



Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Form

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of proposal	Carers Policy
Responsible department	Human Resources

B. AIMS OF THE PROPOSAL

What do you hope to achieve?	This policy outlines the internal supports available and also external agencies that may be able to assist by providing advice and information. It shows the commitment of the SSSC to the work-life balance of all employees
Why is the proposal needed?	<p>This is an update to an existing policy which is part of the SSSC's commitment to the health, safety and welfare of employees as well as meeting exceeding legal obligations that are to come into force shortly.</p> <p>The SSSC acknowledges the increasing need for carers and is supportive of the important role carers play.</p>
How will the proposal contribute to the SSSC's strategic objectives and/or priorities?	This review links to strategic priority 3 - Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and proposal makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.

	<p>This policy supports our Organisational Characteristics in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and specifically "People want to work at the SSSC".</p> <p>The Strategic Plan states "we are committed to investing in our own workforce the same way we are invested in the external workforce".</p> <p>This policy supports strategic themes 1, 2, 3, and 6 of our People Strategy 2021-2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective leaders and managers. • Recruit and develop excellent people. • A healthy and inclusive organisation. • An agile and innovative workforce. <p>This policy supports these priorities by expressing our position and how we support and respond to flexible working requests incidences and dependencies in a fair and consistent manner.</p> <p>By adopting this updated policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We set a consistent standard for managers and employees • We meet our health and safety obligations • We are clear to managers and employees what supports are available and the procedure that may be followed.
<p>How will the proposal address the SSSC's Equality duties?</p>	<p>The policy addresses all 3 of the equality duties in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, <u>Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)</u> ie eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p>This policy makes clear our commitment to equal treatment for employees and sets out how we treat them fairly and consistently.</p>

C. DATA AND EVIDENCE GATHERING

What evidence has been used to come to the decisions contained in this EQIA?	<p>The policy has been updated in terms of layout, language and expression. We have had this policy approved by Carer Scotland.</p> <p>Benchmarking has been conducted with ACAS, CIPD, Disclosure Scotland, Scottish Government as well as considering published material from other public sector organisations.</p>
Has the proposal been the subject of relevant engagement and/or consultation?	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with the Operational Management Team, Executive Management Team and with Unison our recognised trade union regarding this policy. A consultation log has been maintained of their comments and proposals.</p>
Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	Yes
Have any gaps been found in the data?	N/A

D. ASSESSING IMPACT AND IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE EQUALITY

Gender – does the proposal take account of different roles and responsibilities? Does it assume, perhaps wrongly that men have no caring responsibilities? Is the proposal flexible enough to provide a service that everyone can access?

The policy applies equally to all employees and others as outlined above and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy does not take a specific approach regarding this protected characteristic but it does create a common approach for us to follow.

The positive approach to working in a flexible manner or for accessing leave where operationally feasible that we have adopted contributes to a more inclusive environment. Our approach gives more flexibility and leave to all employees and makes it easier for those who are carers to meet their obligations with less stress.

Ethnicity – have you covered all minority ethnic groups? Consider the impact your proposal has on someone from a minority ethnic group and remember this impact may differ depending on the gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation or ethnicity of the person as different cultures have different views on what is acceptable. Consider language and format.

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Disability – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities. How does this proposal affect disabled people? Are there any impairment groups who are unfavourably affected by the policy?

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Sexual orientation – what are the issues for this group in terms of your proposal? Does it meet the needs of this group?

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Gender reassignment – does your proposal include people of different gender identities? Will your proposal impact transgender individuals in any way?

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Age – remember different age groups have different concerns. When considering age remember that some individuals are more vulnerable or have issues that may need additional consideration.

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We recognise that our employees can become a carer at any time and at any age and support all of our employees.

Marital and civil partnership – it is unlawful discrimination for people who are married/civil partnership/same-sex couple to be treated less favourably in employment than those who are not married/civil partnership/mixed-sex couple.

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Pregnancy and maternity – protection against maternity discrimination covers 26 weeks after giving birth – this includes treating a woman unfavourable because she is breastfeeding.

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Religion/Belief/Non-belief – does your proposal take into account different festivals, holidays, religious days and traditions? Will the different faith beliefs impact on women from that group and exclude or prevent them from using the service?

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E. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROUPS LIVING IN AN ISLAND COMMUNITY

This section considers the impact or effect of the proposal on island communities and whether this could be significantly different from its effect on other communities.

It is recognised that our islands face particular challenges around distance, geography, connectivity and demography, so it is important that we consider these properly and make sure islands receive fair and equitable treatment and that there is no detriment to their unique circumstances.

This policy is not expected to have any impact on islands communities beyond those individual employees who live on an island and are employed by us. The supports that are available are online / remote resources avoiding any detriment due to location.

F. CHILD RIGHTS AND WELLBEING

This section considers the impact of the proposal on children and young people, or specific groups of children and young people, in Scotland.

This policy contributes to the creation of a positive culture and enables parents (and others with similar responsibilities) who may also be carers to take time off to spend with children. This will impact on those people that we employ and make them feel happier and supported while at work and will positively impact on children.

This indirectly contributes to the rights and wellbeing of their children and young people. This policy is not expected to have a direct impact on the rights and wellbeing of children and young people.

G. HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND HEALTH INEQUALITIES

This section considers the impact of the proposal on physical and mental health and wellbeing; this includes for example, participation, creativity and developing potential.

This policy is expected to contribute to the health and wellbeing of our employees by contributing to creating a positive environment for them. Employees who are healthier are more likely to perform to a higher standard. Employees who are healthier and happier are more likely to contribute to the wider sector and community.

H. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

This section is concerned with the impact of the proposal on pay and employment opportunities as well as valuing and supporting voluntary work.

The policy is expected to contribute towards improving the health of our employees by creating a positive environment for them. Employees who are healthier and happier are more likely to contribute to the wider sector and community.

I. CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

This section concerns our duties to put Scotland's care experienced children, young people and adults at the heart of what we do.

This policy is not expected to have a specific impact on care experienced children or young people. We have other provisions in place that support our employees in this regard.

J. DECISION MAKING

Which of the following statements best describes the action that should be taken following the EqIA in relation to your proposal?

No major change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Adjust the policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stop and remove the policy	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outline the reasons why you've selected this option.

We have not identified any changes following the completion of the Equality Impact Assessment.

K. MONITORING AND REVIEWING

How will the implementation of the policy/proposal be monitored? How and when will the impact of the proposal be reviewed? Outline the actions that will be taken, the timescale for these and who will be responsible for carrying out these actions.

Action	Timescale	Person Responsible
The policy will be monitored on a three-yearly cycle to test for effectiveness and continued suitability.	Ongoing.	Lucy Finn, Head of Human Resources.

L. SIGN OFF

Name: Lucy Finn

Title: Head of Human Resources

Date Approved: October 2023