

Equality Impact Assessment - Screening Review

A screening review:

- is undertaken as the exception where the policy owner has approached the Equality Team and reached agreement that a full Equality Impact Assessment ("EqIA") may not be proportionate,
- can be undertaken on policies and practices where there is little or no evidence that the policy or practice would have an impact on people,
- is not published but does provide a record of the rationale as to why it is not proportionate or appropriate that a full EqIA is not required,
- is considered by the Equality Management Review Group who either accept the information provided in the screening review or require a full EqIA to be completed. Further information on this point is provided at the end.

We describe all our policies and practices as 'policies'.

If you require any support or assistance in completing this screening review please contact

[@sqa.org.uk](mailto:info@sqa.org.uk)

Name of Policy
Memberships and accreditations review

Aims or Rationale of Policy
<p>Memberships and accreditations are continually under review when they come up for renewal. The first review of memberships and accreditations for 2025 is SQA membership of Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme.</p> <p>SQA currently have a range of memberships and accreditations to support an inclusive culture.</p> <p>These memberships and accreditations can provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• data driven insights and benchmarking to achieve externally validated standards• an enhanced reputation to attract diverse candidates• an external commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion• an increased sense of belonging and psychological safety for staff, potentially leading to greater morale and less turnover of staff• an opportunity to link with others and share practice <p>The majority of SQA equality, diversity and inclusion related memberships are provided at no cost to the organisation other than the ENEI membership and the Stonewall Diversity Champions Membership.</p> <p>We renewed the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI) membership in December 2024. The Stonewall Diversity Champions Membership is now due for renewal and is being considered in relation to 'best value' for the organisation.</p> <p>Stonewall Diversity Champions Membership provide the following:</p> <p>The Stonewall Diversity Champions membership scheme supports organisations to embed workplace inclusion for LGBTQ+ people by providing expert advice and guidance with policy, practice, and strategy development. Thus, supporting SQA's work in relation to</p>

ensuring our colleagues feel safe in our online and physical spaces, in particular advancing equality for the protected characteristics of sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

Membership of the scheme potentially demonstrates a public commitment to progressing the rights of the LGBTQ+ community within SQA. Our annual membership was last renewed in March 2024 and costs around £3,090 + VAT per year.

In addition, Stonewall offer a Workplace Equality Index (WEI). This index ranks employers in relation to a range of inclusive measures. Any employer can submit to the WEI by conducting a self-audit, guided by Stonewall's template.-

Stonewall do not charge for the submission and subsequent ranking, and employers do not have to be a member of the Diversity Champions scheme to take part in the WEI. Training and development are not included in their membership although we can get 10% off the usual rate which is usually around £200 a workshop per attendee.

If we were going to apply for the Workplace Equality Index, the Diversity Champions membership gives us the opportunity to be supported to do this.

We also have a higher representation of LGBT+ colleagues in SQA (over 5% of those who have declared) in proportion to the wider population (4.0%) so the visible commitment to Stonewall may be especially important to colleagues to give them a sense of safety and belonging and although difficult to measure it may also have contributed to SQA attracting candidates from this population.

We have not used our Stonewall membership in 2023/24 in relation to advice, guidance or training but they did support the development of our Gender Identity and Transitioning at Work policy in 2022.

Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei) is a leading employer network covering all aspects of equality and inclusion

It is a 'one stop shop' for advice, consultancy, training, networking, best practice, benchmarking, and leadership. It has around 350 members across the UK. This membership costs £1,650 (plus VAT) annually and was renewed in December 2024.

ENEI also offer a self-assessment tool, namely, the Talent, Inclusion and Equality Evaluation (TIDE). The results are benchmarked against other organisations taking part in the TIDE. We currently completed the TIDE assessment to support the development of our EDI Strategy and will be due to complete this again in May 2025.

All SQA colleagues can access the resources and training available from enei. Training and development are included in the membership and covers all protected characteristics as well as relevant information to advance equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes for example equality impact assessment, EDI strategy development and meeting the Public Sector Equality duties.

Commented [BP1]: Just adding in that WEI is self audit like TIDE - so they are directly comparable, but obvs TIDE is broader and applies to all PCs

SQA colleagues, in particular, equality colleagues often attend enei workshops, roundtable discussion and access their resources.

Does the policy directly affect staff or learners? Provide reasoning for your response

The review of memberships and accreditations does not directly impact on learners or staff.

Would there be any data or wider evidence, within SQA and externally that would be useful in considering the reasons for a particular policy? *(For example, is this policy due to a national strategy or feedback from users)*

Can you think of any evidence that would be useful to have to assist your understanding as to why SQA requires this policy?

Previously we have used Stonewall for advice and guidance on LGBT+ matters but have had no requirement to use their service in the last year and previous to this had used their service very minimally. Training is no longer included in their membership offer.

Can you think of any evidence that would be useful to consider how effective this policy might be? *Or how you would be able to find out the impact on employees or learners? For example, is there any current employee monitoring data? Have any responses from a learner panel been collected that may be relevant? Is there any current evidence from SQA Networks (the Networks themselves could be asked, or the Equality Team or HR).*

This rationale explains the decision not to renew our Stonewall Diversity Champions membership. The primary factors are value for money and the comprehensive support we receive through our existing ENEI (Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion) membership.

We are committed to ensuring that our resources are used effectively to maximise impact. A review of our diversity and inclusion memberships and accreditations indicates that the funds previously allocated to Stonewall membership can be better utilised elsewhere.

Our ENEI membership provides extensive coverage across all protected characteristics, offering significant benefits that overlap with those of Stonewall. Specifically, ENEI provides:

- ENEI's programs and resources address all protected characteristics under the Equality Act, ensuring a holistic approach to diversity and inclusion.
- ENEI offers a wide range of training programs designed to educate all employees on diversity and inclusion best practices. They run 80-100 events a year consisting of webinars, roundtables, guest speakers and network panels. This training is open to all staff. Sessions are also recorded allowing staff to access at a time that is convenient for them.
- ENEI provides robust benchmarking tools that enable us to measure our progress and identify areas for improvement across all aspects of diversity and inclusion.

- They also provide advice, guidance and resources across all protected characteristics

We want to emphasise that non-renewal of Stonewall membership does not preclude our participation in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. We can continue to benchmark our LGBTQ+ inclusion efforts through this important measure if this becomes an area of priority related to our Equality Outcomes. Additionally, it does not prevent us from seeking guidance on best practice with LGBTQ+ issues from other organisations, and benchmarking against other similar organisations to SQA.

Our ENEI membership provides a comprehensive and cost-effective solution for advancing diversity and inclusion across our organisation. By focusing our resources on ENEI, we can ensure that we are effectively supporting all employees whilst getting best value for money.

Would this policy apply to all of SQA or across all staff or learners? If the policy does not affect a large group of staff or learners, could it have the potential to significantly affect a small group of people?

The review of memberships will not have a direct impact on staff and learners. The decision will not impact on practice in relation to the three needs of the general equality duty.

Could this policy affect how a person interacts with SQA functions, both internally for staff and externally for learners? Provide a rationale for the response.

It is not expected that this will impact on how a person interacts with SQA functions internally or externally.

Take the example of one Protected Characteristic – Disability.

Could this policy be relevant to someone with a disability?

Could this policy affect how someone with a disability interacts with SQA?

If you are unsure, how could you find this out? [note – not all disabilities can be ‘seen’ A useful starting point for further information is here

<https://sqanow.sharepoint.com/sites/C196800107/SitePages/Disability-Network.aspx> on SQA’s Disability Network intranet page.

It will be important that we continue to visibly eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations between different groups. In particular, that it is clearly communicated to staff that we will continue with our enei membership that will cover all protected characteristics including disability. It will be important that we continue to visibly eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations between different groups in particular to ensure that the decision not to renew the Stonewall membership is clearly communicated to staff and that they are aware that we will continue with our enei membership that will cover all protected characteristics including sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Our work in relation to the protected characteristics of sexual orientation and gender reassignment will also not be impacted by not renewing our Diversity Champions membership.

The remaining Protected Characteristics are located [here](#). Look at a sample from the list and answer:

Could this policy be relevant to someone with this Protected Characteristic?

Could this policy affect how someone with this Protected Characteristic interacts with SQA?

If you are unsure, how could you find this out?

It will be important that we continue to visibly eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations between different groups. In particular, to ensure that the decision not to renew the Stonewall membership is clearly communicated to staff, and that they are aware that we will continue with our enei membership, which covers all protected characteristics including sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Our work in relation to the protected characteristics of sexual orientation and gender reassignment will also not be impacted by not renewing our Diversity Champions membership.

Has anyone in your team undertaken an EqlA?

Have any related policies had an EqlA? (There are similar functions across SQA that are implemented by different teams.)

Yes – and sighted by the EqlA manager.

Please submit this completed form to cequality@sqa.org.uk

This form will initially be reviewed by the Equality Impact Assessment Manager who will return to you with any relevant supporting advice.

After which the screening review will be considered by the Equalities Management Review Group at their next scheduled meeting. The group will either:

- Agree with the screening review and record its reasoning,
- Agree with the overall screening review; however, require the policy owner to undertake further actions to complete a sufficiently robust screening review,
- Disagree with the screening review decision and provide feedback as to why a full EqlA is required.

The group will provide its decision within five working days of the meeting.