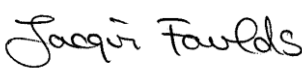


General Equality Duty:

Eliminate discrimination
Advance equality
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Equality Impact Assessment

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

1. Name of policy/procedure/proposal/project/practice/decision*:	Smarter Working Programme project
Completed by:	Anne Andrew
Head of Service:	Jacqui Faulds
Date:	15 October 2021
Signature:	
Next scheduled review date:	31 January 2022

2. Name of policy/procedure/proposal/project/decision*:
Smarter Working Programme project

3. What is main purpose of the project? Please consider the questions below:
<p>The aim of the Smarter Working Programme is to where possible, give our people some individual choice and control over where they work. The principles which underpin the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The inclusive engagement of colleagues underpins the success of Smarter Working - it is critical we all contribute so that all views are considered, and these will help shape the Smarter Working programme.• Colleagues' health and wellbeing is our priority- colleagues' health and wellbeing will be our priority when considering individual work preferences.• Realising our SQA values - Trusted - We will be open and transparent in our communication and decision making. Enabling - We set and uphold high standards of behaviour in line with our values. Progressive - We challenge the status quo and embrace new ways of working.• Keep all colleagues informed throughout the lifecycle of the Smarter Working Programme - regular, relevant communication will be provided to all colleagues.• Every role will be matched to one of the four workstyle options 1. Fixed place and fixed hours 2. Fixed place and varied hours 3. Varied place and fixed hours 4. Varied place and varied hours• Sustain our business operating model, ensuring business needs continue to be met and appropriate resources are in the right place at the right time - it is essential that the right

General Equality Duty:

Eliminate discrimination

Advance equality

Foster good relations

people are available at the appropriate times to support internal and external customers, ensuring no impact on delivery.

- Provide appropriate guidance and tools to support Smarter Working - appropriate guidance will be available to support our colleagues and ensure a consistent and fair approach across the business.
- Relevant policies and processes ensure fairness and consistency to support Smarter Working - policies and processes will be reviewed and updated as required.
- Office workspaces will be redesigned to support Smarter Working and ensure efficient use of space - we will create an efficient and flexible workspace for colleagues, subject to budget availability and with a phased approach to implementation.
- A workspace will be available in the office for those who need it - the workstyle preferences will determine whether colleagues will have a permanently allocated workspace or whether a workspace will be available for booking when in the office.
- Digital technologies that facilitate Smarter Working will continue to be supported, developed and implemented - we will ensure our people have the right support and tools in place, regardless of workstyle preference, to support Smarter Working.

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

Internal evidence sources:

- feedback from all SQA colleagues
- discussion and feedback from Union colleagues
- discussion and feedback from HR colleagues
- feedback from SQA networks
- feedback from SWP business area representatives
- feedback from SIPs
- feedback from internal communication messages

External evidence sources:

- feedback from stakeholder groups
- collaboration with Scottish Government on SWP
- collaboration with bench marking group doing similar activities

General Equality Duty:

Eliminate discrimination
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Foster good relations

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.

5. How might this policy impact on people who share protected characteristics? Please consider positive or negative impact. Are the needs of people with different characteristics met? Does the policy, procedure, or practice affect some groups differently? (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)

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide more information
Age	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different age groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of age.
Disability		X		Consideration has been given to colleagues with specific health issues who require to ‘shield’. The SWP will in fact positively support colleagues with disabilities in that they have the flexibility to work from home when their role allows this as long as business need is met.
Marriage / Civil Partnership	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different marital/civil partnerships groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless marital/ civil partnership status.
Race	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different race groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of race.
Religion / Belief / non-Belief	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different religion/belief/non-belief groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of religion or belief.

General Equality Duty:

Eliminate discrimination
Advance equality
Foster good relations

Sexual Orientation	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different sexual orientation groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of sexual orientation.
Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different gender reassignment groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of gender.
Pregnancy / Maternity	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different pregnancy/maternity/paternity groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of pregnancy or maternity or paternity leave
Sex	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different sex groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of sex.
Care experience (where relevant)	X			There is no differential impact identified in terms of different care experienced groups of colleagues. The project applies equally to all colleagues regardless of care experience.

General Equality Duty:

Eliminate discrimination
Advance equality
Foster good relations

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

Moderation of line manager decisions in relation to place and method of workstyle are carried out in each Directorate to ensure the Smarter Working Programme is consistent and fair across the business. Colleagues across the business are invited to submit questions on the project to the project team.

7. 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, i.e. a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim? Please provide explanatory details.

N/A

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

Project is reviewed monthly by the project steering groups to consider areas of improvement, progress made towards reopening the offices and current Scottish government guidance and the business need to allow the Smarter Working Programme project to progress. FAQ document is also updated on the intranet as required. We will continue consider the general equality duty as we progress through the project when any changes are made to the arrangements, policies or procedures. The EqIA will be reviewed quarterly.

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

Internal consultation has taken place with colleagues across the business via SIPs, internal communications on our Intranet pages and colleagues have had the opportunity to contact union representatives as well as the business area representatives and line managers. The FAQ document is updated as required. Feedback and questions from colleagues through these various forums has informed on the decisions taken to ensure fairness and equity across all colleagues.

10. How will this policy be monitored and evaluated?

General Equality Duty:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality
- Foster good relations

Chair of the SWP and the project group will be responsible for determining and dealing with submitted issues and escalate as required. Colleagues on this group are supported by HR and Union representation. The project sets out the steps and timelines to reopen our offices with all advice and guidance from Scottish Government taken in order to successfully implement the Smarter Working Programme.

Action Plan

Ref:	Action:	Owners:	Dates:

Approval and publication

Completed equality impact assessments will be published on SQA’s website.

- As such, EqlAs must be discussed and approved
- Following completion, please send the electronic copy to equality@sqa.org.uk
- Actions identified will be recorded and monitored as part of SQA’s equality action plan.

Sign off: _____
Date: _____

General Equality Duty:

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Summary of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010

Components	Due Regard
A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:	Having due regard specifically involves taking steps to:
a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act. (Fairness)	
b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. (Opportunity)	a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic * b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. c) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. (Respect)	a) Tackle prejudice. b) Promote understanding.

*'Due regard' comprises two linked elements: proportionality and relevance. The weight that public authorities give to equality should be proportionate to how relevant a particular function is to equality. In short, the more relevant a policy, procedure or practice is to equality and people, then the greater the regard that should be paid.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership *
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

* Although Marriage and Civil Partnership applies to section a) in employment only, this will be considered for all stakeholders.

*Referred to as just "policy" hereinafter

General Equality Duty:

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