

## SQA EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Please read the [Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance on assessing impact.](#)

### 1. Name of policy/procedure/proposal/project/decision\*

\*Referred to as 'policy' hereafter.

<b>POLICY NAME</b>	Attendance Management Policy
<b>COMPLETED BY</b>	Equality Impact Assessment Working Group
<b>HEAD OF SERVICE</b>	Head of Human Resources
<b>DATE</b>	19 August 2021
<b>NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE</b>	TBC in line with policy schedule

### 2. What is main purpose of the policy?

To support managers in managing attendance effectively by placing emphasis on the colleagues and the managers working together to remove barriers to attendance at work.

It has been designed to encourage line managers and colleagues to take proactive steps towards health and wellbeing.

It encourages open and honest discussion about your attendance, promotes early intervention when health or wellbeing issues arise, or when absence levels are unsatisfactory.

### 3. What information, and evidence, is being used to evaluate the impact of this policy on people who share protected characteristics?

In order to evaluate the impact of this policy on employees who have shared protected characteristics we have sought feedback from colleagues in Human Resources and Equality & Diversity, as well as representatives from our two recognised unions, Unite and Unison, who can feedback on behalf of their representatives' and members' experiences.

We have also included representatives from SQA's employee networks – Disability, Rainbow, Women's, who are able to provide valuable feedback from a significant part of the organisation. We have also considered reasonable adjustments for those with protected characteristics during attendance management proceedings.

Once available, we will also review and consider any data trends relating to absence on those with protected characteristics.

## PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

SQA is required to have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This section provides the opportunity to capture how the policy will contribute towards the three aims of the general equality duty, and to consider if there is anything more we need to do to meet our responsibilities.

**4. How might this policy impact on people who share protected characteristics? Please consider positive or negative impacts. (At the beginning of the process, you may want to record perceived impact — ongoing monitoring of the policy will allow you to measure the actual impact of the policy). Please copy this symbol into the applicable boxes: ✓**

Protected Characteristic	Neutral impact	Positive impact	Negative impact	Please provide more information
Age	✓			Policy applies equally to all. Include a link to the menopause guidance in the policy which supports employees with menopausal symptoms.  UK Government statistics show that older employees are statistically more likely to have absences than younger employees.
Disability	✓			Positive reasonable adjustments for absences relating to disability.  Support during informal and formal stages of attendance management procedure.
Marriage/civil partnership	✓			Policy applies equally to all.
Race	✓			Policy applies equally to all. Consider that certain conditions may be more common or likely to affect certain ethnic groups.
Religion/belief/non-belief	✓			Policy applies equally to all. Consider and review employees absences (wellbeing or illnesses) which may be related to religious events e.g., Ramadan – fasting.
Sexual orientation	✓			Policy applies equally to all.
Gender re-assignment (gender identity and transgender)	✓			Positive reasonable adjustments for absences relating to operations.

				Policy looks at the recovery from a surgical aspect however consideration should be given to absences related to hormonal treatments (not all treatments may be surgical).
Pregnancy/maternity	✓			Positive reasonable adjustments for absences relating to pregnancy.  Consideration to be given to employees undergoing fertility treatment and also any associated pregnancy complications.
Sex	✓			Policy applies equally to all.  UK Government statistics say that males are more likely to not seek help for mental health. Provide more guidance and links in the policy to mental health support and policy when available.
Care experience (where relevant)	✓			

**5. What arrangements could be implemented to reduce or mitigate any potential adverse or negative impacts identified above?**

Ensure managers receive support and guidance on how to implement the attendance management policy given the introduction of check in points in section 5.15.

Include links to resources to promote awareness of what is available on SQA Intranet e.g. OH fact sheets, disability articles and fact sheets.

**6. If you are proceeding with a decision that may have a negative impact despite the mitigatory arrangements identified in Step 5, are you satisfied that this is objectively justified, ie a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim? Please provide explanatory details.**

N/A

**7. Could this policy be revised or changed to better meet the general equality duty?**

Include mental health first aiders and Able Futures in section 4, Support.

Once available, review and consider any data trends relating to absence on those with protected characteristics.

Include a link to the menopause guidance in the policy which supports employees with menopausal symptoms.

General Equality Duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality; foster good relations

**8. Has there been consultation/is consultation planned with people who will be affected by this policy/procedure/project/decision? Please detail below how this has affected your decision making.**

Consultation with union representatives, employee networks and members of SQA Equality & Diversity team has been completed which represents a significant part of the workforce within SQA.

**9. How will this policy be monitored and evaluated?**

The policy owner will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring this policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is fit for purpose and in line with relevant legislation. All stakeholders involved in the procedure also have a responsibility for ensuring consistency, fairness, and equity throughout the attendance management procedure.

## ACTION PLAN

Action:	Owners:
Include a link to the menopause guidance document	HR Policy Review Group
Once available add menopause policy to the list of associated policies.	HR Policy Review Group
Add maternity/paternity and adoption policy to associated policies	HR Policy Review Group
Once available, review and consider any data trends relating to absence on those with protected characteristics.	HR Analytics and Systems and HR Shared Service.
Include mental health first aiders and Able Futures in section 4. Support.	HR Policy Review Group
Provide support and guidance to managers on how to implement the attendance management policy.	HR and OD
Include links to resources to promote awareness of what is available on SQA Intranet, eg OH fact sheets, disability articles and fact sheets.	HR Policy Review Group

Signed: Julia Welsh and Zoey Marshall (EIA Working Group Leads)

Date: 20 August 2021