

Equality Impact Assessment

This Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) template will guide you through the steps of considering the needs of the general equality duty in your work. The template is designed to provide a structure to your EqIA, however, you may approach the assessment of equality impacts in a way that suits you. To support you to complete this IA, [guidance](#), including an [SQA academy module](#), and guidance notes are available on the [EqIA intranet site](#). Where an asterisk (*) appears in this template, you can mouse-over the associated text for a short guidance note. For more help with the EqIA process, please [contact the Corporate Equality Team](#).

Name of Policy, Strategy or Service	Parental Leave
EqIA Author(s)*	HR Advisor
Date of EqIA Completion	19 November 2024
Next Scheduled Review Date*	November 2027

Part 1: What evidence about equality groups do you have to support the development of your work?

This can be internal SQA reports, external reports relevant to the work, census data, or original research, as necessary. What is the source of the evidence (please provide links) and what does it say about equality impacts? Evidence should be relevant, timely and robust. SQA hosts a range of equality evidence of the [EDI Knowledge Hub](#).

Protected Characteristic	Source, and description of evidence*										Conclusion about probable impact (positive and/or negative)	
Age	Table 1.1: Age										Neutral	
	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.												
In 2023 75% of mothers at the time of birth are 34 years of age or below. (https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/births-in-scotland/births-in-scotland-year-ending-31-march-2023/)												
Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2021-23 Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23												

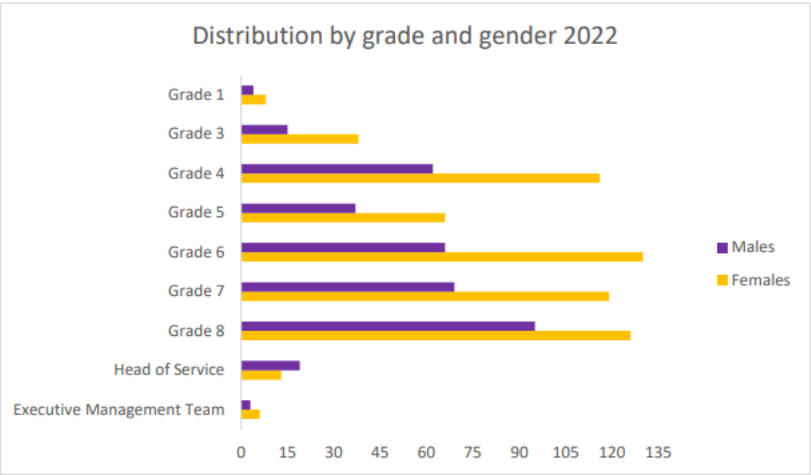
Protected Characteristic	Source, and description of evidence*	Conclusion about probable impact (positive and/or negative)																																																																		
Disability*	Table 3.1: Disability <table><tr><th>Disability</th><th>2019 number</th><th>2019 %</th><th>2020 number</th><th>2020 %</th><th>2021 number</th><th>2021 %</th><th>2022 number</th><th>2022 %</th><th>Variance number</th><th>Variance %</th></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>417</td><td>44.69%</td><td>651</td><td>68.60%</td><td>683</td><td>68.78%</td><td>697</td><td>67.28%</td><td>280</td><td>22.59%</td></tr><tr><td>Not Specified</td><td>444</td><td>47.59%</td><td>152</td><td>16.02%</td><td>152</td><td>15.31%</td><td>184</td><td>17.76%</td><td>-260</td><td>-29.83%</td></tr><tr><td>Prefer not to say</td><td>21</td><td>2.25%</td><td>68</td><td>7.17%</td><td>76</td><td>7.65%</td><td>72</td><td>6.95%</td><td>51</td><td>4.70%</td></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>51</td><td>5.47%</td><td>78</td><td>8.22%</td><td>82</td><td>8.26%</td><td>83</td><td>8.01%</td><td>32</td><td>2.54%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>933</td><td>100.00%</td><td>949</td><td>100.00%</td><td>993</td><td>100.00%</td><td>1036</td><td>100.00%</td><td>103</td><td>0.00%</td></tr></table> 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. 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.	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%	Neutral impact
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Religion or Belief	Table 8.1: Religion or belief <table><tr><th>Religion or belief</th><th>2019 number</th><th>2019%</th><th>2020 number</th><th>2020%</th><th>2021 number</th><th>2021%</th><th>2022 number</th><th>2022%</th></tr><tr><td>Another religion or body</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>6</td><td>0.60%</td><td>6</td><td>0.58%</td></tr><tr><td>Buddhist</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.50%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.48%</td></tr><tr><td>Church of Scotland</td><td>91</td><td>9.75%</td><td>122</td><td>12.86%</td><td>127</td><td>12.79%</td><td>125</td><td>12.07%</td></tr><tr><td>Hindu</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>7</td><td>0.70%</td><td>8</td><td>0.77%</td></tr><tr><td>Jewish</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.50%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.48%</td></tr><tr><td>Muslim</td><td>7</td><td>0.75%</td><td>11</td><td>1.16%</td><td>10</td><td>1.01%</td><td>11</td><td>1.06%</td></tr><tr><td>None</td><td>286</td><td>30.65%</td><td>421</td><td>44.36%</td><td>462</td><td>46.53%</td><td>489</td><td>47.20%</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>405</td><td>43.41%</td><td>126</td><td>13.28%</td><td>102</td><td>10.27%</td><td>123</td><td>11.87%</td></tr><tr><td>Other Christian</td><td>26</td><td>2.79%</td><td>43</td><td>4.53%</td><td>44</td><td>4.43%</td><td>44</td><td>4.25%</td></tr><tr><td>Prefer not to say</td><td>35</td><td>3.75%</td><td>98</td><td>10.33%</td><td>103</td><td>10.37%</td><td>103</td><td>9.94%</td></tr><tr><td>Roman Catholic</td><td>76</td><td>8.15%</td><td>118</td><td>12.43%</td><td>129</td><td>12.99%</td><td>123</td><td>11.87%</td></tr><tr><td>Sikh</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.50%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.48%</td></tr></table> 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	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%	Neutral
	Religion or belief	2019 number	2019%	2020 number	2020%	2021 number	2021%	2022 number	2022%																																																																																																														
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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/>

Protected Characteristic	Source, and description of evidence*	Conclusion about probable impact (positive and/or negative)																																																																																	
Sexual Orientation	Table 10.1: Sexual orientation <table><tr><th>Sexual Orientation</th><th>2019 number</th><th>2019%</th><th>2020 number</th><th>2020%</th><th>2021 number</th><th>2021%</th><th>2022 number</th><th>2022%</th></tr><tr><td>Bisexual</td><td>9</td><td>0.96%</td><td>12</td><td>1.26%</td><td>15</td><td>1.51%</td><td>16</td><td>1.54%</td></tr><tr><td>Gay man</td><td>13</td><td>1.39%</td><td>20</td><td>2.11%</td><td>21</td><td>2.11%</td><td>23</td><td>2.22%</td></tr><tr><td>Gay woman / lesbian</td><td>9</td><td>0.96%</td><td>10</td><td>1.05%</td><td>12</td><td>1.21%</td><td>12</td><td>1.16%</td></tr><tr><td>Heterosexual / straight</td><td>431</td><td>46.20%</td><td>670</td><td>70.60%</td><td>700</td><td>70.49%</td><td>702</td><td>67.76%</td></tr><tr><td>In another way</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.50%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.48%</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>156</td><td>15.71%</td><td>189</td><td>18.24%</td></tr><tr><td>Not sure</td><td>26</td><td>2.79%</td><td>76</td><td>8.01%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.50%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.48%</td></tr><tr><td>Prefer not to say</td><td>443</td><td>47.48%</td><td>158</td><td>16.65%</td><td>84</td><td>8.46%</td><td>88</td><td>8.49%</td></tr></table> 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	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%	Neutral
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Gender Reassignment*	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 reassignment or gender identity. This data is, however, monitored internally.	Neutral																																																																																	

Protected Characteristic	Source, and description of evidence*	Conclusion about probable impact (positive and/or negative)																																																																																																												
Marriage and Civil Partnership*	Table 5.1: Relationship status <table><tr><th>Relationship status</th><th>2019 number</th><th>2019 %</th><th>2020 number</th><th>2020 %</th><th>2021 number</th><th>2021 %</th><th>2022 number</th><th>2022 %</th></tr><tr><td>Civil Partnership</td><td>7</td><td>0.75%</td><td>7</td><td>0.74%</td><td>8</td><td>0.81%</td><td>9</td><td>0.87%</td></tr><tr><td>Co-habiting/in a relationship</td><td>80</td><td>8.57%</td><td>112</td><td>11.80%</td><td>122</td><td>12.29%</td><td>122</td><td>11.78%</td></tr><tr><td>Divorced/Dissolved Civil Partnership</td><td>14</td><td>1.50%</td><td>16</td><td>1.69%</td><td>17</td><td>1.71%</td><td>19</td><td>1.83%</td></tr><tr><td>Married</td><td>265</td><td>28.40%</td><td>370</td><td>38.99%</td><td>425</td><td>42.80%</td><td>416</td><td>40.15%</td></tr><tr><td>Married/Civil Partnership</td><td>8</td><td>0.86%</td><td>12</td><td>1.26%</td><td>14</td><td>1.41%</td><td>16</td><td>1.54%</td></tr><tr><td>Not Specified</td><td>407</td><td>43.62%</td><td>179</td><td>18.86%</td><td>102</td><td>10.27%</td><td>127</td><td>12.26%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.53%</td><td>7</td><td>0.70%</td><td>9</td><td>0.87%</td></tr><tr><td>Prefer not to say</td><td>18</td><td>1.93%</td><td>49</td><td>5.16%</td><td>55</td><td>5.54%</td><td>59</td><td>5.69%</td></tr><tr><td>Separated</td><td>6</td><td>0.64%</td><td>12</td><td>1.26%</td><td>12</td><td>1.21%</td><td>13</td><td>1.25%</td></tr><tr><td>Single</td><td>122</td><td>13.08%</td><td>183</td><td>19.28%</td><td>224</td><td>22.56%</td><td>239</td><td>23.07%</td></tr><tr><td>Widowed/surviving partner from Civil Partnership</td><td>< 5</td><td>< 0.54%</td><td>6</td><td>0.63%</td><td>7</td><td>0.70%</td><td>7</td><td>0.68%</td></tr></table>	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%	Neutral
	Relationship status	2019 number	2019 %	2020 number	2020 %	2021 number	2021 %	2022 number	2022 %																																																																																																					
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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 Equalities: SQA workforce monitoring report 2021-23																																																																																																														

Protected Characteristic	Source, and description of evidence*	Conclusion about probable impact (positive and/or negative)																																																						
Pregnancy/Maternity	Table 6.1: Pregnancy and maternity <table><tr><th>Pregnancy and maternity</th><th>2019 number</th><th>2019 %</th><th>2020 number</th><th>2020 %</th><th>2021 number</th><th>2021 %</th><th>2022 number</th><th>2022 %</th></tr><tr><td>Contract ended as planned</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>3.33%</td><td></td><td>0.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Due to return to work</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>0</td><td>0.00%</td><td>11</td><td>40.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Resigned</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>0</td><td>0.00%</td><td>1</td><td>4.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Returned to work</td><td>20</td><td>100.00%</td><td>10</td><td>100.00%</td><td>29</td><td>96.67%</td><td>14</td><td>56.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>20</td><td>100.00%</td><td>10</td><td>100.00%</td><td>30</td><td>100.00%</td><td>26</td><td>100.00%</td></tr></table> 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	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%	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	2019 number	2019 %	2020 number	2020 %	2021 number	2021 %	2022 number	2022 %																																																
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Total	20	100.00%	10	100.00%	30	100.00%	26	100.00%																																																
Care Experience*	SQA does not currently collect Care Experience data.	Neutral																																																						

Part 2: Consultation and Engagement

Impact assessments must have a basis in evidence. This can include consultation, stakeholder engagement, or reviews of existing engagements. Not all IAs must include engagement, however, it is a rich source of information if used correctly. Additionally, if you were not able to find relevant evidence through desk-based research, engaging with stakeholders is an important way to create trustworthy and relevant evidence.

Which groups of stakeholders have fed into your work? (This can include staff groups, governance groups, learner groups or groups of the public), and what did they say about potential equality impacts of the policy, strategy or service?

	Group(s) engaged. Describe the engagement*	Conclusion/Outcome (as relevant to equality groups)
Internal engagement or consultation (if relevant)	Staff Network Groups	Feedback taken into account in shaping the policy originally in 2021
External engagement or consultation (if relevant)	n/a	n/a

The impact of a policy, strategy or service can vary between people, and this can sometimes be based on protected characteristic. This is called Differential Impact. Where this is the case, the differential impact must be recorded. The differential impact might be positive, or negative – in both cases, it should be noted. Most differential impacts on an equality group can be thought of either as positive or negative impacts against the **three needs of the general equality duty**. These are the columns of the table below. When considering impacts, consider which need of the general equality duty they align with. Detail the impact in the table.

If you have identified that a group of people might be affected by your policy, strategy or service, but the impact is neither positive or negative, this can be considered a neutral impact.

Actions to reduce or remove negative impacts should be taken to address any negative impacts (these are called mitigating actions), and actions can also be taken to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between groups.

Think about the impacts of your work, as evidenced above, and briefly describe what the impacts that you have identified.

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
Age	Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect: This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees to take parental leave as statutory for all employees. For workers meeting this criteria (over 1 year service), the policy should generally have a positive on impact on people of all ages. We do however acknowledge that statistically, younger women are more likely to have children than older women Access to the policy and its benefits are	The policy and the legislation that it is based on, is intended to be beneficial to those caring for children, regardless of age. The policy provides equality of opportunity to eligible employees regardless of their age.	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different age.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
	not, in any way, restricted by age. The terms and conditions stipulated in the policy are those of the legislation.			
Disability*	Equality Risks: This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees. For workers meeting this criteria (1 year service), the policy should generally have a positive on impact on people with or without a disability. This policy may present a barrier for disabled employees in the form of accessibility or greater difficulties following policy and procedure. However, support and guidance is available for all employees from HR Shared Service, as it is for all SQA policies and procedures. The terms and conditions stipulated in the policy are those of the legislation. Neutral Impact Recorded	The policy allows for blocks of leave or multiples of one week. We anticipate this will have a positive impact on parents who have declared a disability, giving them greater flexibility in taking time out of the workplace to care for their child and for parental responsibilities. The policy states "Parental leave should be taken in blocks or in multiples of one week, unless your child is disabled (i.e. they are entitled to Child Disability Payment (CDP) in Scotland (known as Disability Living Allowance (DLA) elsewhere in the UK) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)), in which case it may be taken as	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees with a disability.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
		single days or in multiples of one day”		
Race*	The Parental Leave policy can be utilised by SQA colleagues regardless of their race. The policy adheres to regulations meaning the terms and conditions stipulated in the policy are those of the legislation. Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect: This policy can be utilised by all eligible SQA employees – irrespective of Race. We can identify no reasonable risks (national or local) to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this ‘Protected Characteristic’. Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.	All SQA employees from all races are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the Parental Leave Policy. There is no empirical evidence to indicate that this policy affects employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their Race.	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different Races.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.
Religion or Belief	The Parental Leave policy can be utilised by SQA colleagues regardless of their religion or belief.	All SQA employees from all religions or beliefs are entitled to use, access	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
	The policy adheres to regulations meaning the terms and conditions stipulated in the policy are those of the legislation. Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect: This policy can be utilised by all eligible SQA employees – irrespective of Religion/Belief. We can identify no reasonable risks (national or local) to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this 'Protected Characteristic'. Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.	and be subjected to the Parental Leave Policy. There is no empirical evidence to indicate that this policy affects employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their Religion or Philosophical Belief System.	employees of different religions or beliefs.	to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.
Sex	Equality Risks: This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees. For workers meeting this criteria (1 year service), the policy should generally have a positive on impact on people regardless of their sex.	All SQA employees from all sexes are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the Parental Leave Policy. There is no empirical evidence to indicate that this policy affects employees differently or	It is often an expectation that mothers take time off for childcare, however as this policy is open to people of all sexes, it is suggested that it will challenge this assumption and create more equality and understanding.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
	The terms and conditions stipulated in the policy are those of the legislation. Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.	less favourably, on the grounds of their sex.		
Sexual Orientation	The Parental Leave policy can be utilised by SQA colleagues regardless of their sexual orientation. The policy adheres to regulations meaning the terms and conditions stipulated in the policy are those of the legislation. Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect: This policy can be utilised by all eligible SQA employees – irrespective of their sexual orientation. We can identify no reasonable risks (national or local) to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this 'Protected Characteristic'.	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the Parental Leave Policy and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their Sexual Orientation. It should be noted the policy uses neutral language like parent and not mother and father making it more inclusive.	This policy does foster good relations in respect of Sexual Orientation as it is open to all couples (same and opposite sex). SQA's Rainbow Network exists to ensure that SQA is a workplace that promotes, embraces and welcomes LGBTI+ diversity, dignity, inclusion and talents. In practice, the Rainbow Network discusses LGBT+ issues, shares resources, and organises events such as awareness-raising campaigns and charity fundraising days. SQA will continue to promote Parental Leave and the benefits of the policy	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
	Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.			
Gender Reassignment*	Risks of Discrimination The Equality Act 2010 protects employees against discrimination related to Gender Reassignment. This is defined when a person transitions from one Gender to another. The protection against discrimination includes: ▪ Proposing to undergo a Gender transition. ▪ Undergoing the process of Gender transitioning. ▪ As a result of Gender transition. We can identify no reasonable risks (national or local) to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this 'Protected Characteristic'. Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area	SQA has a Gender Identity and Transitioning at Work policy protecting these colleagues. Whilst, with the exception of Gender Reassignment, there is currently no legal obligation placed on the SQA to provide Equality of Opportunity to people who identify as different genders, it is a very relevant modern consideration – particularly in academic environments such as schools, colleges and universities. (Once again, highly relevant to the SQA.)	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between people of different Gender Identities or who are LGBTQ+.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms. .

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
Marriage and Civil Partnership*	Risks of Discrimination: We can identify no reasonable risks (national or local) to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this 'Protected Characteristic'. Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.	Not a relevant protected characteristic for this need	Not a relevant protected characteristic for this need.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.
Pregnancy/Maternity	Please refer to the separate SQA policy – Maternity, Paternity and Adoption This policy is beneficial to colleagues who are likely to have been recently covered by the provisions of the Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy. It is possible that somebody looking to access the benefits of the Parental Leave Policy will do so after accessing benefits from the Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy. The SQA Parental Leave policy is SQA's policy that	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the Parental Leave Policy. It is likely to be beneficial to those who have recently experienced Pregnancy/Maternity.	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees that are Pregnant or on Maternity.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.

Protected Characteristic	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment*	Advance Equality of Opportunity*	Foster Good Relations*	Mitigating actions or opportunities (if relevant)
	enables the organisation to adhere to The Regulations. The terms and conditions stipulated in the policy are those of the legislation. Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.			
Care Experience*	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the Parental Leave Policy and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of Care Experience. Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the Parental Leave Policy and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of Care Experience.	No evidence identified.	Analysis over the last 5 years shows the policy has been used by too few colleagues to report on any trends. It is suggested usage continues to be monitored and considered if the policy needs to be advertised more via internal comms.

Part 4: Action Plan

This section is completed at the end of the Equality Impact Assessment. This table is designed to help you to confirm important details to ensure your actions are completed, and allows for the CET to track progress against your actions for reporting.

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.

Monitoring Actions	Owner*	Target Date	Comment & Review
Review on a quarterly basis of employment law, case law and legislative changes, and equalities updates (including reviewing EHRC website).	HR Shared Service Manager	BAU	Applicable to all SQA People policies
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 Service Manager	BAU	Applicable to all SQA People policies
Review and assess feedback on a quarterly basis from each of SQA's staff community network groups	HR Shared Service Manager	BAU	Applicable to all SQA People policies

What actions have you identified through the EqIA to address negative impacts, or to further promote positive impacts?

Mitigating Actions	Owner*	Target Date	Comment & Review
Create an internal comms message to all colleagues to promote the policy in case lack of use is down to awareness	HRSS	01/04/2025	Click or tap here to enter text.
Subsequent to the comms message review use of policy	HRSS	31/12/2025	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 4: Conclusion, Monitoring, and rationale

This section will conclude your EqIA, and allow you to reflect on the benefits of your work on people who share a protected characteristic. Filling this section also allows for us to report on the steps your work has taken to embed and mainstream equality considerations across SQA.

Briefly summarise the positive impacts of your work for people who share protected characteristics	The policy follows legislation and all colleagues have the opportunity to access and use the parental leave policy.
Briefly describe how your work might eliminate unlawful discrimination	The policy is equally open to all regardless any protected characteristic. Additionally it should be noted that there is lawful discrimination baked in to support staff with disabled children
Briefly describe how your work might advance equality of opportunity	Having this policy in place supports colleagues who have disabled children for example to take an amount of leave with no negative impacts to the colleague.
Briefly describe how your work might foster good relations.	The policy does this by using gender neutral language and not confirming to stereotypes of only mothers (females) being the carers of children.

Have you identified negative impacts against equality groups?	No
If yes, have you identified mitigating actions?	Choose an item.
How will you monitor the effectiveness of mitigating actions?	Note your strategy in the “Monitoring actions” table at the top of this document
If you have identified negative impacts, without a mitigation, how will you justify continuing with this policy, strategy or service?	n/a