

Equality Impact Assessment (supporting guidance available)

Summary

Name of Policy or practice	Piloting in Qualification Development		
New Policy or Revision	New policy		
Policy Owner (role)	Head of Higher National and Vocational Qualifications Policy Team		
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion	January 2026		
Agreed Schedule Review Date	January 2029	Additional review date (Action review date)	January 2027

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires Qualifications Scotland to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010,
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Qualifications Scotland has a responsibility to assess the impact of new or modified policies and practices against these needs.

Accordingly, this is an EqlA of the Piloting in Qualification Development. We define a pilot qualification as something new that is not available in our qualification product types, as set out in our design principles. This may be an entirely new qualification product, or something that challenges existing design principles, requiring change.

Qualifications Scotland will explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for end users.

We define a qualification pilot as something new that is currently not available, and to reduce risk to learners and Qualifications Scotland it is carried out with small-scale end user delivery and an iterative review process before being considered for introduction more widely. The review process is analysing the product and not the learner. Before starting a qualification pilot development, testing, and prototyping with all relevant directorates must have taken place to ensure that internal systems can adapt to support the pilot and in turn the centres and learners involved in the pilot. All existing policies remain and must be complied with.

We will develop and pilot qualifications only where **all** the following criteria can be evidenced:

- The risk to learners is low¹, due to mitigations in place.
- The risk to Qualifications Scotland is low, since pilot qualifications will only be available to a limited number of learners and centres, and have been approved through the enhanced governance route.

¹ By low risk we mean that there should not be a negative impact on the learner (learner experience or outcomes) as a result of undertaking a pilot qualification.

- The pilot proposal includes evidence of viable and sustainable upscaling, that is, budget, processes, staff, and system resources have been considered.
- The proposal evidences the requirement for new design principles or challenges existing design principles.
- The enhanced governance process for piloting qualifications has been followed.

Subject and sector specific developments would not be considered piloting unless the development meets all the criteria outlined in this policy.

Piloting in qualification development is not about approaches to delivery or approaches to gathering assessment evidence, it is monitoring the performance of the qualification, not the centre or learner. As with all qualifications each centre must demonstrate that the national standard has been met for all qualifications. Delivery approaches might be piloted from a centre perspective, but this would not be a pilot in our definition as we would only be concerned in those instances that the national standard has been met.

Qualification development pilot proposals must meet our piloting criteria as set out in the policy statement and must be approved via the enhanced governance structure set out in this policy.

If Qualifications Scotland is co-creating a qualification pilot with an external organisation, there must be a formal and/or legal agreement² in place. This agreement will set out the roles and responsibilities of each organisation involved.

² Formal and/or legal agreements set out the roles and responsibilities of all parties and detail the minimum annual review and monitoring criteria. The policy outlines the specifics involved in entering a formal and/or legal agreement.

The purpose of our Code of Practice is to outline how we ensure that our qualifications are of a high quality and fit for purpose, and that the assessment of these qualifications is monitored and maintained to a consistently high standard. By doing so, it sets out the framework by which we safeguard the integrity of our qualifications and assessment standards and ensure public confidence. This policy supports the following Governing Principles:

- Governing Principle 1:** Openness to the needs of individuals, educational and vocational institutions and the needs of society is an essential aim of Qualifications Scotland, and therefore Qualifications Scotland will endeavour to ensure that processes for the development of qualifications, assessment and the maintenance of national standards are as open and transparent as possible; and informed through a research and evidence-based approach to self-regulation.
- Governing Principle 2:** Qualifications Scotland will ensure that there is a clear rationale for the development and review of its qualifications, based on educational, vocational, or business needs.
- Governing Principle 3:** Qualifications Scotland will work in partnership with centres, stakeholders, and independent experts to develop and review qualifications.
- Governing Principle 4:** Qualifications Scotland will conduct rigorous validation processes to ensure that all qualifications are fit for purpose.
- Governing Principle 7:** Qualifications Scotland will ensure that all qualifications and assessments are as fair and accessible as possible and that the needs of candidates are met in the administration of its assessments.
- Governing Principle 9:** Qualifications Scotland will work in partnership with centres to ensure that all quality assurance processes are fair, open, and proportionate.
- Governing Principle 12:** Qualifications Scotland will ensure that its qualifications and assessments are open to evaluation by appropriate national and international bodies.

We must maintain the credibility of our qualifications and their assessment with all users. We must also ensure that there is a clear rationale for the development and review of our qualifications, based on educational, economic, social, political, and cultural needs.

To ensure we maintain our qualification products, provide benefit to our learners, and make best use of public money, there is an enhanced governance structure in place for this policy. This will ensure there is oversight of all proposed qualification pilot developments, allowing us to take a strategic and proportionate approach to piloting.

Each group and/or board forming part of the enhanced governance process must approve the proposed qualification development pilot in principle. If any stage of the governance process does not approve the proposal, then the qualification development pilot cannot proceed.

Action Plan

This section is completed at the end of the Equality Impact Assessment. Due to the importance of embedding equality in Qualifications Scotland through our actions the Action Plan will be the focus and record of ongoing actions.

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
As this is a new policy, Qualifications Scotland will monitor the implementation of this policy in 2027.	HNVQ Policy manager	January 2027	Monitoring and reporting on number and progress of pilot qualifications, efficacy of enhanced governance and associated piloting handbook. We will report on information gathered from pilot developments to determine if it has any impact on protected characteristics. Guidance will be provided in the associated handbook and all existing policies apply alongside this one.
Monitor feedback on the pilot of qualifications process relating to protected characteristics	HNVQ Policy manager	January 2027	
Monitor equality issues identified through pilot qualification evaluations and consider whether policy or guidance updates are required.	HNVQ Policy manager	January 2027	Review findings from pilot evaluations and Equality Reviews.
Monitor completion and outcomes of Equality Reviews undertaken as part of pilot qualification developments.	HNVQ Policy manager	January 2027	Identify recurring equality issues and good practice.

Policy Aims

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?

The policy seeks to put supportive parameters around Qualifications Scotland's future piloting in qualifications development. It will ensure that future pilot work is well measured and monitored and has appropriate visibility. Information gathered through evaluation of the pilot will be used to understand effectiveness of the product for learners and centres, identify any potential barriers for these groups, and develop action plan to address these barriers. The information will also be shared across the organisation for the betterment of all qualifications (where relevant). All existing policies will remain in place, and a monitoring and review process will ensure an inclusive approach to addressing all stakeholder and organisational needs.

This policy will ensure greater consistency in Qualifications Scotland's approach to piloting. Supporting guidance for this policy is being developed to assist those involved in developing qualifications to be piloted. This includes conducting appropriate evaluations before qualifications pilots can transition into business as usual. There is currently no policy or supporting guidance in place for piloting in qualifications development which has resulted in a varied approach, this policy seeks to address this and ensure compliance with equality duties.

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

Qualifications Scotland, previously Scottish Qualifications Authority (Qualifications Scotland), has developed and piloted qualifications both on its own and in partnership with stakeholders in the past. This policy draws on the evidence of those experiences and responds to an identified need for greater consistency and guidance for those involved.

To develop this policy, internal scoping activities were carried out to determine previous approaches to piloting in qualifications development. It also addressed external definitions for terminology associated with piloting activities to ensure the organisation has a shared understanding. We have also sought to understand how other organisations undertake piloting activities, to identify best practice approaches. Extensive engagement was carried out internally and the policy has received robust feedback from colleagues across the organisations throughout its development. This involved colleagues from across a wide range of business areas before the policy was presented to Leadership teams for ratification and the Standards and Policy Group for approval in November 2025.

What are the aims of this policy or practice?

By setting out our policy on piloting in qualification development, we want to ensure the process of development approval, development process and evaluation of qualification pilots is consistent, robust, and inclusive.

We adopt a service-design approach to developing and offering qualifications to be piloted. This means we work with our stakeholders to design and develop a qualification product that works for them. Piloting is a key component of this approach to gather and act on user feedback of new products. This policy sets out how this is done, to ensure that the development and piloting of qualifications is as compliant, inclusive, and transparent as possible, and informed through a research and evidence-based approach.

The policy and supporting guidance are designed to support colleagues, development partners, centres, and learners to ensure consistent and fair approaches to qualification pilots. This policy is to work alongside existing policies currently in place.

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

Qualifications Scotland will explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners.

Before starting a qualification pilot development, testing, and prototyping with all relevant directorates must have taken place to ensure that internal systems can adapt to support the pilot which provides an opportunity to take risks without impacting the learner. We define a qualification pilot as something new that is currently not available, and to reduce risk to learners, centres, and Qualifications Scotland the policies clearly states that a pilot development should be subject to an enhanced approval process and carried out with small-scale end user delivery. It will also be subject to an agreed evaluation and review process with any key findings considered and where relevant actioned before being considered for introduction more widely. It is important to note that it is the development and introduction of the product being analysed, not the performance of the centre or learner. The aim is always to mitigate any risk to learners.

We will develop and pilot qualifications only where **all** the following criteria can be evidenced:

- The risk to learners is low due to mitigations in place.
- The risk to Qualifications Scotland is low, since qualification pilots will only be available to a limited number of learners and centres, and have been approved through the enhanced governance route.
- The pilot proposal includes evidence of viable and sustainable upscaling, that is, budget, processes, staff, and system resources have been considered.
- The proposal evidences the requirement for new design principles or challenges existing design principles.
- The enhanced governance process for piloting qualifications has been followed.

Subject and sector specific developments are not considered piloting unless the development meets all the criteria outlined in this policy.

Due to the nature of this policy, pilots of qualifications are not carried out on a set cohort. The policy will include qualifications in our national qualifications offering – which typically have a well constrained age range, and well understood spreads of protected characteristics nationally. However, as pilots are carried out in a small number of centres, it is not representative to look at the national demography of this group of learners to draw conclusions for impacts.

Additionally, the process is not limited to national courses. Our HN and Vocational Qualification (VQ) offering is taken up by a much wide range of learners, with a much wider range of centre type and size.

As a result, it is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. The policy also requires qualification developments to complete the Equality Review Process, follow inclusive assessment principles and undergo enhanced governance scrutiny before approval. These requirements help ensure that equality considerations are embedded throughout the lifecycle of a pilot qualification and not only at the point of implementation.

Qualifications Scotland is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects difference. We believe that, as an employer and public body, we can play a leading part in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion by making them an integral part of our decision-making. As such, principles of equality must be central to piloting in qualification development and all existing organisational policies remain in place. [Assessment Arrangements](#) guidance and Designing Inclusive Assessment course on Academy are examples of existing resources in place for qualifications development and this includes pilot developments.

Our [Equality of Access policy](#) outlines our duties around the Equality Act 2010, anti-racist education, children's rights and corporate parenting which can be found on the [policies for centres](#) page of our website. Training, support, and guidance to enable inclusive practice is available from the Policy Analysis and Standards (PAS) Equalities Team.

Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

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

Stakeholders involved in the development of this policy have all been internal since this policy governs the activity of Qualifications Scotland staff in piloting activity. It intends to have a positive impact on other stakeholder groups, for example all Qualifications Scotland staff, learners, centres, and external stakeholders. As such, those involved in its development included colleagues representing:

- The Qualifications Development Directorate
- The Operations directorate
- The PAS Equalities team
- The PAS NQ Policy team
- The PAS HNVQ Policy team
- The PAS Standards team
- The Next Generation of Higher National Certificates and Diplomas core team
- The Business Development team
- The Digital Assessment and Support team

- The Corporate Equality Team
- Leadership teams from PAS, QD, Operations and Business Development (BD) directorates

Many of these colleagues have been involved in previous pilot developments and provided key evidence and input in shaping this policy. The policy has also been informed by previous qualification development and pilot activity undertaken by Qualifications Scotland/SQA. Learning from these developments, alongside existing equality review processes, assessment arrangements, inclusive assessment guidance and stakeholder engagement, has informed the equality considerations within this policy

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

Age

- Qualifications Scotland offers qualifications to learners of all ages and will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will benefit learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low due to mitigations in place. It is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process.

Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy also refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications.

Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.

Disability	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. It is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.
Race	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. it is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected

	characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.
Religion or Belief	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. it is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.

Sex	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. This would therefore include this protected characteristic. It is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.
Sexual Orientation	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. This would therefore include this protected characteristic. It is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process.

	Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.
Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. This would therefore include this protected characteristic. It is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.
Marriage/Civil Partnership	This protected characteristic is not relevant to this policy.

Pregnancy / Maternity	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for end users. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. This would therefore include this protected characteristic. It is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.
Care experience (where relevant)	Qualifications Scotland will only explore developing and piloting qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for learners. Proposed pilots must be able to demonstrate that a pilot qualification development presents a low risk to learners is low, due to mitigations in place. This would therefore include this protected characteristic. It is not possible to predict the protected characteristic spread of learners that might take part in any given pilot. However, we can expect that learners in any given pilot will have a range of protected characteristics. The policy is designed to reflect that, and includes equality checks throughout the development process. Existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore consider this protected characteristic. The policy refers to compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. The policy refers to

	compliance with equality processes when developing qualifications. Innovation through piloting will support the learner voice by ensuring their feedback is captured through the evaluation process and actioned accordingly. Any risk to learners of relevant protected characteristics would be captured in the evaluation process.
--	--

Impact and Opportunities for Action

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

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

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Age	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Unless legislative, regulatory or sector specific requirements apply, Qualifications Scotland qualifications are available to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners. Wherever there are age restrictions associated with a specific product it will be evidenced by legislative reasons or sector guidance and not determined by Qualifications Scotland.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and provide opportunities for all our learners. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to learners.
	Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities.
	Foster good relations
	All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. This policy working with existing organisational

	policies related to qualifications development, quality assurance and certification ensures no negative impacts or barriers are identified. Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlining in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Disability	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 No adverse impact identified for learners with a disability Qualifications Scotland products are open to all learners, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Pilot qualifications must follow the Equality Review Process, Designing Inclusive Assessment guidance, Assessment Arrangements policy and relevant accessibility requirements. Enhanced governance and monitoring arrangements provide additional safeguards to ensure pilot qualifications are developed in a way that minimises the risk of disadvantage to disabled learners. Advance equality of opportunity Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics. Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities. Foster good relations All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. The policy promotes engagement with learners, centres, stakeholders and internal business areas throughout qualification development and evaluation.

	This collaborative service-design approach helps ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in qualification development activity and supports understanding of the needs and experiences of different learner groups. Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Race	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 No impact identified on basis of race. Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners. Advance equality of opportunity Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics. Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities. Foster good relations All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. The policy promotes engagement with learners, centres, stakeholders and internal business areas throughout qualification development and evaluation. This collaborative service-design approach helps ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in qualification development activity and supports understanding of the needs and experiences of different learner groups. A learner's race is not used as a criterion for access to any of Qualifications Scotland's

	qualifications. Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlining in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
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 No impact identified for learners with beliefs or a religion. A learner's religion or belief is not used as a criterion for access to any of Qualifications Scotland's qualifications. Qualifications Scotland products are open to all learners, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners. Advance equality of opportunity Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics. Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities. Foster good relations All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. The policy promotes engagement with learners, centres, stakeholders and internal business areas throughout qualification development and evaluation. This collaborative service-design approach helps ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in qualification development activity and supports understanding of the needs and experiences of different learner groups.

	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sex	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 No impact identified for learners by sex. A learner's sex is not used as a criterion for access to any of Qualifications Scotland's qualifications. Qualifications Scotland products are open to all learners, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlining in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners. Advance equality of opportunity Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics. Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities. Foster good relations All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. The policy promotes engagement with learners, centres, stakeholders and internal business areas throughout qualification development and evaluation. This collaborative service-design approach helps ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in qualification development activity and supports understanding of the needs and experiences of different learner groups.

	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sexual Orientation	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	No impact identified for learners by sexual orientation.
	A learner's sexual orientation is not used as a criterion for access to any of Qualifications Scotland's qualifications. Qualifications Scotland products are open to all learners, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics. Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities.
	Foster good relations
	All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. The policy promotes engagement with learners, centres, stakeholders and internal business areas throughout qualification development and evaluation. This collaborative service-design approach helps ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in qualification development activity and supports understanding of the needs and experiences of different learner groups.

	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlining in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
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
	No impact identified for learners by gender reassignment.
	A learner's gender identity or trans status is not used as a criterion for access to any of Qualifications Scotland's qualifications. Qualifications Scotland products are open to all learners, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics. Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities.
	Foster good relations
	All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. The policy promotes engagement with learners, centres, stakeholders and internal business areas throughout qualification development and evaluation. This collaborative service-design approach helps ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in qualification development activity and supports understanding of the needs and experiences of different learner groups.

	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
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
	This protected characteristic is not relevant for this policy.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	This protected characteristic is not relevant for this policy.
	Foster good relations
	This protected characteristic is not relevant for 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
	No impact identified by learners' pregnancy or maternity status.
	A learner's pregnancy or maternity status is not used as a criterion for access to any of Qualifications Scotland's qualifications. Qualifications Scotland products are open to all learners, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics.

	Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities.
	Foster good relations
	All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. The policy promotes engagement with learners, centres, stakeholders and internal business areas throughout qualification development and evaluation. This collaborative service-design approach helps ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in qualification development activity and supports understanding of the needs and experiences of different learner groups. Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.
Considered by Qualifications Scotland	General Equality Duty
Care experience (where relevant)	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	No impact identified by care experienced learners.
	Centres are asked to consider the needs of care experienced learners and to determine the most appropriate learning and assessment arrangements, where required. Qualifications Scotland products are open to all learners, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlined in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits risk to learners
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages, and all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. Piloting is an opportunity to innovate and develop qualification products that may better meet the needs of learners. Where existing qualification products do not fully meet identified needs, pilot qualifications may provide opportunities to improve accessibility, flexibility, and participation for a diverse range of learners, including those with protected characteristics.

	Evaluation activities will monitor the learners engaged in the pilots. Existing policies and evaluation monitoring will ensure that a range of learners can be represented and engaged with during pilot activities.
	Foster good relations
	All existing policies remain in place alongside this policy and therefore may address relations between different protected characteristics within those policies. This policy working with existing organisational policies related to qualifications development, quality assurance and certification ensures no negative impacts or barriers are identified. Qualifications Scotland products are open to learners of all ages. Enhanced governance and monitoring are outlining in the policy to ensure pilots are developed in line with agreed criteria that limits any risk to all learners.

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.
The purpose of this policy is to allow Qualifications Scotland to explore and support opportunities for innovation in qualifications where our existing products do not currently meet an identified need and where the development will provide a benefit for end users. It provides broad parameters to ensure appropriate monitoring and support is in place, to support learners and centres who are engaged in piloting, as well as Qualifications Scotland as the awarding body. While no adverse impacts have been identified at policy level, individual pilot qualifications may have specific equality impacts. These will be considered through the Equality Review Process, which forms part of the enhanced governance arrangements for all pilot qualification developments. Qualifications Scotland is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects diversity. We believe that, as an employer and public body, we can play a leading part in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion by making them an integral part of our decision-making. For each pilot qualification development an individual Equality Review will be conducted. This forms part of our enhanced governance and puts learners at the centre of our decision-making for pilot qualification development.

As stated throughout this document, all existing policies remain in place alongside this policy. [Assessment Arrangements](#) guidance and Designing Inclusive Assessment course on Academy are examples of existing resources in place for qualifications development and this includes pilot developments. These resources ensure that our qualifications are inclusive in their design.

Though negative impacts have not been identified, it has been difficult to identify any impacts of this policy, due to its breadth of application. As such, monitoring actions have been noted, and will be maintained as the policy rolls out.