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) | Your Surveys |
| **Senior Responsible Officer (SRO):** name and job title | Patrick Watt, Head of Evaluation and Research |
| **Does your project link to any other** [**published EqIAs**](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/publications-statistics/publications/?page=1&topic%5b%5d=3-6&order=date-desc)**?**  If so please provide the name of the EqIA (e.g. WBL) | n/a |

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| **Approved by:** | **Director of:** | **Date approved:** | **Review date:** |
| Signed: | Head of Evaluation & Research | 25/08/2022 | August 2025 |

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

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

Your Surveys will provide colleagues with better survey tools, training, guidance and support in gathering customer feedback, improving quality and consistency of colleague-led research. This is consistent with the Everyday Leadership approach in SDS. Your Surveys will also improve oversight of survey activities, reducing reputational risk to SDS arising from surveys being distributed of which SDS has no corporate knowledge or oversight. Your Surveys will also provide a universal and consistent offer to polling software. Your Surveys will provide SDS colleagues with access to Qualtrics survey platform via a sub account.

Qualtrics is a web based survey tool that is designed to collect, organise and analyse data. With training and guidance from the E&R Team, Qualtrics is a user friendly platform that allows users to build and send surveys. It also has a comprehensive built-in data analysis tool that allows the user to see their results in real time. The sub account will allow colleagues access to Qualtrics under the SDS license and brand.

Your Surveys will have two aspects to it. The polling aspect will allow users to drive engagement and discussion during meetings and events and to gather real time feedback to simple questions. The survey aspect will allow colleagues to conduct small scale research and evaluation-based surveys and give them the ability to gather more detailed feedback from customers and colleagues alike.

1. **Evidence and Impact**
   1. **Age**

**Context:** After consideration it has been determined that this is not a factor that would affect an individuals ability to use Your Surveys. When surveying children different factors need to be considered, however, Your Surveys should not be used with children under the age of 16 and therefor this is not relevant here.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all age groups | Equality Evidence Review | The E&R team provides guidance on what monitoring questions to use when asking about age.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team.  Our guidance is clear that Your Surveys should not be used to gather feedback from children under 16. | E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. |
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* 1. **Disability**

**Context:** In 2019, around a 35% of Scottish Adults were estimated as being disabled[[1]](#footnote-2)[[2]](#footnote-3) Data from Public Health Information for Scotland stated that an estimate of 26% of adults in Scotland had limiting long term disabilities[[3]](#footnote-4).

Within SDS the number of employees identifying as disabled has doubled over the past 5 years, from 3.5% in 2017 to 7.1% in 2019 stating that they have a disability. [[4]](#footnote-5)

It is also important to keep in mind that not all disabilities are visible and not everyone will report their disabilities. Therefore, it is vital to make sure that our products and services are accessible to all individuals. Barriers that individuals with communication difficulties may face can be – inaccessible written material where the font size is too small and the material is not accessible, no braille or screen reading facilities, inaccessible audio/video messages (no captions), and the lack of Plain English. These issues are also true for those with dyslexia. For neurodiverse individuals, online content may be too overwhelming and they may not be able to focus. This can be overcome by limiting the amount of information that is on screen and making use of page breaks to break up the amount of information that is presented on each page.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The current suppliers, Qualtrics and Mentimeter, both have accessibility built into the tool.  Qualtrics is compatible with assistive technology such as screen readers. Accessibility should not be a problem for survey users if the survey has been developed in an accessible way. However, the survey creator part of Qualtrics is not compatible with assistive technologies.  For Qualtrics, a version of the survey can be exported to a word document that can help disabled people. For example, if someone is using the Qualtrics survey and asking questions over the phone, a printed out copy can be provided to the participant if they have hearing impairments. For individuals with visual impairments, the read aloud and text to speak functionality can help make the survey more accessible for them. Qualtrics is completely accessible for people with speech impairments. | [Survey Accessibility (qualtrics.com)](https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/survey-module/survey-tools/check-survey-accessibility/)  <https://www.mentimeter.com/accessibility>  EER  Equality mainstreaming review  [Involving Disabled People in Social Research (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321254/involving-disabled-people-in-social-research.pdf) | Guidance produced by E&R colleagues encourages all surveys are done in a minimum 14 font size.  The E&R team encourages colleagues to use plain English when constructing surveys. This helps with dyslexia and other conditions  Braille and large print can be organised by SDS and colleagues in SDS are supported in this.  On Qualtrics, information can be provided in different formats for those with visual impairments. | Look into accessibility for the polling software we procure and any future survey suppliers  E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. |
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* 1. **Gender reassignment** (sometimes under heading of Transgender)

**Context:** Research by Stonewall Scotland[[5]](#footnote-6) has estimated that 1% of the population in the UK may identify as trans. We must take care when wording questions and follow the best practice guidelines and avoid gendered terms.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not Applicable – Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all in SDS. | Equality Evidence Review | Guidance around asking questions about gender reassignment is provided in monitoring questions.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team.  Wording around gender and transgender questions follow the best practice guidance. | E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. |
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* 1. **Marriage and civil partnership**

**Context:** After consideration it has been determined that this is not a factor that would affect an individuals ability to use Your Surveys.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not Applicable – Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all in SDS. | Equality Evidence Review |  |  |
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* 1. **Pregnancy and maternity**

**Context:** After consideration it has been determined that this is not a factor that would affect an individuals ability to use Your Surveys.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not Applicable – Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all in SDS. | Equality Evidence Review |  |  |
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* 1. **Race**

**Context:**

Data on ethnicity in Scotland[[6]](#footnote-7) shows that in 2018 96% of the population identified as white. Asians were the second highest ethnic group at 2.6%. The other ethnicities were as follows: African 0.5%, Mixed 0.3%, Caribbean or Black 0.1%, and other 0.4%.

In SDS 92% of our colleagues identify as white, 3% as white (other), and 2% as minority ethnic.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not Applicable – Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all in SDS.  For SDS customers and service users who may need language assistance, SDS has access to translation services that can help support individuals that need help with translation. | Equality Evidence Review | Guidance is provided in monitoring questions around asking questions about race and lists all the different ethnic categories to include.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team. | Ensure Your Survey account holders are aware of translation services.  E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. |
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* 1. **Religion or belief**

**Context:** Within SDS, there is a diverse range of colleagues with varied religious beliefs. In order to not exclude colleagues or service users from taking part in providing feedback, religious holidays will be taken into account. This will ensure that no one misses out on providing feedback if they are on leave for religious reasons.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| To not exclude colleagues or service users from taking part in providing feedback, religious holidays will be taken into account. This will ensure that no one misses out on providing feedback if they are on leave for religious reasons. | Equality Evidence Review | Guidance around asking questions on religion and belief is provided in the example monitoring questions.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team.  Making sure surveys do not clash with religious festivals – this allows no colleague or service user to be excluded from providing their feedback and opinions to SDS if they are on leave due to a religious holiday. | Ensure Your Survey account holders are aware of religious holidays when planning surveys with colleagues or customers. This is available on the CIPD website here - <https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/the-inclusion-calendar-cipd-2022_tcm18-88713.pdf>  E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. |
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* 1. **Sex** (or gender)

**Context:** Our customers and colleagues include people who identify as male, female and those who prefer to self-define. We must take care when wording questions and follow the best practice guidelines and avoid gendered terms.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not Applicable – Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all in SDS. | Equality Evidence Review | Guidance is provided on asking questions around sex and gender in the example monitoring questions.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team.  Wording around gender follow the best practice guidance. | E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. |
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* 1. **Sexual orientation**

**Context:** Research[[7]](#footnote-8) states that in Scotland the estimated number of people who identify as LGB (Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual) increased to 2.7% in 2019 from 2.0% in 2018.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not Applicable – Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all in SDS. | Equality Evidence Review | Guidance about asking questions around sexual orientation is provided in example monitoring questions.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team.  Wording around sexual orientation questions follow the best practice guidance. | E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. |

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). Add sections as required.

* 1. **Care experience**

**Context:** After consideration it has been determined that this is not a factor that would affect an individuals ability to use Your Surveys.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not Applicable – Both the survey software and polling software are accessible to all in SDS.  Carrying out research with care experience people can be challenging. Any colleagues considering carrying out research with this groups should contact the E&R team for further advice. | Equality Evidence Review | Guidance about asking questions related to care experienced is provided in example monitoring questions that are available to all those constructing the survey.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team. |  |
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* 1. **Socio-economic status**

**Context:** Poverty in Scotland has been increasing over the past 10 years. There are specific groups in Scotland who are at greater risk of living in poverty such as those in workless households, single parent families, and people from minority ethnic backgrounds.[[8]](#footnote-9) Poverty also expands the digital divide that exists within society[[9]](#footnote-10). People living in poverty may not have internet access.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Digital divide - our service users may be excluded from taking part in surveys due to not having the resources that are needed for surveys to be completed.  Digital exclusion makes it difficult for individuals to take part in certain activities. | [Covid-19 and the digital divide](https://post.parliament.uk/covid-19-and-the-digital-divide/) | We are aware that due to digital exclusion, not all service users will have access to the technology required to complete surveys.  Your Survey champions are advised to not collect any personal data from their respondents. If there is a need for personal data to be collected, it is advised that they contact the E&R team.  Service users are able to use the computers in SDS contact centres to fill out surveys. | E&R team to issue guidance on how to build surveys that do not take up too much time to load. This can save in the amount of data it will take to complete a survey.  Raise awareness among Your Survey users that not all customers have access to digital devices and to take this into account. |
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1. Island Community Impact Assessment

This section covers our commitments under the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018. This follows the same process as the rest of the form. Please see [Scottish Government Toolkit](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.scot%2Fpublications%2Fisland-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit%2F&data=04%7C01%7CJordon.Gorevan%40sds.co.uk%7Ced2dcd52cc474134145d08d8c9e79135%7C33ca6d475e4f477484f1696cbb508cbe%7C0%7C0%7C637481343690991575%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=9NJwzexZG%2BaGREDjlY74Av%2BP6deY2Z0NC2uORMZa16M%3D&reserved=0) for more information. If you feel a more detailed analysis of impact on Island Communities of your project or policy, please contact [Seonag.Campbell@sds.co.uk](mailto:Seonag.Campbell@sds.co.uk)

**Context:** After consideration it has been determined that this is not a factor that would affect an individuals ability to use Your Surveys.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| These online tools increase the reach to Island Communities and members of staff in rural locations. It allows them to be included in giving their feedback and opinions.  The tools allow us to reach customers and stakeholders in island communities and removes barriers posed by transport and distance.  Some island communities may not have access to digital technology. | Equality Evidence Review |  | E&R team to understand how accessible our software is in island communities and if there are any barriers. |
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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** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Look into accessibility in the polling software.  Test Qualtrics with users who use screen readers. Liaise with HR to identify people who can help with the testing. | Disabled | Everyone can access and complete the surveys and polls. | Feedback from champions and survey users.  The E&R team have not been contacted about accessibility issues. | End Sept 2023 |
| Ensure accessibility is taken into account during the procurement process | Disabled, race | Everyone can access and complete the surveys and polls. | Feedback from champions and survey users.  The E&R team have not been contacted about accessibility issues. | End Sept 2023 |
| E&R team to ensure monitoring questions comply with the most up to date guidance. | All | Consistent and comparable monitoring questions are used increasing the quality of our surveys. | Feedback from champions and survey users. | End Sept 2023 |
| E&R team to understand how accessible our software is in island communities and if there are any barriers. | Island communities | Users in island communities are able to use Your Surveys | Feedback from champions and survey users. | End March 2023 |
| Ensure Your Survey users are fully aware of equality guidance around survey design and implementation | All | Surveys are accessible and representative | Feedback from champions and survey users. | End March 2023 |
| E&R team to issue guidance on how to build surveys that do not take up too much time to load. | All, Socio-economic status | Users from disadvantages socio-economic backgrounds are able to complete surveys | Feedback from survey users | End March 2023 |

1. [Scottish Health Survey (shinyapps.io)](https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-health-survey/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [National Performance Framework - disability perspective: analysis - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/analysis-national-performance-framework-indicators-perspective-disability/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [Key points - ScotPHO](https://www.scotpho.org.uk/population-groups/disability/key-points/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [SDS Equality & Diversity Mainstreaming Report 2021 – 2025.](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/47776/equality-report-2021_final_050521_2.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. [The truth about trans (stonewallscotland.org.uk)](https://www.stonewallscotland.org.uk/help-advice/information-and-resources/truth-about-trans#trans-people-britain) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [Scotland: ethnicity 2018 | Statista](https://www.statista.com/statistics/367842/scotland-ethnicity-of-population/) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2019#uk-countries-and-english-regions> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. [Poverty in Scotland 2021 | JRF](https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-scotland-2021) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. [Covid-19 and the Digital Divide](https://post.parliament.uk/covid-19-and-the-digital-divide/)  [↑](#footnote-ref-10)