairness, Inclusion and Respect (FIR) programme. Sign up for the FIR Growth Assessment with CHAS and begin your journey towards developing a culture of fairness, inclusion and respect.\* \*Terms and conditions apply