

## 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 24	Additional Schedule Review Date	By September 23
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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 – Staff Leave 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	

Equality Impact Assessment – Staff Leave V1.0

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 – Staff Leave V1.0

Identified Actions	General Equality Duty	Owner	Date	Comment & Review
Recommendation is that SQA collect equality data on protected characteristics in relation to staff leave.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	People Analytics, Governance and Systems Manager	September 2023	
Recommendation that the policy specifically references the Attendance Management Policy to ensure that Line Managers are aware that absences related to a disability must be considered with regard to Equality Guidelines.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	HR Shared Service Manager	September 2023	
Recommendation that specific guidance be inserted into the policy for managers to consider annual leave requests when based on grounds of religion/belief to ensure that they are carefully considering any such requests in line with Equality legislation and avoiding potentially direct or indirect discrimination.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	HR Shared Service Manager	September 2023	
Recommendation to adjust wording in policy to consider granting annual leave for religious purposes if this falls within first 8 weeks of employment.	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	HR Shared Service Manager	September 2023	

Equality Impact Assessment – Staff Leave V1.0

<p>Recommendation that the Staff Leave Policy specifically references out to the Transition Policy in order to ensure that Line Managers and employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities relating to this</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>HR Shared Service Manager</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	
<p>Recommendation to adjust wording to signpost to Pregnancy/maternity policy.</p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>HR Shared Service Manager</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	

**Policy Aims**

<b>Name of Policy or practice</b>	Staff Leave
<b>New Policy or Revision</b>	Revised
<b>Name of Policy Owner</b>	Head of Human Resources
<b>Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion</b>	Draft

**What is the rationale for this policy or practice?**

The policy highlights that SQA have separate policies for *Adoption, Compassionate Leave, Attendance Management, Absence, Maternity, Parental, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave*.

The Staff Leave policy covers all other types of leave that are available to staff. It details who is entitled to each type of leave, the amount of leave and indicates any conditions of leave and employee rights during leave.

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

British United Provident Association (BUPA) states: Everyone needs time to rest, relax and recharge. Spending time away from work with the people we love is very important for our mental health.

The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as ‘The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them’.

822,000 workers suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety (new or long-standing) in 2020/21

“Work-related stress, anxiety or depression statistics in Great Britain, 2021 Data up to March 2021 Annual statistics Published 16th December 2021”

All UK employees are entitled under UK Law to 20 days leave plus 8 days (which can be the years bank holidays). SQA employees are entitled to 27 days leave plus 14 days (Bank Holidays) (Pro rata for Part Time Employees). In addition SQA offers its staff the ability to request and access several other types of leave, which are detailed in this policy, including

- Extended Annual Leave
- Long Term Leave of Absence
- Public Duties
- Jury Service/witness citation

- Territorial Army/Cadets Association/ Reserve Forces
- Moving House
- Medical and dental appointments

**What are the aims of this policy or practice?**

The Staff Leave Policy is in place to help staff understand their leave entitlements and rights where applicable and what options for leave are open to them.

It details the different types of leave available, how to request each type and what will be taken into consideration by line managers and HR when approving such leave. It also details any potential evidence required to support a specific leave request, for example, evidence of a medical appointment.

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

The Equality and Human Rights Commission set out employers' responsibilities relating to requests and decisions for time off in "Your Rights to Equality at Work: Working Hours, Flexible Working and Time Off Guidance for Employees, 2014"

The document specifically references

- Decisions relating to time off
- Avoiding direct and indirect discrimination
- The specific age exception allowing different levels of annual leave based on length of service of up to five years
- Reasonable adjustments to remove barriers for disabled people and avoiding discrimination arising from disability
- Requests for time off relating to religion or belief
- Requests for time off relating to gender reassignment



## Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

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

This policy has been developed in consultation with SQA's recognised Trades Unions, Unite and Unison, who represent all staff throughout the organisation.

In addition, as this is an internal policy, SQA has only consulted with internal groups. These include:

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

#### 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.

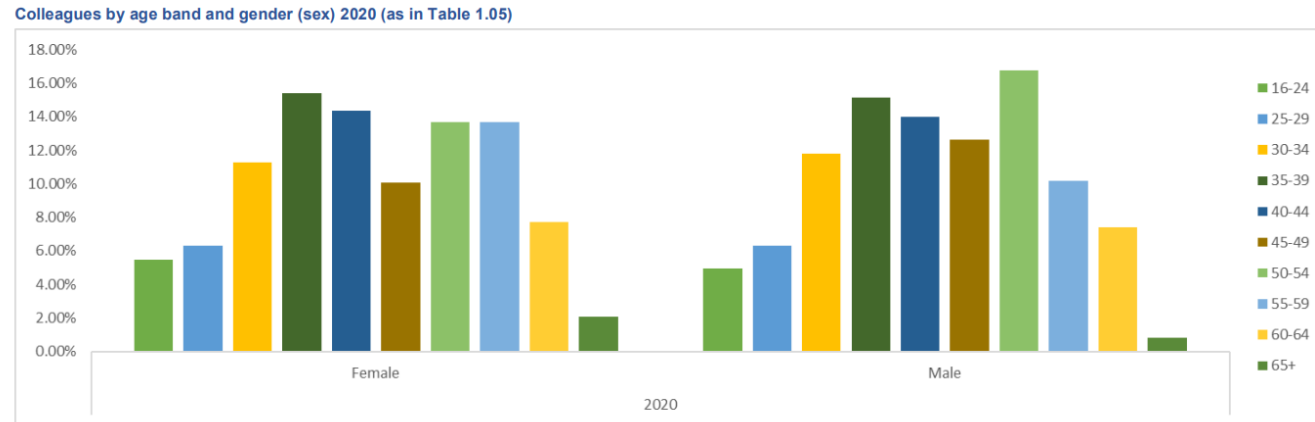
**Evidence, feedback and actions from all EIAPG staff network consultations** are recorded on a dedicated SQA *Microsoft Teams* page which was specifically created with the aim of listing potential equality risks that exist in H.R. policies / activities, sharing resources, recording feedback and scheduling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

Evidence of staff network 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:**

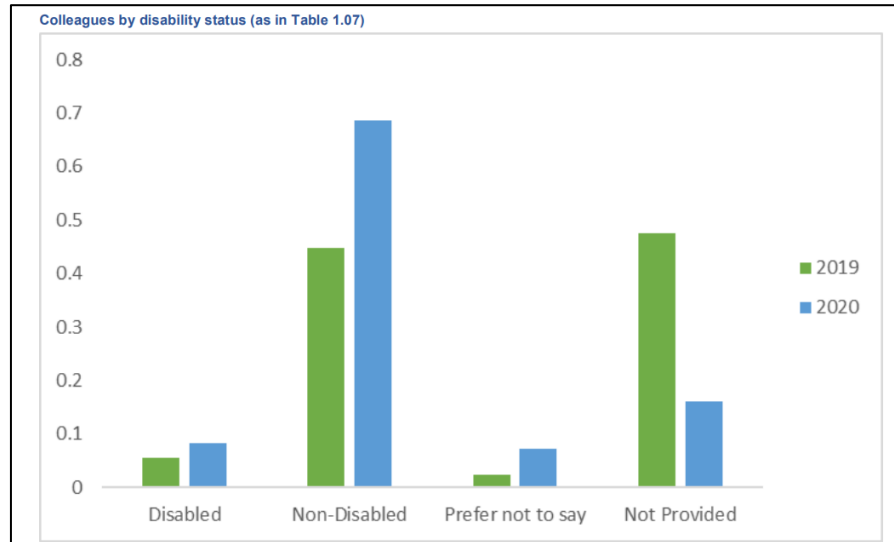


Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021

The majority of SQA employees are in the mid-range age bandings. A total of 79% workers are aged between 30 – 59. SQA has recently seen a decrease in younger (under 35) employees. This data can be found in table 1.05 at [workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf \(sqa.org.uk\)](https://www.sqa.org.uk/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf)

Comparisons between 2019 and 2020 data show that the 30–34 age band saw the largest reduction of female colleagues – a total of seven people. The largest decline in the proportion of male colleagues was in the 30-34 age band, with seven fewer people. The largest decrease was seen in the 30–34 age band for both male and female colleagues - with an overall reduction of 14 people.

**Disability**



Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021

A total of 8.2% of SQA employees declared a disability last year. Declaration rates have significantly improved from a total response rate under the *Not Disclosed / Prefer not to say* category of 49.9% in 2019 (roughly half of employees) to a much reduced 23.1 % in 2020.

The highest proportion of colleagues who have declared a disability (53%) falls within the lowest age bands (16 – 44) and second highest (47%) within the upper age bands (45–64)

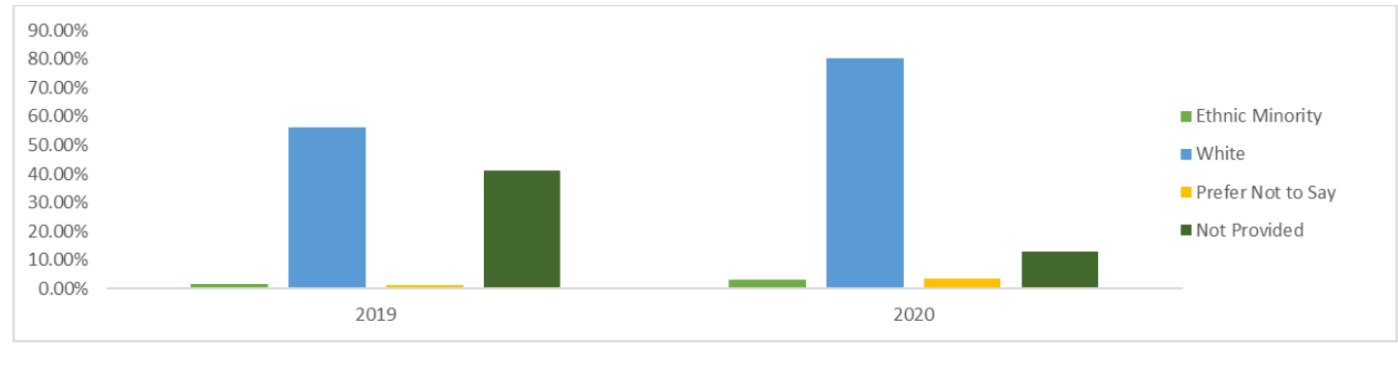
A total of 55% of disabled employees are female and 45% are male. 63% of colleagues who have declared a disability are within the grade range 06 to Head of Service. Head of Service has the largest percentage of colleagues declaring a disability (13%) whereas Grade 6 has the largest overall number of colleagues declaring a disability at 23%.

This information is available in table 1.07 at [workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf) (sqa.org.uk)

**Race  
Ethnicity**

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

Colleagues by Race (as in table 1.12)



Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021

Currently only 3% of SQA employees declared themselves as Minority Ethnicity against a national (Scotland) average of 5%.  
Data available in table 1.12 at [workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf \(sqa.org.uk\)](https://www.sqa.org.uk/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf)

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Race  
Ethnicity  
(continued)

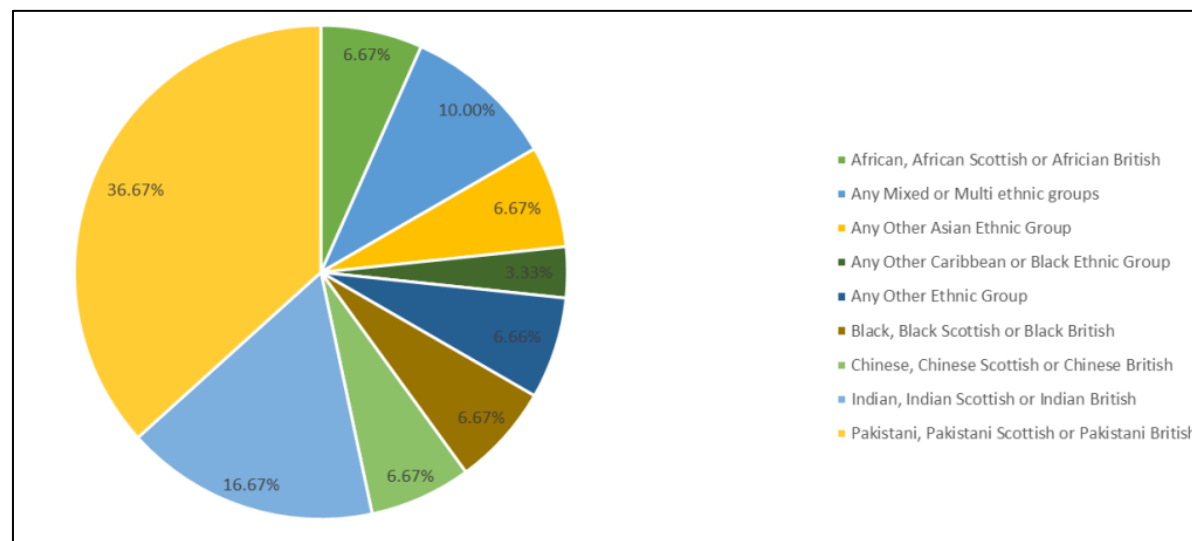


Table 1.15 Race: Colleagues by black and minority ethnicities

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

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021

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

This information can be found in table 1.15 at [workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf) (sqa.org.uk)

**What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)**

**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%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021

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

29.82 colleagues say they are Christian, 17.28% are non-Christian, 29.29% declared no religion, 10.33% preferred not to say, 13.28% did not provide any information. This data is available at Colleagues by religion or belief (as in table 1.16) [workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf) (sqa.org.uk)

**Sex**

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

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021

A greater number of SQA employees overall are female - 62% female versus 38% male. A 60% representation of females across most grades is evident with a decrease to circa 40% for more senior grades. This data is available from Table 1.05: Colleagues by age band and gender (sex) [workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf \(sqa.org.uk\)](#)



**What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)**

**Sexual Orientation**

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

Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021

70.60% colleagues say they are heterosexual, 1.26% bisexual, 2.11% gay man, 1.05% gay woman, 0.21% in another way, 0.11% not sure, 8.01% prefer not to say and 16.65% did not provide information. This data is available at Table 1.18 Colleagues by Sexual Orientation [workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf) (sqa.org.uk)

**What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)**

<p><b>Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)</b></p>	<p>No equality profiling data is currently captured by the SQA.</p>																							
<p><b>Marriage/Civil Partnership</b></p>	<p>No equality profiling data is currently captured by the SQA.</p>																							
<p><b>Pregnancy / Maternity</b></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="3">Colleagues</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Pregnancy Status</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>Variance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Not Pregnant</td> <td>98.25%</td> <td>98.95%</td> <td>0.70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pregnant</td> <td>1.75%</td> <td>1.05%</td> <td>-0.70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100.00%</td> <td>100.00%</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: SQA Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2019 – 2021</p> <p>98.95% of colleagues are not pregnant, 1.05% are pregnant available at Table 1.20: Colleagues by pregnancy status <a href="https://www.sqa.org.uk/workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf">workforce-equality-monitoring-report-2019-2021.pdf (sqa.org.uk)</a></p>					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%	
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Total	100.00%	100.00%																						

**What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment? (continued)**

**Care experience  
(where relevant)**

SQA currently have no data that shows how many colleagues are Care Experienced.

### **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><b>Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:</b></p> <p>SQA does not currently capture Equality profiling data for employees either requesting, being granted, or more importantly, <b>being denied</b>, leave under this policy. Hypothetically, this policy could have a <b>positive impact</b> on all employees requesting leave – particularly where leave is granted. Equally, it could have an <b>adverse impact</b> on an employee - relating to a 'Protected Characteristic' where requests for leave are ultimately denied.</p> <p>Due to an absence of Equality profiling data, it is not currently possible to establish if any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination exist within SQA in the use or application of this policy.</p> <p><u>It is recommended that in 2023, SQA will capture and analyse this data with the aim of identifying any disproportionate trends or disadvantage experienced by different groups of employees requesting, being granted or being denied leave under this policy.</u></p> <p><b>Conclusion – Potential risks of adverse impact in respect of this 'Protected Characteristic' which can neither be identified or eliminated due to an absence of Equality profiling data.</b></p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees – irrespective of their 'Protected Characteristics' have access to the <i>Staff Leave</i> policy. Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.</p> <p>Collecting data (as detailed above) would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.</p>
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy would <i>Foster Good Relations</i> between employees of different ages

<b>Disability</b>	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<b>Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:</b>
	SQA does not currently capture Equality profiling data for employees either requesting, being granted, or more importantly, <b>being denied</b> , leave under this policy. Hypothetically, this policy could have a <b>positive impact</b> on all employees requesting leave – particularly where leave is granted. Equally, it could have an <b>adverse impact</b> on an employee - relating to a ‘Protected Characteristic’ where requests for leave are ultimately denied.
	Due to an absence of Equality profiling data, it is not currently possible to establish if any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination exist within SQA in the use or application of this policy.
	<u>It is recommended that in 2023, SQA will capture and analyse this data with the aim of identifying any disproportionate trends or disadvantage experienced by different groups of employees requesting, being granted or being denied leave under this policy.</u>
	<u>Recommendation that the policy specifically references the Attendance Management Policy to ensure that Line Managers are aware that absences related to a disability must be considered with regard to Equality Guidelines.</u>
	<b>Conclusion – Potential risks of adverse impact in respect of this ‘Protected Characteristic’ which can neither be identified or eliminated due to an absence of Equality profiling data.</b>
	Advance equality of opportunity
All SQA employees – irrespective of their ‘Protected Characteristics’ have access to the <i>Staff Leave</i> policy. Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.	
Collecting data (as detailed above) would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.	
Foster good relations	
There is no evidence to indicate that this policy would <i>Foster Good Relations</i> between employees who are <i>Disabled / not Disabled</i> .	

<b>Race</b>	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p><b>Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:</b></p> <p>SQA does not currently capture Equality profiling data for employees either requesting, being granted, or more importantly, <b>being denied</b>, leave under this policy. Hypothetically, this policy could have a <b>positive impact</b> on all employees requesting leave – particularly where leave is granted. Equally, it could have an <b>adverse impact</b> on an employee - relating to a ‘Protected Characteristic’ where requests for leave are ultimately denied.</p> <p>Due to an absence of Equality profiling data, it is not currently possible to establish if any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination exist within SQA in the use or application of this policy.</p> <p><u>It is recommended that in 2023, SQA will capture and analyse this data with the aim of identifying any disproportionate trends or disadvantage experienced by different groups of employees requesting, being granted or being denied leave under this policy.</u></p> <p><b>Conclusion – Potential risks of adverse impact in respect of this ‘Protected Characteristic’ which can neither be identified or eliminated due to an absence of Equality profiling data.</b></p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees – irrespective of their ‘Protected Characteristics’ have access to the <i>Staff Leave</i> policy. Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.</p> <p>Collecting data (as detailed above) would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.</p>
	Foster good relations
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy would <i>Foster Good Relations</i> between employees of different <i>Races / Ethnicities</i>.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p>SQA does not currently capture Equality profiling data for employees either requesting, being granted, or more importantly, <b>being denied</b>, leave under this policy. Hypothetically, this policy could have a <b>positive impact</b> on all employees requesting leave – particularly where leave is granted. Equally, it could have an <b>adverse impact</b> on an employee - relating to a 'Protected Characteristic' where requests for leave are ultimately denied.</p> <p>Due to an absence of Equality profiling data, it is not currently possible to establish if any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination exist within SQA in the use or application of this policy.</p> <p><u>It is recommended that in 2023, SQA will capture and analyse this data with the aim of identifying any disproportionate trends or disadvantage experienced by different groups of employees requesting, being granted or being denied leave under this policy.</u></p> <p><b>Conclusion – Potential risks of adverse impact in respect of this 'Protected Characteristic' which can neither be identified or eliminated due to an absence of Equality profiling data.</b></p> <p><u>Recommendation to adjust wording in policy to consider granting annual leave for religious purposes if this falls within first 8 weeks of employment.</u></p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees – irrespective of their 'Protected Characteristics' have access to the <i>Staff Leave</i> policy. Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.</p> <p>Collecting data (as detailed above) would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.</p>
	Foster good relations
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy would <i>Foster Good Relations</i> between employees of different Religions or beliefs.</p>



Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
Sexual Orientation	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
	<p><b>Risks of Discrimination:</b></p> <p>We conclude there is no reasonable evidence to suggest this policy could adversely affect employees on the grounds of this ‘Protected Characteristic’.</p> <p><b>Neutral Impact Recorded.</b></p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees of all <i>Sexual Orientations</i> have access to the Staff Leave policy.</p> <p>Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.</p> <p>Collecting data would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.</p>
	Foster good relations
<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy would foster good relations between employees of different <i>Sexual Orientations</i>.</p>	

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
<p><b>Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)</b></p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>There is the possibility that those employees undergoing Gender Reassignment may have more frequent medical appointments related to their transition. The Staff Leave Policy states:</p> <p><i>'5.10.1 'Where, however, time off for appointments becomes frequent or regular, or starts to cause difficulties for your business area, your line manager has the discretion either to require to make up the time off by working extra time on another occasion, or to grant any further time off without pay.'</i></p> <p><u>We recommend that the Staff Leave Policy specifically references the new SQA Gender Identity and Transitioning at Work Policy in order to ensure that Line Managers and employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities relating to this.</u></p> <p><b>Risks of Discrimination – Direct and Indirect:</b></p> <p>SQA does not currently capture Equality profiling data for employees either requesting, being granted, or more importantly, <b>being denied</b>, leave under this policy. Hypothetically, this policy could have a <b>positive impact</b> on all employees requesting leave – particularly where leave is granted. Equally, it could have an <b>adverse impact</b> on an employee - relating to a 'Protected Characteristic' where requests for leave are ultimately denied.</p> <p>Due to an absence of Equality profiling data, it is not currently possible to establish if any disproportionate trends or risks of discrimination exist within SQA in the use or application of this policy.</p> <p><u>It is recommended that in 2023, SQA will capture and analyse this data with the aim of identifying any disproportionate trends or disadvantage experienced by different groups of employees requesting, being granted or being denied leave under this policy.</u></p> <p><b>Conclusion – Potential risks of adverse impact in respect of this 'Protected Characteristic' which can neither be identified or eliminated due to an absence of Equality profiling data.</b></p>

<b>Gender Re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)</b>	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees have access to the Staff Leave policy – irrespective of <i>Gender Identity</i>.</p> <p>Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.</p> <p>Collecting data (as detailed above) would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.</p>
	Foster good relations
	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between employees in respect of this ‘Protected Characteristic’. No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>

Protected Characteristic	General Equality Duty
<p><b>Marriage/Civil Partnership</b></p>	<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010</p>
	<p><b>Risks of Discrimination:</b></p> <p>We conclude there is no reasonable evidence to suggest this policy could adversely affect employees on the grounds of this 'Protected Characteristic'.</p> <p><b>Neutral Impact Recorded.</b></p>
	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
	<p>All SQA employees of all Marital Statuses have access to the Staff Leave policy.</p> <p>Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.</p> <p>Collecting further data would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.</p>
	<p>Foster good relations</p>
<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy would foster good relations between employees of different marital statuses.</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><b>Risks of Discrimination:</b></p> <p>We conclude there is no reasonable evidence to suggest this policy could adversely affect employees on the grounds of this 'Protected Characteristic'.</p> <p><b>Neutral Impact Recorded.</b></p> <p>Note <i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i> related absence is dealt with via a separate policy in SQA. <u>Recommendation to adjust wording to signpost to Pregnancy/maternity policy</u></p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees of have access to the Staff Leave policy.</p> <p>Whether <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually realised / promoted in the implementation of this policy is currently unknown due to an absence of Equality related profiling data.</p> <p>Collecting further data would allow SQA to identify if <i>Equality of Opportunity</i> is actually being realised / promoted in respect of this policy.</p>
	Foster good relations
	There is no evidence to indicate that this policy would foster good relations in this area.

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>‘5.9 of this policy states <b><i>You should give reasonable notice of at least four weeks by completing staff leave form</i></b>’</p> <p>There is the possibility that employees in care experience may have more often and with less opportunity to provide notice. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to back this up and that currently SQA have no data on this.</p> <p><u>Going forward the recommendation is that SQA collect equality data on protected characteristics – including Care Experience.</u></p>
	Advance equality of opportunity
	<p>All SQA employees are entitled to use the Staff Leave policy. However, because there is no care experience related profiling data available relating to those requesting staff leave, it is not possible to conclude if this policy does effectively advance equality of opportunity for care experience employees.</p>
	Foster good relations
<p>There is no evidence to indicate that this policy currently fosters good relations between care experience employees. No further recommendations are made in respect of this at this stage.</p>	

Rationale:

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

N/A