

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
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Explain how you will monitor and record the actual impact on equality groups, including how the evidence can be revisited to measure the actual impact.

Equality Impact Assessment – Retirement Policy V1.0

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	

Equality Impact Assessment – Retirement Policy V1.0

Identified Actions	General Equality Duty	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
<p>In 2023, SQA will undertake an analysis of retirement data by disability 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</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>Reward Advisor, People Reward & Equalities and Data Analyst, People Analytics Governance & Systems</p>	<p>By September 2023</p>	
<p>In 2023, SQA will undertake an analysis of retirement data by race 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 races.</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>Reward Advisor, People Reward & Equalities and Data Analyst, People Analytics Governance & Systems</p>	<p>By September 2023</p>	
<p>Starting in 2023, SQA to record details of retirees by <i>Nationality and Ethnicity</i></p>	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>	<p>Reward Advisor, People Reward & Equalities and Data Analyst, People Analytics Governance & Systems</p>	<p>By September 2023</p>	

Equality Impact Assessment – Retirement Policy V1.0

<p>Identify the reasons why a higher number of women (than men) left SQA via retirement. Once established, decide if this could be removed, mitigates or justified.</p>	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>	<p>Reward Advisor, People Reward & Equalities</p>	<p>By September 2023</p>	
<p>Due to a very high non declaration rate of <i>Disability, Race and Religion/ Belief</i>, undertake further work with the aim of improving overall declaration rates from retiring employees.</p>	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>	<p>Reward Advisor, People Reward & Equalities</p>	<p>By September 2023</p>	

Policy Aims:

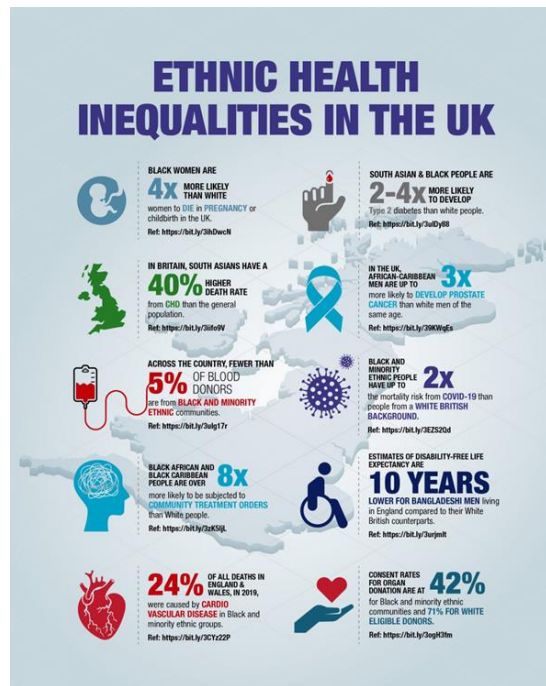
Name of Policy or practice	Retirement Policy
New Policy or Revision	Revised
Name of Policy Owner	People Reward and Equalities Manager
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion	Draft

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?
<p>SQA is committed to equal opportunities for all colleagues and recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce, including the skills, knowledge and experience older colleagues contribute to the business and to the broader SQA community.</p> <p>SQA does not operate a fixed retirement age and acknowledges retirement is a choice and aim to ensure colleagues can continue to work until they feel it is appropriate for them to retire.</p>

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

Different Health outcomes affecting people with Protected Characteristics and potentially leading to risks of early retirement:

We recognise that people with different Protected Characteristics have different health outcomes which could impact on retirement. For example, there is considerable evidence indicating that people from different ethnic groups experience poorer health than the overall UK population. Examples include higher observed rates of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and mental illness.



For more information and sources for above statistics please visit: www.nhsrho.org
October 2021



Source: NHS Race & Health Observatory: [Ethnic Health Inequalities in the UK](https://www.nhs.uk/health-inequalities) - NHS - Race and Health Observatory NHS – Race and Health Observatory (nhsrho.org)

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

The picture on the page above shows that:

- Black Women are 4 x more likely to die in childbirth than White women
- South Asian and Black people are 2 – 4 times more likely to develop type-2 diabetes than White people
- In Britain, South Asians have a 40% higher death rate from CHD than the general population
- In the UK, Afro-Caribbean men are 3 x more likely to develop prostate cancer than white men of the same age
- Across the country, fewer than 5% of blood donors are from Black and minority ethnic communities
- Black and minority ethnic people have 2 x the mortality risk of from covid-19 than people from a White British background
- Black African and Black Caribbean people are over 8 x more likely to be subjected to Community Treatment Orders than White people
- Estimates of disability-free life expectancy are 10 years lower for Bangladeshi men living in England compared with their White British counterparts
- 24% of all deaths in England and Wales in 2019 were caused by cardiovascular disease in Black and minority ethnic groups
- Consent rates for organ donation are at 24% for Black and minority ethnic groups and at 71% for White eligible donors

For more information relating to health outcomes by Protected Characteristics please see: [NHS England - What are healthcare inequalities?](#)

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

Pensions Gap – Women:

A recent publication (see link below) reported a **significant gap in pension savings between women and men of over 40%**. (Women on average, having lower savings). This equates to an average difference in pension income by Sex of approximately £7,500 a year.

Source: [achieving gender equality in pensions, Prospects 2020 report on the gender pension gap](#)

Also, because the amount people save for a pension is usually a percentage of their overall salary, the national average gender pay gap (source ofns) could mean that, on average, women have less salary to put into their pension.

Women are more likely to take career breaks, have caring responsibilities and work part-time – all contributing to potentially lower earnings.

Occupational pensions for women are often adversely affected by lower earnings, interrupted careers and caring duties: As prime carers for both children and relatives, women usually work fewer years, and also earn less than men. Lower lifetime earnings often equate to lower private pensions. Historically, women were often forced to leave company pensions if they married or worked part-time and tended to work in occupations where employer pensions were less prevalent.

The average pension pot for a married man in the UK is £53,000 compared to £10,000 for married women. Also, divorced women, on balance, risk losing access to a larger pension fund. https://www.insuringwomensfutures.co.uk/uploads/2017/03/COH_J012646-IWF-Pension-Life-Journey-Report-Update-P2.pdf

Women’s state pension age increased by more than men’s at shorter notice: The Government has relatively recently increased pension age for older women by up to 18 months with only 5 years notice given. In contrast, men had at least 7 years’ notice of a 12 months rise.

There is evidence that the short notice changes have caused significant hardship to many women - especially as many did not know about the plans to increase their pension age from 60.

For more comprehensive information - please see <https://pensionsandsavings.com/equal-state-pension-ages-but-no-pension-equality-for-women/>

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

Pensions Gap – Minority Ethnicity:

Ethnic minority pensioners are, on average, £3,350 a year worse off in retirement than others of the same age according to *The People's Pension (TPP) report Measuring the Ethnicity Pension Gap* which found that the average ethnic minority pensioner's retirement income is 24.4 per cent less than the average white pensioner. The report also highlights issues of intersectionality (or compound discrimination) reporting that the gap is even larger when Sex is factored in. The report states that a female ethnic minority pensioner is, on average, 51.4 per cent worse off in retirement than a white male pensioner. The gaps being attributed to a combination of lower average earnings, variable employment rates and the fact that ethnic minority workers are more likely to be self-employed.

Source: <https://www.pensionsage.com/pa/Ethnic-minorities-3350-a-year-worse-off-in-retirement.php>

Disability and Ill health Retirement:

Retiring earlier or not working, can, of course, reduce pension incomes. Disabled people are half as likely to work as non-disabled people beyond the age of 60.

Although the income of pensioners receiving disability benefits is higher than the income of pensioners that do not receive them, this does not take into account the additional costs of disability, which can be substantial. Lower earnings and time spent not in full-time work result in lower overall pension contributions for disabled people.

Source: [Raising the State Pension Age \(pensionspolicyinstitute.org.uk\)](https://pensionspolicyinstitute.org.uk/raising-the-state-pension-age)

Finally , disabled people are more likely (than non-disabled people) to be:

- working in lower-skilled occupations
- self-employed
- working part-time (and subsequently less hours)
- working in the public sector
- temporarily away from work

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-employment-of-disabled-people-2021/the-employment-of-disabled-people-2021>

What are the aims of this policy or practice?

The stated aims of SQA's *Retirement Policy* are to:

- Assist employees who indicate their intention to retire from the organisation from the age of 55 onwards.
- Assist employees who are forced to retire as a result of ill health
- Ensure that all SQA employees are treated fairly and consistently
- Clearly set out SQA's approach to retirement
- Provide guidance on how employees can retire
- Clarify when pension payments apply
- Ensure that SQA applies retirement arrangements which are fair, transparent, free from bias and based on lawful practices

The policy also details the management of some discretions in relation to retirement under the *Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)* administered by the *Strathclyde Pension Fund*. A separate policy outlining all pension discretions under the LGPS is available on the SQA intranet.

The following SQA policies are also related to the *Retirement* policy:

- Pensions Discretions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Flexible working policy
- Dignity at Work

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, women who are 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 queries related to retirement or their pension pot
- Be less likely to be selected for developmental opportunities, some of which may have a financial incentive
- Be more likely to be displaced and more likely to end up in a lower graded post and subject to salary protection
- Be more likely to work part time and therefore accrue lower overall pension contributions
- Not have joined a pension scheme on the grounds that their former spouse was considered to be the main pension earners
- Be more likely to experience ill health

As part of this assessment, we identified that all the bullet points above could potentially have a detrimental impact someone's ability to accrue pension.

The development, implementation and analysis of the effects of this policy are therefore highly relevant to people from some 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 will be 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 will only consult with internal groups. These include:

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

Evidence of Stakeholder Engagement:

Trade Union Consultation Review Group (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.

Equality Impact Assessment – Retirement Policy V1.0

Evidence of Staff Network Consultation Meetings

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



This table (1.04) shows colleagues by age band for 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

Disability

Figure 10: Disability by directorate: all colleagues, grade 1 – EMT



This table (Figure 10) shows colleague disability status by Directorate for 2020.

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019-2021

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

Race

Figure 12: Ethnicity by directorate — all colleagues, grade one – EMT



The directorate breakdown of ethnicity shows the following:

- The business areas with the largest concentration of ethnic minority colleagues are: Business Systems (7.9% ethnic minority), Qualifications Development (2.9% ethnic minority) and People (2.2% ethnic minority).

This table (Figure 12) shows ethnicity by Directorate for 2020.

Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019-2021

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf

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%	

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

This table (1.16) shows colleague religion / belief data for 2019 – 2020 and 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

Grade	Gender (Sex)					
	Female			Male		
	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

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

<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sexual Orientation</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>Variance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bisexual</td> <td>0.96%</td> <td>1.26%</td> <td>0.30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gay man</td> <td>1.39%</td> <td>2.11%</td> <td>0.71%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gay woman / Lesbian</td> <td>0.96%</td> <td>1.05%</td> <td>0.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heterosexual/straight</td> <td>46.20%</td> <td>70.60%</td> <td>24.41%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In another way</td> <td>0.11%</td> <td>0.21%</td> <td>0.10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not sure</td> <td>0.11%</td> <td>0.11%</td> <td>0.00%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>2.79%</td> <td>8.01%</td> <td>5.22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not Provided</td> <td>47.48%</td> <td>16.65%</td> <td>-30.83%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100.00%</td> <td>100.00%</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This table (1.18) shows colleagues by sexual orientation for 2019 – 2020 and the variance between the two years.</p> <p>Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021 https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf</p>	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%	
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<p>Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)</p>	<p>No equality profiling data is currently captured by SQA</p>																																								
<p>Marriage/Civil Partnership</p>	<p>Table 1.10: Colleagues by relationship status</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Relationship status</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>Variance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Married/Civil Partnership</td> <td>30.01%</td> <td>44.66%</td> <td>14.65%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single</td> <td>24.44%</td> <td>35.87%</td> <td>11.44%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>1.93%</td> <td>5.71%</td> <td>3.79%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not Provided</td> <td>43.62%</td> <td>13.76%</td> <td>-29.87%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100.00%</td> <td>100.00%</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This table (1.10) shows colleagues by marriage/civil partnership for 2019 – 2020 and the variance between the two years.</p> <p>Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021 https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf</p>	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%																	
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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%	
	<p>This table (1.20) shows colleagues by pregnancy / maternity for 2019 – 2020 and the variance between the two years.</p> <p>Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2021 https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf</p>			
Care experience (where relevant)	<p>SQA does not currently collect Care Experience data.</p>			

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																																																																																			
	Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:																																																																																			
	This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees who wish to retire, have to retire, or do not wish to retire – setting out a clear and consistent approach for all employees. This policy could therefore have a positive impact on all employees. Equally, we respectfully acknowledge that some forms of early retirement (for example, because of ill-health) may not necessarily be regarded as a ‘positive’ by the person who is retiring.																																																																																			
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<p>Age (Continued)</p>	<p>The table above shows that a total of 27 people retired from SQA in the last three years. An analysis of retirees by Age is relatively inconclusive and indicates no clear adverse impacts on any specific age groups (people over 57).</p> <p>Positive Impacts Recorded.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>This policy does, in principle, promote the ‘same chance’ / equality of opportunity to employees aged 55+ as it promotes equal access to retirement, early retirement or non-retirement.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Foster good relations</p>
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees between 55 years and over. No further recommendations are made in this respect at this stage.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty																																												
Disability	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010																																												
	<p>This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees who wish to retire, have to retire, or do not wish to retire – setting out a clear and consistent approach for all employees. This policy could therefore have a positive impact on all employees. Equally, we respectfully acknowledge that some forms of early retirement (for example, because of ill health) may not necessarily be regarded as a ‘positive’ by the person who is retiring.</p> <p>Although the policy applies equally to all employees aged 55 and over and is accessible regardless of <i>Disability</i>, it is, on balance, more likely that an employee with a <i>Disability</i> will either be awarded or apply for early health retirement than an employee who is not disabled.</p>																																												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">Retirement</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="5">Disability</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Disability</th> <th>2019-2020</th> <th>2020-2021</th> <th>2021-2022</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>7</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not Provided</td> <td>11</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>13</td> <td>3</td> <td>11</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Retirement					Disability					Disability	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total	No	2	1	7	10	Not Provided	11	2	2	15	Prefer not to say			1	1	Yes			1	1	Total	13	3	11	27
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<p>When retiring, employees are given the option to declare whether or not they have a Disability. A total of 55% of retirees did not provide this information. For the remaining 45% of people who did reply, 10 people declared no disability whilst only one person declared a Disability.</p>																																													

	<p>Conclusion: Insufficient response rate from employees to either conclude or discount adverse impact on the grounds of <i>Disability</i>. <u>Further work or amendments to documentation required to improve overall declaration rates in this area.</u></p>
	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the retirement policy in respect of ill health early retirement. There is no evidence to indicate that the policy itself could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their <i>Disability</i> status.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
	<p>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.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Race	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p>This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees who wish to retire, have to retire, or do not wish to retire – setting out a clear and consistent approach for all employees. This policy could therefore have a positive impact on all employees – irrespective of <i>Race/ Ethnicity</i>. Equally, we respectfully acknowledge that some forms of early retirement (for example, because of ill-health) may not necessarily be regarded as a ‘positive’ by the person who is retiring.</p> <p>Whilst SQA currently collects some data related to people retiring, it does not collate ethnicity (beyond white Scottish / white English – please see the appendices of this document). Also a total of 76% of respondents failed to declare their Ethnicity. (See appendices)</p> <p>Therefore, the examples of the equality risks listed in pages 5 - 7 of this document can neither be identified or discounted at this stage.</p> <p>A combination of Positive and Potentially Negative Impacts recorded.</p> <p><u>Starting in 2023, SQA to record details of retirees by Nationality and Ethnicity.</u></p> <p>Conclusion: Insufficient profiling information is currently collected from SQA employees to either conclude or discount adverse impact on the grounds of <i>Race / Ethnicity</i>.</p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their <i>Race</i> .
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different <i>Races / Ethnicities</i> . No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Religion or Belief	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p>As previously stated, this policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees who wish to retire, have to retire, or do not wish to retire – setting out a clear and consistent approach for all employees. This policy could therefore have a positive impact on all employees – irrespective of their <i>Religion</i> or <i>Philosophical</i> Belief system.</p> <p>Whilst we can identify no reasonable risks or evidence to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this Protected Characteristic, a total of 76% of respondents failed to declare their Religion / Belief. (See appendices)</p> <p>Conclusion: Insufficient profiling information is currently collected from SQA employees to either conclude or discount adverse impact on the grounds of <i>Religion or Belief</i>.</p> <p><u>Different types of Religion / Belief are also not captured comprehensively in SQA (See appendices).</u></p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their <i>Religion or Belief</i>.</p>
	Foster good relations
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different <i>Religions or Beliefs</i>. No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty																														
Sex	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees who wish to retire, have to retire, or do not wish to retire – setting out a clear and consistent approach for all employees. This policy could therefore have a positive impact on all employees – irrespective of Sex. Equally, we respectfully acknowledge that some forms of early retirement (for example, because of ill health) may not necessarily be regarded as a ‘positive’ by the person who is retiring.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">Retirement</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="5">HMRC Gender</th> </tr> <tr> <th>HMRC Gender</th> <th>2019-2020</th> <th>2020-2021</th> <th>2021-2022</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>13</td> <td>1</td> <td>8</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td></td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>13</td> <td>3</td> <td>11</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: SQA People Analytics, Governance & Systems</p> <p>The table above shows that in the last three years a total of 27 people retired from SQA. Within this cohort, 81% were female and 19% were male.</p> <p>In SQA overall, 62% of staff were female and 38% were male.</p> <p>Source: SQA Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019-2021</p> <p>https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/sqa-equality-mainstreaming-report-2019-21.pdf</p> <p>A higher number of females retired than males.</p> <p>Adverse impact recorded.</p> <p><u>The reasons for this adverse impact require both identification and where appropriate, mitigating.</u></p>	Retirement					HMRC Gender					HMRC Gender	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total	Female	13	1	8	22	Male		2	3	5	Total	13	3	11	27
Retirement																															
HMRC Gender																															
HMRC Gender	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total																											
Female	13	1	8	22																											
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Total	13	3	11	27																											

Sex	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their Sex.
	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
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>
	<p>As previously stated, this policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees who wish to retire, have to retire, or do not wish to retire – setting out a clear and consistent approach for all employees. This policy could therefore have a positive impact on all employees – irrespective of their <i>Sexual Orientation</i>.</p> <p>We can identify no reasonable risks or evidence to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this Protected Characteristic.</p> <p>Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.</p>
	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their <i>Sexual Orientation</i>.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees of different <i>Sexual Orientations</i>.</p> <p>No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
<p>Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>
	<p>This policy provides clear guidance for SQA employees who wish to retire, have to retire, or do not wish to retire – setting out a clear and consistent approach for all employees. This policy could therefore have a positive impact on all employees – irrespective of their <i>Gender Identity or LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning +)</i> status.</p> <p>We can identify no reasonable risks or evidence to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this Protected Characteristic.</p> <p>Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.</p>
	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their <i>Gender Identity / Transgender or LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning +)</i> status.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees who have different <i>Gender Identity / Transgender or LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning +)</i> status.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
<p>Marriage/Civil Partnership</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>
	<p>We can identify no reasonable risks or evidence to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this Protected Characteristic.</p> <p>Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.</p>
	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their <i>Marital Status</i>.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees on the grounds of their <i>Marital Status</i>.</p> <p>No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Pregnancy / Maternity	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p>We can identify no reasonable risks or evidence to indicate how or why this policy could disproportionately impact a person on the grounds of this Protected Characteristic.</p> <p>Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.</p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave differently or less favourably.
	Foster good relations
<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave.</p> <p>No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>	

Considered by SQA	General Equality Duty
Care experience (where relevant)	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p>We conclude there is no evidence to suggest that this policy may impact directly on people who are care experienced and therefore make no further recommendations in this area.</p> <p>Neutral Equality related impact is therefore recorded in this area.</p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	All SQA employees are entitled to use, access and be subjected to the <i>Retirement Policy</i> and there is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees who are care experienced differently or less favourably.
	Foster good relations
There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees who are care experienced. No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.	

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.

Not applicable.

Miscellaneous

Additionally, the SQA is committed to being a supportive and inclusive employer and is members of and/or accredited by various organisations these include:

- 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

Appendices – SQA Retirement Data: (Source SQA People Analytics, Governance & Systems)

Total Leavers Retirement				
Reason for Leaving	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
Ill Health			1	1
Retirement	13	3	10	26
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Age				
Age	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
57	1		1	2
60	2			2
61	1		2	3
62	2		1	3
63	2	1		3
64	2		1	3
65	2		2	4
66		1	2	3
67			1	1
68	1			1
69			1	1
79		1		1
Total	13	3	11	27

Equality Impact Assessment – Retirement Policy V1.0

Retirement				
HMRC Gender				
HMRC Gender	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
Female	13	1	8	22
Male		2	3	5
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Ethnicity				
Ethnicity(T)	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
Not Provided	11	2		13
Prefer Not to Say			1	1
White British		1	4	5
White Scottish	2		6	8
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Nationality				
Nationality (T)	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
British	1		5	6
Not Provided	11	2		13
Scottish	1	1	6	8
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Religion				
Religion	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
Christian: Church of Scotland	1		5	6
Christian: Roman Catholic			2	2
None	1	1	2	4
Not Provided	11	2		13
Prefer not to say			2	2
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Transgender Identification				
Transgender Identification	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
No	2	1	9	12
Not Provided	11	2	1	14
Prefer not to say			1	1
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Sexual Orientation				
Sexual Orientation	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
Heterosexual/straight	2		8	10
Not Provided	11	2	1	14
Prefer not to say		1	2	3
Total	13	3	11	27

Equality Impact Assessment – Retirement Policy V1.0

Retirement				
Disability				
Disability	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
No	2	1	7	10
Not Provided	11	2	2	15
Prefer not to say			1	1
Yes			1	1
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Caring Responsibilities				
Caring Responsibilities	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
No	2	1	8	11
Not Provided	11	2	2	15
Prefer not to say			1	1
Total	13	3	11	27

Retirement				
Relationship Status				
Relationship Status	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total
Divorced/Dissolved Civil Partnership			2	2
Married	2		5	7
Not Provided	11	2		13
Prefer not to say		1	1	2
Single			3	3
Total	13	3	11	27