Equality Impact Assessment (supporting guidance available)

Action Plan

This section is completed at the end of the Equality Impact Assessment. Due to the importance of embedding equality in SQA through our actions the Action Plan will be the focus and record of ongoing actions.

Agreed Schedule Review Date	30 April 2024	Additional Schedule Review Date	

Explain how you will monitor and record the actual impact on equality groups, including how the evidence can be revisited to measure the actual impact.

Required Actions	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
Actions taken to **monitor the implementation of policy and the impact on equality groups** (evidence and consultation).			**[ONGOING RECORD]**
Add to introductory communications and visit plans/agendas a request for information from centre contacts on any potential barriers to participating in SA or SV activities and log these and required adjustments put in place as a result to monitor impact.	Quality Enhancement Managers	30 June 2023 and ongoing monitoring	
Add question on any impact of SA and SV activities on equality groups to the online feedback form on QA activities and monitor responses.	Senior Operations Manager	30 2023 and ongoing monitoring	
Continue to consult with the staff and appointees conducting these activities at team meetings and one-to-ones on any barriers that they face (eg female staff as lone workers) and how best to address these.	Senior Operations Manager	Ongoing	

Identified Actions	General Equality Duty	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
QEMs and SASVs to ensure that if they are interviewing younger candidates they are in groups or accompanied by an adult and that they use age-appropriate language and explain clearly anything that the young people may not understand.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 Foster good relations	Quality Enhancement Managers and Systems Approvers and Verifiers	Ongoing	
Add to the visit planning emails questions about any barriers which centre staff and candidates might have in engaging with the process and required adjustments and implement these adjustments where possible in a physical visit.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Quality Enhancement Managers	30 June 2023 and ongoing	
Use the option of virtual approval and verification events where this would be more appropriate to meet the needs of centre staff, candidates or our staff and appointees with disabilities.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Quality Enhancement Managers	30 June 2023 and ongoing	
Review our guidance documents and revise formatting where required to ensure that they meet all accessibility standards.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Senior Operations Manager and Quality Enhancement Managers	Ongoing	Review of Guidance on Systems Verification for Centres in China to be reviewed in April 2023. Other guidance documents will not be updated until 2024.

Ensure that all our guidance documentation and other information on the website is written in Plain English and as clearly as possible.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Senior Operations Manager and Quality Enhancement Managers	Ongoing	Review of Guidance on Systems Verification for Centres in China to be reviewed in April 2023. Other guidance documents will not be updated until 2024.
Ensure that our Systems Approval and verification reports are written in Plain English and as clearly as possible. The existing members of the QEM team have already undertaken training in Clear and Confident Writing but new members coming into the team should also undertake this.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Quality Enhancement Managers	Ongoing	
Arrange training for the QEM and SASV team on avoiding bias and stereotyping.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Senior Operations Manager	30 June 2023	
Ensure that our staff and appointees have awareness of religious events and holidays, particularly in the countries in which international centres are based and accommodate these when arranging visits.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Senior Operations Manager	Ongoing	

Ensure that all QEMs and SASVs, but particularly females, consider the risks of every visit to centres and take mitigating action, eg: • Ensure someone else knows where they are going on any particular day and likely times of departure and return, and location of overnight stays. • If in any concerns about location of a centre (eg office is in head of centre's home or remote location) consider arranging the visit to take place in SQA offices or a public space (eg hotel foyer) or arrange to conduct the meeting virtually.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Quality Enhancement Managers and Systems Approvers and Verifiers	Ongoing	
Make any necessary adjustments, including the option of virtual approval and verification events where this would be more appropriate to meet the needs of centre staff, candidates or our staff and appointees who are pregnant or have young children.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	Quality Enhancement Managers and Systems Approvers and Verifiers	Ongoing	

Policy Aims

Name of Policy or practice	Systems Approval and Verification processes
New Policy or Revision	Existing processes
Name of Policy Owner	Head of Operations: HN&VQ
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion	24 April 2023

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?

Part I of the Education (Scotland) Act 1996, as amended by the Scottish Qualifications Authority Act 2002, established SQA as "a body corporate" and set out its statutory functions. SQA's general functions include:

(d) to approve education and training establishments as being suitable for presenting persons for SQA qualifications

The Act also sets out SQA's quality assurance responsibilities. These are to ensure:

(1) the quality of the procedures used by such establishments for assessing the standards of attainment of such persons (and, in particular, such persons with special educational needs) in relation to SQA qualifications;

(2) the quality of the internal arrangements adopted by such establishments for monitoring and controlling the effectiveness of such procedures; and

(3) the suitability of such establishments for presenting persons for SQA qualifications.

Systems approval is the process by which SQA confirms that a centre has the management and quality assurance systems to support the delivery, assessment and internal verification of SQA qualifications, irrespective of what qualification(s) a centre intends to offer. Combined with qualification for at least one qualification initially, this constitutes centre approval allowing an employer or training provider – in Scotland, rest of the UK or internationally - to be recognised as an SQA centre and thereby allowed to offer our qualifications. If they meet all of our Systems Approval criteria and are approved as a centre, they receive a Centre Operating Agreement. This does not apply to schools or any other organisations with SEED numbers.

SQA subsequently carries out <u>Systems Verification</u> in centres (excluding schools) to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria to be an SQA centre.

The requirements of the Act are expressed through SQA Governing Principles, specifically those relating to quality assurance:

5: ensure that any centre offering SQA qualifications has the systems, resources and expertise to deliver and assess these qualifications to the defined standard.
6: work in partnership with its appointees and centres to ensure that all assessments used in its qualifications are valid and reliable;
7: all qualifications and assessments are as fair and accessible as possible and that the needs of candidates are met
8: quality assure centre assessments and assessment judgements to ensure that they maintain the defined standard;
9: work in partnership with centres to ensure that all quality assurance processes are fair, open and proportionate;
10: ensure that candidates receive accurate results in the stated timeframe;

Governing Principle 5 relates specifically to Systems Approval and Verification, but there are links to the other GPs listed eg through Systems Approval and verification criteria relating to centres having effective internal verification, assessment arrangements and data management procedures.

The Governing Principles apply to SQA's self-regulated qualifications, but there are also principles and conditions which SQA adheres to in relation to qualifications regulated by SQA Accreditation, Ofqual and Qualifications Wales. These include the responsibilities of SQA as the awarding body for ensuring that centres approved to deliver its qualifications have the necessary resources in place, including suitably qualified staff, and effective processes for quality assurance of assessment, equal access to assessment, assessment arrangements, appeals, complaints, malpractice and data management. The requirements for having policies and procedures for all of these functions which fully meet SQA and regulatory requirements are covering in the Systems Approval and verification quality assurance criteria.
SQA Accreditation - Regulatory Requirements
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook

What evidence is there to support the implementation or development of this policy or practice?

Education Act
SQA's Governing Principles
SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles
Ofqual's Conditions of Recognition
Consultation on last major review of the QA criteria and approach for 2015-18.

Systems Approval Guidance for Centres

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Systems_and_Qualification_Approval_Guide.pdf

Systems Verification Guidance for Centres

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Systems-verification.pdf

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Systems-verification-criteria-guide-QA.pdf

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What are the aims of this policy or practice?

Systems approval is the SQA process confirming that prospective centres have the management and quality assurance systems that they will need to support the delivery, assessment and internal verification of SQA qualifications, regardless of which qualifications they intend to offer. This area will be reviewed by an SQA systems approver.

Systems verification is the SQA process ensuring centres are managing their systems and resources to meet our quality assurance criteria.

Systems verification focuses on ensuring:
- Quality assurance is managed effectively
- Resources are managed effectively
- Candidates are supported effectively
- Assessment and internal verification is managed effectively
- Candidate data is managed effectively

Systems verification is undertaken by systems verifiers who are experienced experts appointed by SQA. Most of the systems verifiers are SQA staff members called Quality Enhancement Managers (QEMs) but there are also two appointees carrying out these duties called Systems Approvers and Systems Verifiers (SASVs).

How is the content of these aims relevant to equality groups?

The aims of these processes are positive in relation to equality groups in terms of seeking to ensure that centres delivering our qualifications have appropriate policies and procedures in place and implemented effectively and treat their candidates fairly. Specifically, both Systems Approval and systems verification cover the following two criteria of specific relevance:

3.4: Policies and procedures must give SQA candidates equal opportunities for assessment

As an SQA-approved centre, you must ensure that everyone eligible to take a qualification has an equal chance of benefitting from the services you provide. There must be no discriminatory barriers in the way of anyone who wants to take SQA qualifications.

3.5: Individual candidates' requirements for assessment arrangement must be discussed, identified, implemented and recorded

Assessment arrangements, or reasonable adjustments to assessment allow candidates who are disabled, and/or who have been identified as having additional support needs or alternative assessment needs, appropriate arrangements to access the assessment without compromising its integrity.

Any negative impacts on equality groups would arise in relation to the implementation of the Systems Approval and verification processes, not the aims. These negative impacts could be on our own staff and appointees who conduct the Systems Approval and verification visits, the centre staff whom they engage with and any candidates that they may interview during these visits to check on the implementation of policies and procedures and their effect on the candidates.

The systems verification report will provide the names and job roles of the staff in centres that the Systems Verifier spoke to but no equalities information about them. The names of any candidates that the SV spoke to in the centre are not held and no equalities data about them is recorded. The systems verifiers do not select candidates to speak to – that is decided by the centre staff. Centre staff that they speak to will be chosen by job role (eg SQA Coordinator, data manager, assessor, internal verifier) – not by any other characteristic.

Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

What stakeholders have you engaged with in the development of this policy or practice?
SQA/College Quality Focus Group – terms of reference includes: • help identify and explore issues, making recommendations on ways forward, including those which may require further consultation with the sector/and or stakeholders and learners • help develop approaches to quality, ensuring compatibility with other appropriate quality frameworks in the sector College Quality Manager and SQA Coordinator annual events College Quality Forum Working Group – developed new self-assessment approach for 2023 Employer and Training Providers Forum Scottish Training Forum (STF) Forum and annual conference Systems Quality Enhancement events for training providers

What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment?	
Age	Ages of candidates interviewed for systems verification will not be known or recorded. Systems verification may involve interviews with either young or mature learners. When there is a significant age difference between the Systems Verifier and younger candidates, it could create an intimidating atmosphere that may negatively impact on the witness's ability to respond to questions. In terms of mature learners, there is also the potential for bias in the form of ageism. Increasing numbers of Senior Phase school pupils are undertaking vocational qualifications, so there is a higher probability of systems verification involving young people, but only if they are studying at a college through school/college partnership, because schools are not subject to systems verification. According to Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations data reported on by Scottish Government, the percentage of school leavers attaining VQs at SCQF level 5 or above every year increased from 9% in 2014-2015 to 17% in 2018-2019. Additionally, there are more Senior Phase pupils enrolling on and completing college courses and progressing into positive destinations.

	Young people may also be studying full-time at college or with a training provider. The age group with the highest proportions of people undertaking National Certificates, National Progression Awards and National Workplace Awards is 15-19 year olds. Developing the Young Workforce Evaluation: Evidence Synthesis (www.gov.scot)
Disability	One of the criteria for Systems Approval and verification relates to the requirement for centres to identify and address assessment arrangements required by individual candidates. SQA holds numbers of students for whom alternative assessment arrangements have been submitted to SQA - however, this only applied to externally-assessed National Qualifications, not the HN&VQ qualifications primarily delivered by centres subject to systems verification – for these qualifications, centres are required to implement assessment arrangements procedures internally, but not required to inform SQA of individual arrangements put in place. SQA also does not hold any information regarding whether centre staff or candidates involved in systems verification identify as having a disability. However, we acknowledge that people with disabilities could face barriers in participating in interviews and that we must make reasonable adjustments to address these. People with disabilities may face significant barriers that can make it difficult for them to participate fully in an interview. For example, a deaf person may require a sign language interpreter or assistive technology to effectively communicate, while someone with a physical disability may experience discomfort or pain during prolonged interviews. **Supporting evidence:** "Students should have access to support services to assist them in accessing and navigating processes […] In some cases it may be reasonable to make adjustments". *Supporting Disabled Students When Things go Wrong, Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education* https://www.oiahe.org.uk/resources-and-publications/good-practice-framework/supporting-disabled-students/when-things-go-wrong/ *(accessed 15 March 2023)*
Race	Information on the race of individuals involved in systems verification will not be sought or recorded. However, some HN&VQ qualifications are delivered in international centres, so the country in which the centre and candidates are based will be known, although that will not necessarily define the race of individuals. While language is not a characteristic protected in the Equality Act, there can be a relationship through nation of origin between language and the protected characteristic of race. people with English as a second or alternative language experiencing difficulties in understanding our guidance or engaging in interviews as part of the verification process. Stereotypes or assumptions may impact how individuals are perceived.

Religion or Belief	Information about the religion or belief of individuals involved in systems verification will not be sought or recorded. Stereotypes or assumptions may impact how individuals are perceived or evaluated, and impact decision making. Cultural, religious or belief differences may contribute to misunderstandings. Consideration should be given to religious events and holidays when arranging Systems Approval and verification visits.
Sex	Female staff and appointees could be more at risk through travelling and visiting centres alone. The gender mix of the team conducting Systems Approval is currently: QEM team (7 women, one man) and SASVs (both women) currently. No information will recorded about the sex of centre staff or candidates interviewed for systems verification. Stereotypes or assumptions may impact how individuals are perceived and impact decision making linked to the investigation.
Sexual Orientation	Information about the sexual orientation of individuals involved in Systems Approval and verification will not be sought or recorded. Stereotypes or assumptions may impact how individuals are perceived and impact decision making.
Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)	Information about the gender identity or gender re-assignment of individuals involved in Systems Approval and verification will not be sought or recorded. Stereotypes or assumptions may impact how individuals are perceived and impact decision making.
Marriage/Civil Partnership	Information about the marital or civil partnership status of individuals involved in Systems Approval and verification will not be sought or recorded. Stereotypes or assumptions may impact how individuals are perceived and impact decision making.
Pregnancy / Maternity	Information about pregnancy or maternity would only be known if this applied to a member of SQA staff (QEM) or appointee (SASV) carrying out Systems Approval and verification. No information on centre staff or candidates is sought, but this could be included in information asked for in the visit planning stage about any barriers to participation that might be experienced. Appropriate adjustments should be made to address any barriers or difficulties that might be experienced in participating in Systems Approval or verification. Medical appointments and maternity leave may also need to be taken into consideration, when scheduling visits. **Supporting evidence:**

	"It is common to feel tired, or even exhausted, during pregnancy, especially in the first 12 weeks". *Common Symptoms in Pregnancy, National Health Service (NHS), Health A to Z https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/related-conditions/common-symptoms/tiredness/ (accessed 15 March 2023).*
Care experience (where relevant)	Information about care experience of individuals involved in systems verification would not be sought or recorded. Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that all young people are treated appropriately in the verification process. SQA is a proud corporate parent and acutely aware of the unique challenges that care experienced people face. Our approach is, as with all learners, to protect the learner wherever possible and minimise any disadvantage/distress.

Impact and Opportunities for Action

The impact that a policy or practice has on an equality group may be different and this requires to be recorded. The impact may not always be negative. Actions are taken to address any differential impact, and include actions to mitigate against any negative impact, to advance equality and to foster good relations between groups.

Each section contains questions for each equality group. These questions are here to support consideration; however, you can provide further detail. Focus initially on the equality groups that would be affected by this policy. If you do not consider that certain equality groups would be affected by this policy, you may leave these sections.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Age	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The aims of the Systems Approval and verification processes should have a neutral impact. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when engaging with staff and candidates in our centres. Most candidates undertaking HN&VQ qualifications will be adults, but there may be some young people (under 18) and potentially a Systems Verifier will interview them as part of the process. The findings of the interview or the outcome of the overall SV process would have no negative impact on the candidates, but the process could be difficult for them if not handled correctly.
	Action: QEMs and SASVs to ensure that if they are interviewing younger candidates they are in groups or accompanied by an adult and that they use age-appropriate language and explain clearly anything that the young people may not understand.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	The aims of the Systems Approval and verification processes should have a neutral impact. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when engaging with staff and candidates in our centres. Most candidates undertaking HN&VQ qualifications will be adults, but there may be some young people (under 18) and potentially a Systems Verifier will interview them as part of the process. The findings of the interview or the outcome of the overall SV process would have no negative impact on the candidates, but the process could be difficult for them if not handled correctly.

	Action: QEMs and SASVs to ensure that if they are interviewing younger candidates they are in groups or accompanied by an adult and that they use age-appropriate language and explain clearly anything that the young people may not understand.
Protected Characteristic	**General Equality Duty**
Disability	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The aims of the processes should have a positive impact on this equalities group in that the Systems Approval and verification criteria against which centres are approved and verified include the requirements for assessment arrangements policies and procedures to be in place and implemented effectively for individual candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties and for centres to have documented policies on equal access to assessment for all candidates. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when engaging with staff and candidates in our centres. People with disabilities could face barriers to participating in interviews if suitable adjustments are not put in place. QEMs or SASVs with disabilities might face difficulties in travelling to centres to conduct physical visits. The format of our guidance documentation might present barriers to people with certain disabilities.
	Action: Add to the visit planning emails questions about any barriers which centre staff and candidates might have in engaging with the process and required adjustments and implement these adjustments where possible in a physical visit. The number and nature of such requests and how they were addressed to be logged and monitored. Action: Add to the online feedback form a question about whether any required adjustments were discussed and suitably addressed and monitor responses. Action: Use the option of virtual approval and verification events where this would be more appropriate to meet the needs of centre staff, candidates or our staff and appointees with disabilities. Action: Review our guidance documents and revise formatting where required to ensure that they meet all accessibility standards.
	Advance equality of opportunity

	The aims of the processes should have a positive impact on this equalities group in that the Systems Approval and verification criteria against which centres are approved and verified include the requirements for assessment arrangements policies and procedures to be in place and implemented effectively for individual candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties and for centres to have documented policies on equal access to assessment for all candidates.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
Protected Characteristic	**General Equality Duty**
Race	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The aims of the Systems Approval and verification processes should have a neutral impact. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when engaging with staff and candidates in our centres. This could be due to bias against or stereotyping of people of a different race or due to people with English as a second or alternative language experiencing difficulties in understanding our guidance, writing documentation that meets our requirements or engaging in interviews as part of the SV process. This could particularly, but not exclusively, affect staff in international centres. It should be noted that it is a requirement for international centres delivering SQA qualifications to assess them in English and to have quality assurance documentation available in English.
	Action: Ensure that all our guidance documentation and other information on the website is written in Plain English and as clearly as possible. Action: Ensure that our Systems Approval and verification reports are written in Plain English and as clearly as possible. The existing members of the QEM team have already undertaken training in Clear and Confident Writing but new members coming into the team should also undertake this. Action: Arrange training for the QEM and SASV team on avoiding bias and stereotyping.

	SQA cannot offer a translation for interviews but centres may be able to provide someone who can translate if necessary.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
Protected Characteristic	**General Equality Duty**
Religion or Belief	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The aims of the Systems Approval and verification processes should have a neutral impact. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when arranging physical or virtual visits to our centres. This is mostly likely to be due to proposed dates for these visits coinciding with religious events or holidays. This could particularly, but not exclusively, affect staff in international centres.
	Action: Ensure that our staff and appointees have awareness of religious events and holidays, particularly in the countries in which international centres are based and accommodate these when arranging visits.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sex	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The aims of the Systems Approval and verification processes should have a neutral impact. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly for female staff and appointees undertaking visits to centres, as they could be at higher risk through travelling and staying overnight alone and going into centres.
	Action: Ensure that all QEMs and SASVs, but particularly females, consider the risks of every visit to centres and take mitigating action, eg: • Ensure someone else knows where they are going on any particular day and likely times of departure and return, and location of overnight stays. • If any concerns about location of a centre (eg office is in head of centre's home or remote location) consider arranging the visit to take place in SQA offices or a public space (eg hotel foyer) or arrange to conduct the meeting virtually. https://www.suzylamplugh.org/personal-safety-at-work https://www.suzylamplugh.org/policy-writing Also, male colleagues undertaking visits should be aware of concerns that female staff in centres might have and take appropriate mitigating actions.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
Protected Characteristic	**General Equality Duty**
Sexual Orientation	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
	The aims of the Systems Approval and verification processes should have a neutral impact. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when engaging with staff and candidates in our centres. This could be due to bias against or stereotyping of people because of their sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation.
	Action: Arrange training for QEMs and SVs in avoiding bias and stereotyping.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
Protected Characteristic	**General Equality Duty**
Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The aims of the Systems Approval and verification processes should have a neutral impact. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when engaging with staff and candidates in our centres. This could be due to bias against or stereotyping of people because of their gender identity of because they are transgender.
	Action: Arrange training for QEMs and SVs on avoiding bias and stereotyping.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Marriage/Civil Partnership	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The impact of the aims and implementation of the processes should be neutral.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
Protected Characteristic	**General Equality Duty**
Pregnancy / Maternity	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The impact of the aims of the processes should be neutral. There could potentially be some negative impact through the implementation of the procedure, particularly when engaging with staff and candidates in our centres and QEMs or SASVs who are pregnant or have young children might face difficulties in travelling to centres to conduct physical visits.
	Action: Add to the visit planning emails questions about any barriers with centre staff and candidates might have in engaging with the process and required adjustments and implement these adjustments where possible in a physical visit. This could include adjustments relating to eg breast-feeding or fatigue experienced during pregnancy. The number and nature of such requests and how they were addressed to be logged and monitored. Action: Add to the online feedback form a question about whether any required adjustments were discussed and suitably addressed and monitor responses.

	Use the option of virtual approval and verification events where this would be more appropriate to meet the needs of centre staff, candidates or our staff and appointees who are pregnant or have young children.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
Considered by SQA	**General Equality Duty**
Care experience (where relevant)	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	The impact of the aims of the process should be neutral. Any impact from the implementation of the processes and actions to mitigate this would be the same as for all young people (see under Age above).
	No action has been identified against this specific duty.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.
	Foster good relations
	No impacts have been identified against this specific duty.
	No actions have been identified against this specific duty.

Rationale

If you are proceeding with a decision that may have a negative impact and are not putting in place actions to mitigate against this, please explain how this is objectively justified.
Not applicable.