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**Health and Safety Executive**

**Scientific Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification**

**(SACGM)**

**Appointment of Members**

Information pack for applicants

The closing date for the receipt of applications is:

**Midnight Friday 3 October 2025**

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# About the Scientific Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification (SACGM)

## Background

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification (SACGM) is a non-statutory scientific advisory committee established in 2004. It provides scientific and technical advice to the Competent Authority on the contained use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), particularly in respect of hazard identification and risk assessment.

The primary piece of legislation that applies to the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the workplace is the [Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1663/contents). The [GMO(CU) Regulations](https://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/gmo/law.htm) provide for human health and safety and environmental protection from genetically modified micro-organisms in contained use, and human health and safety from genetically modified plants and animals.

The Competent Authority responsible for the Regulations consists of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in England and Wales. In Scotland, HSE and the Scottish Ministers are the competent authority.

## Role and remit of the SACGM

The SACGM provides advice on activities with different types of GMOs, e.g. viruses, bacteria, parasites which are carried out under containment, for example in a laboratory. The term 'contained use' covers any activity involving GMOs where control measures, such as physical, chemical or biological barriers, are used to limit contact between GMOs and humans or the environment so as to provide a high level of safety. It relates to the actual process of genetic modification, and also to the use, storage, transport and destruction of GMOs. Typical contained use facilities would be microbiology laboratories, animal houses, plant growth rooms and glasshouses, industrial fermenters used for large scale production of enzymes or therapeutics, and facilities to contain genetically modified farm animals.

Risk assessments for contained uses with GMOs must be notified to the Competent Authority authorities for approval before work can commence. The Competent Authorities are thus in a position to assess and ensure that the work is carried out at the appropriate containment level and in facilities and in a way that ensures that GMOs which could be infectious to humans or animals are contained during the work activities. Further information on the notification of GMO activities can be found [here](https://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/gmo/notifications/what.htm).

In brief, the GMO(CU) Regulations require the risk assessment of contained uses involving GMOs which take into consideration risk to humans and the environment including animals. The Regulations introduce a classification system based on the risk of the contained use independent of the purpose of the contained use. The classification is based on four levels of containment. The risk assessment process requires the identification of any potentially harmful properties of the GMO as a result of the genetic modification or any alteration of the recipient organisms' existing properties. Further information can be found [here](https://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/gmo/acgm/index.htm).

In some occasions complex or novel risk assessments are submitted to the Competent Authority, where the classification and containment level of an activity is difficult to determine. Such notifications could involve activities with highly pathogenic organisms, mechanisms of attenuating pathogenicity, creation of novel chimeric organisms. In other occasions, the methodology for creating the GMO may be novel or the application or use of the GMO. In those occasions, the Competent Authority may seek advice from the SACGM members on topics such as the classification of an activity, impact of genetic modifications and also in the choice of containment measures.

Guidance associated with the GMO(CU) Regulations is available [here](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l29.htm). In addition HSE, with advice from the SACGM, has previously prepared a [Compendium of Guidance](https://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/gmo/acgm/acgmcomp/index.htm) on various subjects and topic areas of genetic modification activities. The Compendium provides useful advice on how to comply with the Regulations and provides considerations for different types of GMOs and GMMs, e.g. viral vectors, reverse genetics, the modification of different types of viruses as well as containment considerations.

The Competent Authority may seek future advice from the SACGM members on guidance for new and emerging areas of genetic modification as well as seek advice on future applications of GMOs and the development, application and implications of future genetic modifications techniques e.g. synthetic biology, engineering biology. Such advice informs the Competent Authority on genetic modification research development and on emerging applications.

## Terms of Reference of the SACGM

SACGM provides technical and scientific advice to the UK Competent Authorities on all aspects of the human and environmental risks of the contained use of GMOs. In particular:

* To advise on the technical issues on individual activities notified under the Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2014;
* To provide advice on risk assessments for contained use activities involving GMOs; and
* To help develop and update guidance on all aspects of contained use of GMOs including the SACGM compendium of guidance.

The SACGM is Scientific Advisory Committee – as defined by the Government Chief Scientific Adviser – and will operate in accordance with the [Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (CoPSAC)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scientific-advisory-committees-code-of-practice/code-of-practice-for-scientific-advisory-committees-and-councils-copsac-2021).

## Composition of the SACGM

The current membership of the SACGM can be found [here](https://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/gmo/sacgm.htm). The SACGM Chair and members are independent, external experts drawn from relevant science, medical, industrial disciplines who are recognised as leaders in their fields in academia, industry or Government. The mix of experts should reflect the scientific areas that are relevant to SACGM and the research developments in the field of genetic modification.

Areas of expertise which are likely to be relevant to the SACGM are listed below. However, it may be that additional areas of expertise may be relevant to the committee and we welcome candidates to bring any such areas to its attention. We recognise that some areas of expertise may be overlapping with other areas.

* Molecular bacteriology
* Molecular virology
* Molecular immunologist
* Molecular parasitologist
* Molecular mycologist
* Vector biology
* Synthetic biology
* Engineering biology
* Gene therapy
* Gene editing
* Plant molecular biology
* Modification and handling of highly pathogenic micro-organisms
* Modification and handling of micro-organisms for industrial applications

## Secretariat

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides Secretariat support to SACGM via a Secretariat Team based within the Microbiology and Biotechnology Unit (MBU) at HSE. All meetings are organised and supported by the HSE Secretariat Team. The Secretariat Team works closely with the SACGM Chair and the HSE Chief Scientific Adviser’s team. The HSE Secretariat Team are coordinating the recruitment exercise of new SACGM members and will be supporting new members in their role once appointed.

## SACGM Work Programme

The work programme is dependent on the Terms of Reference, so subject to change, but is expected to include:

1. The consideration of information provided to members prior to committee meetings. This would include information on notifications made to the Competent Authority and is likely to include risk assessments with supporting documentation and papers requesting advice on specific risk assessment aspects.
2. The provision of independent advice on areas of specific expertise as well as wider areas of genetic modification.
3. The provision of personal views on emerging genetic modification areas and associated hazards and risks.
4. The possible input into the preparation of SACGM guidance – this will be subject to agreement with Members since it is likely to require additional time from Members.

## Working methods and time commitment

It is anticipated that the role of SACGM Members would involve on average four days participation from members per year. Each member will be expected to attend two or three meetings every year which are predominantly held online. Face to face meetings may be organized as the need arises.

Meetings will be attended by the HSE Secretariat, Competent Authority representatives and depending on the agenda topics, external research representatives. Meetings may be attended by representatives from the HSE’s Chief Scientific Adviser office.

Meetings last for approximately 4 - 5 hours. Prior to meetings members are sent documentation for consideration. In some instances Members may be contacted following meetings for any additional advice.

Minutes of SACGM meetings will be produced by the Secretariat Team and will signed off by the SACGM Chair and Members before formal sign-off at the following meeting. The Secretariat team shall record the actions and decisions taken within each meeting that will be reported to Members.

Some Members may also be asked to participate in a sub group or working group on a particular topic such as guidance review if required. This will be agreed with Members to ensure that they are able to provide the input required.

## Remuneration

This is not a paid post. Members are entitled to allowances for subsistence and travel whilst on SACGM business, at rates set centrally.

Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will also be reimbursed on presentation of receipts, in accordance with HSE’s normal rules, up to a specified limit.

## 1.9 Further information

If you are considering applying to become a SACGM Member and would like to discuss either the role or the application process, please contact SACGM@hse.gov.uk.

# About the roles: Role description for Members.

## Being a Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee for Genetic Modification

All Members are expected to review information such as risk assessments, peer review publications, technical papers prepared by the Secretariat Team provided prior to meetings. Members are expected to actively contribute in discussions by providing their scientific opinions, challenge as appropriate and provide information to the committee as required. All SACGM members are expected to devote time to supporting any actions arising from meetings should their expertise be needed, for example any follow up communications with the Secretariat Team or the Chair to clarify any information or to consider any additional information. Members are also expected to be prepared to respond to reasonable requests from the SACGM Chair on any urgent matters.

Upon appointment Members will be provided with an introduction of the workings of the Committee as well as introduction to the regulatory context of contained use activities to help them understand the requirements of the regulations in respect to risk assessment requirements as well as containment requirements.

## Selection Criteria for applicants:

## Qualities and experience required of all Members

All Members will need to demonstrate how the meet the following 4 essential criteria in order to be considered for appointment.

**Appointment criterion 1**: Accomplished and respected in their area of genetic modification scientific expertise, which should be relevant to the remit of the committee. (Essential)

**Appointment criterion 2:** Knowledgeable and keeping up to date in current debates and developing hazard and risk areas of genetic modification in their area of expertise as well as wider areas. (Essential)

**Appointment criterion 3**: Capable of independent working, analytical thinking, formulation and defending of conclusions and advice to different types of audiences in an evidence-based manner. (Essential)

**Appointment criterion 4:** Experience of constructively working with others in a collaborative manner to come to joint decisions and ways forward e.g. being part of a committee. (Essential)

## Conflicts of Interests

All members of SACGM must declare any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with membership of SACGM, including any business interests and positions of authority outside the role in SACGM. If appointed, you will be required to declare publicly any such interests and they will be entered into a register which is available to the public.

# How to apply

To make an application you will need to provide the following:

* A supporting statement (max 1000 words) demonstrating how you meet Appointment Criteria 1 and 2. Section 3.1 provides details on what your supporting statement will need to include.
* A completed monitoring form (see Annex C for details).
* A copy of your CV.
* A declaration of Interests form (see section 3.2 for details).

Your application should be sent by email to SACGM@hse.gov.uk quoting SACGM APPLICATION in the subject field followed by your field of expertise.

Email applications must be received by midnight, **03 October 2025**. Receipt of applications will be acknowledged by email.

## Supporting statement

The supporting statement is your opportunity to define and demonstrate your technical knowledge, experiences, applications of your specific area of genetic modification expertise (Criterion 1); and your wider expertise and knowledge on other areas of genetic modification or areas of wider consideration (Criterion 2). You may like to refer to [The STAR method | National Careers Service](https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/interview-advice/the-star-method) for information on using examples to demonstrate your expertise in your supporting statement. Providing separate paragraphs for each criterion will help the selection panel to identify how you meet each criterion.

Your statement must include evidenced examples of your expertise. This could be demonstrated by different ways. Examples include the number, type of publications in peer reviewed journals, contributions to technical reports, patents, projects, risk assessments relating to genetic modification activities and applications. Your examples must also demonstrate how they are applicable to the remit of SACGM including its programme of work, role of the committee and members as described in this candidate pack. Please ensure your supporting statement does not exceed 1000 words.

Your statement will be scored using the criteria described in Annex B.

## Declaration of interests and ensuring public confidence

If you have any business or personal interests that might be relevant to the work of the SACGM and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest, were you to be appointed, please provide details in your supporting statement. It is expected that appointees would not have personal interests of a financial nature of relevance to the work of the committee. Should you be successful in your application, if there is anything in your professional history that if brought into the public domain may cause embarrassment or disrepute to the organisation, please provide details in your supporting statement. Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment being terminated. Please refer to the Eligibility Criteria for appointment set out in Annex A.

## CV

Please ensure your CV includes your:

* Full name, title, and communication information - email address and/or telephone number
* Brief details of qualifications and work history relevant to the role
* Relevant research/technical expertise relevant to the role
* Relevant past/present roles on expert committees and dates you occupied such roles.

## Monitoring form

The HSE values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all. Please complete and include the monitoring form (Annex C) with your application. Diversity monitoring information will not be seen by the panel assessing your application.

## Indicative timetable

Call for Members published: 04/09/2025

Closing date: midnight Friday 03/10/2025

Shortlisting to be completed: Mid-October 2025

Interviews will last for 45 mins and to be held as ‘virtual’ via TEAMS in mid-November 2025.

See Annex B for additional information on the selection and appointment process.

**If you will not be available for interview in the identified timescales** please immediately contact HSE to discuss the potential for alternative arrangements to be made – see contact information at 1.9. Note that we cannot guarantee to offer alternative dates.

# Annex A: Terms and Conditions of appointment

**A.1 Standards in public life**

The Scientific Advisory Committee for Genetic Modification is a scientific advisory committee, and will operate in accordance with the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (CoPSAC); you can access this document at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scientific-advisory-committees-code-of-practice>

You will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to and an understanding of the value and importance of the seven principles of public life. These are:

1. Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity: Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity: Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness: Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty: Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership: Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

**A.2 Eligibility criteria**

Current employees of HSE are not eligible for appointment to SACGM. There are other circumstances in which an individual may not be considered for appointment, which include:

a) persons who have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of 3 months or more in the last 5 years

b) persons who are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order, or a debt relief order or interim debt relief order under Schedule 4ZB to the Insolvency Act 1986

c) persons who have had an earlier term of appointment with a public body terminated on the grounds

i. that it was not conducive to the interests or good management of the body that the person should continue to hold office

ii. that the person failed to attend a meeting of the body on three consecutive occasions

iii. that the person failed to declare a pecuniary interest or withdraw from consideration of a matter in respect of which the person had a pecuniary interest

iv. of misconduct or failure to carry out the person’s duties

d) anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; or

e) anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity

If you need further advice about eligibility for appointment please use the contact information in 1.10.

**A.3 Personal liability of SACGM members**

Legal proceedings by a third party against individual Members of advisory bodies are very exceptional. The Government has indicated that an individual Committee Member who has acted honestly and in good faith will not have to meet out of their own personal resources any personal civil liability which is incurred in the execution or purported execution of their Committee function, save where the person has acted recklessly.

# Annex B: Selection and Appointment Process

**B.1 Selection Panel**

The panel will be chaired by the SACGM Chair or nominated SACGM Member by the Chair. Representatives from the Secretariat Team and or the Competent Authority will be panel members.

**B.2 Short-Listing and interviewing**

The following scoring criteria will be used for both sifting and interviewing of candidates.



**Short-Listing**: Candidates will be short listed by the panel for interview against Criteria 1 and 2.

**Interviewing**: Short-listed candidates will be invited to a virtual interview by Teams. Interviews are predicted to last for approximately 45 minutes. Candidates may be asked to present a short presentation and will then be asked questions to assess them against all the 4 essential criteria for the appointments.

In the same way as for the supporting statement, candidates will be asked to provide evidenced examples of how they meet the essential criteria during interviews and will scored using the 7 point scale as above.

**B.3 How we will handle your application**

We will acknowledge receipt of your application. Candidates will be notified within three weeks by email whether or not they have been short-listed, for interview. All candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application.

**B.4 Appointments**

The SACGM Chair and HSE Secretariat Team will consider the interview outcomes to make a decision on whether to offer appointments to candidates. We envisage the appointment of up to 12 members in different areas of genetic modification expertise. Consideration will also need to be given to the balance across technical areas of expertise and experience. As described above, all candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application.

If successful, before appointment candidates will be required to go through a Security Clearance process.

Appointments to SACGM will normally be for three years and may be extended.

**Personal data**

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and / or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember not to give anyone’s information or details (e.g., referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

**B.4 Equal Opportunities**

These appointments will be governed by the principle of public appointment based on merit with independent assessment and transparency of process. HSE is committed to improving the diversity of their public bodies and welcome applications irrespective of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or belief, age, gender, or re-assignment. We would particularly welcome candidates from under-represented groups, for example people with disabilities and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

**B.5 Dealing with your concerns**

If you need further advice about the selection process, please use the contact information in 1.9.

# Annex C: Diversity Information Form

**Diversity Information Form**

We encourage applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and across the whole of the United Kingdom. Boards of public bodies are most effective when they reflect the diversity of views of the society, they serve, and this is an important part of the Government’s levelling up agenda.

We collect diversity data about applicants’ characteristics and backgrounds, including information about people’s professional backgrounds, so that we can make sure we are attracting a broad range of people to these roles and that our selection processes are fair for everyone. Without this information, it makes it difficult to see if our outreach is working, if the application process is having an unfair impact on certain groups and whether changes are making a positive difference.

When you submit your application, your responses are collected by the Cabinet Office and the government department(s) managing your application. The data is used to produce management information about the diversity of applicants. You can select “prefer not to say” to any question you do not wish to answer. The information you provide in this form will not be seen by the advisory assessment panel who will sift applications and conduct interviews against the advertised criteria.

Our Privacy Notice sets out in more detail how we will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The form should only take a few minutes to complete.

We thank you in advance for your support.

Required fields are marked with a \*

# About you

What is your title? (Mr/Mrs/Dr/etc.) \*

Click or tap here to enter text.

What is your first name? \*

Click or tap here to enter text.

What is your last name? \*

Click or tap here to enter text.

Which appointment are you applying for? \*

Click or tap here to enter text.

# Diversity Questions

## Sex and Gender

What is your sex? \*







Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? \*







What is your gender if it is not the same as your sex registered at birth?

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Disability and Health Conditions

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? \*

More information on disability can be found on the public appointments website - <https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/recording-whether-or-not-you-have-a-disability/>







If you answered yes to any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, does your condition or illness / do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?









Do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas?

[ ]  Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)

[ ]  Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)

[ ]  Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)

[ ]  Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)

[ ]  Learning or understanding or concentrating

[ ]  Memory

[ ]  Mental health

[ ]  Stamina or breathing or fatigue

[ ]  Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) which includes Asperger’s, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD))

[ ]  Prefer not to say

## Ethnicity

What is your ethnic group? \*







































Specification of other ethnic group: Click or tap here to enter text.

## Age

What was your age group at your last birthday? \*



















## Sexual Orientation

What is your sexual orientation? \*









If you selected other, please specify your orientation here: Click or tap here to enter text.

##

## Religion or Belief

What is your religion or belief? \*



















If you selected other, please specify your religion here: Click or tap here to enter text.

## Place of Residence

Where is your main place of residence? \*





























If you selected other please specify your region here: Click or tap here to enter text.

## Employment

What is your main employment, if any? \*















If you selected other, please specify your employment here: Click or tap here to enter text.

## Number of Appointments Held

How many other public appointments do you hold? \*

This includes all non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), NHS bodies, parole boards and research councils. It does not include sitting as a school governor or any positions within charities.

















## Political Activity

The information in this section will be made available to the panel if you are called for interview.

Political activity is defined as being employed by a political party, holding significant office in a party, standing as a candidate for a party in an election, having publicly spoken on behalf of a political party or having made significant donations or loans to a party. Significant loans and donations are those of a size which are reported to the Electoral Commission, in line with a central party’s reporting threshold.

Have you undertaken any political activity for a political party in the past five years? \*





If you answered yes to political activity.

Please indicate which party / parties your political activity relates to here: Click or tap here to enter text.

Thank you for completing this form.

Public appointments are made by Ministers, after a fair and open process, based on merit in accordance with the Cabinet Office Governance Code and the Public Appointments Order in Council. By completing this diversity monitoring form, you will be helping us meet our public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2012 and section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Your personal data will always be treated in confidence and when anonymised with data from other applicants will help compile the Annual Statistical Bulletin of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Your responses to questions regarding your gender, if you are disabled, your ethnic group, sexual orientation, your religion or belief, your age, principal residence and professional background will never be made available to the panel considering your application.

This diversity information is collected by government departments managing appointments to the boards of public bodies, on behalf of the Cabinet Office and The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). This data will not be connected to your name when it is shared, it is supplied anonymously.

OCPA collects diversity information to produce management information about the public appointments process, and the diversity of the field of applicants. It will be published in OCPA’s annual report and website, in aggregated form. Departments, including the Cabinet Office, collect this data to enable government to meet its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It will be published in aggregated form. For full information about how we handle your data please see the privacy notice on <https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/privacy-notice/>

This data is collected and held on the basis that you consented to provide this information to departments alongside your application and you have not given notice that you do not wish for your data to be processed for this purpose.

This data may be held for up to 3 years by OCPA and up to 5 years by the Cabinet Office and the Government Department, who are all co-controllers of the data. This data is shared with Cabinet Office IT suppliers, identified as processors, to securely collect and store the data

If you have any questions, please contact the department responsible for the role you have applied for. Contact details can be found here: <https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/contact-us/>