



# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

## Summary results of the EqIA

**Title of policy/practice/process/service:**

Family Friendly Policy

**Is the policy new (proposed), a revision to an existing policy or a review of current policy?**

Revision to existing policy

**Key findings from this assessment (or reason why an EqIA is not required):**

This policy applies to all employees within SLAB and all prospective employees. With an attractive family friendly policy, the aim is to demonstrate our commitment to supporting employees and giving effect to their rights through the various life events and stages they may encounter while working for us. All protected characteristics are therefore potentially of relevance.

**Summary of actions taken because of this assessment:**

Offering employees receiving fertility treatment and employees whose partners are receiving fertility treatment, up to 22.2 hours (pro rata for part time employees) paid leave per rolling 12 month period, for maximum of three cycles.

The introduction of enhanced Shared Parental pay, and the introduction of 1-week unpaid carers leave per year.

Clarification that a “dependant” could be a child, parent, and partner, or in cases of illness, injury or where care arrangements break down, someone who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance. The dependent may not always be a member of the employee’s immediate family or live in their household.

**Ongoing actions beyond implementation include:**

Ongoing monitoring.

**Lead person(s) for this assessment (job title and department only):**

Head of People & Organisation Development, People & OD.

**Senior responsible owner agreement that the policy has been fully assessed against the needs of the general duty (job title only):**

Director of Corporate Services & Accounts.

**Publication date (for completion by Communications):**

13/12/2023

<b>Document control</b>		
<b>Document control:</b>	VO.4	
<b>Date policy live from:</b>	1 December 2023	
<b>Review cycle:</b>	Three years unless a change in law or practice and any results from equality monitoring	
<b>Document change log</b>		
<b>Version/Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Morton Fraser	March '22	
Agata Soroka	July '23	Further evidence gathered to explore promoting and fostering arms of the PSED and reviewed against further redraft of policy.
Agata Soroka	Oct '23	To reflect findings of staff consultation.
Kirsty Lockhart	Nov'23	To update following changes made to policy, because of staff and union feedback during consultation.

## Step 1 - Framing the planned change

*Discussing step 1 and step 2 with the Policy Officer (Equalities) at an early stage will help identify appropriate evidence. This may include support from the wider Policy and Development team.*

**1.1 Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/practice/process/service. You can use the information in your project specification, business case etc.**

The purpose of the Family Friendly Policy is to have one policy to combine all the individual policies that fall under the ‘family friendly’ banner, including pregnancy and maternity leave, parental leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave, fertility treatment, surrogacy and special leave. Reviewing the current policies and where possible enhancing them to help SLAB attract and retain the best people.

**1.2 Why is the change required? Legislative, routine review etc.**

Review required to ensure policy remained fit for purpose in terms of current employment and equality law, and current guidance and good practice.

**1.3 Who is affected by this policy/practice/process/service? Be clear about who the ‘customer’ is.**

This policy applies to all SLAB employees.

**1.4 Policy/practice/process/service implementation date? Project end date, date new legislation will take effect.**

01/12/2023

**1.5 What other SLAB policies or projects may be linked to or affected by changes to this policy/practice/process/service? The EqIA for related policies might help you understand potential impacts, and/or your findings might be relevant to share.**

Special Leave Policy, Equality in Employment Policy, Flexible Working Policy, Dignity at Work Policy, Managing Sickness Absence Policy, Holiday Leave Policy, and Recruitment & Retention Policy.

## Step 2: Consider the available evidence and data relevant to your policy/practice/process/service

The information you gather in this section will:

- help you to understand the importance of your policy/practice/process/service for different equality groups,
- inform the depth of equality impact assessment you need to do (this should be proportional to the potential impact on equality groups), and
- provide justification and an audit trail behind your decisions, including where it is agreed an equality impact assessment is not required.

### 2.1 What information is available about the experience of each equality group in relation to this policy/practice/process/service?

*Stay focused on the topic and scope of your policy/practice/process/service. Does the policy/practice/process/service relate to an area where there are already known inequalities? Refer to the EqIA guidance for sources of evidence.*

*Remember, this step in the EqIA process is NOT about the impact your policy has on equality groups and what we need to do to mitigate those. That assessment is done under Step 4.*

*Note: If you proceed to a full EqIA you should continue to add to this section as you develop the policy/practice/process/service, come across new evidence and/or undertake a consultation.*

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
<b>All Protected Characteristics</b>	(1) Expert insight in relation to Employment and Discrimination Law standards  (2) SLAB employee data 2022-23	It is important that decisions made under this policy are not made from discriminatory assumption and if managers are more aware of equality and diversity matters within the workplace there is less chance of this occurring. The law recognises that families come in a variety of forms which encompass the full spectrum of protected groups. No employee should experience discrimination in relation to their parental entitlements under employment and equality law due to a protected characteristic or due to care experienced status. (1)

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
		<p>The data on caring responsibilities among SLAB employees (2) states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52% have no caring responsibilities</li> <li>• 5% care for an adult only</li> <li>• 3% care for a child and adult</li> <li>• 28% care for a child only</li> <li>• Overall, 36% of employees have some form of caring responsibilities.</li> </ul>
Age	<p>(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a></p> <p>(2) Expert knowledge and insight of employment and discrimination law standards.</p> <p>(3) SLAB employee information 2022-23</p> <p>(4) Staff consultation on People policies</p>	<p>The mean employee age is now 45 years, compared to 46 in the previous year. Our employees are clustered around the middle age ranges with fewer employees aged &lt;=24 years and 65+ years (both &lt;5%). Around a third of our employees are aged 45-54 years (30- 35%). Proportionally, our age demographic has several similarities to the 2019 Scottish population in employment: the main difference is across the lower age ranges where &lt;5% of our staff are aged &lt;=24 years and 10-15% are aged 25-34 years, compared to the 2019 Scottish population in employment, for which the figures are 11.9% aged &lt;=24 years and 23% aged 25-34 years. The percentage of our staff aged 45-54, in contrast, is higher than that in the 2019 Scotland population in employment (30-35%, compared to 20-25%). (1)</p> <p>While maternity leave policies will most likely affect employees of childbearing age, other types of leave within this policy could affect employees of any working age. (2)</p> <p>The data on caring responsibilities of SLAB employees in each age group states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those aged 18-24 declare no caring responsibilities</li> </ul>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4.8% of those aged 25-34 are responsible for an adult only, 19% for a child only, with an overall rate of caring responsibilities at 23.8%</li> <li>• 1.2% of those aged 35-44 group are responsible for an adult only, 51.2% for a child only, 3.6% for a child and an adult, with an overall rate of caring responsibilities at 56%, the highest of all age groups</li> <li>• 3.5% of those aged 45-54 are responsible for an adult only, 30.7% for a child only, 6.1% for a child and an adult (the highest of all age groups), with an overall rate of caring responsibilities at 40.4%</li> <li>• 13.7% of those aged 55-64 are responsible for an adult only, 9.6% for a child only, 1.4% for a child an adult, with an overall rate of caring responsibilities at 24.7%</li> <li>• 14.3% of those aged 65+ are responsible for an adult only, the highest of all age groups in this category.</li> </ul> <p>Based on the above data it can be observed that age of the employee is a factor in caring responsibilities, with employees in the middle of the ranges more likely to have caring responsibilities overall, and especially caring responsibilities towards a child, whereas caring responsibilities towards an adult are likely to increase with age. (3)</p> <p>The feedback received through staff consultation carried out in September 2023 refers to the lack of paid leave provisions for carers. (4)</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a></p> <p>(1b) Staff Survey 2021</p> <p>(2) Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>15-20% of employees who completed their equality record declared a disability or long-term health condition. This level remains higher than the 2019 Scottish population in employment figure of 13.7%, but lower than the 25.9% of people with a disability in the general population. SLAB does not gather information on caring responsibilities by disability or long-term health condition. (1)</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
	<p>(3) <a href="#">Employment: Statutory Code of Practice   Equality and Human Rights Commission</a></p> <p>(4) Expert knowledge and insight in relation to employment and discrimination law standards</p>	<p>However, in the 2021 SLAB Staff Survey (1b), 35% said they had a condition which lasted or was likely to last for 12 months. 11% said they had a mental health condition. This might suggest that the actual level of Equality Act disability amongst staff could be higher than is reported through our self-service equality data gathering process. SLAB does not as a matter of course gather data in relation to the impact on disability of parental leave policies.</p> <p>Where a person has a disability that could lead to fertility problems, they may need to take leave in order to undergo such treatment. Employers are under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ameliorate any substantial disadvantage experienced by an employee because of disability. This may include time off for treatment or recovery from treatment. (2)</p> <p>The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Code advises that employers should treat applications for time off for fertility treatment sympathetically and develop clear procedures around leave and pay for such treatment. (3)</p> <p>While employees may adopt children for a variety of reasons one reason could be that a disability has resulted in infertility and so the employee has chosen to adopt. Parental leave policies should give adoption and biological parenthood parity of esteem in recognition of this possibility. (4)</p>
Race	(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a>	<p>Our data tells us that our employee ethnic origin demographic is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 85-90% White Scottish and other British</li> <li>• &lt;5% White minority</li> <li>• &lt;5% minority ethnic groups</li> </ul>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
	(2) Staff consultation on People policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5-10% selected prefer not to say.</li> </ul> <p>Our employee demographic is broadly comparable to the 2019 Scottish population, except in the ‘White - minority’ group, which is underrepresented compared to the Scottish in work population. Since the 2021-2022 report, ‘white - minority’ has moved from 5-10% of our staff complement to &lt;5%. (1)</p> <p>SLAB does not, as a matter of routine, gather data in relation to the equality impact of race on parental leave. The numbers of employees declaring an “Other” national identity or minority ethnic origin too low to report on caring responsibilities of this group within this impact assessment.</p> <p>The feedback received through staff consultation carried out in September 2023 refers to caring responsibilities for elderly family members as more prevalent in some cultures as compared to others. (2)</p>
Sex	<p>(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a></p> <p>(2) SLAB employee information 2022-2023</p> <p>(3) Expert insight of employment and discrimination law standards</p>	<p>We have a 65-70% female and 30-35% male breakdown. The 2019 population data shows that in the general population 52% were female and 48% were male and of those in employment, 48.5% were female and 51.5% were male. (1)</p> <p>The data on caring responsibilities among SLAB employees (2) states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.9% of female employees have caring responsibilities towards an adult only, 3.7% towards a child and an adult, 26.4% towards a child only - overall 37% female employees have caring responsibilities.</li> </ul>



Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
	<p>(4) <a href="#">What Women Want: Tackling gender inequalities in unpaid care and the workplace, Centre for Progressive Policy, 2023</a></p> <p>(5) <a href="#">Leave in the lurch: paternity leave, gender equality and the UK economy, Centre for Progressive Policy, 2023</a></p> <p>(6) <a href="#">Gender gap in parental leave intentions: Evidence from 37 countries, Political Psychology Journal, 2023</a></p> <p>(7) <a href="#">The experiences of women returning to work after</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.7% of male employees have caring responsibilities towards an adult only, 2.7% towards a child and an adult, 32.1% towards a child only - overall 37.5% male employees have caring responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p>Parental leave policies are more likely to affect women as it is understood and accepted that women still perform the majority of childcare in the home. Parental policies which are accessible and fair aim to address this imbalance by making it as viable as possible for those other than women to take parental leave. (3)</p> <p>A 2021 report by the Centre for Progressive Policy states that despite issues around measurement, enough evidence has been collated to demonstrate that women perform a disproportionate amount of unpaid care in the UK. (4)</p> <p>A 2023 report by the Centre for Progressive Policy states that survey findings suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing father's and partners' statutory paid leave entitlement, and paying this at a higher rate, would encourage UK fathers and partners to take more parental leave</li> <li>• a paternal leave of six weeks or more can reduce gender inequality in the labour market</li> <li>• only 18% of prospective parents could afford to take six weeks of parental leave at the statutory rate of £172 per week</li> <li>• 43% of recent fathers who took some parental leave returned to work early and did not use the full entitlement available due to financial hardship. (5)</li> </ul>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
	<p><a href="#">maternity leave in the UK, NCT, 2008</a></p> <p>(8) <a href="#">How Companies Can Ensure Maternity Leave Doesn't Hurt Women's Careers, Harvard Business Review, 2018</a></p> <p>(9) Staff consultation on People policies</p>	<p>A 2023 study of international evidence on gender gap in parental leave intentions shows that men's relatively lower engagement in childcare has been linked to lower career opportunities for women. However, the study highlights that financially generous leave and gender-egalitarian policies (linked to men's higher uptake in prior research) were not associated with leave intentions in men. Rather, men's leave intentions were related to their individual gender attitudes. Among both sexes, leave intentions were negatively associated with career ambition, highlighting the importance of reducing this gender gap for equality in higher-status careers. (6)</p> <p>Findings of a 2008 survey published by the National Childbirth Trust show that 15% of respondents felt that it might be tricky to continue breastfeeding following return to work. (7)</p> <p>Findings of the 2018 survey of maternity leave returnees in UK and Ireland carried out by Harvard Business Review show that returning from maternity leave may have a negative impact on career progression. The recommendations made include a phased return to work. (8)</p> <p>The feedback received through staff consultation carried out in September 2023 refers to the lack of paid leave provisions for carers, highlighting that more women than men are unpaid carers. (9) While SLAB data indicates that female employees are marginally more likely to have caring responsibilities for an adult,</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
		(3) it is recognised that UK evidence suggests that women perform disproportionate amount of unpaid care. (4)
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a>  (2) Expert knowledge and insight of employment and discrimination law standards	We monitor data in relation to gender reassignment but do not publish it due to the risk of disclosure and identifying individuals. (1) The numbers are too small within SLAB to enable us to draw any conclusions in relation to the impact of the parental policy on gender reassignment. The numbers of transgender employees are too low to report on caring responsibilities of this group within this impact assessment.  The use of gender-neutral language within parental policies is more inclusive. An employee undergoing or who has undergone gender reassignment may still be affected by any of these types of leave within the policy. (2)
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a>  (2) Expert knowledge and insight of employment and discrimination law standards  (3) <a href="#">Adoptions and re-registrations, National Records for Scotland, 2021</a>	<5% of employees identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other/unsure. LGBT and ‘Other’ representation appears comparable to the 2019 general Scottish population (2.9%) and the population of people who are in employment (3.2%). Whilst 10-15% of staff continue to answer, ‘prefer not to say’, the specific percentage has decreased slightly since last year. (1) The numbers of LGBT employees are too low to report on caring responsibilities of this group within this impact assessment.  Inclusive language which acknowledges parents of all sexual orientations is essential for reducing the risk of discrimination or exclusion. (2)  Same sex couples may choose to adopt rather than engage in surrogacy arrangements and even where surrogacy arrangements are utilised one or both

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
	(4) <a href="#">Families and households in the UK: 2022, ONS, 2023</a>	<p>parents may have to or may choose to adopt. Parental leave policies should give adoption and biological parenthood parity of esteem in recognition of this possibility. (2)</p> <p>In 2021, 44 out of 480 (9.2%) adoptions in Scotland were to same-sex couples. (3)</p> <p>Same-sex cohabiting couple families account for 0.6% and civil-partner couple families (both same sex and opposite sex) account for a further 0.6% of all families in 2022. (4)</p>
Religion or Belief	<p>(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a></p> <p>(2) Staff consultation on People policies</p>	<p>The number of employees identifying as Christian (30-35%) is lower than that reported for the 2019 Scottish population (42.5%) but broadly comparable to those in employment (36.4%). The percentage of employees declaring no religion (50-55%) is in line with the 2019 Scottish population (53.7%) but significantly lower than those in employment (60%). This is the same position as previous years.</p> <p>The number of employees identifying with other religions (collating Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and others, for example Jewish) is &lt;5%, in line with both the 2019 national profile and for those in employment (3.1%). Our ‘prefer not to say’ figure remains relatively high at 10-15%, though again, this figure has reduced slightly since we last reported. (1) The numbers of employees declaring an “Other” religion are too low to report on caring responsibilities of this group within this impact assessment.</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
		The feedback received through staff consultation carried out in September 2023 refers to Christian/other religious beliefs as applying a wider definition of “family” that extends beyond blood relatives. (2)
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	(1) <a href="#">SLAB Annual Report 2022-23</a>  (2) Expert knowledge and insight in relation to Employment and Discrimination Law standards	In 2022-23, 100% of maternity leavers returned to work. Of these, 60% (20% more than the year prior) requested a variation to their contractual hours on return to work and all were approved on a permanent basis. SLAB does not gather information on absence rates among this protected characteristic group. (1)  Employees who are pregnant and on maternity leave are afforded rights and protections under the law to ensure they do not experience detriment or discrimination due to pregnancy or maternity. It is essential that any parental policy gives clear and comprehensive guidance to employees and managers alike to ensure those rights and protections are upheld. (2)
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	(1) <a href="#">Staff Demographics</a>  (2) Desk research  (3) Expert knowledge and insight in relation to employment and discrimination law standards	SLAB does not as a matter of course gather data in relation to parental leave or caring responsibilities and marriage or civil partnership. (1)  A wider search for any data suggesting an equality impact in relation to parental leave policies and marriage and civil partnership no results. (2)  Parents may be married, unmarried, divorced, single or in a civil partnership and it is essential that parental policies contain no language which gives rise to an assumption of the marital or partnership status of parents. (3)

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service? <i>Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).</i>
	(4) <a href="#">Families and households in the UK: 2022, ONS, 2023</a>	Married-couple families remain the most common type of family in 2022 (12.7 million), accounting for 65% of all families. Civil-partner couple families (both same sex and opposite sex) account for a further 0.6% of all families in 2022. (4)
Care Experienced ( <i>corporate parenting duty</i> )	(1) Staff demographics  (2) Staff consultation on People policies	<p>5-10% of all staff members declare they are care-experienced, 80-85% are not and 10-15% prefer not to say. SLAB does not as a matter of course gather data in relation to parental leave and Care Experienced status. (1)</p> <p>The data on caring responsibilities among SLAB employees states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31.6% of care experienced employees have caring responsibilities towards an adult only, 5.3% towards a child and an adult, 26.3% towards a child only - overall 63.2% care experienced employees have caring responsibilities, the highest rate of all protected characteristic groups within SLAB, however, it should be noted that the number of employees in this group is low at 19.</li> <li>• 4.4% of employees with no care experience have caring responsibilities towards an adult only, 3.3% towards a child and an adult, 30.8% towards a child only - overall 38.5% employees with no care experience have caring responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p>The feedback received through staff consultation carried out in September 2023 refers to lack of provisions for foster carers within the policy, such as leave to attend training to become a foster carer or when a child is placed in the employees' care. (2)</p>

**2.2 Using the information above and your knowledge of the policy/practice/process/service, summarise your overall assessment of how important and relevant the policy/practice/process/service is likely to be for equality groups.**

There is likely to be several potential impacts across the protected characteristics.

**2.3 Outcome of step 2 and next steps. Complete the table below to inform the next stage of the EqIA process.**

*Consult with the project group and/or Corporate Policy Officer (Equalities) on completing this section.*

Outcome of Step 2 following initial evidence gathering and relevance to equality characteristics	Yes/ No (Y or N)	Next steps
There is no relevance to equality or our corporate parenting duties	N	Proceed to Step 5: agree with decision makers that no EqIA is required based on current evidence
There is relevance to some or all of the equality groups and/or our corporate parenting duties	Y	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA
It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all of the equality groups and/or our corporate parenting duties	N	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA

**Step 3 - stakeholder involvement and consultation**

*This step will help you to address any gaps in evidence identified in Step 2. Speaking to people who will be affected by your policy/practice/process/service can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups.*

***Remember that sufficient evidence is required for you to show ‘due regard’ to the likely or actual impact of your policy/practice/process/service on equality groups. An inadequate analysis in an assessment may mean failure to meet the general duty.***

*The Policy and Development team can help to identify appropriate ways to engage with external groups or to undertake research to fill evidence gaps.*

**3.1 Do you/did you have any consultation or involvement planned for this policy/practice/process service?**

Yes

**3.2 List all the stakeholder groups that you will talk to about this policy/practice/process/service.**

Carried out consultations with SLAB leadership team, employees, and our recognised Trade Union.

### 3.3 What did you learn from the consultation/involvement? *Remember to record relevant actions in the assessment action log.*

#### Staff and Union Consultation - August 2023

- 5% of respondents felt the policy would impact on different groups of people based on protected characteristics differently, with a potential negative impact on the protected characteristic - age.
- One respondent felt that removing the ability to carry over credit hours (a provision in the Flexible Working policy) and offering paid leave for emergency dependents' care might result in discrimination between different groups of staff - believed it impacted the protected characteristic of sex given the provisions seemed to favour the typically older and more senior staff with young dependents. Following consultation, the Flexible Working policy has been amended to allow a credit carry over of seven hours.

### Step 4 - Impact on equality groups and steps to address these

*You must consider the three aims of the general duty for each protected characteristic. The following questions will help:*

- **Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010? How will this be mitigated?**
- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not? How can this be achieved?**
- **Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not? How can this be achieved?**

#### 4.1 Does the policy/practice/process/service have any impacts (whether intended or unintended, positive or negative) on any of the equality characteristics?

*In the tables below, record the impact the policy/practice/process/service might have on each equality characteristic, as it is planned or as it operates, and describe what changes in policy/practice process/service or actions will be required to mitigate that impact. Copy any actions across to the project action log.*



Age	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
potential for discrimination	X	X		As evidenced above those of younger age groups may be less likely to qualify for statutory leave. Qualifying criteria are set by law and this policy cannot address this. Unpaid carers have access to generous flexible working provisions and paid leave through special leave policy to minimise the potential for any adverse impact on pay.
potential for developing good relations	X	X		If staff making decisions under this policy are trained as recommended this minimises the risk of unfairness in decision making under the policy from an equality impact perspective. This will hopefully serve to increase levels of trust and quality of communication.  To promote good relations between employees with caring responsibilities for children, caring responsibilities for adults and no caring responsibilities, other types of leave will be covered in the Special Leave Policy, as well as addressed by generous flexible working provisions.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X	X		No employee should experience discrimination or detriment in relation to the parental rights and protections under employment law and appropriate training will be completed by all employees involved in decision making under this policy, should help to reduce any risk that employees miss out on pay and leave opportunities due to any discriminatory assumption in decision making.

Sex	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
potential for discrimination	X	X		<p>The policy introduced enhanced shared parental pay, paid days off for fertility treatment, carer leave, neonatal leave and time off for classes recommended by a medical practitioner as antenatal leave, all of which are expected to have a positive impact on reducing the potential for discrimination on the grounds of sex.</p> <p>Unpaid carers have access to generous flexible working provisions to minimise the potential for any adverse impact on pay related to unpaid carers leave.</p>
potential for developing good relations	X			A more sympathetic approach to fertility treatment and pregnancy-related time off should increase trust and communication.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The policy introduced enhanced shared parental pay, paid days off for fertility treatment, carer leave, neonatal leave and time off for classes recommended by a medical practitioner as antenatal leave, all of which are expected to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for both sexes.
Disability	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
potential for discrimination	X			The paid fertility treatment leave has been extended to the maximum of three cycles.

				The paid fertility treatment leave has been extended to the partners of those receiving treatment.
potential for developing good relations	X			A more sympathetic approach to fertility treatment should increase trust and communication.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Parents who choose to adopt due to reasons arising from disability will be more likely to feel confident that their time on adoption leave will be viewed with the same esteem as other forms of parental leave.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<b>Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)</b>			<b>Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.</b> For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	<b>Positive impacts</b>	<b>Negative impacts</b>	<b>No impact</b>	
potential for discrimination	X			The policy adopts gender-neutral language to prevent discrimination of employees undergoing gender reassignment.
potential for developing good relations	X			The policy adopts gender-neutral language to promote inclusion of employees undergoing gender reassignment.
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
<b>Race</b>	<b>Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)</b>			<b>Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.</b> For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	<b>Positive impacts</b>	<b>Negative impacts</b>	<b>No impact</b>	
potential for discrimination		X		As evidenced above those of certain racial groups may be less likely to qualify for statutory leave. Qualifying criteria are set by law and this policy cannot address this.  Providing care to elderly family members may be more prevalent in some cultures. Unpaid carers have access to generous flexible working

				provisions to minimise the potential for any adverse impact on pay related to unpaid carers leave.
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<b>Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)</b>			<b>Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.</b> For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	<b>Positive impacts</b>	<b>Negative impacts</b>	<b>No impact</b>	
potential for discrimination	X	X		The definition of “family” may vary in some belief systems and go beyond the definition included in the policy. Provisions such as Carers Leave, Special Leave and flexible working provisions will assist with accommodating different beliefs and worldviews
potential for developing good relations	X	X		If staff making decisions under this policy are trained as recommended this minimises the risk of unfairness in decision making under the policy from an equality impact perspective. This will hopefully serve to increase levels of trust and quality of communication.  To promote good relations between employees with caring responsibilities for children, caring responsibilities for adults and no caring responsibilities, other types of leave will be covered in the Special Leave Policy, as well as addressed by generous flexible working provisions.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X	X		No employee should experience discrimination or detriment in relation to the parental rights and protections under employment law and appropriate training will be completed by all employees involved in

				decision making under this policy, should help to reduce any risk that employees miss out on pay and leave opportunities due to any discriminatory assumption in decision making.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)</b>			<b>Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.</b> For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	<b>Positive impacts</b>	<b>Negative impacts</b>	<b>No impact</b>	
potential for discrimination	X			<p>Same sex couples may choose to adopt rather than engage in surrogacy arrangements and even where surrogacy arrangements are utilised one or both parents may have to, or may choose to, adopt. Parental leave policies should give adoption and biological parenthood parity of esteem in recognition of this possibility.</p> <p>The policy acknowledges that parents may be husbands, wives, and partners in recognition of equal marriage of same sex couples.</p>
potential for developing good relations	X			<p>Same sex parents who choose to adopt within or outwith surrogacy arrangements will feel more included by language which recognises that adoptive parenting is held in the same esteem as biological parenting.</p> <p>The use of more inclusive language should make employees who are parents feel recognised whatever their domestic arrangements and result in increased trust and communication.</p>
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			<p>Same sex parents who choose to adopt within or outwith surrogacy arrangements will be more likely to feel confident that their time on adoption leave will be viewed with the same esteem as other forms of parental leave.</p>

				The use of more inclusive language will be likely to feel that the policy applies to them and they can more easily avail of the opportunities for leave and pay within it.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
potential for discrimination	X			The policy will have a positive impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity as it sets out the rights and protections of employees who are pregnant and on maternity leave. Clarity which has been added in relation to some of the pay and leave provisions should serve to support this further.
potential for developing good relations	X			<p>If staff making decisions under this policy are trained as recommended this minimises the risk of unfairness in decision making under the policy from an equality impact perspective. This will hopefully serve to increase levels of trust and quality of communication.</p> <p>To promote good relations between employees with caring responsibilities for children, caring responsibilities for adults and no caring responsibilities, other types of leave will be covered in the Special Leave Policy, as well as addressed by generous flexible working provisions.</p>
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			No employee should experience discrimination or detriment in relation to the parental rights and protections under employment law and appropriate training will be completed by all employees involved in decision making under this policy, should help to reduce any risk that

				employees miss out on pay and leave opportunities due to any discriminatory assumption in decision making.
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>	<b>Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)</b>			<b>Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.</b> For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	<b>Positive impacts</b>	<b>Negative impacts</b>	<b>No impact</b>	
potential for discrimination	X			The changes in the policy should mitigate any potential risk arising from practices which could discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of marriage and civil partnership.
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
<b>Care experienced young people</b>	<b>Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)</b>			<b>Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.</b> For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	<b>Positive impacts</b>	<b>Negative impacts</b>	<b>No impact</b>	
potential for discrimination	X	X		Foster carers and those interested in fostering have access to generous flexible working provisions as well as Special Leave.
potential for developing good relations	X	X		If staff making decisions under this policy are trained as recommended this minimises the risk of unfairness in decision making under the policy from an equality impact perspective. This will hopefully serve to increase levels of trust and quality of communication.  To promote good relations between employees with caring responsibilities for children, caring responsibilities for adults and no caring responsibilities, other types of leave will be covered in the Special

				Leave Policy, as well as addressed by generous flexible working provisions.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X	X		No employee should experience discrimination or detriment in relation to the parental rights and protections under employment law and appropriate training will be completed by all employees involved in decision making under this policy, should help to reduce any risk that employees miss out on pay and leave opportunities due to any discriminatory assumption in decision making.

**4.2 Describe how the assessment so far might affect other areas of this policy/practice/process/service and/or project timeline?**

We have been supported by consultants and devised a project plan with the intention of the initial review being completed within six months.

We will consult with all staff and the Union and seek views on the refreshed policy and procedures before implementation, making clear the purpose of the refresh review. In addition, SLAB as proposed within its People Strategy will be required to conduct a fuller review of this policy if taking forward plans to introduce a Health & Wellbeing Policy, which may touch upon this policy. This review is expected to take 12-18 months to complete and will require consultancy support. Equality will be part of the technical specification for any future procurement process for consultancy support.

More resource by way of consultancy support; management information services for HR data analysis and to provide training to those involved making decisions with this policy will be required, all of which will be additional cost compared to the current set up.

**4.3 Having considered the potential or actual impacts of your policy/practice/process/service on equality groups, you should now record the outcome of this assessment below.**

*Choose from one of the following (mark with an X or delete as appropriate):*



Please select (X)	Implications for the policy/practice/process/service
	<p><b>No major change</b> Your assessment demonstrates that the policy/practice/process/service is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.</p>
X	<p><b>Adjust the policy/practice/process/service</b> You need to take steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality of to foster good relations. You have set actions to address this and have clear ways of monitoring the impact of the policy/practice/process/service when implemented.</p>
	<p><b>Continue the policy/practice/process/service with adverse impact</b> The policy/practice/process/service will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. You have justified this with this assessment and shown how this decision is compatible with our obligations under the public sector equality duty. When you believe any discrimination can be objectively justified you must record in this assessment what this is and how the decision was reached.</p>
	<p><b>Stop and remove the policy/practice/process/service</b> The policy/practice/process/service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.</p>

## Step 5 - Discuss and review the assessment with decision makers and governance structures

*You must discuss the findings of this assessment with senior decision makers during the lifetime of the project/review and before you finalise the assessment. Relevant groups include, but are not limited to, a Project Board, Executive Team or Board members. EqIA should be on every project board agenda therefore only note dates where key decisions have been made (for example draft EqIA sign off, discussion about consultation response).*

### 5.1 Record details of the groups you report to about this policy/practice/process/service and impact assessment. Include

- From January 2022 - Regular reviews and updates to the EqIA between Policy staff and the People & OD team, with input from Morton Fraser.
- August 2023 - Consultation with Employees and our recognised Trade Union.

## Step 6 - Post-implementation actions and monitoring impact

*There may be further actions or changes planned after the policy/practice/process/service is implemented and this assessment is signed off. It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your policy/practice/process/service on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. This will also highlight any unforeseen impacts.*

### 6.1 Record any ongoing actions below.

*This can be copied from the project action log or elsewhere in this assessment and should include timescales and person/team responsible. If there are no outstanding items, please make this clear.*

- Review of employment law, case law and legislative changes (People & OD team - quarterly)
- Investigate implementing a fostering and kinship policy (People & OD team - year end 2024)

### 6.2 Note here how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy/practice/process/service on equality groups. In the table below you should:

- *list the relevant measures,*
- *identify who or which team is responsible for implementing or monitoring any changes,*
- *identify where the measure will be reported to ensure any issues can be acted on as appropriate.*

Measure	Lead department/ individual	Reporting (where/ frequency)
Staff Survey	Research	Every two years, to project board and to staff.
Ongoing monitoring of paternity leave, maternity leave (and return), shared parental leave and, where possible, disaggregated by protected characteristics.	Human Resources with policy input.	Annually in line with corporate reporting on regulatory duties.

### 6.3 EqlA review date.

*This EqlA should be reviewed as part of the post-implementation review of the policy/practice/process/service. The date should not exceed three years from the policy/practice/process/service implementation date.*

01/12/2026

### Step 7 - Assessment sign off and approval

*Once final consultation has been undertaken with Corporate Policy Officer (Equalities), all equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Director or Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), even where an EqlA is not required. The Chief Executive must approve all equality impact assessments. Note the relevant dates here:*

Director/SRO sign off: 11/12/2023

Chief Executive approval: 11/12/2023

*All full equality impact assessments must be published on SLAB's website as early as possible after the decision is made to implement the policy, practice, process, or service.*