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) | Apprenticeships.scot |
| **Senior Responsible Officer (SRO):** name and job title | Stewart Forrest |
| **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) | [Work-based Learning EqIA](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/46804/work-based-learning-equality-impact-assessment.docx)  Employer hub |

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| **Approved by:** | **Director of:** | **Date approved:** | **Review date:** |
| Signed: A close-up of a signature  Description automatically generated | Digital Services | 21/09/2023 | September 2024 |

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

Apprenticeships.scot supports people who would like to become apprentices with detailed information on the Apprenticeship family and a search function to look for their ideal opportunity. It also offers advice and support for employers looking to take on an apprentice. Between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023 there were **413,753 users** on the website.

The apprenticeship family consists of:

* [Foundation Apprenticeships](https://www.apprenticeships.scot/become-an-apprentice/foundation-apprenticeships/) – For pupils in S3 to S6. They choose this qualification as part of their subject choices and get the chance to work with employers.
* [Modern Apprenticeships](https://www.apprenticeships.scot/become-an-apprentice/modern-apprenticeships/) - Primarily aimed at people who are 16 to 24 although there is no upper age limit. A modern apprentice is employed and works towards a qualification with a college or learning provider.
* [Graduate Apprenticeships](https://www.apprenticeships.scot/become-an-apprentice/graduate-apprenticeships/) – For anyone who is 16 or above - there's no upper age limit. A graduate apprentice is employed and works full-time while gaining an Honours or Masters degree.

We work closely with Scotland’s industries to make sure apprenticeships meet their needs. We also administer the funding for apprenticeships training, on behalf of the Scottish Government.

This EqIA outlines what has been achieved and what it is planned over the next year (until February 2024).

The impact assessment was put together after meetings with the Apprenticeships.scot team. The scope of this impact assessment is purely for the website and not the wider apprenticeship offer, which is covered in the Work-based learning Equality Impact Assessment, linked at the start of this document.

1. **Evidence and Impact**

This section should consider the impact of your large project/directorate on each of the equality groups in turn. The [Equality Evidence Review](https://skillsdevelopmentscotland.sharepoint.com/sites/IShare/Connectcontent/Resource%20Library/Forms/NotArchived.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FIShare%2FConnectcontent%2FResource%20Library%2FHR%20%5E%2FCulture%20and%20Standards%2FEquality%2C%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion%2FEquality%20Mainstreaming%20report%5FEquality%20Evidence%20Review%5FJune%202019%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FIShare%2FConnectcontent%2FResource%20Library%2FHR%20%5E%2FCulture%20and%20Standards%2FEquality%2C%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion&p=true&cid=90e8ed31-d77d-4e91-9365-940facfb6e8e) has information on school, Further/Higher education and employment for different groups. Think about the **actions** required. They will be collated on the action plan in the next section. Please add rows, as required.

Each section should include:

* **a context** – outlining how your project/service relates to this protected characteristic, e.g. population statistics
* **evidence of positive or negative impact** – outlining the potential disadvantage or barriers faced by this equality group
* **source of evidence** – evidence used, including any consultation
* **activity to date** – outlining what we have already done to address disadvantage or promote equality
* **further activity required** – outlining what we’ll do to proactively promote equality and address any potential barriers
  1. **Age**

**Context:**

As of September 2020, the average duration of daily internet usage was the highest amongst internet users aged between 18 and 24 years old in the United Kingdom (UK). Additionally, internet users from all age groups mainly used internet on their smartphones, more so than on desktop or tablet devices\*.

Evidence suggests that young adults’ experiences of employment have changed in recent years.

Young People stay in education longer, start work later and early experiences of work are more likely to be characterised by short term contracts, low paid work and precarious employment (Scottish Government Social Research, 2017, EHRC, 2018a, IES, 2021). Those in younger age groups are less likely to be in employment - the employment rate for those age 16 to 24 in Scotland in 2019 was 58% (Scottish Government 2020).

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| MAs and GAs have no upper age limit but the focus has been primarily on getting younger people into apprenticeships. | <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1123889/daily-internet-usage-by-age-and-device-uk/#statisticContainer>  SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021 | * Recent campaigns have focussed on Foundation Apprentices (FAs) and employers. * Annual campaigns include apprenticeship of the year and Modern Apprenticeship week. | * There is to be a planned focus on Graduate Apprentices (GAs) and Modern Apprentices (MAs) – e.g. working with businesses to increase awareness of upskilling existing employees through GAs. * Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices post roll out of the new service. Older apprentices will be included in insight sessions and the use of images of older apprentices will be included as part of the content review. * Insight will take place to identify further gaps – the employer part of this will be cross checked with the employer hub. |

* 1. **Disability**

**Context:** 32% of pupils have an additional support need (ASN) recorded. This includes pupils in special schools and mainstream schools. Of those with ASN 68% were male and 32% female. The number of Modern Apprenticeship starts identifying as disabled in Q3 2020/21 was 12.4%. Figures for Foundation Apprenticeships show that 16.3% of FA starts self-identify as having an impairment, health condition or learning difficulty.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| If App.scot is not accessible, disabled people may be less likely to access the information and as a result not receive the support they require. | SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021  Pupil census 2020  SDS Modern Apprenticeship statistics Q3, 2020/21  SDS Apprenticeship Equality Action Plan, 2019). | * All new content adheres to WC3 WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines. Work has taken place to improve the accessibility of the current site to reach these standards. * Video audit and update of video content. * Identified a gap in support for people with sight and/or hearing loss. * Design system has been developed to improve consistency across SDS websites. | * Further work to ensure consistency and compliance with WC3 guidelines. * Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices. This may include content for people with specific disabilities and any additional support available to them. * A British Sign Language video will be produced explaining the apprenticeship family. * Continue to create photography in content with diverse representation –e.g. apprentice stories * Consider re-using images in non-trad workplaces where we can (we are restricted by images we receive from marketing). * Investigating wording in alt text around disability to improve experience for screen reader users. * Introduce an equality monitoring case study form that includes exact ethnicities. |
| Disabled young people face multiple barriers in entering and progressing in employment. | SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021 | * The vacancy upload features the Disability Confident branding with information on what that is for customers. * Content clarifies the message of “Apprenticeships are for everyone” inclusive statement on disability. * Health and wellbeing materials created by Penumbra for apprentices and for employers * Insight has taken place with disabled customers. | * Investigate data reporting on Disability Confident – check number of vacancies signed up to disability confident and measure against FIPS. Also discover if it’s different providers signing up and using it or the same ones. * Insight will continue to take place with disabled customers with a view to taking a more co-design/co-creation approach. |

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

**Context:** Trans individuals face significant barriers in both the education system and the labour market. Evidence highlights that bullying, harassment and discrimination are key issues. Further evidence is required to understand the issues trans people face in learning and employment.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A barrier to trans people accessing services can be a need to provide proof of name change or not having the options they need to complete equality monitoring information. | SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021 | * Forms do not force customers to identify gender. * Options are given on forms. * Training has taken place around the use of gender neutral language with the content team. * Insight has taken place with trans customers. | * Continue to monitor gender options in line with Scottish Government. * Continue to review language of App.Scot for gendered language * Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices over the next two years. This may include specific content around gender reassignment/transgender. * Insight will continue to take place with trans customers to understand any additional requirements with a view to taking a more co-design co-creation approach. * Look at possibility of capturing equality monitoring to check for potential gaps |

* 1. **Marriage and civil partnership**

**Context:** It was agreed that this is not a protected characteristic group that we need to action for this EqIA.

* 1. **Pregnancy and maternity**

**Context:** around 1/3 of employers believe women who are pregnant or have children are ‘generally less interested in career progression’

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| An opportunity to give clear support to MAs on what support is available re pregnancy and maternity. | SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021 | * Work has taken place to provide content for apprentices/providers about how to return to apprenticeships following a break for maternity. | * Review content annually |

* 1. **Race**

**Context:** 2.7% of MA starts in Q3 2021 were from a Minority Ethnic Background

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Some communities have accessibility needs in relation to the way services engage with them – for example Gypsy / Traveller, Refugees / Asylum seekers  The data for Modern Apprenticeships shows an under-representation of BME individuals | SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021 | * We ensure representation is diverse on the website. * Content and language levels (for whom English is a second language) are checked using online readability tools in the apprenticeship content. * Jargon is avoided wherever possible. | * Continue to ensure representation is diverse on the website. * Review content for employers and consider if the language could be made simpler for whom English is a second language. * Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices over the next two years. This may include reviewing the language levels. * Insight will take place with the identified under represented communities to understand any additional requirements and to begin to take a more co-design/co-creation approach. |

* 1. **Religion or belief**

**Context:** It was agreed that this is not a protected characteristic group that we need to action for this EqIA.

* 1. **Sex** (or gender)

**Context:** Significant differences are evident in the subject choices made by girls and boys. These differences can have an impact on the future choices of apprenticeship, jobs and careers available to both boys and girls.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| If representation of gender on App.scot is inclusive, this can help ensure gender stereotypes aren’t embedded. | SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021  [Article on Gender Pay - Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/04/gender-pay-gap-figures-show-eight-in-10-uk-firms-pay-men-more-than-women)  Engender report | * We have ensured images and case studies on App.Scot do not promote / or (do) challenge gender stereotyping and language used. * Content Training on Gendered Language has taken place | * Continue to promote STEM through social media and marketing campaigns. * Continue to review language of App.Scot for gendered language. * Continue to promote equality through the content e.g. celebrating successes with more girls going in to STEM. * Insight will take place to understand any additional requirements and to begin to take a more co-design/co-creation approach. * Gather stats on gender for direct applications submitted |

* 1. **Sexual orientation**

**Context:** The evidence highlights that LGBTQ+ young people can often face bullying and harassment at school, but this improves once at college or university. These challenges can also continue in the workplace. More evidence is required to improve our understanding of LGBTQ+ individuals in the education system and the labour market.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opportunity to promote LGBTQ+ inclusive practices to other employers and promote SDS as an inclusive employer | SDS Equality Evidence Review April 2021 | * Insight sessions have taken place with LGBTQ+ young people. | * Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices. This may include relevant content around sexual orientation. * Insight sessions will continue to take place with LGBTQ+ young people to begin to take a more co-design/co-creation approach. |

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:** Care experienced children have poorer outcomes in comparison to other young people.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opportunity to promote case studies from a care experienced background |  | * Captured data * Insight sessions have taken place with care experienced young people. | * Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices over the next two years. This may include relevant content for care experienced young people. * Insight sessions will continue to take place with care experienced young people to begin to take a more co-design/co-creation approach. |

* 1. **Other Groups – Socio-Economic Background**

**Context:** Despite most young people having a mobile phone – the cost of data continues to be an issue especially for younger audiences.

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| People from economically deprived backgrounds may be unable to use their phone to access our services | <https://post.parliament.uk/covid-19-and-the-digital-divide/> | * Steps have been taken to make the website ‘greener’ which has a knock on effect of making the site use less mobile data * Customers can use public access computers in our centres to access apprenticeships.scot | * Continued work will take place on the website to ensure loading times are minimised. |

1. Island Community Impact Assessment

This section covers our commitments under the [National Gaelic Language Plan](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gaidhlig.scot%2Fen%2Fgaelic-language-plans%2Fthe-national-gaelic-language-plan%2F&data=04%7C01%7CPatricia.Crook%40sds.co.uk%7C2666ba0baad74390de9208d9a45176d7%7C33ca6d475e4f477484f1696cbb508cbe%7C0%7C0%7C637721492352313840%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=5ez8EfzYnRjeUX0UxP%2B%2Bq6Ugz4rLljIJV6%2FWWKBzwe0%3D&reserved=0). 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 fuller analysis of impact on Island Communities please contact Seonag.Campbell@sds.co.uk

**Context:**

| Evidence of positive or negative impact | Source of evidence | Activity to date | Further activity required |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| People from remote/island communities may be unable to use their phone to access our services |  | * Customers can use public access computers in our centres to access apprenticeships.scot * The National Gaelic Plan includes: embedding the language in apprenticeship family and developing hospitality MA modules with Gaelic content. | * Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices. This may include relevant content for care experienced young people. * Insight sessions will take place with people from island communities to begin to take a more co-design/co-creation approach. |

1. **Action Plan**

The SRO is responsible for all actions. Throughout the EqIA process you will have identified actions which need to be taken forward. These actions should be added to your workplan and Risk Register where appropriate. Some examples of action you may have identified throughout the EqIA process are:

* Build in equality monitoring / evaluation
* Make amendments to your policy
* Build in additional support mechanisms to your policy if required
* Consult with staff, customers or stakeholders
* Involve staff/customer groups in developing aspects of your policy

| **What is the action?** | **Which group(s) does it relate to?** | **What is the anticipated outcome?** | **What method is used to measure it?** | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| There is to be a planned focus on Graduate Apprentices (GAs) and Modern Apprentices (MAs) – e.g. working with businesses to increase awareness of upskilling existing employees through GAs. | Age, disability, gender, race | Increased content on GAs and MAs on apprenticeship.scot and through the new employer hub. | Feedback | August 2024 |
| Content will be developed to support current apprentices as well as prospective apprentices post roll out of the new service. Older apprentices will be included in insight sessions and the use of images of older apprentices will be included as part of the content review. | Age, disability, gender, race | Improved content for apprentices | Feedback | Begin Spring 2024 once new service is launched |
| Insight will take place to identify further gaps – the employer part of this will be cross checked with the employer hub. | All except marriage and civil partnerships | User centred content relevant and inclusive for all our customers. | Annual sessions with each customer group including intersectionality and additional sessions for any new content production | Ongoing – reviewed annually |
| Continue to create photography in content with diverse representation –e.g. apprentice stories – feature in other parts of the site.  Consider re-using images in non-trad workplaces where we can (we are restricted by images we receive from marketing).  Investigating wording in alt text to improve the experience for screen reader users.  Introduce an equality monitoring case study providing exact ethnicities. | All except marriage and civil partnerships | Inclusivity across the website | Monitoring the websites for use of images and case studies | Ongoing |
| Look at possibility of capturing equality monitoring to check for potential gaps | Gender reassignment | Increased inclusiveness in content. | Feedback from customers and stakeholders | Ongoing |
| A planned focus on Graduate Apprentices (GAs) and Modern Apprentices (MAs) including benefits of GAs and MAs to older audiences. *Back to 16–19-year-olds – enhanced funding up to 29 – disabled care experienced delayed – apprentice stories – one MAs 26 two GAs in 20s also younger MAs and FAs – fairly broad range of case studies. Also depends on what is given.*  Look at possibility of capturing equality monitoring to check for potential gaps | Age | Improved customer experience through content development and the creation/updating of personas for identified customer segments e.g. pupils, young people, current apprentices, employers and learning providers | Feedback from customers partners and stakeholders | Review new service |
| Investigate data reporting on Disability Confident – check number of vacancies signed up to disability confident and measure against FIPS. Also discover if its different providers signing up and using it or the same ones. | Disability | Understand current uptake | Stats | Ongoing |
| Further work to ensure consistency and compliance with WC3 guidelines.  BSL videos in development. | Disability | Accessible content | Accessibility improvements evidenced in annual audits | Ongoing accessibility improvement built into new projects |
| Continue to check for gendered language | Gender reassignment/sex | Appropriate use of language in content | Monitoring of new content | Ongoing |
| Update equality monitoring options on forms and adjust as required | All | Appropriate equality monitoring questions | Feedback from stakeholders and Scottish Government | Ongoing |
| Promoting STEM through social media and marketing campaigns. Making content more explicit e.g. celebrating successes with more girls going into STEM. | Gender | Useful to understand existing employees or the vacancy being the barrier. | Marcomms – application numbers | Review post new service |
| Integrate all actions into workplan | All | Progress across all the agreed actions | Feedback from partner organisations and customers. Review eia quarterly with team and integrate into work plan - ongoing | Ongoing and review post new service launch |
| Diverse insight and usability testing from an equality perspective | All | Greater understanding of specific needs from different equality groups | Insight sessions | Review August 2024 |