

# **Race Equality Scheme 2007–10**

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# Foreword by the Chief Executive

Education and training is at the heart of Scotland's heritage and culture. Education and training unlock potential, and bring benefits to all of us and to the communities we live in. Qualifications are how we show what we have achieved in education and training.

We recognise the role that education has in addressing equality issues and in eliminating racial discrimination. We are deeply aware of our responsibilities in the area of equality and diversity.

We set up an Equality and Diversity Team to develop our Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. Taking a holistic approach to equalities, we decided at the same time to refresh our Race Equality Scheme.

Our commitment to equality is enshrined in our core values – quality, integrity, innovation, partnership and service. But we do recognise that equality needs to be made explicit in all aspects of our work.

We have involved various groups in the refresh of this Race Equality Scheme, and we are grateful to everyone who gave up their time to participate.

As the Chief Executive of SQA, I am committed to ensuring that the actions outlined in our Scheme are carried out. Carrying out these actions will demonstrate our commitment to equality and help us to put equality into the mainstream of our day-to-day work.

**Janet Brown**

# 1 What we do

SQA is the national awarding body for Scotland, and is responsible for the development, accreditation, assessment, and certification of qualifications other than degrees. Our qualifications are offered at approximately 1,470 centres, including schools, colleges, employers and private training providers, in Scotland and elsewhere. In 2006 we received close to 3.5 million entries, from around 368,000 candidates.

SQA's purpose is to:

- ◆ Devise, develop and validate qualifications and keep them under review.
- ◆ Approve and accredit qualifications.
- ◆ Approve and quality assure education and training establishments that offer SQA qualifications.
- ◆ Arrange for, assist in, and carry out the assessment of candidates taking SQA qualifications.
- ◆ Award and issue certificates to candidates.
- ◆ Ensure that Scottish qualifications contribute to economic growth, social justice, and lifelong learning.

Our mission:

SQA will work in partnership to provide high quality, recognised, and relevant qualifications and assessment.

Our vision:

To be recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in qualifications and assessment.

We are responsible for a large range of academic and vocational qualifications. These can be split into three main types:

- ◆ Units (National, Higher National and SVQ)
- ◆ Courses (Standard Grades and National Courses)
- ◆ Group Awards (National Progression Awards, National Certificates, Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, Scottish Vocational Qualifications, Professional Development Awards, and Customised Awards).

## 2 The law

Under the Race Relations Act 1976 (RRA) it is unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds in the areas of employment, education, and the provision of goods, facilities and services.

The RRA was amended in 2000 to introduce new duties for public authorities to promote racial equality. SQA was subject to the General Duty and the Employment Duty from 2002. We became subject to the Specific Duties from 2005.

The legislation must be considered in the light of the guidance contained in the statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality in Scotland. The Code is admissible in evidence in any legal action and a court or a tribunal should take the Code's recommendations into account.

The General Duty requires that, in carrying out its functions, we pay due regard to the need to:

- ◆ eliminate unlawful discrimination
- ◆ promote equality of opportunity
- ◆ promote good relations between persons of different racial groups

The General Duty is designed so that equality will be built into everything that SQA does, and become embedded throughout the organisation.

We are also subject to the Specific Duties. This means that we must:

- ◆ Have 'due regard' to the provisions of the duty. This means that we should consider the potential equality impact in relation to all policies, practices and functions and ensure that the weight we give to race equality is proportionate to its relevance.
- ◆ Prepare a Race Equality Scheme (and Action Plan), and review it every three years.
- ◆ Assess whether our functions and policies are relevant to race equality.
- ◆ Assess and consult on the likely impact of proposed policies.
- ◆ Monitor policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality.

- ◆ Publish the results of assessments, consultation, and monitoring.
- ◆ Ensure public access to information and services.
- ◆ Train staff in connection with the duties.
- ◆ Check that we are meeting the duty by analysing our data to find any patterns of inequality, and take whatever steps are needed to remove barriers and promote equality of opportunity.

As part of the Employment Duty, we must also monitor by ethnic group:

- ◆ our existing staff
- ◆ applicants for jobs, promotion, and training
- ◆ grievances, disciplinary processes, performance appraisals
- ◆ people who leave the organisation

The results of this monitoring should be published annually.



### 3 Our core values and principles

We are committed to working in partnership to provide high quality, recognised and relevant qualifications and assessment. We value the diversity and creative potential that people from different racial groups, backgrounds and with different skills and abilities, bring to the workplace. Our commitment to race equality is enshrined in our core values:

- ◆ Quality
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Innovation
- ◆ Partnership
- ◆ Service

This Race Equality Scheme sets out the framework within which we intend to promote race equality. Our commitment to delivering our Race Equality Scheme is based on the following principles. We will:

- ◆ provide equality of opportunity and access
- ◆ appreciate the differences among people and to respond to individual and group needs
- ◆ embed equality in all our activities
- ◆ develop a culture where people are treated equitably
- ◆ be transparent and open
- ◆ use clear and straightforward language
- ◆ involve staff, stakeholders and service users in reviewing and developing our services

## **4 How we fulfil the duties**

### **4.1 Developing the Scheme**

We are committed to working in partnership with staff, users, and stakeholders to gather information to inform the development of our Scheme. We have focused on areas which we consider essential to achieving and promoting race equality.

- ◆ SQA staff were invited to participate in meetings and to complete a questionnaire on race equality.
- ◆ A sample group of 200 Appointees were invited to complete a questionnaire on race equality.
- ◆ Centres were invited to complete a questionnaire and one centre took part in a focus group discussion on issues to do with race equality.
- ◆ Trade union representatives were invited to complete a questionnaire on race equality.

The feedback from the meetings and questionnaires has been used to develop our Race Equality Scheme and action plan.

#### **Assessing and prioritising**

Each business area has assessed all its functions and policies for relevance to race equality, and prioritised them for impact assessment. This process also allowed us to identify some of the actions that would make up our action plan.

#### **Developing our Action Plan**

Our action plan outlines how we intend to fulfil the requirements of the general duty in areas where gaps have been identified. Our action plan was based on information gathered:

- ◆ by assessing our functions and policies for relevance
- ◆ from questionnaires submitted by members of staff, trade union representatives, appointees, and centres
- ◆ at staff meetings

## 4.2 Equality Impact Assessment

We have a two-stage procedure for equality impact assessment (EQIA).

### Stage 1 – Assessing for relevance

The first stage is to assess a policy or activity for relevance to race equality. This stage includes:

- ◆ identifying the main aims of the policy or activity
- ◆ Collecting and considering this information
- ◆ deciding whether the policy or activity is relevant

If a policy or activity is not relevant to race equality the procedure ends at this stage. (Existing policies and activities have already been assessed in the production of this Scheme.)

### Stage 2 – Full equality impact assessment

If the policy or activity is relevant to race equality, the second stage is to conduct a full EQIA. This has eight stages:

- ◆ Identify all of the aims of the policy or activity.
- ◆ Collect and consider evidence (data and information).
- ◆ Assess any likely impact on different groups.
- ◆ Consider alternatives (what to do if you find adverse impact).
- ◆ Consult formally (relevant stakeholders).
- ◆ Decide whether to adopt/revise the policy or activity.
- ◆ Make monitoring and review arrangements.
- ◆ Publish assessment results.

## 4.3 Equality impact assessment reports

Each business area will conduct full equality impact assessments in accordance with the timetable that has been set. At the conclusion of each EQIA, we will publish an impact assessment report which clearly sets out recommended improvements, actions and outcomes.

## **4.4 Publishing our results**

We will produce and publish information in a number of ways.

### **Formal reporting and approval**

- ◆ Summary impact assessment reports will be submitted to our Executive Management Team to confirm that our response is relevant and proportionate, and for formal approval of the recommended actions.
- ◆ Annual reports on the progress made in race equality will be submitted to our Executive Management Team and Board of Management for formal approval, and will then be published on our website.
- ◆ We will include a summary of the progress we have made in addressing race equality issues in SQA's Annual Report.

### **Communication of outcomes**

- ◆ Approved actions will be incorporated into existing action plans, and will be communicated within the organisation.
- ◆ Summary reports setting out the issues, actions and outcomes of impact assessments will be published on our equality and diversity web page, and sent to targeted groups who may have an interest in them.

We will of course be happy to provide full reports on equality impact assessments to any interested party on request.

## **5 SQA as an employer**

### **5.1 Where are we now**

We have a range of policies and procedures in place, and aim to be fair and consistent to staff and potential employees in regard to areas such as recruitment and selection, pay, job evaluation, performance management, flexible working, grievance and disciplinary and training and development.

We also operate to a Partnership Agreement with the three recognised trade unions representing our staff (Amicus, Transport & General Workers and Unison). The aim of the Partnership Group is to develop and support an environment of trust, respect and inclusiveness at all levels of the organisation.

### **5.2 Workforce profile**

SQA has 692 members of staff who work on site in Glasgow, in Dalkeith and at home. This figure includes permanent and fixed term staff, staff on external secondment from SQA, and part-time workers.

We have been subject to the Employment Duty since 2002. However, our procedures for recording and monitoring data since that time have not been adequate, and the data on the ethnic origin of SQA staff is incomplete (see section 5.5 below).

From the data that we have collected we know that only a small percentage of employees are from ethnic minority groups, although they are represented at all grades up to Business Manager level.

### **5.3 What our staff think**

All members of staff were invited to participate in staff meetings on race equality and to complete a race equality questionnaire. We are grateful to staff who provided feedback to help us in developing our Scheme.

Fifty-eight staff (about 9%) responded to the staff survey which is low. From the feedback it was clear that members of staff think SQA is delivering well in many areas, but that we need to do more.

Areas highlighted by staff included the relatively low proportion of ethnic minority employees and a lack of awareness of race issues.

## **5.4 What our Trade Union representatives think**

Representatives from the three trade unions were invited to complete a race equality questionnaire. We are grateful to those who provided feedback to help us in developing our Scheme.

All three trade unions responded to the questionnaire. Again, feedback showed that SQA is delivering well generally, but that there are areas for improvement. Issues raised included the ethnic diversity of higher grades and of senior management.

## **5.5 Gathering and using information**

We collect data on ethnicity from applicants, but we have not collated or monitored information by racial group. This was partly due to the inadequacy of our Human Resources (HR) management information system and the procedures we had in place to collect information. We have recently started using a new HR management information system. This will enable us to collect and monitor information more easily than was possible in the past.

We are urgently reviewing the information that we have collected. In future, we will be collecting, monitoring, and publishing information on the position of ethnic minority groups in the workforce in a number of areas such as:

- ◆ recruitment
- ◆ applications and success rates for promotion
- ◆ distribution of workers in the organisation
- ◆ type of job, location, and grade
- ◆ applications for and uptake of training courses
- ◆ performance ratings
- ◆ grievances raised
- ◆ disciplinary action taken
- ◆ terminations of contract

As well as monitoring, and acting on, information on these areas, we will be able to cross-reference data by gender, disability (where disclosed), and age so that we know what the issues are for different groups. To make sure that we meet the general duty to promote race equality in employment we will collect and monitor data and take steps to deal with any disparities revealed by the data. We will change our policies and procedures accordingly and publish the results of our monitoring.

## **6 How we deliver our services**

### **6.1 What do we do**

We are responsible for the development, accreditation, assessment, quality assurance, and certification of qualifications other than degrees. Our qualifications are offered at approximately 1,470 centres, including schools, colleges, employers and private training providers, in Scotland and elsewhere.

### **6.2 Scotland's population**

Population information on Scotland's ethnic groups is collected in Scotland's census which takes place every ten years. The size of the minority ethnic population was just over 100,000 in 2001 or 2% of the total population of Scotland (based on the 2001 ethnicity classification which was revised to better reflect the diversity of Scotland's ethnic groups). This compares to just over 60,000 in 1991 or 1.2% (based on the 1991 classification). Whilst the total Scottish population increased by 1.3% during this time, Scotland's minority ethnic population increased by 62.3%.

In 2001 Pakistanis were the largest minority ethnic group, followed by Chinese, Indians and those from any Any Mixed Backgrounds. Over 70% of the total minority ethnic population were Asian: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese or Other South Asian, and over 12% of the total minority ethnic population described their ethnic group as Mixed. (*Source: High Level Summary of Equality Statistics, Published by the Scottish Executive*)

### **6.3 Scotland's candidates**

The Scottish Executive's 2006 pupil census, *Pupils in Publicly-Funded Schools in Scotland*, shows that:

- ◆ The number of ethnic minority pupils in Scotland's local authority schools has risen from 26,145 in 2005 to 27,543 in 2006 – an increase of 5.4%. The number of white pupils from outside the UK (eg children from eastern European migrants) has risen from 8,917 to 10,349 (16%) over the same period.
- ◆ 9,486 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and are not fluent in English. 2,192 pupils were considered 'new to English'.



The Scottish Executive's 2007 publication *A Gender of Statistics: Comparing the Position of Women and Men in Scotland*, provides ethnicity data for students enrolled in FE colleges. Of the 450,435 enrolments on individual courses (individuals commonly enrol on more than one course in an academic year so the number of enrolments is significantly higher than the number of students) at FE colleges in session 2004—05, the ethnic profile was:

- ◆ 397,365 were white
- ◆ 4,015 were Pakistani
- ◆ 3,115 were Black African
- ◆ 2,555 were Chinese
- ◆ 2,445 were Indian
- ◆ 435 were Black Other
- ◆ 325 were Bangladeshi
- ◆ 190 were Black Caribbean
- ◆ 7,810 were listed as Other
- ◆ 32,185 refused or were not known

In percentage terms, 88% were white and 5% were from other ethnic groups (and 7% were not known). The proportion of minority ethnic students in further education was greater than the proportion of ethnic minority people in the population as a whole.

## **ESOL Courses**

SQA has a National Qualifications framework in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). These qualifications are for learners whose first language is not English. National Courses in ESOL are available at Higher (SCQF level 6) and Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5) for certification in August 2007. There are also free-standing Units from Access 2 (SCQF level 2) to Intermediate 1 (SCQF level 4), providing accreditation for all levels. This framework is designed to promote social inclusion by integrating ESOL into mainstream qualifications. We are currently 'e-enabling' 11 Units from Access 2 (SCQF level 2) to Intermediate 1 level (SCQF level 4); these materials will be ready for use in August 2007.

SQA has developed a number of Higher National Units for candidates whose first language is not English. These units include Developing Listening & Speaking Skills and Developing Reading & Writing Skills (SCQF level 5 and 6). In addition, there are ESOL for Work Units in Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking at Basic Operational level (SCQF 6), Intermediate Operational level (SCQF 6) and

Advanced Operational (SCQF 7). All of these Units incorporate the National Occupational Standards for languages.

We have developed an HN unit in Workplace Communication in English (SCQF level 6), which is included as an optional unit in the majority of HNC/D frameworks, and are about to develop a Professional Development Award in Tutoring ESOL.

As part of our work on the ESOL framework, we received European Social Fund EQUAL programme funding through the ATLAS – Scotland (Action for Training and Learning for Asylum Seekers) Development Partnership. This has involved ensuring that ESOL is linked to professional and vocational skills that meet the needs of asylum seekers.

We adapted the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) pack of learning and teaching materials, which combines ESOL teaching with Citizenship content for Scotland. The resulting materials – Citizenship Materials for ESOL Learners in Scotland – are now available for use in colleges.

## **English as an Additional Language**

Candidates who have English as an additional language may have access to a bilingual dictionary in their assessments, with the exception of assessments in English. Extra time of ten minutes per hour can be allowed for using the dictionary.

We will also adopt a needs-based flexible approach to assessment arrangements for those candidates who have been identified as having additional support needs to ensure that they can be fairly assessed along with other candidates.

## **Curriculum for Excellence**

Scottish Ministers established a Curriculum Review Group in November 2003 to identify the purposes of education for the 3–18 age range and determine the key principles to be applied in re-designing the curriculum. This resulted in the publication in November 2004 of *A Curriculum for Excellence*. It is due to be implemented in August 2008, and sets out the aims of education in Scotland. The work being taken forward on the curriculum and qualifications through *Curriculum for Excellence* will help provide the opportunities for young people, irrespective of ethnic origin, to develop their full potential.

We are working in partnership with Learning and Teaching Scotland, HM Inspectorate of Education, and the Scottish Executive Education Department to deliver the biggest education reform programme for a generation.

## **6.4 Gathering and using information**

The Scottish Executive produces a publication titled *SQA Attainment and School Leaver Qualifications in Scotland*. This publication presents statistical information on the attainment of National Qualifications by pupils attending publicly-funded secondary schools, and by school leavers. The data is presented by a number of different pupil characteristics, including ethnic background. In 2006, Chinese and Mixed-Race pupils all performed above average, while Black-Caribbean, Black-Other, and 'All Other Categories' (including Gypsy Travellers and Others) performed below average.

SQA does not collect ethnicity monitoring data, so we cannot effectively analyse the performance of all of our candidates by ethnic group. We currently collect, analyse, and disseminate candidate attainment information by age and gender only. We know that we need to collect ethnicity monitoring data, and we are taking steps to address this issue as a matter of priority. We are investigating whether to share data already collected from other sources, or to collect data directly from centres.

## **6.5 Survey of centres**

We contacted SQA Co-ordinators at every centre and asked them to complete an on-line survey on issues around stereotyping, promotion of race equality and the recruitment of Appointees. We were encouraged by the responses. We received 338 responses to our questionnaire and the results of this survey have been incorporated into the rest of this section.

A focus group was held at one centre to discuss race equality issues. We are very grateful for their contribution and the issues they raised. These issues included the cultural context of some of our assessments, and literacy in English. The issues raised have been fed back to staff in our qualifications teams, and will be addressed through our action plan and impact assessment.

## 6.6 Qualifications

We need to ensure that our qualifications are free from racial stereotyping. We were encouraged that 98.8% of respondents to our centre questionnaire think that we design qualifications that are free from racial stereotyping (55.5% said we do this 'very well', and 43.3% said 'well').

We will continue to work hard to promote race equality through careful design and maintenance of qualifications and associated support materials.

## 6.7 Assessment

As the national awarding body for Scotland, SQA has a responsibility to ensure that the process of assessment leading to certification is rigorous and fair and allows all candidates to demonstrate the skills and knowledge required for the award. We need to ensure that our assessments are free from racial stereotyping, that the language and examples used challenge stereotyping and that we consider cultural context in setting assessments.

We were encouraged that 98.5% of centres think that we design assessments that are free from racial stereotyping (55.4% said 'very well' and 43.1% said 'well').

We will continue to work hard to promote race equality through careful design and maintenance of assessments.

## 6.8 Publications

Our publishing team produce over 700 publications per year for a variety of audiences. This includes:

- ◆ promotional documents for National Qualifications examinations for centres, parents and candidates
- ◆ qualification-specific promotional documents for the general public
- ◆ promotional documents on SQA and its services for the general public
- ◆ packs for teachers/lecturers and others attending events for qualification launches or professional development
- ◆ learning and teaching packs for teachers/lecturers and students in centres
- ◆ SVQ portfolios for colleges, employers, external training providers and candidates.

Our publishing team works hard to ensure that our publications do not encourage stereotyping, but we will be checking our promotional documents to ensure that people from all racial groups are seen positively and any negative stereotypes are challenged.

## **6.9 Appointees**

Our Operations business area recruits some 15,000 Appointees — teachers, lecturers and other individuals (professional and non-professional) — each year to carry out assessment duties in areas such as marking, question setting, verification and invigilation.

In our survey of centres, a significant number of respondents skipped the question about our recruitment practices for Appointees, and a number of comments were made that suggested that many of them were not aware of our procedures to recruit Appointees. Of those who answered the question, 93.7% indicated that we promote equality of opportunity.

We do not currently collect data by ethnicity for these appointments but we are aware that we must do more to encourage teachers, lecturers and other suitably qualified individuals from ethnic minority groups to apply for these roles. We will review our recruitment and selection practices as a matter of priority.

## **6.10 Accreditation**

We are responsible for approving awarding bodies to ensure that they have in place the necessary policies, systems and procedures to award SVQs. We also audit awarding bodies to confirm that they continue to meet our requirements. We are reviewing our procedures to ensure that centres and awarding bodies promote equality of opportunity and that they address barriers to participation in learning encountered by different racial groups.

## **6.11 Partnership working**

We work in partnership with centres and with national and international organisations. Where these partnerships impact on race equality, we are committed to making our requirements for promoting race equality clear. In the design and maintenance of qualifications and assessments, we will

work with our stakeholders to ensure equality of access, and to remove unnecessary barriers.

Our partners overseas will be bound by the laws that apply in their own countries, but we will include in our quality assurance procedures that partners must not breach their own anti-discriminatory legislation.

## **6.12 Procurement**

Under the Race Relations Act, we must consider race equality when procuring goods, works or services from external providers. To ensure that we meet our obligations under the RR(A)A we are revising our procurement procedures to take account of race equality.

- ◆ We will revise our purchasing manual to include guidance on race equality issues.
- ◆ We will develop an implementation plan which puts the revised manual into practice.
- ◆ We will equip staff involved in purchasing through training and guidance materials to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the provisions of the RR(A)A.

# **7 Corporate and Race Equality Objectives**

## **7.1 Corporate Objectives**

Our Corporate Plan 2007-10 sets out the short and medium term progress we will make towards achieving our vision to be recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in qualifications and assessment. It builds on good progress in 2006-07, and recognises emerging trends and challenges for the organisation. Our Corporate Plan continues to focus on five key areas of achievement:

Objective 1 – Provide qualifications and support to match the needs of individuals, society and the economy of Scotland.

Objective 2 – Using our unique data and resources, inform and support national policy development and implementation.

Objective 3 – Re-design our services and processes to make them better to use and more efficient.

Objective 4 – Develop a highly-skilled, motivated and effective workforce.

Objective 5 – Increase the use of our qualifications and services nationally and internationally.

If the goal of mainstreaming is to be achieved, it is essential that there is an overt link between equality and diversity and our corporate objectives.

## **7.2 Race Objectives**

This link is achieved by means of a business objective under Corporate Objective 4 to 'Develop action plans to monitor compliance with Equality & Diversity legislation'.

We have identified a number of areas in our action plan that need to be reviewed. Our overall race objectives are set out below.

## **Mainstreaming**

Our overarching objective is to bring equality, including race equality, into the mainstream of all areas of our work. To do this, we have identified four race objectives to focus on.

**Data collection:** the collection, analysis and presentation of good quality data are crucial to delivering the race equality duty. We need to ensure we are collecting and using relevant information, and that we address the gaps in our data collection and monitoring so that we can clearly identify any differences between ethnic groups.

Race Objective 1: Implement data collection and monitoring for candidates and take action to address any differences identified for groups from ethnic minorities.

Race Objective 2: Implement data collection and monitoring and identify and act on racial differences in relation to pay, employee functions and policies, training, appointees and other non-salaried appointments.

**Assessing impact and making changes:** we must understand how race and other equality issues impact on our policies, procedures and practices so we can make changes that lead to positive outcomes. At a formal level, this involves equality impact assessment. At a more informal level, it requires all staff to consider the impact for their day to day work.

Race Objective 3: Conduct equality impact assessments according to the timetable and publish results showing how we are promoting race equality and the changes being made in the way we work.

**Training:** training is also crucial to the delivery of race equality. As well as raising awareness, it ensures that people begin to incorporate race equality in their own areas of work. We have started rolling out equality training to all our staff but we know that we should be doing more.

Race Objective 4: Undertake training needs analysis across SQA to determine the needs of staff and other groups who work with us. Implement a programme of equality training that is fit for purpose and includes race equality.



## **8 Taking the Scheme forward**

### **8.1 Accountability and implementation**

The Board of Management has a strategic and governance role to ensure SQA fulfils its legal obligations. As accountable officer of SQA, the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Race Equality Scheme.

SQA has five directorates and one business area which report directly to the Chief Executive. Each Director has responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the planned actions under their leadership.

### **8.2 Equality and Diversity Steering Group**

We have set up an Equality and Diversity Steering Group to drive our equalities strategy forward. The Steering Group is made up of managers and staff from across the organisation. It will meet quarterly and report regularly to the Executive Management Team.

### **8.3 Equalities Officer**

We recognise the significance of the existing and emerging equality legislation and the impact it has on SQA as an employer and as a service provider. We have recruited an Equalities Officer to put our equalities strategy into practice. The post-holder joined SQA on 30 April 2007.

The Equalities Officer will work closely with the Equality and Diversity Steering Group, and with staff across all teams, to ensure that we meet our statutory obligations, deliver on our action plan, and promote and embed equality and diversity within SQA.

### **8.4 Publication of the Race Equality Scheme**

SQA's Race Equality Scheme will be published on our website in its entirety, and will be made available in different formats on request. We will also produce a user-friendly summary.

## **8.5 Reviewing the Race Equality Scheme**

We will formally review the Scheme's progress every year to review existing actions and update action plans based on newly identified priority areas. Annual reports will be subject to approval by the Executive Management Team and the Board of Management.

We will produce a revised Race Equality Scheme every three years.

## **8.6 Publishing results**

We will produce and publish information in a number of ways for different audiences. See section 4.4 of this Scheme.

## **8.7 Monitoring the Scheme and Action Plans**

The Race Equality Scheme and action plans will be monitored as part of our normal reporting procedures.

We report on corporate performance and progress against plans and budgets monthly, quarterly and annually. We have recently developed a corporate 'Balanced Scorecard' to support the execution of our 2006–07 Business Plan which in future will include equality objectives.

Monthly, key performance information is supplied to the business to assist management focus; influence or improve performance; and give assurance of progress. Our Monthly Management Team meeting is one of the forums we use to review performance information at corporate and business area level.

Each business area will be responsible for developing individual equality action plans. These will be incorporated into operational, business and corporate plans to enable progress and mainstreaming of equality to be monitored effectively.

## **8.8 Training and development**

We recognise the important role that training and development have in ensuring that we fulfil our obligations to race equality. We have embarked on a large-scale training programme and brought in two experienced equality trainers.

- ◆ Executive staff and business managers attended a workshop to help them understand the key elements of equality legislation.
- ◆ Business managers also attended workshops on identifying barriers and assessing for relevance before assessing their functions and policies for relevance to race equality.
- ◆ All staff will attend an equalities workshop to raise their awareness of equality issues and to understand the general and specific duties. These workshops have been running since February 2007.
- ◆ Targeted staff attended equality impact assessment training.

We recognise that further work needs to be done and more training is planned.

- ◆ Our Board of Management will attend a workshop in 2007. The workshop will help them understand some of the key leadership challenges and issues.
- ◆ More staff will be identified to attend equality impact assessment training from September 2007.
- ◆ Equality training will be built into our induction procedures.
- ◆ We will develop an on-going equality training programme for staff and will build equality into existing training courses, particularly in areas related to employment.

In the long term we would like to build equality into our performance management process to ensure that we meet individual training needs.

## 8.9 Communication

We will communicate the existence of our Race Equality Scheme internally and externally to ensure that our staff, customers, stakeholders and candidates are aware of our commitment to the race equality. We have a number of methods of communicating with centres and stakeholders.

- ◆ Each centre has an SQA Co-ordinator who liaise with our Customer Support Managers.
- ◆ We produce a monthly e-zine which is sent to SQA Co-ordinators and other stakeholders.
- ◆ Our website contains publications, guides and information.

We communicate with staff in a number of ways.

- ◆ Through regular all-staff briefings by the Chief Executive.
- ◆ Through business team meetings.
- ◆ Through our bulletin board and fortnightly newsletter, both easily accessible on our intranet.

Our Communication and Sponsorship Manager is reviewing our communications strategy with a view to improving the ways in which we communicate with different audiences.

We are developing a web page for equality and diversity, and all publications and information related to equality will be located on our website.

## **8.10 Over-arching equality policy**

We are developing an over-arching equality policy which sets out our legal responsibilities and explains how impact assessment will be incorporated into our decision-making. The policy will also set out: our requirements for costing the proposed improvements and actions; and any necessary approval processes.

## **8.11 Involving staff, stakeholders and service users**

We will be involving different groups in our impact assessments, using a range of consultation methods including surveys, open meetings, focus groups, working groups, and commissioned research where necessary. To make best use of resources, we will:

- ◆ Be proportionate – the nature and scale of the consultation will depend on how relevant the issue is to race equality.
- ◆ Use appropriate methods – the methods used should be appropriate to the consultation issue.
- ◆ Be accessible – the consultation method should be easily accessible to the group being consulted.

## 9      **Contacting SQA**

Developing our Race Equality Scheme is an on-going process, and we recognise that others may want to contribute. We welcome feedback on the Scheme and would be happy to hear your thoughts and concerns.

You can contact us by:

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telephone          0845 213 5319

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