

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.

POLICY NAME	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
COMPLETED BY	Equality Impact Assessment Working Group
HEAD OF SERVICE	Head of Human Resources
DATE	26 August 2021
NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE	TBC in line with policy schedule

2. What is main purpose of the policy?

To promote equality and diversity amount the workforce. To recognise that people from different backgrounds and experience can bring valuable insights and enhance the way we work.

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, ACE and Women's, who are able to provide valuable feedback from a significant part of the organisation.

Also used to evaluate this policy are:

- ◆ published equality outcomes as part of the public sector equality duty (new outcomes every four years)
- ◆ SQA's Equality Mainstreaming Report

Once available, we will also review and consider any data trends relating to equality, diversity and inclusion on those with protected characteristics. With specific reference to recruitment and selection.

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	✓			<p>Training is available to all staff no matter their age. Recruitment and selection eliminate unlawful age discrimination – DOB is not shown on applications.</p> <p>Highlights benefits of mixed age workforce – would be beneficial to include information on how SQA challenge age stereotyping?</p>
Disability		✓		<p>Disability Confident Employer.</p> <p>Looks to assess people on their merit regardless of the PC’s. will look to make reasonable adjustments or remove barriers to promotion.</p> <p>Employee network in place to support Disabled colleagues and ensure inclusion.</p>
Marriage/civil partnership	✓			<p>Policy applies equally to all, although SQA may wish to review the policy once more equality data is available.</p>
Race	✓			<p>Policy applies equally to all, although SQA may wish to review the policy once more equality data is available.</p>
Religion/belief/non-belief	✓			<p>Positive action for religion or belief providing prayer areas and meal options.</p>

Sexual orientation	✓			Policy applies equally to all, although SQA may wish to review the policy once more equality data is available.
Gender re-assignment (gender identity and transgender)	✓			Policy applies equally to all, although SQA may wish to review the policy once more equality data is available.
Pregnancy/maternity	✓			Support for employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave.
Sex	✓			Policy applies equally to all, although SQA may wish to review the policy once more equality data is available.
Care experience (where relevant)	✓			

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

Section 6.4 remove terminology ‘special needs’ as it can be seen as offensive language.

Ensure all SQA colleagues receive mandatory equalities, diversity and inclusion training. This will support SQA’s aim of promoting a more diverse and cultured workforce. It will also assist line managers in dealing with any potential handling of complaints of discrimination.

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?

Section 4 — Support - Include SQA network sites; ACE, Disability, Rainbow, Women’s, etc.

Section 7.6 — Race and 7.7 – Religion or belief - include the Equality Outcome/action plan as part of a wider corporate goal for inclusion and diversity for all colleagues.

Section 7.7 — Religion or belief - include that cafeteria needs at least 24 hours’ notice for meal options.

Section 11.2 — Types of discrimination – explain that these are defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Introduce a greater inclusion and diversity across SQA in relation to the mainstream equality report recently published.

Once available provide equality, diversity and inclusion data. With specific reference to recruitment and selection.

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.

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ACTION PLAN

Action:	Owners:
Mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training for all SQA colleagues.	HR and OD
Once available provide equality, diversity and inclusion data. With specific reference to recruitment and selection.	HR Reward
Include SQA Networks in section 4 – support.	HR Policy Review Group
include the Equality Outcome/action plan as part of a wider corporate goal for inclusion and diversity for all colleagues.	
Section 11.2 – Types of discrimination – explain that these are defined by the Equality Act 2010.	HR Policy Review Group
Provide more details in section 6.3 to 7.8 of how SQA challenge and monitor any discrimination., eg Section 7.1 Age – How do SQA monitor or challenge age stereotyping.	HR Policy Review Group

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

Date: 27 August 2021