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 2024	Additional Schedule Review Date	By September 2023

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
Review and assess monthly establishment management information packs containing fundamental employment data on SQA employees	People Analytics, Governance & Systems Manager	Commencing monthly from October 2022	
Review on a quarterly basis of employment law, case law and legislative changes, and equalities updates (including reviewing EHRC website).	HR Shared Services Manager	Commencing quarterly from January 2023	
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	Commencing quarterly from January 2023	
Review and assess feedback on a quarterly basis from each of SQA's staff community network groups	HR Shared Services Manager	Commencing quarterly from January 2023	
Continue to review and assess on an annual basis SQA's engagement People survey	OD Manager	Commencing annually from October 2023	
Review and assess on an annual basis all SQA employee lifecycle data	People Analytics, Governance & Systems Manager	Commencing annually from January 2024	
Continue to review and assess every 2 years SQA's equality mainstreaming report [next report due May 2023]	People Reward and Equalities Manager	Commencing every 2 years from May 2023	
Continue to review and assess every 2 years SQA's workforce equality monitoring report [next report due May 2023]	People Reward and Equalities Manager	Commencing every 2 years from May 2023	

Identified Actions	General Equality Duty	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
Age SQA will undertake an analysis of pay by age to determine if there are any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination for this protected characteristic. Once the outcome of this review is known, the organisation will determine any relevant actions required to eliminate or mitigate any adverse impact this policy may have on employees of different ages.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	**People Reward & Equalities Manager**	**By April 2023**	
All Protected Characteristics It is recommended that SQA delivers mandatory training in respect of effective use of the recruitment and selection policy to ensure that any bias is minimised or eliminated.	Advance equality of opportunity	**Employee Development Programme Manager and HR Recruitment Consultant**	**By December 2023**	
All Protected Characteristics It is recommended that SQA promotes the recruitment and selection policy to ensure all recruiting managers are aware of their responsibilities – The revised policy will be supported by mandatory training.	Advance equality of opportunity	**Employee Development Programme Manager and HR Recruitment Consultant**	**By December 2023**	

All Protected Characteristics It is recommended that SQA commence the provision of mandatory training on the revised dignity at work policy.	Advance equality of opportunity	**Employee Development Programme Manager and HR Shared Service Manager**	**By September 2023**	
All Protected Characteristics It is recommended that SQA will redesigns its application process to remove potentially biased elements (in progress).	Advance equality of opportunity	**HR Recruitment Consultant and People Analytics, Governance and Systems Manager**	**By September 2023**	
Disability SQA will continue to report the disability pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to disability. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.	Advance Equality of Opportunity	**People Reward & Equalities Manager**	**Annually**	

Race SQA will continue to report the ethnicity pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to ethnicity. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.	Advance equality of opportunity	**People Reward & Equalities Manager**	**Annually**	
Sex SQA will continue to report the gender pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to sex of employees. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.	Advance equality of opportunity	**People Reward & Equalities Manager**	**Annually**	

Sexual Orientation SQA will continue to report the sexual orientation pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to employees with different sexual orientations. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.	Advance equality of opportunity	**People Reward & Equalities Manager**	**Annually**	
All protected characteristics In 2023, SQA will review plans to conduct an ED&I survey and include a question(s) about the perception of equality in the application of reward policies.	Foster good relations	**People Reward & Equalities Manager and Head of Strategic Planning & Governance.**	**By December 2023**	

Policy Aims

| Name of Policy or practice	Pay Policy
New Policy or Revision	Revised
Name of Policy Owner	People Reward & Equalities Manager
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion	Draft stage, still in progress

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?
The stated aims of SQA's *Pay Policy* are to: • Ensure that all SQA employees are treated fairly and consistently • Clearly set out SQA's approach to pay • Provide guidance on how colleagues are paid • Clarify when specific payments and allowances apply • Ensure that we operate a pay system which is fair, transparent, free from bias and based on lawful practices

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

National Pay Data Statistics – Sex:

Gender pay gap for median gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime),

UK, April 1997 to 2021
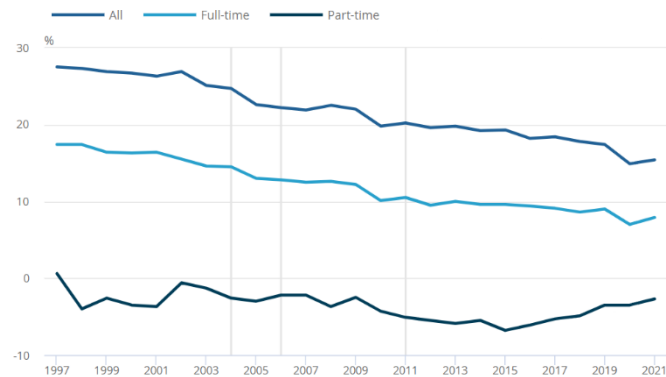
The above graph shows the gender pay gap for median gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for all full and part time employees from 1997 to 2021.

According to ONS statistics, among all employees, the gender pay gap in 2021 is 15.4%.

The gender pay gap is higher for all employees than it is for full-time employees or part-time employees. This is because women fill more part-time jobs,
which in comparison with full-time jobs have lower hourly median pay.
Source: https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2021

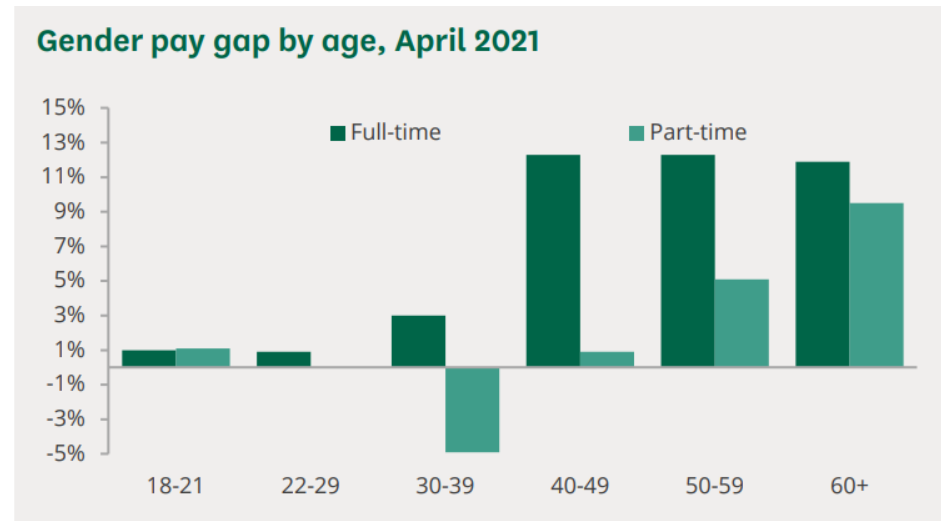The Resolution Foundation reports that 57% of low paid employees in 2020 were women.

50% of workers in the labour market as a whole are women, in tech, it's half that, at 26%.
Source: https://technation.io/diversity-and-inclusion-in-uk-tech/#executive-summary

Only 3% of Chief Technology Officers (CTO's) or Technical Director roles are held by women and 0.6% of Chief Operating and 0.4% of Chief Financial Officer roles are held by women.
Source: https://technation.io/diversity-and-inclusion-in-uk-tech/#executive-summary

National Pay Data Statistics – Disability:

Pay gap between disabled and non-disabled employees, UK, 2014 to 2021
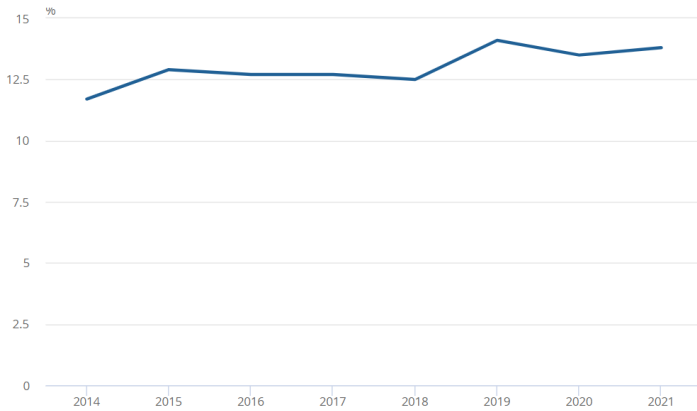
The chart above demonstrates the pay gap between disabled and non-disabled employees in the UK in the period from 2014 - 2021.

According to ONS the disability pay gap, the gap between median pay for disabled employees and non-disabled employees, was 13.8% in 2021
Source:
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitypaygapsintheuk/2021#:~:text=The%20disability%20pay%20gap%2C%20the,less%20than%20non%2Ddisabled%20employees.

National Pay Data Statistics – Race and Ethnicity:

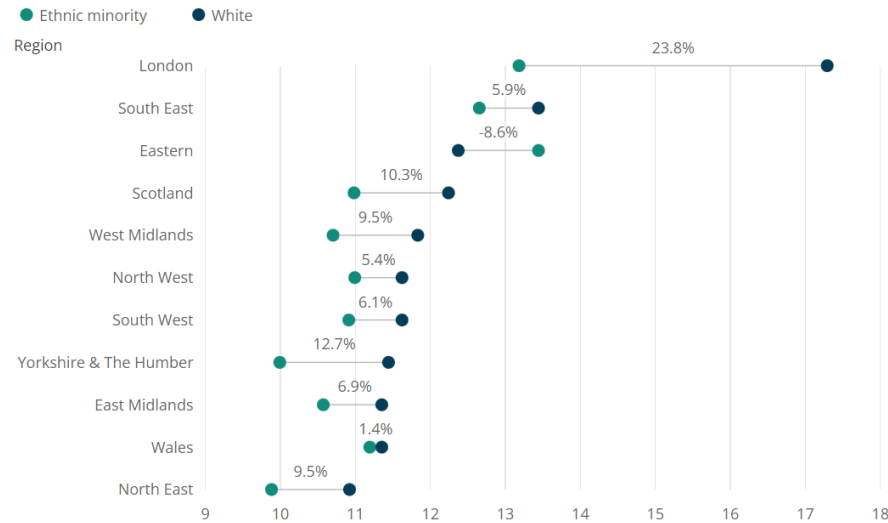Ethnicity pay gap between those White and those ethnic minority by region, Great Britain, 2019

This graph shows the ethnicity pay gap between white and ethnic minority workers by region in Great Britain in 2019.

The ethnicity pay gap in Scotland, in 2019 was 10.3% according to ONS.
Source: https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/ethnicitypaygapsingreatbritain/2019#pay-gaps-by-region

National Pay Data Statistics – Sexual Orientation:

According to research by networking site LinkedIn and LGBT+ ((Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning +) organisation UK Black Pride, gay, bisexual and transgender employees earn 16% less on average than their heterosexual peers, which equates to £6,703 a year.
Source: https://www.linkedin.com/news/story/the-uk-has-an-lgbtq-pay-gap-4702500/

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) - Gender Pay Gap Statistics:
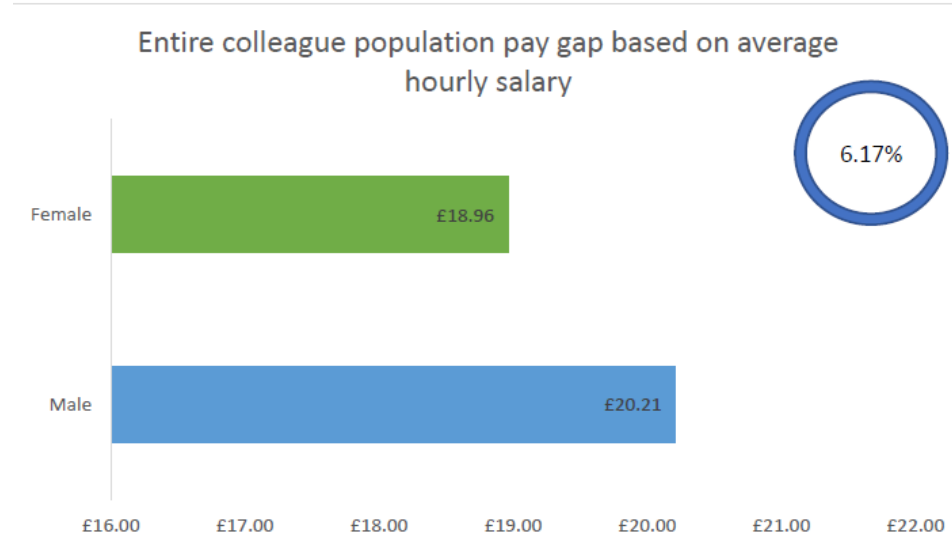
The graph above illustrates SQA's entire colleague population pay gap based on average hourly salary.

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

The overall gender pay gap has increased by 2.47% since the previous Equality Mainstreaming Report published in 2019. However, there has been a 0.80% decrease in the overall gender pay gap from the 2020 internally published equal pay audit. The average female hourly salary is £18.96, and the average male hourly salary is £20.21.

SQA's pay gap between male and female salaries can be explained by the fact that there are proportionately more female colleagues at the lower grades within SQA. However, as the gender pay gap has widened since the last Equality Mainstreaming Report was published, we have explored the reasons for the increase. Last year, we began including additional salary components to provide a more accurate reflection of colleagues' annual earnings based on the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) and the UK Government Equalities Office guidance on gender pay gap reporting, i.e. allowances including market supplement payments. Most market supplement payments are within the Business Systems (IT) area of SQA, which has a higher male population (68.2%). However, we still have a higher

percentage of females, 31.8%, working in technology roles than the proportion of technology roles held by women in Scotland overall, which stands at 23% according to Scotland's Digital Technologies: Summary Report 2019 published by Skills Development Scotland.

In the most recent equal pay audit, yet to be published, the gender pay gap has decreased further to 5.6%.

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) - Disability Pay Gap Statistics:

The graph above illustrates SQA's Disability pay gap (average hourly salary)

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
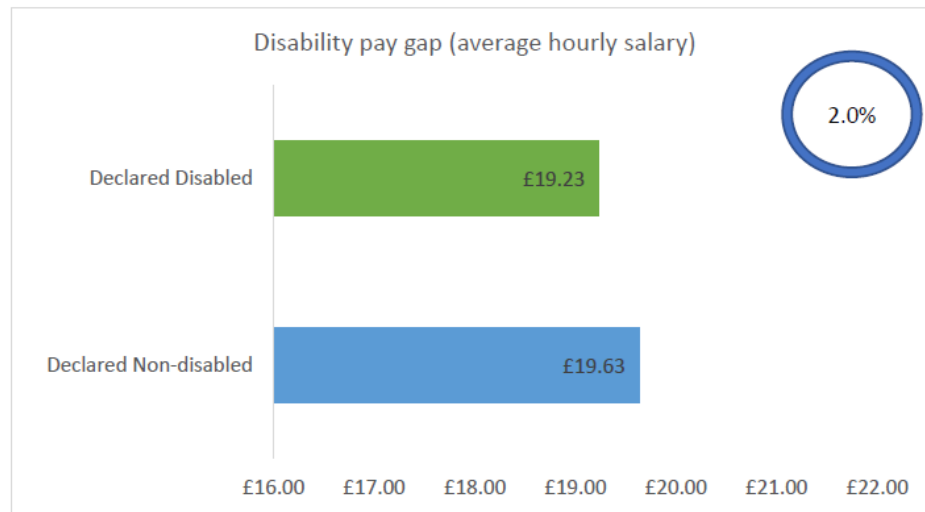https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

There has been an 8.1% decrease in the disability pay gap from last years' Equal Pay Audit. As previously mentioned, this can be explained by the
increase in colleague data available for analysis due to the equality campaign run in the second half of 2020.

In the most recent equal pay audit, yet to be published, SQA no longer has a disability pay gap as it has decreased to -0.3%.

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) - Ethnicity Pay Gap Statistics:

Ethnicity pay gap (average hourly salary)

6.21%

Minority ethnicity — £18.14

White — £19.34

£16.00 £17.00 £18.00 £19.00 £20.00 £21.00 £22.00

The graph above illustrates SQA's ethnicity pay gap (average hourly salary)

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

The ethnicity pay gap has decreased compared to the previous Equality Mainstreaming Report 2017-2019 (↓6.99%) and last year's 2020 internal equal pay audit (↓18.03%) to 6.21%.

Further analysis was not conducted in 2021. However, in the most recent equal pay audit, yet to be published, SQA's ethnicity pay gap has again decreased to 2.5%.

What are the aims of this policy or practice?

As previously stated the aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure that all SQA employees are treated fairly and consistently
- Clearly set out SQA's approach to pay
- Provide guidance on how colleagues are paid
- Clarify when specific payments and allowances apply
- Ensure that we operate a pay system which is fair, transparent, free from bias and based on lawful practices.

The policy itself is divided in two discrete sections:

Policy Structure:

1: Part A – Policy detail.

2: Part B – Procedures for SQA managers / employees to follow.

What are the aims of this policy or practice?

The following SQA policies or guidance are also related to the *Pay* policy:

- Essential Car User
- Grievance
- Home Based Workers
- Job Evaluation
- Internal Secondment Policy
- Retention and Redeployment Policy
- Staff Leave
- Standby and Call-out
- TOIL
- Travel, Accommodation and Expenses

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

SQA acknowledges that people who share /do not share certain 'Protected Characteristics' may, on balance:

- Be less likely to secure promotion and therefore salary progression
- Experience compound discrimination or intersectionality i.e. where a person has one or more characteristics and may be subjected to consequentially greater levels of disadvantage. For example, people who are women and of an ethnic minority may have restricted earnings potential and may experience barriers to salary progression
- Be less likely to ask for and secure a higher starting salary
- Be less likely to ask for assistance with pay queries or to query the grade of their role
- Be unable to be on standby and call-out
- Be unable to carry out shift working or to undertake overtime
- Be less likely to seek out certain types of careers/roles i.e. women may be less likely to seek a career in IT.
- Be less likely to be selected for developmental opportunities, some of which may have a financial incentive.
- More likely to be displaced and more likely to end up in a lower graded post and subject to salary protection.

The development, implementation and analysis of the effects of this policy are therefore highly relevant to people from all Equality groups as they may risk experiencing disproportionate impacts or outcomes.

It is important that the SQA identifies and takes action to mitigate or remove any disadvantage identified which is the overall purpose of this Equality Impact Assessment.

Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

What stakeholders have you engaged with in 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.

Trade Union Consultation Review Group (PRG):

Members of SQA Human Resources department and trade union representatives from *Unite the Union* and *Unison* meet weekly in SQA via the PRG. This group has been meeting weekly in SQA since July 2020. 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.

Staff Network Consultations:

In June 2021, we formed a dedicated *Equality Impact Assessment Project Group* (EIAPG) with the aim of reviewing, assessing and providing feedback from staff on all SQA HR policies from Equality perspectives.

The EIAPG group consists of representatives from each of the SQA staff networks listed on the previous page of this document.

Evidence, feedback and actions from all EIAPG staff network consultations are recorded on a dedicated SQA *Microsoft Teams* page which was specifically created with the aim of listing potential equality risks that exist in H.R. policies / activities, sharing resources, recording feedback and scheduling future consultation meetings.

The table below details the consultation undertaken.

Policy·Name¤	Review·Date¤	Women's· Network¤	(ACE)¤	Disability·Network¤	Rainbow·Network¤
Redeployment¤	02/08/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Restructure¤	02/08/2021¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	¤
Standby·&·Call-Out¤	23/06/2021¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Time·Recording¤	09/08/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Attendance·Management¤	16/08/2021¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Childcare·Voucher¤	16/08/2021¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Dignity·at·Work¤	10/08/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Disciplinary¤	01/06/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Equalities,·Diversity·&·Inclusion¤	23/08/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Fixed·Term·Workers¤	23/08/2021¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Grievance¤	29/06/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Improving·Performance¤	07/09/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Probation¤	06/09/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Recruitment·&·Selection¤	06/05/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Secondment¤	13/09/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Whistleblowing¤	22/07/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Flexible·Working¤	18/11/2021¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Flexitime¤	26/10/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Pay¤	09/12/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
TOIL¤	16/12/2021¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Code·of·Conduct¤	24/02/2022¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Conflict·of·Interest¤	10/03/2022¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Pensions·Discretion¤	29/03/2022¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Redundancy¤	22/03/2022¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Relocation¤	31/03/2022¤	Yes¤	¤	Yes¤	Yes¤
Retirement¤	15/03/2022¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤	Yes¤

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

| Age | Colleagues by age band and gender (sex) 2020 (as in Table 1.05)
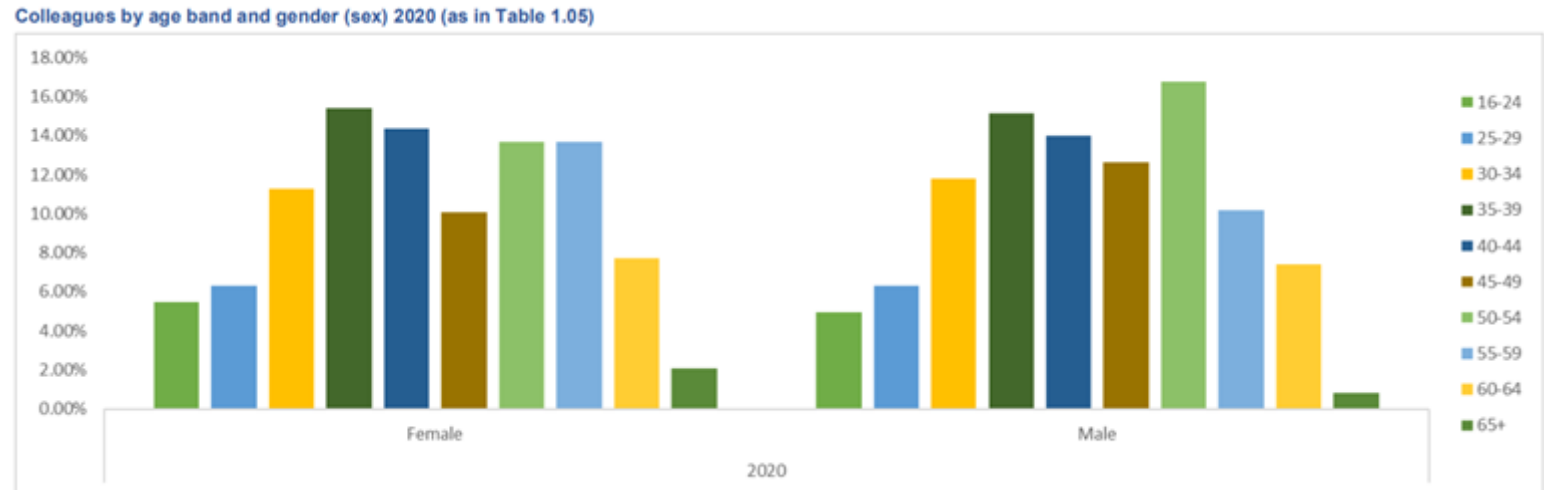
The bar chart above illustrates SQA colleagues by age band and gender (sex) in 2020.

The majority of SQA employees are in the mid-range age bandings. A total of 79% workers are aged between 30 – 59. Less than 2% of SQA employees are aged 60+ and the SQA has recently seen a decrease in younger (under 35) employees.

Comparisons between 2019 and 2020 data show that the greatest increase in the proportion of female colleagues is within the 60–64 age band - an increase of 12 colleagues.
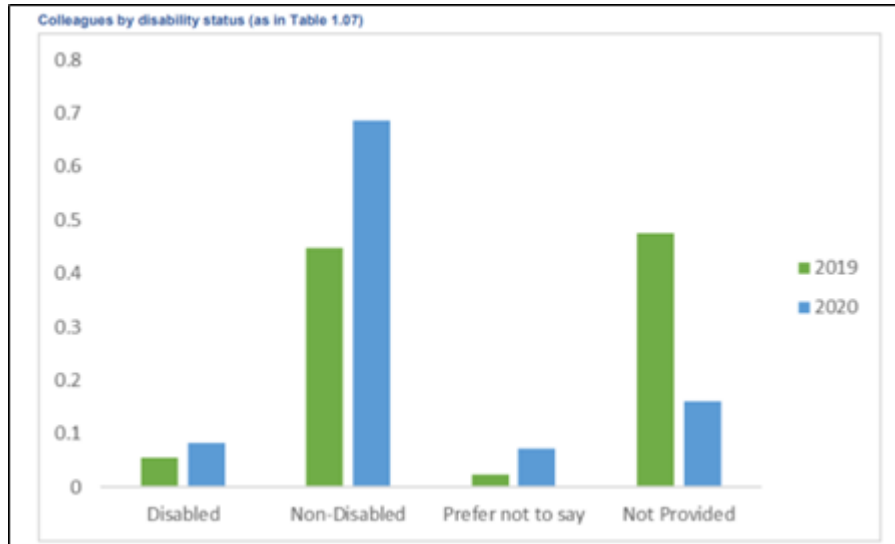
The 30–34 age band saw the largest reduction of female colleagues – a total of seven people. Over the same period, there was an increase in the proportion of male colleagues within the 50-54 age band - an overall increase of nine people. The largest decline in the proportion of male colleagues was in the 30-34 age band, with seven fewer people. The largest decrease was seen in the 30–34 age band for both male and female colleagues - with an overall reduction of 14 people.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 - 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf |

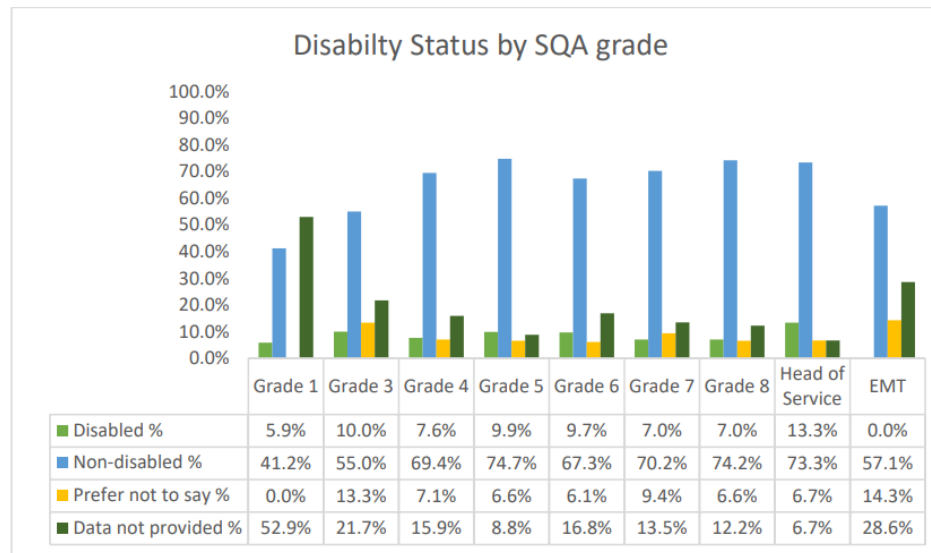| Disability	A total of 8.2% of SQA employees declared a disability last year. Declaration rates have significantly improved from a total response rate under the Not Disclosed / Prefer not to say category of 49.9% in 2019 (roughly half of employees) to a much reduced 23.1 % in 2020.
	The bar chart above illustrates colleagues by disability status in 2019 and 2020
	The highest proportion of colleagues who have declared a disability (53%) falls within the lowest age bands (16 – 44) and second highest (47%) within the upper age bands (45–64)
	A total of 55% of disabled employees are female and 45% are male. 63% of colleagues who have declared a disability are within the grade range 06 to Head of Service. Head of Service has the largest percentage of colleagues declaring a disability (13%) whereas Grade 6 has the largest overall number of colleagues declaring a disability at 23%.
	Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021 https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

| Disability (Continued) | **Occupational Segregation**: |

Occupational Segregation:

Disabilty Status by SQA grade

	Grade 1	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Head of Service	EMT
Disabled %	5.9%	10.0%	7.6%	9.9%	9.7%	7.0%	7.0%	13.3%	0.0%
Non-disabled %	41.2%	55.0%	69.4%	74.7%	67.3%	70.2%	74.2%	73.3%	57.1%
Prefer not to say %	0.0%	13.3%	7.1%	6.6%	6.1%	9.4%	6.6%	6.7%	14.3%
Data not provided %	52.9%	21.7%	15.9%	8.8%	16.8%	13.5%	12.2%	6.7%	28.6%

The bar chart above illustrates Disability Status by SQA grade.

The grade split by disability shows the following:
♦ 8.3% of the workforce have declared a disability; 69.4% are non-disabled; 7.4% 'prefer not to say'; and 14.9% have not yet provided data.
♦ Heads of Service have the highest overall concentration of colleagues declaring a disability at 13.3%, followed by grades three and five both with 10.0% and 9.9% colleagues, respectively.
♦ The percentage of colleagues at grades one to three who have declared a disability is 9.1%.
♦ The percentage of colleagues at grades four to six who have declared a disability is 9.0%.
♦ The percentage of colleagues at grades seven and eight who have declared a disability is 7.5%.
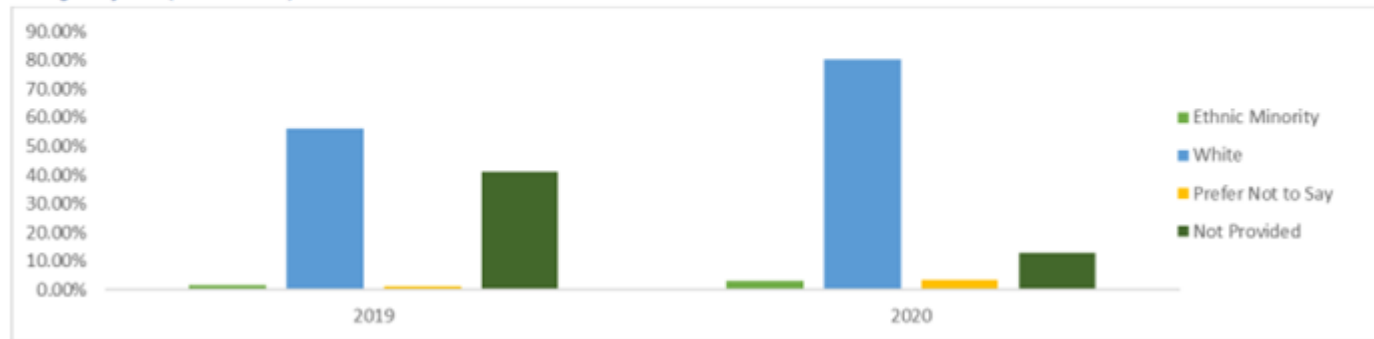
Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

Race Ethnicity	
Race Ethnicity		Race	2019	2020	Variance
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Ethnic Minority	1.82%	3.16%	1.34%
White	56.06%	80.40%	24.34%
Prefer Not to Say	1.07%	3.48%	2.41%
Not Provided	41.05%	12.96%	-28.09%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	

Colleagues by Race (as in table 1.12)

The bar chart above shows SQA colleagues by Race in 2019 – 2020.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

Currently only 3% of SQA employees declared themselves as Minority Ethnicity against a national (Scotland) average of 5%.

A further breakdown of ethnicity (overleaf) indicates that Chinese, Indian and Mixed Ethnicity groups are currently the predominant minority ethnicities in the SQA.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf
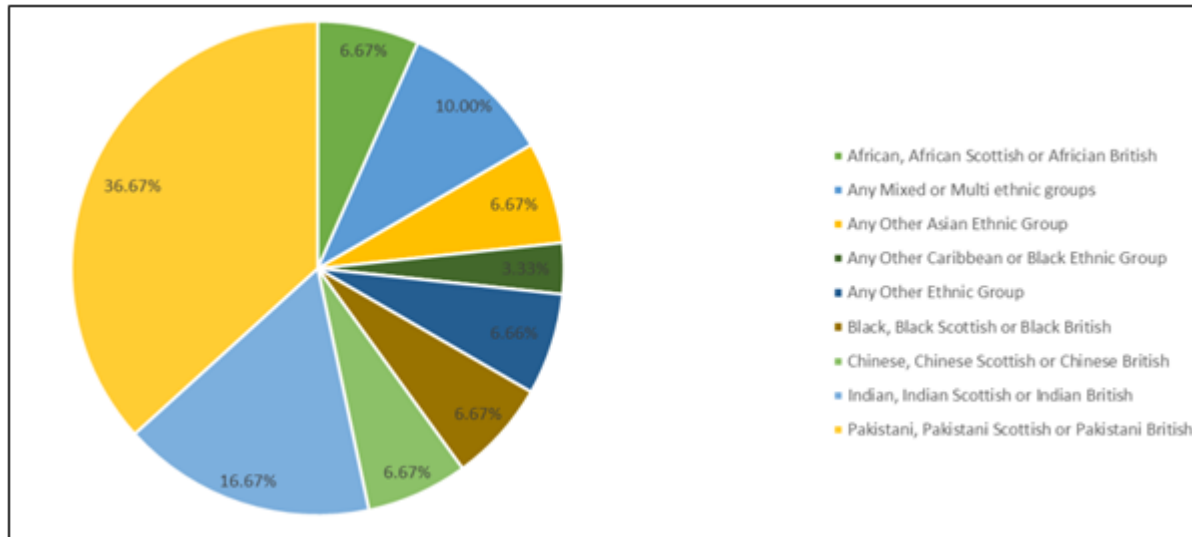
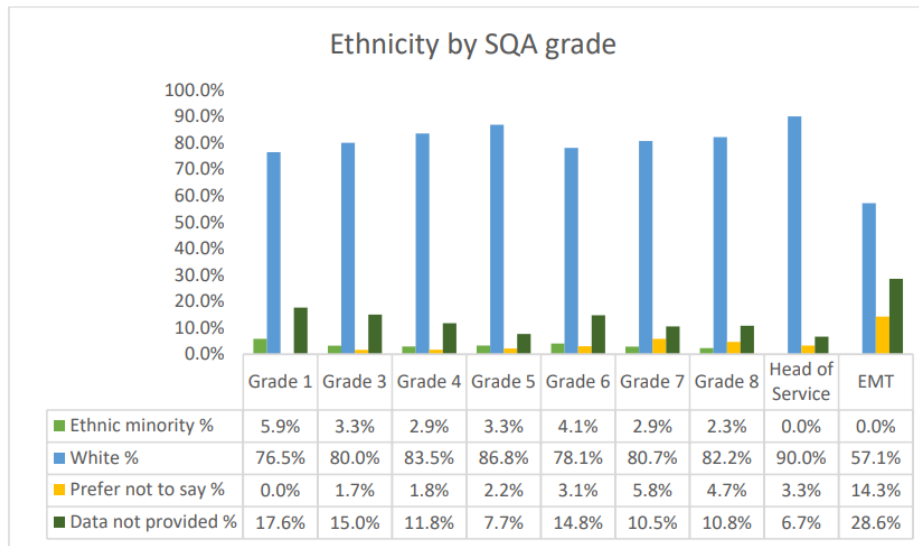|	
Race Ethnicity (continued)	The pie chart above shows SQA colleagues by Black and minority ethnicities 2020 (as in table 1.15 below) Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021 https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf The table above shows SQA colleagues by Black and minority ethnicities. Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021 https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

Table 1.15 Race: Colleagues by black and minority ethnicities

Black and Minority Ethnicities	2019	2020	Variance
African, African Scottish or African British	5.88%	6.67%	0.78%
Any Mixed or Multi ethnic groups	11.76%	10.00%	-1.76%
Any Other Asian Ethnic Group	5.88%	6.67%	0.78%
Any Other Caribbean or Black Ethnic Group		3.33%	3.33%
Any Other Ethnic Group		6.66%	6.66 %
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	5.88%	6.67%	0.78%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	11.76%	6.67%	-5.10%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	17.65%	16.67%	-0.98%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	41.18%	36.67%	-4.51%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	

Race Ethnicity (continued)	**Occupational Segregation:**

The bar chart above shows the grade split by ethnicity and demonstrates the following:

♦ 81.6% of the workforce are white; 3.0% are of ethnic minority; 3.6% 'prefer not to say';- and 11.8% have not yet provided data.
♦ 37.9% of ethnic minority colleagues are at grades 1 to 5, and 62.1% of ethnic minority colleagues are at grades 6 to 8.
♦ Grade 1 has the highest overall concentration of ethnic minority colleagues at 5.9%, followed by grade 6 at 4.1%.
♦ The percentage of colleagues at grades 1 to 3 who are of ethnic minority is 3.9%.
♦ The percentage of colleagues at grade 4 to 6 who are of ethnic minority is 3.5%.
♦ The percentage of colleagues at grades 7 and 8 who are of ethnic minority is 2.6%.
♦ There are no ethnic minority colleagues at Head of Service or EMT level.

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

Ethnicity by SQA grade

	Grade 1	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Head of Service	EMT
Ethnic minority %	5.9%	3.3%	2.9%	3.3%	4.1%	2.9%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%
White %	76.5%	80.0%	83.5%	86.8%	78.1%	80.7%	82.2%	90.0%	57.1%
Prefer not to say %	0.0%	1.7%	1.8%	2.2%	3.1%	5.8%	4.7%	3.3%	14.3%
Data not provided %	17.6%	15.0%	11.8%	7.7%	14.8%	10.5%	10.8%	6.7%	28.6%

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Religion or Belief			

Religion or Belief	2019	2020	Variance
Christian	20.69%	29.82%	9.13%
Non-Christian	11.47%	17.28%	5.81%
None	20.69%	29.29%	8.61%
Prefer not to say	3.75%	10.33%	6.58%
Not Provided	43.41%	13.28%	-30.13%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	

This table (1.16) shows colleague religion / belief data for 2019 – 2020 and variance between the two years.

An improved declaration rate was also shown for this characteristic in 2020. *Christian* and *No Religion* account for nearly 60% of all responses.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

Sex	

	Gender (Sex)					
	Female			Male		
Grade	2019	2020	Variance	2019	2020	Variance
1	83.33%	66.67%	-16.67%	16.67%	33.33%	16.67%
3	65.15%	65.00%	-0.15%	34.85%	35.00%	0.15%
4	63.28%	64.71%	1.43%	36.72%	35.29%	-1.43%
5	58.02%	61.54%	3.51%	41.98%	38.46%	-3.51%
6	69.90%	69.90%		30.10%	30.10%	
7	59.76%	57.89%	-1.86%	40.24%	42.11%	1.86%
8	53.54%	56.34%	2.80%	46.46%	43.66%	-2.80%
HOS	39.39%	40.00%	0.61%	60.61%	60.00%	-0.61%
EMT	57.14%	42.86%		57.14%	42.86%	
Total	61.20%	61.64%	0.44%	38.80%	38.36%	-0.44%

A greater number of SQA employees overall are female - 62% female versus 38% male. A 60% representation of females across most grades is evident with a decrease to circa 40% for more senior grades.

This table (1.02) shows colleague sex by grade for 2019 – 2020 and the variance between the two years.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

| **Sex (Continued)** | **Occupational Segregation:**
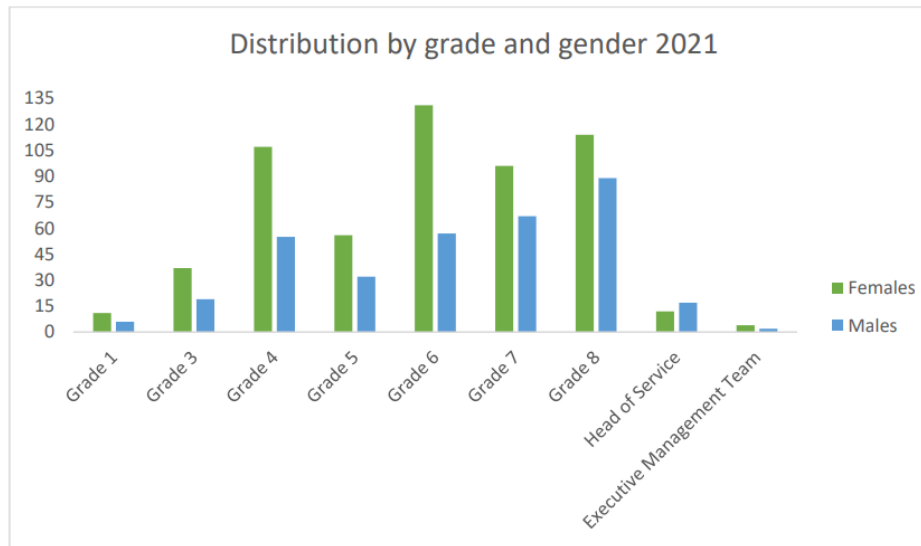
The bar chart above shows distribution by grade and gender in 2021

64.71% of SQA's grade one colleagues are female (grade 1 includes modern apprentices).
66.1% of administration colleagues (grades 3 and 4) are female.

In addition:
♦ 67.7% of colleagues in grades 5 and 6 and 57.4% of colleagues in grades 7 and 8 are female.
♦ This trend reverses when we look at heads of service — 41.4% of colleagues at this level are female and 58.6% are male.
♦ At EMT level, however, 66.7% are female and 33.3% are male.

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf |

Sexual Orientation (Continued)	Sexual Orientation	2019	2020	Variance
	Bisexual	0.96%	1.26%	0.30%
	Gay man	1.39%	2.11%	0.71%
	Gay woman / Lesbian	0.96%	1.05%	0.09%
	Heterosexual/straight	46.20%	70.60%	24.41%
	In another way	0.11%	0.21%	0.10%
	Not sure	0.11%	0.11%	0.00%
	Prefer not to say	2.79%	8.01%	5.22%
	Not Provided	47.48%	16.65%	-30.83%
	Total	100.00%	100.00%	

This table (1.18) shows colleagues by sexual orientation for 2019 – 2020 and the variance between the two years.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)	No equality profiling data is currently captured by SQA.

Marriage/Civil Partnership	
	Table 1.10: Colleagues by relationship status

Relationship status	2019	2020	Variance
Married/Civil Partnership	30.01%	44.66%	14.65%
Single	24.44%	35.87%	11.44%
Prefer not to say	1.93%	5.71%	3.79%
Not Provided	43.62%	13.76%	-29.87%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	

This table (1.10) shows colleagues by marriage/civil partnership for 2019 – 2020 and the variance between the two years.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

Pregnancy / Maternity

	Colleagues		
Pregnancy Status	2019	2020	Variance
Not Pregnant	98.25%	98.95%	0.70%
Pregnant	1.75%	1.05%	-0.70%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	

This table (1.20) shows colleagues by pregnancy / maternity for 2019 – 2020 and the variance between the two years.

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf

Care experience (where relevant)

SQA does not currently collect Care Experience data.

Impact and Opportunities for Action

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

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

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 takes into account six discrete elements:

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

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Age	**Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010**
	Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect: **SQA does capture pay and age data but does not currently analyse pay data by age at this time.** It is not therefore possible, to establish if any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination exist within SQA in the use or application of this policy. SQA will undertake an analysis of pay by age to determine if there are any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination for this protected characteristic. Once the outcome of this review is known the organisation will determine any relevant actions required to eliminate or mitigate any adverse impact this policy may have on employees of different ages.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Whilst all SQA employees are entitled to use, access, and of course, be subjected to the *Pay Policy*, whether or not the policy actually **promotes / advances** the 'same chance' to employees of all *Ages* **remains unclear.** This is again, due to a lack of accurate monitoring of pay data by age in SQA. Advancing Equality of Opportunity (same chance) may sometimes require organisations to do slightly different things to meet the different needs of people.
	Foster good relations
	Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share, or may not share, a protected characteristic.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Disability	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	As stated in an earlier section of this document, at a national level, the disability pay gap is 13.8%. SQA's disability pay gap in 2021 was 2.0%. In the most recent equal pay audit, yet to be published, SQA no longer has a disability pay gap as it has decreased to -0.3%. **Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:** SQA does analyse and report the disability pay gap as part of the equality mainstreaming report which is published every two years and provides an overall indication of disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the pay policy. There is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their disability status. SQA will continue to report the disability pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to disability. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap. The Pay Policy references long term sickness absence in relation to pay progression i.e. unless an individual is identified as an under performer they will be eligible for pay progression.
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between disabled and non-disabled employees. No further recommendations are made in this respect at this stage.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Race Ethnicity	**Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010**
	As stated in an earlier section of this document, at a national level, the ethnicity pay gap is 10.3%. SQA's ethnicity pay gap in 2021 was 6.21%. Further analysis was not conducted in 2021. However, in the most recent equal pay audit, yet to be published, SQA's ethnicity pay gap has again decreased to 2.5%. **Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:** However, SQA does analyse and report the ethnicity pay gap as part of the equality mainstreaming report which is published every two years and provides an overall indication of disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the pay policy. There is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their ethnicity. SQA carries out analysis of occupational segregation for the protected characteristic of race in order to understand if we are meeting our commitment to deliver equal pay across the organisation. SQA will continue to report the ethnicity pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to ethnicity. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different ethnicities. SQA seeks feedback from its ethnic minority community network, the ACE Network, on how we may make improvements to future Equality Mainstreaming (including Equal Pay Audit) and Workforce Equality Monitoring Reports.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Religion or Belief	**General Equality Duty**
	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	We conclude there is no evidence to suggest that this policy may impact directly on people of different *Religion or Belief* and therefore make no further recommendations in this area. **Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.**
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the *Pay Policy* and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their *Religion or Belief.*
	Foster good relations
	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 in relation to this policy.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sex	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

As stated in an earlier section of this document, at a national level, the gender pay gap is 15.4%.

SQA's gender pay gap in 2021 was 6.17%.

In the most recent equal pay audit, yet to be published, the gender pay gap has decreased further to 5.6%.

Gender: by quartile			
Quartile	Date	%age female	%age male
Lower Quartile	31-Jan-21	66.23%	33.77%
Lower Middle Quartile	31-Jan-21	65.35%	34.65%
Upper Middle Quartile	31-Jan-21	65.35%	34.65%
Upper Quartile	31-Jan-21	52.19%	47.81%
Grand Total	**31-Jan-21**	**62.28%**	**37.72%**

The table above shows SQA gender by quartile

There is a proportionate number of females in each quartile.

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

Sex (Continued)

Gender: all colleagues by grade (FTE) up to head of service

Grade	Date	Number of colleagues	%age female	%age male	Average hourly salary (£)	Average hourly salary — female (£)	Average hourly salary — male (£)	Female hourly salary as a %age of male salary	Pay Band minimum	Pay Band maximum
1	31-Jan-21	17	64.71%	35.29%	£10.06	£10.06	£10.06	100.00%	£10.06	£10.06
3	31-Jan-21	56	66.07%	33.93%	£10.95	£10.91	£11.03	98.84%	£10.33	£11.51
4	31-Jan-21	162	66.05%	33.95%	£12.31	£12.30	£12.34	99.69%	£11.65	£13.02
5	31-Jan-21	88	63.64%	36.36%	£14.51	£14.47	£14.57	99.29%	£13.62	£16.31
6	31-Jan-21	188	69.68%	30.32%	£18.24	£18.33	£18.04	101.59%	£16.60	£22.50
7	31-Jan-21	163	58.90%	41.10%	£22.34	£22.41	£22.25	100.72%	£20.25	£24.90
8	31-Jan-21	203	56.16%	43.84%	£25.85	£25.68	£26.06	98.56%	£23.75	£28.96
HoS	31-Jan-21	29	41.38%	58.62%	£34.71	£34.66	£34.74	99.78%	£31.61	£37.22

The table above illustrates by Gender: all colleagues by grade (FTE) up to head of service

When looking at the pay data by grade there is a negligible pay gap at all grades.

Source; SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019 – 2021
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:
However, SQA does analyse and report the gender pay gap as part of the equality mainstreaming report which is published every two years and provides an overall indication of disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.

Sex (Continued)	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the pay policy There is evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their sex.
	SQA's pay gap between male and female salaries can be explained by the fact that there are proportionately more female colleagues at the lower grades within SQA. However, as the gender pay gap has widened since the last Equality Mainstreaming Report was published, we have explored the reasons for the increase. Last year, we began including additional salary components to provide a more accurate reflection of colleagues' annual earnings based on the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) and the UK Government Equalities Office guidance on gender pay gap reporting, i.e. allowances including market supplement payments. Most market supplement payments are within the Business Systems (IT) area of SQA, which has a higher male population (68.2%). However, we still have a higher percentage of females, 31.8%, working in technology roles than the proportion of technology roles held by women in Scotland overall, which stands at 23% according to Scotland's Digital Technologies: Summary Report 2019 published by Skills Development Scotland.
	Actions taken in 2022 to help mitigate barriers to progression for women include: • In the first quarter of this year, our mentoring programme was launched and is now active in accordance with Scottish Mentoring Network guidelines • Publication of a revised dignity at work policy • Implementation of a tool to check language within job adverts to ensure inclusive language is used • Utilisation of Vercida, a jobs board focussed specifically on diversity and inclusion to aid attraction of a diverse workforce • Development of an improved workforce equality monitoring template to improve the reporting and analysis of data gathered across all protected characteristics in preparation for the next Workforce Equality Monitoring Report in 2023

Sex (Continued)	It is recommended that the following is undertaken: • Promote the recruitment and selection policy to ensure all recruiting managers are aware of their responsibilities o The revised policy launched in September 2022 will be supported by mandatory training • Provide mandatory training on the revised dignity at work policy • Redesign our application process to remove potentially biased elements (in progress) While these actions have been identified under the Protected Characteristic of Sex, we recommend that this is included for all Protected Characteristics. SQA carries out analysis of occupational segregation for the protected characteristic of sex in order to understand if we are meeting our commitment to deliver equal pay across the organisation. SQA will continue to report the gender pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to sex of employees. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.
	Foster good relations
	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.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sexual Orientation	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	National data indicates that gay, bisexual and transgender employees earn 16% less on average than their heterosexual peers, which equates to £6,703 a year. We conclude there is some evidence to suggest that this policy may impact directly on people with different *Sexual Orientations* and therefore recommend that SQA conduct a sexual orientation pay gap analysis.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the *Pay Policy* and there is some evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their *Sexual Orientation.* We have for the first time as part of our 2022 equal pay audit conducted a sexual orientation pay gap analysis, which shows a sexual orientation pay gap of 2.6%. In 2023, SQA will continue to report the sexual orientation pay gap and investigate any discrepancies and trends which may demonstrate any potential barriers in relation to employees with different sexual orientations. Where a pay gap of greater than 5% exists SQA will conduct in-depth analysis to determine the reason for the gap.
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees with different *Sexual Orientations.* No further recommendations are made in respect of this in relation to this policy.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	We conclude there is no evidence to suggest that this policy may impact directly on people with different *Gender identities or those who have undergone Gender Re-assignment* and therefore make no further recommendations in this area. **Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.**
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the *Pay Policy and there* is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their *Gender Identity.*
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different *Gender Identities.* No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Marriage/Civil Partnership	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	We conclude there is no evidence to suggest that this policy may impact directly / indirectly on people who are *Married* or in a *Civil Partnership* and therefore make no further recommendations in this area. **Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.**
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the *Pay Policy* and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their *Marital Status.*
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different *Marital Status.* No further recommendations are made in respect of this in relation to this policy.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Pregnancy / Maternity	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	We conclude there is no evidence to suggest that this policy may impact directly / indirectly on people who have the protected characteristic of *Pregnancy/Maternity* and therefore make no further recommendations in this area. **Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.** Please refer to the separate SQA Policies – Maternity and Shared Parental Leave which deals with Pay while on Maternity or Shared Parental Leave.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	The Pay Policy references Maternity Leave in relation to pay progression i.e. unless an individual is identified as an under performer they will be eligible for pay progression.
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees who have the protected characteristic of *Pregnancy/Maternity.* No further recommendations are made in respect of this in relation to this policy.

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
	SQA does not currently collect Care Experience data.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	No evidence identified.
	Foster good relations
	No evidence identified.

Rationale

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

Miscellaneous: **Other impacts identified as part of this Equality Impact Assessment which generally have a positive impact on all SQA employees include:**   • The equal pay statement within the pay policy specifically references all protected characteristics, and SQA's commitment to supporting the principles that all employees should receive equal pay for the same or similar work, or work of equal value and will operate a pay and reward system which is fair, transparent and free from bias.

- SQA is covered by and adheres to Public Sector Pay Policy which focuses on reducing inequalities and commits to tackling poverty by specific measures to address low pay.
- SQA has a 5-year journey time from the minimum to the maximum of the pay band reducing the risk of potential inequalities for all groups.
- SQA operates an analytical job evaluation scheme. The scheme systematically assesses individual jobs objectively while aiming to avoid prejudice and discrimination. The pay structure is then set based on the outcomes of the job evaluation scheme.
- Internally, SQA People Reward & Equalities Team can provide unbiased advice to employees and managers on pay related queries.
- Trade union representatives can provide members with advice, help and support relating to pay.
- An SQA employee assistance programme providing employees with confidential support and guidance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Additionally, the SQA is committed to being a supportive and inclusive employer and is members of and/or accredited by various organisations these include:
- Accreditation as a Scottish Living Wage Employer
- Disability Confident Employer
- Hidden Disability Sunflower Scheme Member
- Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion Member
- Happy to Talk Flexible Working Employer
- Business in the Community Race at Work Charter Signatory
- Stonewall Diversity Champion
- Dying to Work Charter Member
- Accreditation as a Carer Positive Employer at Engaged Level