

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	January 2024	Additional Schedule Review Date	Nov 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.

Required Actions	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
Actions taken to monitor the implementation of policy and the impact on equality groups (evidence and consultation)			[ONGOING RECORD]
[LIST]			
Reviewed annually in line with SQA Risk Management Policy and governance requirements. The Compliance Team will consult with SQA's Risk & Opportunity Group and Finance & Performance Group to gather further insight on data collated from Risk, Opportunity and Issues Registers and Corporate Risk Register and application of this policy to staff with protected characteristics.	Compliance Manager	January 2024	

Identified Actions	General Equality Duty	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
[LIST]	[CROSS REFERENCE]			
Provide equality and diversity guidelines to members of the Risk & Opportunities Group to incorporate the needs of people with protected characteristics in the approach and completion of Risk, Opportunity and Issues registers during quarterly review	Advance equality of opportunity	Compliance Manager	January 2024	

Policy Aims

Name of Policy or practice	Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Policy
New Policy or Revision	Revision
Name of Policy Owner	Head of Service, Strategic Planning & Governance
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion	March 2023

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?
SQA's Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Policy provides us with a framework to support better decision making through a good understanding of risks, opportunities and their likely impact. There is correlation between SQA's Risk, Opportunity and Issues (ROI) and Business Continuity policies. Allowing the organisation to build operational resilience through identification of risks and putting effective mitigating actions in place to prevent or manage any disruptions.
What evidence is there to support the implementation or development of this policy or practice?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and revised Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Policy • Current and revised Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Process Guide • Feedback from SQA Risk and Opportunities Group • Feedback from SQA Finance and Performance Group

- Feedback from SQA Audit Committee members
- Feedback from SQA Board of Management
- Feedback from SQA Corporate Risk Register (CRR) owners
- Feedback from SQA ROI Register owners.

What are the aims of this policy or practice?

The purpose of the Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Policy is to support better decision making through a good understanding of risks, opportunities and their likely impact.

- identifying and assessing risks, opportunities and issues,
- planning and implementing mitigating actions and
- escalating to Corporate Risk Register when required.

It is an important part of SQA's internal controls and corporate governance arrangements. This policy provides a framework to support risk, opportunity and issue management in SQA.

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

In terms of risks – equality impact considerations will need to be considered in the response taken and mitigating actions implemented; this relates to the probability and impact on services and SQA employees.

Risk Assessments are fully documented as part of SQA's Risk Management process and procedures. Where mitigating actions are required it is the responsibility of Risk Owners to consider requirements including the needs of people with protected characteristics. These needs should be balanced with the requirements of addressing risks and cannot therefore be fully documented in advance. Depending on the cause, consequence, probability and impact of the risk, ROI registers and CRR should take into consideration the needs, as far as reasonably practicable, of all groups that may be affected.

Diversity & inclusion (D&I): Levers for post lockdown recovery | BCI (thebci.org)

Diversity, equity and inclusion risk management | Grant Thornton

Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

What stakeholders have you engaged with in the development of this policy or practice?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SQA Risk & Opportunities Group • SQA Audit Committee • SQA Board of Management • SQA Joint Trade Union & HR Group 	
What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment?	
Age	<p>Planned consultation with all related SQA Unions following completion of equality impact assessment. We may feedback from SQA's Employee Networks, if required.</p> <p>SQA has a diverse workforce. As per 30 March 2020, the age distribution was:</p> <p>Age band 16-24 5.27%</p> <p>Age band 25-29 6.32%</p> <p>Age band 30-34 11.49%</p> <p>Age band 35-39 15.28%</p> <p>Age band 40-44 14.23%</p> <p>Age band 45-49 11.06%</p> <p>Age band 50-54 14.86%</p> <p>Age band 55-59 12.33%</p> <p>Age band 60-64 7.59%</p> <p>Age band 65+ 1.58%</p>
Disability	SQA has a diverse workforce. As per 30 March 2020, 8.72% of staff declared they have a disability.
Race	SQA has a diverse workforce. As per 30 March 2020, 3.16% defined themselves as belonging to an ethnic minority.
Religion or Belief	86.72% of colleagues have provided information relating to their religious beliefs in 2020. This represents a total of 823 colleagues and an increase of 30.13% on 2019. The increase is spread across all religions or beliefs. 283 colleagues declared Christian as their religion or belief in 2020. This is an increase of 9.13% (90 colleagues) from 2019. 164 colleagues declared non-Christian religion or belief, an increase of 57 (5.81%) from 2019. 287 colleagues declared no religion or belief, which is an additional 8.61% (94). There was an increase of 6.58% colleagues (63) declaring they would 'prefer not to say'.

Sex	SQA has a diverse workforce. As per 30 March 2020, 61.64% of staff were female and 38.36% were male.
Sexual Orientation	A total of 791 colleagues have declared their sexual orientation in 2020. This may be a result of the equality campaign encouraging colleagues to complete equality and diversity data in the second half of 2020. There was an increase in colleagues declaring they would 'prefer not to say', with the largest increase (6.97%, four) among grade 3.
Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)	SQA does not currently capture information regarding gender re-assignment.
Marriage/Civil Partnership	86.24% of colleagues declared their relationship status in 2020, an increase of 29.87% compared to 2019. Of those who provided this information, there are more colleagues who have declared they are married or in a civil partnership (44.66%) compared to those who have declared they are single (35.87%). For the purposes of this report, those who have declared their relationship status as married or in a civil partnership have been grouped together to compare with those who fall within the category of single, which groups the following: single, cohabiting/in a relationship, separated, widowed/surviving partner from civil partnership, divorced/dissolved civil partnership and other. 54 colleagues (5.71%) declared they would prefer not to say in 2020, which is an increase of 3.79%.
Pregnancy / Maternity	In 2020 1.05% or six female colleagues have had a period of maternity leave.
Care experience (where relevant)	SQA does not currently capture information regarding Care Experience.

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
	<p>SQA considers that this policy, on balance, will have a perceived positive impact on employees of all ages as the policy aims to drive awareness, enhance and support Risk Management across SQA for all staff by preventing, controlling and mitigating the impacts of risks and issues.</p> <p>Analysis of business and people requirements is fully documented as part of SQA's Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Process. If reactive actions need to be implemented Heads of Service and Senior Managers will consider the requirements to deliver prioritised activities including the needs of people with protected characteristics. These needs would have to be balanced with the requirements for the continuity of the business in each circumstance and cannot therefore be fully documented in advance.</p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>For example, the policy incorporates identifying potential risks to SQA from the internal and external environment and ensuring resources are available to facilitate home working. Some conditions can be progressive in later life that can make walking or travelling in icy conditions more dangerous e.g., osteoporosis and therefore identifying bad weather and promoting working from home is those conditions increased the safety of staff with conditions due or aggravated by age.</p> <p>People who are older (aged 50 and over) and / or who have a disability are less likely to regard walking or cycling as viable alternatives to short car journeys; when an individual has both of these characteristics, this perception is much</p>

	more marked. 60% of people aged 50 and over with a limiting disability felt it would be difficult to replace short car journeys with walking.
	Neutral - No actions identified.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral - No actions identified.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Disability	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Impact will need to be considered and recorded as part of the mitigating actions in response to each risk. ROI registers will encourage colleagues to consider the impact on different groups. We adopt use of plain English and avoid jargon in our policies, processes and supporting documentation. Consideration will also be given to whether the Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Policy, Process and Procedures need to be produced in different formats, available on request.
	Neutral – no actions identified.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – no actions identified.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – no actions identified.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Race	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

	Impact will need to be considered and recorded as part of the mitigating actions in response to each risk. ROI registers will encourage colleagues to consider the impact on different groups. Consideration will also be given to whether the Risk, Opportunity and Issues Management Policy, Process and Procedures need to be produced in different formats, available on request.
	Neutral – no actions identified.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – no actions identified.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – no actions identified.
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
	Although as above, colleagues would be encouraged to consider and acknowledge the impact on different groups which may also include notable religious holidays. The positive influence of SQA’s Risk Management policy is that risk assessments are carried out, meaning religion and belief would be considered as part of our processes.
	Neutral – No actions required.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – No actions required.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – No actions required.

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sex	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	Neutral – No actions required.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – No actions required.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – No actions required.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sexual Orientation	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	We have no evidence in relation to SQA staff or from wider research that there is a significant impact, Neutral or negative, for this group in terms of this policy.
	Neutral – No action required.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – No action required. Foster good relations

	Neutral – No action required.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	We have no evidence in relation to SQA staff or from wider research that there is a significant impact, Neutral or negative, for this group in terms of this policy.
	Neutral – No action required.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – No action required.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – No action required.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Marriage/Civil Partnership	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	We have no evidence in relation to SQA staff or from wider research that there is a significant impact, positive or negative, for this group in terms of this policy.
	Neutral – No action required.
	Advance equality of opportunity

	Neutral – No action required.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – No action required.
Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Pregnancy / Maternity	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	As above, impact will need to be considered and recorded as part of the response and mitigating actions to each risk identified. ROI registers will encourage colleagues to consider the impact on different groups along with risk assessments being carried out. Line Managers have overall responsibility for staff on maternity leave.
	Neutral – No action required.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – No action required.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – No action required.
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
	We have no evidence in relation to SQA staff or from wider research that there is a significant impact, Positive or negative, for this group in terms of this policy.

	Neutral – No action required. As above, impact will need to be considered and recorded as part of the response and mitigating actions to each risk identified. ROI registers will encourage colleagues to consider the impact on different groups along with risk assessments being carried out.
	Advance equality of opportunity
	Neutral – No action required.
	Foster good relations
	Neutral – No action required.

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.
There is no requirement to change the existing policy – Based on the information above we will consider any proposals to enhance and promote consideration of equality impact where possible. This could relate to CRR and ROI registers and risk management assessment and processes which would support our responsibilities to mainstream the general equality duty.