

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	April 2024	Additional Schedule Review Date	
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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)			
Policy review	Policy author	In line with education reform timelines following recommendations from the Hayward Independent Review report scheduled end May 2023.	These policies have undergone minor review and no changes have been made to the content since they were last approved. A wider review into Skills Frameworks is part of the Education Reform Programme begun in 2022. The development of new or amended generic skills policies will form part of this work and necessitate further equality impact assessment.
Monitoring of Assessment Arrangements queries related to Core Skills.	Policy author	Ongoing	
Monitoring of information and evidence related to Core Skills gained from engagement with equality and inclusion key partners.	Policy author	Ongoing	

Identified Actions	General Equality Duty	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
[LIST]	[CROSS REFERENCE]			
No impact or opportunity identified				

Policy Aims

Name of Policy or practice	<p>Core Skills Policy: Core Skills and other generic skills for learning, life and work across qualifications Policy: The Core Skills Framework Policy: Revisions to the Core Skills Framework</p>
New Policy or Revision	Revision
Name of Policy Owner	Martyn Ware
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion	20 February 2023

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?
<p>This is a group of three policies which relate to the same purpose of including Core Skills and other generic skills in qualifications.</p> <p>Core Skills and other generic skills for learning, life and work across qualifications This policy establishes the use of the Core Skills Framework across all qualifications.</p> <p>The Core Skills Framework The Core Skills Framework outlines the national standards for development of generic skills, and for quality assurance processes leading to automatic certification of Core Skills and/or their components in qualifications.</p> <p>Revisions to the Core Skills Framework This policy establishes the principle that the Core Skills Framework may require adjustment to remain appropriate to SQA qualifications. Any changes to the framework must be made following agreed management arrangements.</p>

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

The five Core Skills are the skills most needed in many work environments. Jobs require some level of ability in some or all of these skills. The implementation of these Core Skills policies ensures that all learners have opportunities to acquire these skills, the usefulness of which are detailed as follows:

Communication skills underpin personal, social, learning, and working activities. They are essential in clarifying one's own thoughts, in interacting and conversing with others, in expressing thoughts and in conveying information, feeling and opinions.

Numeracy skills are necessary for coping with the demands of everyday life. People need to be comfortable with numbers, graphs, symbols, diagrams and calculators.

Information and Communication Technology focuses on the ability to use IT in ways that are useful in work and the home. It is not about developing IT specialists.

Working with Others develops the skills needed to co-operate with others in learning and working situations to identify and achieve shared goals.

Problem Solving develops the skills needed for tackling issues and problems in personal, social, vocational and occupational contexts.

What are the aims of this policy or practice?

The aims of the Core Skills policies are to ensure that all learners have opportunities to acquire a range of core skills as part of their learner journey. The policies details where and how Core Skills can be gained through stand-alone units or through embedding in other qualifications. They also detail the national standards that must be applied in order to ensure quality and consistency of assessment and confidence in certification, and make provision for adjustment to remain appropriate to SQA qualifications.

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

As the policies relate to how SQA provides opportunities for learning and certification, a positive impact on equality groups is intended.

Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

What stakeholders have you engaged with in the development of this policy or practice?

The consideration of the impact of these policies on people with disabilities and other protected characteristics was informed by information and analysis from SQA's Equality Review of Qualifications Process and engagement with equality and disability key partners and stakeholders. This is reflected in information on Specifications and Reasonable Adjustments detailed below.

What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment?	
Age	Age is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA qualifications.
Disability	Some learners may have barriers to achieving the Core Skill of Communication because of disabilities relating to reading, writing, listening and talking. The assessment arrangements and reasonable adjustments agreed by SQA allow disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding while maintaining the standard and integrity of SQA's assessments.
Race	Race is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA qualifications.
Religion or Belief	Religion or belief is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA qualifications.
Sex	Sex is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA qualifications.
Sexual Orientation	Sexual orientation is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA qualifications.
Gender Reassignment (Gender identity and transgender)	Gender reassignment is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA stand-alone Core Skills qualifications or any SQA qualifications which embed Core Skills.
Marriage/Civil Partnership	Marriage/civil partnership is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA qualifications.
Pregnancy / Maternity	Pregnancy/maternity is not used as a criterion for access to any SQA qualifications. Any learner who is pregnant, has recently given birth or who is breastfeeding may utilise assessment arrangements if required, to ensure that they can access SQA's qualifications.
Care experience (where relevant)	Care-experienced learners can utilise assessment arrangements if they have difficulties with accessing SQA qualifications

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
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations Neutral impact.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Disability	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Some learners may have barriers to achieving the Core Skill of Communication because of disabilities relating to reading, writing, listening and talking.
	In relation to National Core Skills Communication Units and to National Certificate Communication Units, exemption from demonstrating abilities in reading, writing, listening or speaking will not be a reasonable adjustment. An award of a Core Skill Communication Unit indicates that the candidate has reached a level of competence in reading, writing, listening and speaking. The development of these four skills and the demonstration of their

	<p>achievement are deemed to be of key importance to the award. Therefore, it is not possible to exempt a disabled candidate from demonstrating abilities in reading, writing, listening or speaking.</p> <p>Disadvantage to disabled learners can be mitigated through a range of agreed reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>Disabled candidates who are unable to decode written text are allowed to have a human reader or screen reader to enable them to demonstrate their ability to meet the assessment objectives of understanding, analysing and evaluating a piece of writing. Similarly, in the case of writing, disabled candidates who are unable to write, are allowed to have a human scribe or to use speech-recognition software to enable them to demonstrate their ability to meet the assessment objective of composing a piece of writing which is appropriate for purpose and audience.</p> <p>Deaf candidates who are unable to speak and/or listen are allowed to use British Sign Language, Sign Supported English (SSE), lip speakers or any other appropriate augmentative and alternative communication to demonstrate their ability to respond and express themselves appropriately.</p> <p>Where the Core Skill of Communication is embedded in a qualification which does not explicitly assess the four modes of communication, there is no barrier to achieving the main qualification. Guidance for the design of qualifications make this clear. The audit and validation process confirms that the embedded Core Skill does not present any extra barrier to the achievement of the qualification.</p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No impact or opportunity identified
	Foster good relations
	No impact or opportunity identified
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Race	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations

	Neutral impact.
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
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral impact.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sex	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral impact.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sexual Orientation	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral impact.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Gender Reassignment (Gender identity and transgender)	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral impact.
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
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral impact.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty

Pregnancy / Maternity	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations
Neutral impact.	
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
	Neutral impact.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral impact.
	Foster good relations
Neutral impact.	

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.
We have identified that disadvantage to disabled learners can be mitigated through a range of agreed reasonable adjustments. The application of these reasonable adjustments fall outwith the scope of this policy, but can be found in the Equality of Access to SQA Qualifications policy.