Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

## Skills Development Scotland has a legal duty to consider the impact of any new ‘policy’ on equality groups. A ‘policy’ in this context is taken to mean any new activity, function, policy or product, essentially anything that SDS does. Assessing impact includes considering relevant evidence, including evidence received from equality groups and the likelihood of a positive or negative impact on equality groups of introducing that new product, project or policy. The final section of this form requires us to think about how negative consequences can be mitigated against or removed, and how potential positive impacts can be encouraged. Equality impact assessment helps SDS meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. In addition, SDS took the decision to use the impact assessment process to make progress as a Corporate Parent in relation to care experienced young people, which is a component part of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The process might also be used to consider other groups that SDS has evidence of experiencing discrimination or underrepresentation.

For more detailed information about equality impact assessment, please see EHRC guidance here:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/assessing-impact-and-public-sector-equality-duty-guide-public-authorities>

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| --- | --- |
| **Name of EqIA** (e.g. directorate, large project or service) | HR Partnering Service |
| **Senior Responsible Officer (SRO):** name and job title | Linsay Lochans, Head of HR |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Approved by:** | **Director of:** | **Date approved:** | **Review date:** |
|  | Human Resources | 11th May 2022 | 11th May 2025 |

1. **Purpose of project, policy or product**

Provide details of what is being impact assessed below, including the target audience for this project:

SDS is an employer of choice committed to enabling fulfilling working lives through our exemplar demonstration of fair, innovative and transformative work. There are four teams within the HR directorate committed to support SDS’s ambitions. Three of the teams are responsible for creating the Employer Framework for the employment experience, HR Policy, Organisational Development and Workforce Planning. The fourth team HR Partnering is then responsible for the implementation and embedding of the employer framework and interface with the business.

SDS Business Partnering service offer is to provide advice and guidance for Management to continuously improve and transform the employment experience in practice, in line with our employer ambitions. To do this the team must understand the impact and insights from the employer framework to inform future action planning and continuous improvement activity in the wider HR directorate.

Our Partnering team supports the business in two key areas: People Leadership and People Development. People Leadership focuses on ensuring the adoption of Employee Engagement best practice to create a highly engaged and motivated workforce, thus creating a productive workforce. The other key area is People Development via strategic workforce planning. This business area enables efficient and effective service delivery through talent development, upskilling, reskilling and continuous professional development for our employees.

1. **Evidence and Impact**

This section considers the impact on each of the equality groups in turn.

* 1. **Age**

**Context:** SDS workforce age profile shows that we have 639 over the age of 50 years or over as at 31/3/21 which represents 38.5% of the workforce as at 31/3/21. An average of 31 individuals have retired from SDS per annum in the 3-year period 2018/19 to 2020/21. Our age profile as at 31/3/21 shows that 5.4% of our workforce are aged 16-24 years (89 individuals)

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Succession planning discussions take place for business-critical roles | Discussions with Management teams | Clear advice given to business areas and people managers on the approach to workforce planning and succession planning around retirement and next steps. |  |
| Older employees are likely to feel discriminated against if asked directly or feel pressure to disclose when they plan to retire. | [Older People in Employment Research - SG](https://www.gov.scot/publications/older-people-employment-scotland/pages/6/) | General non-targeted promotion of pre-retirement courses  Our flexible working practices allow for flexible retirement to help a gradual transition to retirement and support flexible working  As part of a strategic project talent planning will be reviewed and a new approach implemented.  Use of management information to highlight potential risks within the skills profile of workforce and losing key skills via retirements |  |
| Young people have been widely adversely affected by the Pandemic and need to be given opportunities to enter the workplace to obtain qualifications and experience. | SDS currently commits 60 approved youth opportunities per annum for current and new young people. | SDS Young Talent strategy in place designed to reach those further from the labour market and maximise on work-based learning opportunities  Pilot of Career Ready and Summer Internships in 2021. Both programmes are focused on disadvantaged groups.  Inclusion of youth opportunities as part of strategic annual workforce planning  Ongoing support to ensure all young people obtain a positive destination following participation in our Young Talent programme |  |
| Younger colleagues have been impacted by remote working during the Pandemic and during our Recover phase | Informal discussions with people managers  Loneliness survey, Chargifi  SDS Pulse Engagement surveys 2020-2021 | An information pack for managers has been pulled together and rolled out to support people working remotely  Wellbeing strategy offer – Chinwags etc  Younger workers were given priority return to offices when we were able to safely open  Extensions to contracts of Graduate Interns were given as an exceptional measure to allow for a office based work experience |  |

* 1. **Disability**

**Context:** 5.2% of workforce identify as disabled but this does not fully reflect the number of reasonable adjustments which have previously been put in place

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| People Manager knowledge and understanding of the importance and benefits of reasonable adjustments varies  With only a small number of employees in the organisation identifying as disabled many People Managers may lack the awareness, understanding and ability to support reasonable adjustments within the workplace. This can then affect the diversity of our workforce. | Case conversations and informal advice cases; conversations with managers  [Business Disability Forum](https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/news-opinion/people-manager-toolkit/https:/businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/news-opinion/people-manager-toolkit/) | HR Business Partnering offer provide coaching and guidance to People Managers to identify opportunities to make reasonable adjustments to roles and consider carefully the design of roles to create an inclusive workforce.  Advice provided from our resourcing team to hiring managers to ensure our onboarding ensures reasonable adjustments are discussed and reviewed before day one  Reasonable adjustment process being developed and planned for e-learning roll out | Explore the feasibility of designing a Power BI dashboard which would provide diversity information to Management teams. |

* 1. **Gender reassignment** (sometimes under heading of Transgender)

**Context:** Under 10 employees identify as transgender

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Given the small numbers of colleagues identifying as transgender in the organisation there may be a skills and knowledge gap both in our own HR team and wider business to ensure an inclusive working environment is created | Current stats of employees identifying as trans | HRBPs have raised awareness of the Trans webinar and guidance to teams who felt they needed some upskilling as a result of recent recruitment | Trans Webinar on the Academy to form part of mandatory learning for roles in HR team and built into induction |

* 1. **Marriage and civil partnership**

**Context:** We have reviewed this and do not believe there is a potential impact on this group.

**2.5 Pregnancy and maternity**

**Context:** From 1 Apr 2020 to 31 March 2021 we had 25 individuals on maternity leave

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Colleagues on maternity/adoption leave, including returners to the workplace, may not be aware of the full range of services available to them whilst on leave but also to support return to work planning. This could include awareness of development and promotional opportunities but also the right to be considered for flexible working and a robust induction support as part of the return to the workplace. | There is no formal communication process agreed for individuals who are on maternity leave; managers are relied upon to keep in touch with colleagues | Continue to support People Managers when they have colleagues on maternity leave to ensure they have the right information and guidance to make decisions regarding recruitment.  Team member currently undertaking further research into maternity career journey and experience. |  |

**2.6 Race**

**Context:** 2% of workforce are from a minority ethnic community

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Lack of diversity in SDS in relation to race and ethnicity, and under-representation across the organisation | Equality & Diversity Mainstreaming Report | Via Business Partnering support ensure People Managers engage with learning available to support inclusive recruitment practices  ‘Rethinking Recruitment’ working group established to review recruitment practices – a separate equality impact assessment will be published in relation to our recruitment practices |  |

**2.7 Religion or belief**

**Context:** 43% of our employees state that they do not have a religion. Of the 57% remaining, 16% identify as Catholic; 19% as Church of Scotland, 7% as Other Christian, 1% another religion or belief, 10% chose not to say and 2% did not respond. Less than 10 employees identified as Hindu/Jewish/Muslim or Pagan so this was not reported.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Observation of religious practice may impact attendance or require adjustment to working practices. Awareness needs to be raised through advice and guidance given to ensure colleagues are not excluded and essential events are not held on religious holidays. | [XpertHR](https://www.xperthr.co.uk/tasks/establish-a-policy-on-requests-for-time-off-to-observe-religious-holidays/150478/) | Advice and guidance on informal support to flex start/ finish times during periods of religious observation (use SDS Flexi Time Policy), as well as advice on annual leave requests to avoid discriminatory practice. |  |

**2.8 Sex** (or gender)

**Context:** Workforce gender breakdown 72% female 28% male as at 31st March 2021. 23% of the workforce work part time (30% of workforce who work part time are female and 6% are male.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Colleagues may experience domestic abuse during hybrid working but can disproportionally affect women | [Gender Occupational Segregation Report](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/47776/equality-report-2021_final_050521_2.pdf) (EDMR pg 66) | We promoted our domestic abuse guidance in November 2020  We are currently reviewing our domestic abuse guidance and meetings arranged for review between January and April 2022 | A review of the domestic abuse guidance to take place and further awareness raising to follow |
| If job descriptions and adverts are not inclusive then they may discourage a diverse range of candidates for posts | [Equality Evidence Review](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/47777/1329_equality-evidence-review-2021.pdf)  Research showing that wording on adverts could discourage diversity  [Harvard research](https://gap.hks.harvard.edu/evidence-gendered-wording-job-advertisements-exists-and-sustains-gender-inequality) | Promoting diversity in our recruitment process and practice including interview panels; reviewing how we advertise  HR support on the design and articulation of all job descriptions with peer review included |  |

**2.9 Sexual orientation**

**Context:** LGB and other is reported at 4.3% of the workforce (69 individuals)

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| If managers aren’t aware of our inclusive approach, our values may not be fully embedded | [CIPD Inclusion At Work Report](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/inclusion-work-perspectives-report_tcm18-90359.pdf) | We have LGBTI+ employee network  Equality and Diversity training is mandatory compliance learning for all employees |  |

1. Assessing impact on other groups

This section is the same as above only considers the impact of groups not covered in the Equality Act (2010), e.g. care experience, carers, socio-economic disadvantage).

* 1. **Care experience**

**Context:** 1.1% of our workforce (19 individuals) are care experienced.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ringfencing of Young Talent positions for care experienced young people | [Who Cares? Scotland](https://www.whocaresscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Impact-of-Covid-19-on-Scotlands-Care-Experienced-Community-May-2020-2.pdf) | Mandatory module on the Academy for Corporate Parenting  NSPCC training for all case team, NPO training for Head of HR and HRBP Case Advice |  |

* 1. **Island Community Impact Assessment**

**Context:** SDS has signed up to the Gaelic Language plan which sets out various actions

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Some job roles may need to be in Gaelic language to ensure the role is inclusive to those in island communities | Gaelic Language Plan | We have advertised some roles in the Gaelic language |  |
| Individuals who live on an Island (or other rural) location may feel disadvantaged from roles due to their location | Through informal discussion and some concerns raised about job roles having a defined location which is often central belt | We discuss and challenge recruiting managers and encourage diversity of location  Job descriptions and job adverts demonstrate flexible location unless there is a genuine business requirement |  |

1. **Action Plan**

The SRO is responsible for all actions.

| **What is the action?** | **Which group(s) does it relate to?** | **What is the anticipated outcome?** | **What method is used to measure it?** | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Explore the feasibility of designing a Power BI dashboard which would provide diversity information to Management teams. | Disability/ALL | Leaders and senior managers become more aware of the current stats we have relating to diversity of colleagues within SDS | More open discussions with senior leaders | End of March 2023 |
| All role in HR Partnering team to undertake learning via Trans Webinar on Academy | Gender reassignment | Wider understanding and confidence around how to create inclusive working environments to ensure HR colleagues can support Managers | Number of people completing the learning on Academy | End of June 2022 |
| A review of the domestic abuse guidance to take place and further awareness raising to follow | Sex | To ensure there is appropriate guidance for Managers in the event they need to support a colleague | Revised guidance published | End of August 2022 |