



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	By September 27	Additional Schedule Review Date	By September 26
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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)			[ONGOING RECORD]
Review and assess monthly establishment management information packs containing fundamental employment data on SQA employees	People Analytics, Governance & Systems Manager	Continuing to take place	
Review on a quarterly basis of employment law, case law and legislative changes, and equalities updates (including reviewing EHRC website).	HR Shared Services Manager	Continuing to take place	



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Review and assess feedback on a quarterly basis from joint trade unions (Unite and Unison) through SQA's Joint engagement forum and Policy review group.	HR Shared Services Manager	Continuing to take place through PRG meetings	
Review and assess feedback on a quarterly basis from each of SQA's staff community network groups	HR Shared Services Manager	To be considered further	
Continue to review and assess on an annual basis SQA's engagement People survey	OD Manager	Continuing to take quarterly starting March 2024	
Review and assess on an annual basis all SQA employee lifecycle data	People Analytics, Governance & Systems Manager	Continuing to take place	
Continue to review and assess every 2 years SQA's equality mainstreaming report [next report due May 2023]	People Reward and Equalities Manager	Continuing to take place	
Continue to review and assess every 2 years SQA's workforce equality monitoring report [next report due May 2023]	People Reward and Equalities Manager	Continuing take place	



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Policy Aims

Name of Policy or Practice:	Grievance
New Policy or Revision?	New (previously included in Dispute Resolution Policy)
Name of Policy Owner:	Head of Human Resources
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion:	14 March 2024

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?
<p>The policy outlines SQA’s commitment to ensuring fair and consistent treatment for all colleagues and to encourage behaviour in line with that set out in SQA’s code of conduct and stated values: trusted, progressive, and enabling and the principles outlined in SQA’s Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy.</p> <p>The policy acknowledges that there may be occasions where colleagues have concerns about their work, working conditions or their relationships with colleagues and provides a procedure to follow to support colleagues in seeking a resolution to their concerns fairly and without reasonable delay.</p> <p>The policy (and accompanying procedure) complies with the Advisory conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) Code of Practice and meets all current, relevant legislation.</p>



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

SQA, as an employer, is obligated to follow a full and fair procedure in line with the ACAS code for any grievance case. The ACAS Code states that: “fairness and transparency are promoted by developing and using rules and procedures for handling grievance situations. These should be set down in writing, be specific and clear.” See the [ACAS Code](#) for more information. Therefore, without a written grievance policy and procedure, SQA would be in breach of the ACAS code.

Additionally, the *Equality Act 2010* sets out the nine characteristics that are protected from unlawful discrimination meaning that SQA is required to protect employees from less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic.

A written grievance policy encourages managers to follow a fair procedure and act consistently and should reduce the risk of discrimination and constructive unfair dismissal claims. The procedure an employer follows, and an employee's actions will be taken into account if the case reaches an employment tribunal. A failure to follow the Code does not, in itself, make a person or organisation liable to proceedings. However, employment tribunals will take the Code into account when considering relevant cases.

Tribunals will also be able to adjust any awards made in relevant cases by up to 25 per cent for unreasonable failure to comply with any provision of the Code. This means that if the tribunal feels that an employer has unreasonably failed to follow the guidance set out in the Code, they can increase any award they have made by up to 25 per cent. Conversely, if they feel an employee has unreasonably failed to follow the guidance set out in the Code, they can reduce any award they have made by up to 25 per cent. For these reasons, it is important that this grievance policy (and accompanying procedure) is developed and implemented within SQA.



What are the aims of this policy or practice?

The policy aims to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all colleagues and to encourage behaviour in line with that set out in SQA's code of conduct and with SQA's stated values: trusted, progressive and enabling and the principles outlined in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

The policy and accompanying procedure aim to provide colleagues with informal and formal routes to raise a concern about their employment and for their concerns to be addressed consistently and fairly without reasonable delay.

Associated Policies:

The policy links directly to other SQA policies, we directly reference these to help the reader understand context, alternative routes for solutions and practical application within the policy.

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Matters concerning grading are dealt with separately under the appeals system in SQA's Job Evaluation Scheme.
- If you are unhappy with the outcome of disciplinary proceedings, you should lodge an appeal under the procedure in our Disciplinary policy.
- Concerns relating to bullying and harassment are initially addressed under the Dignity at Work policy.
- Concerns relating to whistleblowing are addressed under the Whistleblowing policy.
- Collective disputes raised by trade unions on behalf of their members will be handled in line with the collective disputes' procedure outlined in the documents setting out terms of recognition of our trade unions.



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

One of the main reasons for having a grievance policy and procedure is to provide colleagues with informal and formal routes to raise a concern about their employment and for their concerns to be addressed fairly and consistently throughout the grievance process. As such, particular attention must be paid to any protected characteristics, or potential protected characteristics, which may be apparent or could be relevant.

Overall Identification of Equality Risks in this Policy:

This Equality Impact Analysis has identified that SQA **does not currently collate or analyse equality data for employees going through the grievance process**. When a EqlA was first completed on this policy in 2022 the overall sample size of people that went through the grievance process in SQA the past twelve months was low (less than 10), Equality profiling information (e.g. Age, Sex etc) relating to this cohort was not captured and is therefore not available for reporting purposes. During 2023 the number of colleagues who raised a grievance was also under ten and therefore again a low sample size.

We therefore conclude:

- (i) There is a non-existent data sample relating to the use of this policy in SQA.
- (ii) It is impossible to draw any meaningful conclusions in respect of Equality Impact.

We have noted as an action point from this assessment for SQA to commence collection of data, by 'Protected Characteristic' for all employees that both raise a formal grievance or have a formal grievance raised against them.



Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

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

This policy has been developed in consultation with SQA's recognised Trades Unions, Unite and Unison, who represent all staff throughout the organisation.

In addition, as this is an internal policy, SQA has only consulted with internal groups. These include:

- ACE (Appreciate Culture and Ethnicity) Network.
- SQA Disability Network.
- SQA Rainbow Network.
- Women's Network.

Evidence of Stakeholder Engagement:

Trade Union Consultation Review Group (Policy Review Group):

Members of SQA Human Resources department and trade union representatives from Unite the Union and Unison meet weekly in SQA via the PRG. SQA's trade union representatives are also given statutory time off to attend relevant training, meetings and other information gathering activities as supported in our union framework agreement.

Evidence of all meeting minutes, actions and consultation undertaken with the PRG group (including Equality considerations in respect of all policies, activities and functions) is detailed on a dedicated SQA shared resources site.



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What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment?

Age:

Local Evidence:

Table 1.1: Age

Age bracket	2019 no	2019 %	2020 no	2020 %	2021 no	2021 %	2022 no	2022 %	Variance no	Variance %
16-24	59	6.32%	50	5.27%	49	4.93%	36	3.47%	-23	-2.85%
25-29	65	6.97%	60	6.32%	73	7.35%	105	10.14%	40	3.17%
30-34	123	13.18%	109	11.49%	96	9.67%	95	9.17%	-28	-4.01%
35-39	131	14.04%	145	15.28%	146	14.70%	144	13.90%	13	-0.14%
40-44	129	13.83%	135	14.23%	146	14.70%	150	14.48%	21	0.65%
45-49	116	12.43%	105	11.06%	113	11.38%	124	11.97%	8	-0.46%
50-54	125	13.40%	141	14.86%	131	13.19%	126	12.16%	1	-1.24%
55-59	119	12.75%	117	12.33%	122	12.29%	122	11.78%	3	-0.98%
60-64	53	5.68%	72	7.59%	81	8.16%	102	9.85%	49	4.16%
65+	13	1.39%	15	1.58%	36	3.63%	32	3.09%	19	1.70%
Total	933	100.00%	949	100.00%	993	100.00%	1036	100.00%	103	11.04%

Table 1.1 shows the age profile of the organisation from 2019 to 2022

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23
[Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23](#)

National Evidence:

Official statistics show that 15,336 claims which included a complaint of age discrimination were received at employment tribunals between March 2020 and March 2021. The figure is more than double the number of disability discrimination claims (the next highest



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Age:	<p>number of discrimination claims) and is a remarkable sixfold increase on the number of age discrimination claims presented the previous year. It is speculated this may be linked to the over-50s having suffered the largest increase in unemployment of any age group during the pandemic however this needs to be analysed and considered more fully in time to understand.</p> <p>(https://www.brownejacobson.com/insights/discrimination-comes-of-age#:~:text=Official%20statistics%20show%20that%2015%2C336,March%202020%20and%20March%202021)</p> <p>Traditionally, age discrimination is perceived as affecting older workers, but there is evidence to demonstrate that younger workers also face similar issues. A Glassdoor diversity and inclusion survey found that 48% of 18- to 34-year-olds employed in the UK reported that they had experienced ageism, in comparison to 25% of those aged 55 and over.</p>
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Disability

Local Evidence:

Table 3.1: Disability

Disability	2019 number	2019 %	2020 number	2020 %	2021 number	2021 %	2022 number	2022 %	Variance number	Variance %
No	417	44.69%	651	68.60%	683	68.78%	697	67.28%	280	22.59%
Not Specified	444	47.59%	152	16.02%	152	15.31%	184	17.76%	-260	-29.83%
Prefer not to say	21	2.25%	68	7.17%	76	7.65%	72	6.95%	51	4.70%
Yes	51	5.47%	78	8.22%	82	8.26%	83	8.01%	32	2.54%
Total	933	100.00%	949	100.00%	993	100.00%	1036	100.00%	103	0.00%

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23

[Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23](#)

Table 3.1 shows the composition of the disability self-reporting categories for the period from 2019 to 2022.

Of those staff who have declared a disability, females made up 58.54% (2021) and 53.01% (2022) of the population, and males 41.46% (2021) and 46.99% (2022). Due to the low number of staff declaring a disability within SQA we are unable to publish further intersectional data in relation to disability and other protected characteristics.

National Evidence:

Research shows that disabled people are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than non-disabled people. In 2008, 19% of disabled people experienced unfair treatment at work compared to 13% of non-disabled people (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disability-facts-and-figures/disability-facts-and-figures#discrimination>)



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Disability	<p>Employers may discriminate against people with disabilities, because of misconceptions about their capabilities, or because they do not wish to include them in their workforce. Different impairments elicit different degrees of prejudice, with the strongest prejudice exhibited towards people with mental health conditions. Of people with schizophrenia, 29% experienced discrimination in either finding or keeping a job, and 42% felt the need to conceal their condition when applying for work, education, or training (World report on disability 2011 – World Health Organisation)</p> <p>Scope (https://www.scope.org.uk/media/disability-facts-figures/) have raised considerations for attitudes towards people with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 in 3 disabled people feel there is a lot of disability prejudice.• 1 in 3 people see disabled people as being less productive than non-disabled people.• In 2000, 37% of disabled people and 34% of non-disabled people felt that there was a lot of prejudice around disability. The gap trebled by 2017, with 32% of disabled people and 22% of non-disabled people feeling there is a lot of prejudice against disabled people
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What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)

Religion or Belief

Local Evidence:

Table 8.1: Religion or belief

Religion or belief	2019 number	2019%	2020 number	2020%	2021 number	2021%	2022 number	2022%
Another religion or body	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	6	0.60%	6	0.58%
Buddhist	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	< 5	< 0.50%	< 5	< 0.48%
Church of Scotland	91	9.75%	122	12.86%	127	12.79%	125	12.07%
Hindu	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	7	0.70%	8	0.77%
Jewish	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	< 5	< 0.50%	< 5	< 0.48%
Muslim	7	0.75%	11	1.16%	10	1.01%	11	1.06%
None	286	30.65%	421	44.36%	462	46.53%	489	47.20%
Not specified	405	43.41%	126	13.28%	102	10.27%	123	11.87%
Other Christian	26	2.79%	43	4.53%	44	4.43%	44	4.25%
Prefer not to say	35	3.75%	98	10.33%	103	10.37%	103	9.94%
Roman Catholic	76	8.15%	118	12.43%	129	12.99%	123	11.87%
Sikh	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	< 5	< 0.50%	< 5	< 0.48%

Table 8.1 shows the religion, belief or non-belief status of staff within the organisation for the period from 2019 to 2022.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23
[Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23](#)



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National Evidence:

A survey by ComRes Faith Research Centre, found that around one million UK employees have experienced discrimination because of their religion. The survey of 984 British workers found that 3% of employees had experienced discrimination because of their religion. And 4% said they'd been aware that somebody else was being discriminated against because of their faith.

Source: [Belief at Work: Faith in the Workplace 2017 Survey](#)

In a survey of employees and employers in the UK and US, 47% of respondents said they did not feel comfortable discussing at work the religious festivals they celebrate, 32% said they have had negative experiences when expressing their religious identity at work and 38% said they feel organisations could do more to be inclusive of people of different faiths. (<https://www.ukemploymenthub.com/new-religion-at-work-research-shows-discrimination-is-still-commonplace>).



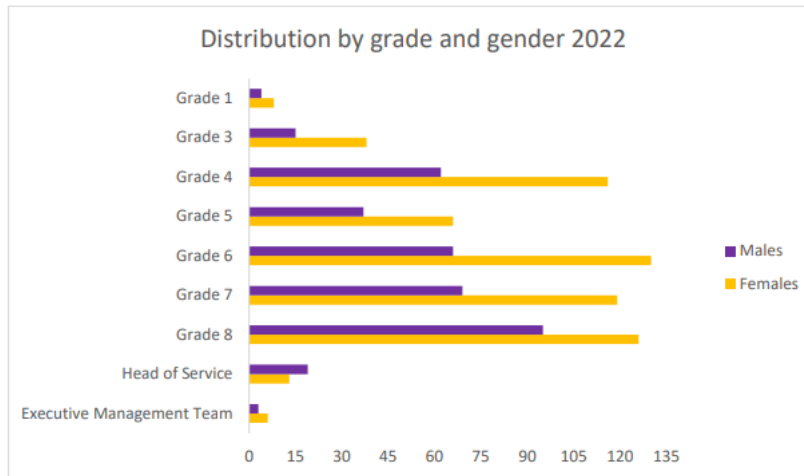
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Sex

Local Evidence

Gender

Distribution by grade and gender of SQA grade 1 – EMT



Source: SQA Summary of Equal Pay Audit 2023

[Scottish Qualifications Authority \(sqa.org.uk\)](https://www.sqa.org.uk)

The majority of the 2.9 million lone-parent families in 2022 were headed by a lone mother (2.5 million, 84%)

Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2022>

59% of unpaid carers are women (Census 2021). Women are more likely to become carers and to provide more hours of unpaid care than men. More women than men provide high intensity care at ages when they would expect to be in paid work (Petrillo and Bennett, 2022)

Source: Carers UK

There are 1.25 million sandwich carers in the UK. These are people caring for an older relative as well as bringing up a family. 68% (850,743) are women.

Source: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/campaigning/care-in-crisis/breaking-point-report/>



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National Evidence:

CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) report that women are significantly more likely than men to report they have experienced both *bullying* and *sexual harassment* in the workplace (17% versus 13% and 7% versus 2%, respectively).

Reports of high levels of workplace harassment and recorded sexual crimes in Scotland 2021 and 2022 can be found here:

The National (March 2022):

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/19975579.report-shocking-levels-workplace-harassment-scotland/>

The Times (Feb 2022):

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/scores-of-police-face-sexual-abuse-claims-6533jh7q2>

The Herald (April 2022)

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/20083471.recorded-sexual-crime-figures-scotland-worst-50-years/>



What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)

Sexual Orientation

Local Evidence:

Table 10.1: Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	2019 number	2019%	2020 number	2020%	2021 number	2021%	2022 number	2022%
Bisexual	9	0.96%	12	1.26%	15	1.51%	16	1.54%
Gay man	13	1.39%	20	2.11%	21	2.11%	23	2.22%
Gay woman / lesbian	9	0.96%	10	1.05%	12	1.21%	12	1.16%
Heterosexual / straight	431	46.20%	670	70.60%	700	70.49%	702	67.76%
In another way	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	< 5	< 0.50%	< 5	< 0.48%
Not specified	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	156	15.71%	189	18.24%
Not sure	26	2.79%	76	8.01%	< 5	< 0.50%	< 5	< 0.48%
Prefer not to say	443	47.48%	158	16.65%	84	8.46%	88	8.49%

Table 10.1 shows the composition of staff sexual orientation within the organisation for the period 2019 to 2022.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23

[Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23](#)

National Evidence:

We know from the *Scottish Government Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2019*, that the proportion of staff identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or 'other' (LGBO) increased from 2% in 2015 to 4% in 2018. Recruitment within this self-identified group also increased from 4% to 9% in the same time-period. Higher rates of discrimination were also reported by LGBO compared to straight respondents in the people survey, however this gap is narrowing and fell from 18% in 2016 to 14% in 2018. Respondents who identified as bisexual or 'other' consistently report higher rates of discrimination than gay or



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lesbian respondents: in 2018, 13% of gay or lesbian respondents had experienced discrimination in the previous 12 months compared to 17% of bisexual and 23% (n= 7) of 'other' respondents.

The Scottish Government's ranking for diversity and inclusion among employers rose between 2018 and 2019, from 101 to 72 according to Stonewall Workplace Equality Index reports. In 2018, Stonewall marked the Scottish Government's 'Trans inclusion work' at 13% which rose to 58% in 2019.

Further, a 2019 staff survey demonstrated that among lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) respondents, 81% would feel confident reporting homophobic or biphobic bullying and harassment they experience, 82% would feel confident disclosing their sexual orientations on a monitoring form and 82% would feel confident challenging homophobic, biphobic or transphobic behaviour at work.

Numbers are too low to allow any data analysis of equality data for grievances however it is a recommendation of this EqIA that equality data is continue to be collected to allow it to be analysed when numbers are sufficient.



What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)

**Gender Re-assignment
(Gender identity and transgender)**

Local Evidence:

Due to the low number of staff reporting as transgender or describing their gender identity ‘in another way’, we are unable to publish further data in relation to gender re-assignment or gender identity. This data is, however, monitored internally.

National Evidence:

An evidence review commissioned by the *Government Equalities Office*, published by the *National Institute of Economic and Social Research* in July 2016 stated that many trans people (up to 50% of respondents) experienced harassment and bullying at work. They reported extremely poor service from HR departments, lack of understanding of trans issues by managers and little support when they faced discrimination and harassment.

A report by Crossland Employment solicitors found a strong prejudice among UK employers towards transgender workers: <https://www.crosslandsolicitors.com/site/hr-hub/transgender-discrimination-in-UK-workplaces> and a survey by The National in 2021 suggests that 60% of transgender people in Scotland experience workplace harassment:

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/19556842.60-transgender-people-scotland-experience-workplace-harassment-survey-says/>

A freedom of information request to Police Scotland revealed the following statistics:

Categories	Scotland	Highlands and Islands Division
Hate Incidents	7,270	138
Sexual Orientation Crimes	1,772	18
Transgender Crimes	143	1

www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/ga3b2fc0/21-2780-response.pdf



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Marriage/Civil Partnership

Table 5.1: Relationship status

Relationship status	2019 number	2019 %	2020 number	2020 %	2021 number	2021 %	2022 number	2022 %
Civil Partnership	7	0.75%	7	0.74%	8	0.81%	9	0.87%
Co-habiting/in a relationship	80	8.57%	112	11.80%	122	12.29%	122	11.78%
Divorced/Dissolved Civil Partnership	14	1.50%	16	1.69%	17	1.71%	19	1.83%
Married	265	28.40%	370	38.99%	425	42.80%	416	40.15%
Married/Civil Partnership	8	0.86%	12	1.26%	14	1.41%	16	1.54%
Not Specified	407	43.62%	179	18.86%	102	10.27%	127	12.26%
Other	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	7	0.70%	9	0.87%
Prefer not to say	18	1.93%	49	5.16%	55	5.54%	59	5.69%
Separated	6	0.64%	12	1.26%	12	1.21%	13	1.25%
Single	122	13.08%	183	19.28%	224	22.56%	239	23.07%
Widowed/surviving partner from Civil Partnership	< 5	< 0.54%	6	0.63%	7	0.70%	7	0.68%

Table 5.1 shows the marriage and civil partnership status of staff within the organisation for the period from 2019 to 2022.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23

National Evidence

One of the least often claimed grounds of discrimination is marriage and civil partnership. Prejudice against married people is hardly widespread and there are few circumstances in which an employer might treat an employee less favourably because they were married. However it can be difficult for an employee to make a successful claim of direct discrimination on the grounds of marriage. (<https://www.frettns.co.uk/site/library/frettnsnews/marital-status-discrimination-in-the-workplace-solicitor-poole>)



Pregnancy / Maternity

Local Evidence:

Table 6.1: Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy and maternity	2019 number	2019 %	2020 number	2020 %	2021 number	2021 %	2022 number	2022 %
Contract ended as planned					1	3.33%		0.00%
Due to return to work					0	0.00%	11	40.00%
Resigned					0	0.00%	1	4.00%
Returned to work	20	100.00%	10	100.00%	29	96.67%	14	56.00%
Total	20	100.00%	10	100.00%	30	100.00%	26	100.00%

Table 6.1 details the number of staff who have taken maternity leave, whether they are still on maternity leave (due to return to work), have returned to work following maternity leave, resigned following maternity leave, or their fixed-term contract ended (contract ended as planned).

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23
[Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23](#)

National Evidence:

The *Equality and Human Rights Commission* conducted a formal investigation into *Pregnancy* discrimination in 2015. Their final report found that 54,000 women a year are forced out of their job because of pregnancy discrimination, one in five mothers experienced harassment and negative comments because of their pregnancy and 10% of mothers were discouraged from taking time off for their antenatal care.

The principal areas of unfair treatment during pregnancy were found to be denial of a pay increase, refusal of promotion, having to take lower-paid work, being excluded from training and refusal of time off for antenatal care.



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Women involved in the in-depth interviews experienced a wide range of negative treatment at work, ranging from more subtle changes in the attitudes of their colleagues and employers, to unfair selection for redundancy, dismissal, denial of promotion opportunities and sexual and verbal harassment. Many also reported enforced changes to their job during pregnancy.

The report is available at: www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/managing-pregnancy-and-maternity-workplace/pregnancy



What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)

**Care experience
(where relevant)**

SQA does not currently collect Care Experience data.

Nationally **Who Cares? Scotland** say:

Education

In 2019/20 64% of all school leavers had one or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better, whereas only 14% of school leavers looked after within the last year had qualifications of that level.

Care Experienced children are less likely to be in positive destinations nine months after leaving school. Figures from 2019-20 show that 75% of school leavers looked after within the last year were in positive destinations. This is compared to 92% of all schools' leavers.

At all levels, Care Experienced students have lower rates of completing courses compared to all students at university and college. Between Care Experienced students and non-Care Experienced students, there is a difference of 5.3% for retention at university, and the largest gap is in successful completion of full-time further education courses at college where the gap is 15.6% ([SFC \(Scottish Funding Council\), 2019](#)).

Unemployment

9 months after leaving school, 22% of school leavers looked after within the last year people were classed as unemployed, compared to 7% of their non-Care Experienced peers ([Scottish Government, 2021](#)).

Criminalisation



Care experience (where relevant)	<p>In a Scottish Prison Service survey carried out in 2019, 1/4 of the adult prison population indicated that during their upbringing they had been in care (25%) (<u>Scottish Prison Service, 2020</u>).</p> <p>Around 40% of young people in custody report that they have been in care (<u>Scottish Prison Service, 2021</u>).</p> <p>Health</p> <p>In a study conducted in 2002, among young people aged 5–17 years who were looked after by local authorities in Scotland, 45% were assessed as having a mental health issue (<u>Office for National Statistics, 2004</u>).</p> <p>Homelessness</p> <p>Practitioners estimate that between 30-50% of individuals who are homeless could be Care Experienced.</p> <p>Currently, no equality data on Care Experience is collected from those who have undergone the grievance procedure at SQA. In addition, these numbers are too low to allow any data analysis. <u>It is a recommendation of this EqlA that equality data is collected to allow it to be analysed when numbers are sufficient.</u></p>
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Impact and Opportunities for Action

The impact that a policy or practice has on an equality group may be different and needs 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.

Use of the term Discrimination:

Please note that for the purposes of this document we have used the term Discrimination as a generic descriptor which considers six discrete elements:

- Direct Discrimination
- Indirect Discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Discrimination by perception
- Associative discrimination



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Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Age	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Risks of Discrimination The grievance policy itself does not reference <i>age</i>, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – irrespective of their <i>age</i>. This policy and procedure apply to all employees. However, the number of grievances raised in SQA over the past twelve months are too low (less than 10) to be able to establish any significant data regarding equality.</p> <p>There is, however, as previously considerable national evidence to indicate a causal link between employee age, employee’s dissatisfaction, and discrimination.</p> <p>The policy does refer to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and <u>Training on this policy will be provided to managers at SQA.</u></p> <p>Whilst we accept that the current data sample in SQA of less than ten people could be statistically insignificant, overall risks of <i>age</i> discrimination cannot be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:</p> <p>Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) potentially negative impacts recorded (in the actual application of this policy).</p> <p>Please also refer to the separate EqIA for the SQA <i>Dignity at Work</i> Policy.</p>



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Age	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i> regardless of their <i>age</i>.</p> <p>However, because there is no age-related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity between employees of different ages.</p> <p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
	Foster good relations
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy itself fosters good relations between employees according to their <i>age</i>.</p> <p>The outcomes of the policy should continue to be monitored for any trends that suggests employees may be disadvantaged directly or indirectly because of their <i>age</i>.</p>



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Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Disability	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p>Risks of Discrimination</p> <p>The grievance policy itself does not reference <i>disability</i>, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – irrespective of whether they have a disability or not. This policy applies to all employees and at the time of writing the original EqIA the number of grievances raised in SQA are too low (less than 10) to be able to establish any meaningful data regarding equality. The number of grievances in 2023 were also too low to analyse.</p> <p>However, there is considerable national evidence (see early section of this report) to indicate a causal link between disability and unfair treatment at work meaning that employees who are disabled, may, on balance be at a greater risk of being discriminated against at work than non-disabled employees.</p> <p>Overall risks of discrimination cannot currently be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted in SQA as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:</p> <p>Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) potentially negative impacts recorded (in the actual application of this policy).</p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>Whilst this policy does not explicitly reference <i>disability</i>, all SQA employees are entitled to use, access, and be subject to the Grievance Policy. There is no local evidence in SQA to indicate that this policy affects employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of <i>disability</i>.</p>



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<p>Disability (continued)</p>	<p>As previously referenced, the policy does state the following to ensure additional support can be provided:</p> <p>2.3 Equalities</p> <p>We will ensure throughout this procedure that we do not unfairly discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic as per our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.</p> <p>For example, adapting procedures to accommodate you if required or making reasonable adjustments to procedures to ensure that we do not put anyone with a disability protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage. This might mean allowing someone else to also attend, for example a support worker or someone with knowledge of your specific needs.</p> <p>5.3 Right to be accompanied</p> <p>You may be accompanied by a trade union representative, a workplace colleague or a companion accompanying you as part of an agreed reasonable adjustment (see 5.2 above and 1.1 of the procedure) at any formal stage of the grievance procedure.</p> <p>Please also refer to the separate EqIA for the SQA <i>Dignity at Work</i> Policy.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Foster good relations</p> <p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy fosters good relations between employees according to <i>disability</i>. Outcomes of the policy should continue to be monitored for any trends that suggests employees may be disadvantaged directly or indirectly because of their <i>disability</i>.</p>



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Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Race	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Risks of Discrimination</p> <p>The grievance policy itself does not reference <i>Race</i>, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – <i>irrespective of Nationality, Citizenship or Ethnic Origin (Race)</i>. Whilst this policy applies to all employees, the number of grievances raised in SQA are too low (less than 10) to be able to establish any meaningful data regarding equality.</p> <p>However, there is considerable national evidence to indicate a causal link between <i>Race/Ethnicity</i> and unfair treatment at work (please see earlier section) meaning that some employees, may, on balance be at a greater risk of being discriminated against at work.</p> <p>Overall risks of discrimination cannot currently be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted in SQA as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:</p> <p>Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) potentially negative impacts recorded (in the actual application of this policy).</p> <p>Please also refer to the separate EqIA for the SQA <i>Dignity at Work</i> Policy.</p>



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	<p style="text-align: center;">Advance equality of opportunity</p> <p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i> regardless of their <i>Race/Ethnicity</i>.</p> <p>However, because there is no <i>Race/Ethnicity</i> related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity between employees of different <i>rac</i>es/<i>ethnicities</i>.</p> <p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
Race (continued)	<p style="text-align: center;">Foster good relations</p> <p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different Race or Ethnicity. No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>



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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
	<p>Risks of Discrimination</p> <p>The grievance policy itself does not reference <i>Religion/Belief</i>, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – irrespective of their <i>Religion or Philosophical Belief System</i>. Once again, the number of grievances raised in SQA are too low to be able to establish any meaningful data regarding equality.</p> <p>This policy applies to all - regardless of <i>Religion</i> and <i>Belief</i>, there is no evidence to suggest that this policy affects employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their <i>Religion or Belief</i>. However, there is national evidence to indicate a causal link between <i>Religion/Belief</i> and unfair treatment at work meaning that some employees, may, on balance be at a greater risk of being discriminated against at work.</p> <p>Overall risks of discrimination cannot currently be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted in SQA as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:</p> <p>Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) potentially negative impacts recorded (in the actual application of this policy).</p>



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Religion / Belief f	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i> regardless of their <i>Religion or Belief</i>. However, because there is no <i>Religion/Belief</i> related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity between employees of different <i>Religions/Beliefs</i>.</p> <p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
	Foster good relations
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different Religion or Belief. No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>



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Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sex	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 (continued)</p> <p>Risks of Discrimination</p> <p>The grievance policy itself does not reference Sex, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – irrespective of whether they are a man or women. Again, the number of grievances raised in SQA are too low to be able to establish any meaningful data regarding equality.</p> <p>As previously illustrated, there is national evidence to indicate a causal link between Sex and unfair treatment at work meaning that some employees, may, on balance be (i) at a greater risk of being discriminated against at work and (ii) more reluctant to raise a grievance against a person on the ground of their Sex.</p> <p>Overall risks of discrimination cannot currently be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted in SQA as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:</p> <p>Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) potentially negative impacts recorded (in the actual application of this policy).</p>



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Sex (continued)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Advance equality of opportunity</u></p> <p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i>. This includes employees of both sexes. However, because there is no Sex related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity between Men and Women.</p> <p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
Sex (continued)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Foster good relations</u></p> <p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different sexes. No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>



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Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sexual Orientation	<p data-bbox="443 355 1984 416">Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p data-bbox="443 459 775 485">Risks of Discrimination</p> <p data-bbox="443 528 2022 624">The grievance policy itself does not reference <i>Sexual Orientation</i>, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – <i>irrespective of their Sexual Orientation</i>. This policy also applies to all employees, however, the number of grievances raised in SQA are too low to be able to establish any meaningful data regarding equality.</p> <p data-bbox="443 663 1995 842">The law states that you should not be discriminated against because of your <i>Sexual Orientation</i> or 'perceived' <i>Sexual Orientation</i>. This includes orientation towards someone of the same sex (lesbian/ gay), opposite sex (heterosexual) or both (bisexual). There is considerable national evidence to indicate a causal link between <i>Sexual Orientation</i> and unfair treatment at work meaning that some employees, may, on balance be at a greater risk of being discriminated against at work.</p> <p data-bbox="443 895 1989 1002">For example, CIPD research on inclusion at work found that LGB+ employees are more likely to experience workplace conflict and harassment than their heterosexual counterparts (and less likely to raise a grievance). SQA's Equality Data shows that although most staff identify as heterosexual, there are a number who do not:</p>



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Table 10.1: Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	2019 number	2019%	2020 number	2020%	2021 number	2021%	2022 number	2022%
Bisexual	9	0.96%	12	1.26%	15	1.51%	16	1.54%
Gay man	13	1.39%	20	2.11%	21	2.11%	23	2.22%
Gay woman / lesbian	9	0.96%	10	1.05%	12	1.21%	12	1.16%
Heterosexual / straight	431	46.20%	670	70.60%	700	70.49%	702	67.76%
In another way	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	< 5	< 0.50%	< 5	< 0.48%
Not specified	< 5	< 0.54%	< 5	< 0.53%	156	15.71%	189	18.24%
Not sure	26	2.79%	76	8.01%	< 5	< 0.50%	< 5	< 0.48%
Prefer not to say	443	47.48%	158	16.65%	84	8.46%	88	8.49%

Table 10.1 shows the composition of staff sexual orientation within the organisation for the period 2019 to 2022.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23
[Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23](#)

The *Grievance Policy* reinforces SQA’s commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the expected standards of conduct and behaviour. It explicitly mentions that the policy and procedure will be followed without discrimination on the grounds of *Sexual Orientation* and makes direct reference to SQA’s *Dignity at Work Policy* (Please also refer to the separate EqIA for the SQA *Dignity at Work Policy*).

A previous EqIA recommendation that consideration be given to providing managers and investigating managers with Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training to avoid the risk of discrimination in the grievance process on the grounds of Sexual Orientation has been acted on.

Overall risks of discrimination cannot currently be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted in SQA as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:



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	<p>Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) potentially negative impacts recorded (in the actual application of this policy).</p>
	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i>. This includes employees of any sexual orientation. However, because there is no <i>Sexual Orientation</i> related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity between employees of different sexual orientations.</p> <p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different sexual orientations.</p> <p>No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>



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Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
<p>Gender Identity.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <p>Gender Re-assignment</p> <p>Non-Binary</p> <p>Gender Fluid</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Risks of Discrimination</p> <p>The grievance policy itself does not reference <i>Gender Identity</i>, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – <i>irrespective of this ‘protected characteristic’</i>.</p> <p>This policy and procedure applies to all employees, however, the number of grievances raised in SQA over the past twelve months are too low to be able to establish any significant data regarding equality.</p> <p>There is, however, considerable national evidence to indicate a causal link between employee <i>Gender Identity</i> and discrimination. For example, an evidence review commissioned by the Government Equalities Office, published by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research in July 2016 stated that many trans people (up to 50% of respondents) experienced harassment and bullying at work. They reported extremely poor service from HR departments, lack of understanding of trans issues by managers and little support when they faced discrimination and harassment. A report by Crossland Employment solicitors found a strong prejudice among UK employers towards transgender workers: https://www.crosslandsolicitors.com/site/hr-hub/transgender-discrimination-in-UK-workplaces and a survey by The National in 2021 suggests that 60% of transgender people in Scotland experience workplace harassment: https://www.thenational.scot/news/19556842.60-transgender-people-scotland-experience-workplace-harassment-survey-says/</p>



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A freedom of information request to Police Scotland revealed the following statistics:

Categories	Scotland	Highlands and Islands Division
Hate Incidents	7,270	138
Sexual Orientation Crimes	1,772	18
Transgender Crimes	143	1

www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/ga3b2fc0/21-2780-response.pdf

No internal data is available to consider but the clear external evidence shows that individuals in this equality group are at risk of being discriminated against. The *Grievance Policy* reinforces SQA's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the expected standards of conduct and behaviour. It explicitly mentions that the policy and procedure will be followed without discrimination on the grounds of *Gender Identity* and makes direct reference to SQA's *Dignity at Work Policy* (Please also refer to the separate EqIA for the SQA *Dignity at Work Policy*).

A previous EqIA recommendation was a gender re-assignment (Transitioning at Work) policy is implemented using policy review process and this policy was introduced June 2023.

It was also recommended that consideration be given to providing managers and investigating managers with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training to avoid the risk of discrimination in the grievance process on the grounds of Gender Identity. This training has been available since 6 Dec 2023 and will be linked to in the training managers do for investigation training.

Overall risks of discrimination cannot currently be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted in SQA as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:

Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) **potentially negative impacts recorded** (in the actual application of this policy).



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	Advance equality of opportunity
Gender Identity. This includes:	<p>The implementation of our gender re-assignment (Transitioning at Work) policy will contribute greatly to advancing equality of opportunity for employees who identify as different genders.</p>
	Foster good relations
Gender Re-assignment Non-Binary Gender Fluid (continued)	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different gender identities.</p> <p>No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Marriage/Civil Partnership	<p style="text-align: center;">Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>We can identify no reasonable risks or evidence to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this 'Protected Characteristic'.</p> <p>A neutral impact has been recorded for this characteristic.</p> <p>Please also refer to the separate EqIA for the <i>SQA Dignity at Work Policy</i>.</p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i>. This includes employees of any <i>Marital Status</i>. However, because there is no <i>Marital Status</i> related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity between those of different <i>Marital Status</i>.</p>



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	<p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of differing marital status.</p> <p>No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>



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Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Pregnancy / Maternity	<p data-bbox="488 352 2036 416">Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p data-bbox="488 456 815 483">Risks of Discrimination</p> <p data-bbox="488 541 2000 604">The grievance policy itself does not reference <i>Gender Identity</i>, therefore, in theory, the policy should have an entirely neutral impact on employees – <i>irrespective of this ‘protected characteristic’</i>.</p> <p data-bbox="488 643 1989 707">This policy and procedure applies to all employees, however, the number of grievances raised in SQA over the past twelve months are too low to be able to establish any significant data regarding equality.</p> <p data-bbox="488 745 2029 920">There is, however, considerable national evidence to indicate a causal link between employee <i>Pregnancy/Maternity</i> and discrimination. For example, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission conducted a formal investigation into pregnancy discrimination in 2015. Their final report found that 54,000 women a year are forced out of their job because of pregnancy discrimination, one in five mothers experienced harassment and negative comments because of their pregnancy and 10% of mothers were discouraged from taking time off for their antenatal care.</p> <p data-bbox="488 959 2024 1176">The principal areas of unfair treatment during pregnancy were found to be denial of a pay increase, refusal of promotion, having to take lower-paid work, being excluded from training and refusal of time off for antenatal care. Women involved in the in-depth interviews experienced a wide range of negative treatment at work, ranging from more subtle changes in the attitudes of their colleagues and employers, to unfair selection for redundancy, dismissal, denial of promotion opportunities and sexual and verbal harassment. Many also reported enforced changes to their job during pregnancy.</p> <p data-bbox="488 1214 2033 1246">The report is available at: www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/managing-pregnancy-and-maternity-workplace/pregnancy-</p>



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	<p><u>A previous EqIA recommendation that SQA provide all managers with Equality, Diversity & Inclusion training to ensure that they are aware of their role and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 has been acted upon.</u></p>
	<p>Overall risks of discrimination cannot currently be accurately identified, eliminated nor wholly discounted in SQA as the Authority does not currently collect any related profiling data relating to formal or informal grievances. We therefore ultimately conclude:</p>
	<p>Neutral impacts recorded (in respect of the policy itself) potentially negative impacts recorded (in the actual application of this policy).</p>
	<p>Please also refer to the separate EqIAs for the SQA <i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i> policy and <i>Dignity at Work</i> policy.</p>
	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i>. However, because there is no <i>Pregnancy/Maternity</i> related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity for pregnant employees/employees on maternity leave.</p>
	<p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
	<p>Whilst this policy does not explicitly reference <i>Pregnancy/Maternity</i> there is little evidence to indicate that this policy does not foster good relations between employees.</p>
	<p>No further recommendations are made in respect of this in relation to this policy.</p>



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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
	<p>Risks of Discrimination</p> <p>Whilst there is currently no evidence to suggest that care experience colleagues are placed at a disadvantage compared to other colleagues (or vice versa), it is recommended that data is collected and analysed, by care experience, to identify any adverse trends.</p> <p>The policy does make provision for the right to be accompanied in section 1.1 if there was a requirement where additional support would help an employee, they may be accompanied by a family member or friend including to allow their companion to support them with communication.</p> <p>2.3 Equalities</p> <p>We will ensure throughout this procedure that we do not unfairly discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic as per our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.</p> <p>For example, adapting procedures to accommodate you if required or making reasonable adjustments to procedures to ensure that we do not put anyone with a disability protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage. This might mean allowing someone else to also attend, for example a support worker or someone with knowledge of your specific needs.</p> <p>Neutral Equality impact recorded in this area.</p>
Advance equality of opportunity	



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	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subject to <i>the Grievance Policy</i>. However, because there is no <i>Care Experience</i> related profiling data available relating to those who have gone through the <i>Grievance procedure</i> in SQA, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity for <i>Care Experienced</i> employees.</p> <p>The policy states that SQA will ensure that throughout the procedure nobody is discriminated against because of a protected characteristic and ensures all employees are aware that reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.</p>
	<p>Foster Good Relations</p>
	<p>Whilst this policy does not explicitly reference care experience there is little evidence to indicate that this policy does not foster good relations between employees</p>