



FDA guide to recruiting new members

Resources for FDA
representatives and activists



The FDA is the fastest growing union in the UK – with more than 60% growth in the last ten years. FDA membership is now the largest it has ever been. This growth has been seen across all grades represented by the FDA – from HEO to SCS.

Recruiting these new members has been fundamental to the success of the union. Our reps and activists play a vital role in continuing our growth across every nation, region, and grade – helping us to represent civil servants and strengthening our bargaining position.

This guide outlines what the FDA offers members and discusses the approaches and activity that can be used to confidently recruit colleagues and raise union visibility in your workplace.



There are many great reasons to join the FDA. You will have your own examples of what makes union membership so valuable – experiences of representing members in a case, negotiating with your employer to improve terms and conditions, or seeing the FDA on the national stage defending the civil service from political attacks.

Excellence in personal representation

The FDA is there when members need help with a personal problem at work.

The FDA has a successful track record of providing hundreds of members a year with high-quality, expert and trusted employment relations advice and representation at work. This includes assistance and representation on issues such as:

Bullying and harassment

Organisational change

Redundancy

Discrimination

Appraisal and promotion

Disciplinary issues

Capability issues

Contractual disputes

Internet-related allegations

**Pay, including
performance-related pay**

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“Thank goodness for the FDA. Their support has saved my career and enabled me to carry on working.”

FDA member

Providing members with a pragmatic and influential voice in the workplace

We negotiate collectively, both in workplaces and centrally. We ensure that we understand what's important to our members and work in partnership with employers, using our influence and negotiating skills to find a solution.

By fighting for your pay, pensions and working conditions, we campaign and negotiate with employers on behalf of our members to ensure they have the resources required, both to do their jobs and have a life outside the workplace. Our objective is always to improve FDA members' working lives so they are able to continue to provide world-class public services.



Recent FDA successes include:

- Our historic win on Fast Stream pay, which saw Fast Streamers receive a salary increases of as much as 22.5% following a successful vote for strike action. This pay rise helped to tackle years of pay stagnation and record attrition.
- FDA Procurator Fiscal Section (PFS) secured a pay deal for prosecutors in Scotland worth up to an extraordinary 56%, following their Equal Value, Equal Worth campaign, which fought for prosecutors in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service to be paid the same as their counterparts in Scottish Government.
- Following the FDA's recommendation that an investment of £910m into HM Revenue and Customs would return £11.3bn to the Treasury over the course of a parliament, the current government announced large-scale investment into HMRC – including more than 5,000 additional compliance staff. This helped to demonstrate the valuable work of public servants, and the improved resourcing will help our members' working lives.

Defending members' impartiality, integrity and professionalism

In recent years we have seen an unprecedented period of attacks on civil service values from political commentators, MPs, and even some ministers. It has felt at times that the FDA has been the lone voice pushing back. A strong and permanent civil service is too important to the UK and its nations to let these ideologically-driven attacks permanently undermine public trust in it.

The FDA is a non-partisan organisation, but we regularly engage with stakeholders across the political spectrum and work with a variety of politicians to influence and shape the conversation about public service.

We are robust in defence of our members. We are pragmatic, but unafraid to challenge. The FDA has always, and will always, stand up for the impartiality, integrity and professionalism of civil servants and the civil service.

The civil service must have the trust and confidence of the public – and elected politicians – to deliver high-quality public services.

This is why the FDA campaigned for the civil service to be put onto a statutory footing, which was finally achieved via the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act – providing a legal basis for civil service values.



Helping members to progress in their careers

Through FDA Learn we provide learning and development opportunities to more than 8,000 civil servants every year. We run 250 courses, online and in the workplace. While non members pay up to £100 to attend our courses, they are all completely free to members. Our offer on leadership, management, wellbeing – and equality, diversity and inclusion – is highly regarded across the civil service.

The most popular and sought-after element of FDA Learn is our career development and success profiles courses, designed to increase your chances for promotion. Our courses are designed and delivered by providers with a wealth of knowledge and understanding of civil service careers. Whether you are aiming to move from an SEO to G7 or a G6 to SCS, FDA Learn is proven to help our members make the leap to the next stage.

We directly support more than 2,300 civil servants to apply for new roles every year and our success rate is high. Members who attend our career support programme are up to three times more likely to be successful in gaining promotion.

Alongside Dods, we run the prestigious 'Women into Leadership', 'Ethnic Minorities into Leadership', 'Unlocking the SCS', and 'Unlocking Grade 7' events. These successful and popular events seek to increase the diversity of civil servants entering more senior grades.



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Your career advantage

“I was successful in being invited to interview and then was successful at the interview stage too! Thank you for running such an effective course which boosted my confidence.”

FDA member

“It has been a pleasure to see how a union should be run to help members and encourage members to progress. Its my pleasure to say thank you in joining the FDA.”

HEO member,
Welsh Government

“The sessions on Behaviours and Strengths helped me in successfully passing the ESA. FDA sessions really were invaluable in helping me through the process.”

Fast Stream member

“I found your training courses absolutely invaluable in helping me to know what to expect at interview, I’m sure I wouldn’t have been successful without your assistance.”

HMRC member



Member discounts

As soon as you become a member of the FDA, you are automatically eligible to access FDA Portfolio.

Whether it’s your weekly grocery shop, reducing your holiday spend or a weekend take-away delivered to your door, FDA Portfolio has a deal that could save you money.

Special monthly deals are also announced throughout the year, meaning FDA members always have access to brand-new bargains.

The average FDA member could save £692.04* per year by using just a handful of benefits available through FDA Portfolio.

Members are also offered access to financial and legal help via FDA Portfolio.

*figure is correct as of 01/11/2024



Have your say

Being a member of the FDA isn't just about receiving high-quality, trusted professional representation or having civil service values robustly defended – it is about being part of a democratic organisation where every member can have their say.

Members have the opportunity to take part in the FDA's national policymaking every year with our Annual Delegate Conference.

Policies agreed by the ADC determine the work of the FDA for the following year, giving delegates a direct influence on the priorities of the union and how it works with the civil service to improve the working lives of members.

Another way members can have their say is by getting involved with the union. There is a way for every member to get involved, that can suit their experience, time commitments, or needs:

- **Attending branch meetings**
- **Volunteering for a role on the branch committee**
- **Joining our organising network, FDA On, which connects reps and activists across the union to share ideas and best practices**
- **Becoming a workplace representative**
- **Being part of the FDA delegations to TUC equality conferences**
- **Taking part in an FDA event**
- **Standing for the Executive Committee**
- **Recruiting another member**

Join the FDA online

Scan the QR code or visit **fda.org.uk**

