



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

Summary results of the EqIA

Title of policy/practice/process/service:

Flexible Working 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):

That we develop a policy that clearly defines the different forms of flexible working, ensuring it is clear and transparent. We clearly articulate how flexible working requests will be managed and what duties/responsibilities SLAB as an organisation has. We are clear about how this guides decision making, frames the expectations of both the organisation and individual employees and supports a consistent, fair, and transparent approach to flexible working requests.

We also include guidance on:

- the Working Time Regulations act
- SLAB not working traditional flexitime and how it works in practice for different grades
- The process for requesting to temporarily work abroad
- responsibilities in relation to utilities, equipment and confidentiality/security when working remotely.

Summary of actions taken because of this assessment:

- Changing the carry over credit into the following month to seven hours.
- Changing the debt carry over into the following month to the full amount.
- Appendix added to policy giving examples on when an employee would be required to complete a Flexible Working Application form.
- Clarifying the procedure for when electrical equipment needs to be checked for those working remotely and the options available.

Ongoing actions beyond implementation include:

Ongoing monitoring.

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

Head of People & OD, Human Resources

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 and Accounts

Publication date (for completion by Communications):

12/12/2023

Document control		
Document control:		V0.4
Date policy live from:		1 December 2023
Review cycle:		Three years unless a change in law or practice and any results from equality monitoring.
Document change log		
Version/Author	Date	Comment
V0.1 Agata Soroka	July 2023	Initial draft
V0.2 Agata Soroka	October 2023	To reflect findings of staff consultation.
V0.3 Agata Soroka	October 2023	To reflect proposed changes to the policy.
V0.4 Kirsty Lockhart	November 2023	To update following changes made to policy, because of staff and union feedback during consultation.
V0.5 Agata Soroka	November 2023	To reflect final review meeting feedback.

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 aim of the policy is to provide a framework to support:

- employees when considering and requesting options for flexible working
- managers when considering, agreeing or proposing options for flexible working.

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

Revision of an existing policy. Also including the introduction of more flexibility because of the DANWE project.

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

The policy applies to all employees within SLAB.

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.

Computer Usage, Data Protection, Health & Safety, Recruitment & Retention, Family Friendly, Domestic Abuse, Special Leave and Managing Sickness Absence.

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 EqlA guidance for sources of evidence.

Remember, this step in the EqlA 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 EqlA 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? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).
All protected groups	(1) SLAB employee information	Access to remote work is made available to nearly all SLAB employees, apart from 13 staff members within the Facilities department whose roles require them to be always present on site in the course of their employment. The employees in this group retain access to other forms of flexible working. Due to the low number of employees unable to access remote working and the

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	<p>(2) Hybrid working guidance for people professionals, CIPD, 2022</p> <p>(3) Improving work-life balance for shift workers, Timewise, 2019</p> <p>(4) Flexibility in the workplace: implications of flexible work arrangements for individuals, teams and organisations, ACAS, 2017</p>	<p>following risk of compromising personal information of the individuals involved, a breakdown of protected characteristics of this group could not be included in this impact assessment. (1)</p> <p>The 2022 CIPD guidance also highlights that where employees are unable to work in a hybrid way because of the work that they undertake, the employer should be raising awareness of other forms of flexible working that may be suitable for them. (2) Timewise developed a guidance on access to other forms of flexible working for shift workers, characterised by enabling employees to have input into the work schedule, offering employees advance notice and stability. (3)</p> <p>A 2017 ACAS publication on implications of flexible working arrangements a belief among employees that flexible working would not be available in more senior roles. Such a belief could, in turn, prevent employees from applying for promotion, and further widen existing pay gaps present within SLAB among. (4)</p> <p>A 2021 publication on flexible working issued by the National Council for Voluntary Organisation states that “flexibility open to all” means that employees do not need to disclose issues or needs that they do not feel comfortable sharing or justify flexibility by giving a “good enough” reason. It recommends a “reason neutral” approach to decision making as feeding into improving equality, diversity, and inclusion. (5)</p> <p>The feedback received through staff consultation carried out in September 2023 referred to the unequal application of the policy to employees, depending on the department or role they work in (6).</p>

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	<p>(5) Time To Flex: Embracing Flexible Working, NCVO, 2022</p> <p>(6) Staff consultation on People policies</p> <p>(7) SLAB employee information</p>	<p>The data on demographic breakdown between SLAB directorates (7) suggests some differences between them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Legal Services and Operations and Legal Services have a much higher proportion of female employees (73% and 70% respectively) compared to Corporate Services and Strategic Development (58% and 48% respectively). • A higher than average proportion of Operations and Legal Services employees is in top age ranges, with an opposite trend noted in Strategic Development and Corporate Services. • Slightly higher than average proportion of non-white employees is in Client Legal Services and Corporate Services (10% compared to the average of 6%), with an opposite trend in Strategic Development (4% compared to the average of 6%). • A slightly higher than average proportion of Client Legal Services employees declares Roman Catholic and Other religion (15 and 20% respectively, as compared to the average of 11 and 14%). <p>No statistically significant differences were observed in other protected characteristic groups. The data sample for sexual orientation and care experience was too small to include in this assessment.</p> <p>However, the specific requirements of some roles within SLAB are not compatible with the full provisions of the Flexible Working Policy.</p> <p>The feedback received through staff consultation carried out in September 2023 also referred to the perceived lack of clarity for employees whose working patterns differ from traditional full time hours (such as condensed hours, part time) (6). The need to work a non-traditional pattern may be linked to protected characteristics of employees.</p>

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Age	<p>(1) Staff Demographics 2022-2023</p> <p>(2) DANWE Hybrid Working survey, 2023</p> <p>(3) Flexible Working: Age Positive Guide, Age Positive, 2007</p> <p>(4) Characteristics of homeworkers, Great Britain: September 2022 to</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 ≤24 years and 65+ years (both <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 <5% of our staff are aged ≤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 ≤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>The findings of the 2023 DANWE Hybrid Working survey state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working mainly and mostly onsite remained unpopular as preferences for future work styles across all age groups (the most popular work style was hybrid - mostly remote, followed by exclusively remote, and hybrid regular) • Hybrid regular was preferred by younger age groups ('18-24' and '25-34'), while exclusively remote was slightly preferred by older age groups ('35-44', '45-54' and '55-64') • Overall, the older people were the more likely they would prefer working exclusively onsite as the future work style • People between 55 and 64 years old appeared to do least well in terms of wellbeing. (2) <p>The 2007 Flexible Working: Age Positive Guide issued by Age Positive recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age should never be used to make decisions on flexible working requests

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	<p>January 2023, ONS</p> <p>(5) Inclusivity through flexibility, Centre for Ageing Better, 2020</p> <p>(6) Making Hybrid Inclusive - Key Priorities for Policymakers, Work Foundation and Chartered Management Institute, 2021</p> <p>(7) SLAB employee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual needs ought to be balanced with business needs • all staff are fully informed on the flexible working options available • the age of staff granted flexible working arrangements is monitored to ensure no age bias is evident in the approval process • flexible working request decision-makers are trained in equality and diversity • a range of working patterns to suit employees of all ages is considered • “trial periods” testing out suitability of flexible working arrangements are considered. (3) <p>The ONS statistics on flexible working trends among the UK workforce issued in early 2023 state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • younger workers continue to be least likely to only work from home (6%) • those aged 16 to 24 had the highest rate of those travelling to work (79%), while those aged 34 to 44 had the lowest rate (48%) • the group aged 16 to 24 also had the highest rate of workers who did not have the ability to work from home, with just under two in three (65%) reporting this • those aged 25 to 34, 35 to 44, and 45 to 54 reported higher rates of home or hybrid working compared with the group aged 16 to 24. (4) <p>A 2020 publication by the Centre for Ageing Better recommends flexible working for people aged 50 and over is done as part of a wider drive to enable more flexible working, and that flexible working is offered to all employees where possible as “positive discrimination” towards older workers may send the wrong signal. (5)</p>

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	<p>information 2022-2023</p> <p>(8) Views on the ageing society: survey of older people, Department for Business and Trade and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2018</p> <p>(9) Older workers need flexible working - and employers need to provide it,</p>	<p>A 2021 report by the Work Foundation and Chartered Management Institute states that among other groups, those with caring responsibilities were identified by managers as at risk of facing challenges when working remotely, including isolation from the office and risking missing out on opportunities for learning and development. (6)</p> <p>SLAB's statistics show that certain age groups are more likely than others to have caring responsibilities, and that the type of caring responsibilities tends to differ depending on the age of the employee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those aged 18-24 declared no caring responsibilities • 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% • 1.2% of those aged 35-44 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 • 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% • 13.7% of those aged 55-64 are responsible for an adult only, 9.6% for a child only, 1.4% for a child and adult, with an overall rate of caring responsibilities at 24.7% • 14.3% of those aged 65+ are responsible for an adult only, the highest of all age groups in this category.

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	Timewise, 2019	<p>Based on the above data it can be observed that the employee's age is a factor in caring responsibilities, with employees in the middle age 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. (7)</p> <p>In 2018 UK Government survey, 78% of workers over 50 agreed that workplaces should offer flexible working patterns. (8)</p> <p>A 2019 publication by Timewise suggests that flexible working is helpful to retain older workers. (9)</p>
Disability	<p>(1) Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023</p> <p>(2) DANWE Hybrid Working survey, 2023</p> <p>(3) Characteristics of homeworkers, Great Britain:</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. (1)</p> <p>The findings of the 2023 DANWE Hybrid Working survey state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Hybrid - mostly remote' was the most popular future work style, although the non-disabled were slightly more likely to prefer this work style compared to the disabled • 'Exclusively remote' was the second most preferred work style, and like 'Hybrid - mostly remote', was slightly more preferred by non-disabled staff compared to the disabled • 'Hybrid - regular' was the third most popular work style, but it was slightly more preferred by the disabled as compared to the non-disabled

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	<p>September 2022 to January 2023, ONS</p> <p>(4) Hybrid working guidance for people professionals, CIPD, 2022</p> <p>(5) Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Protected Characteristics Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those who were limited a lot in their activities due to a health problem, 87% preferred working 'Exclusively remote' in the future Those whose activities were limited a little preferred 'Hybrid - regular' the most as their future work style Those with no limitation preferred working 'Hybrid - mostly remote', as generally found in other sections Working mostly/mainly/exclusively onsite remained the least preferred options for future work styles across all groups Disabled respondents were overall positive about their wellbeing but doing less well than their non-disabled counterparts. Disabled people were notably more likely to disagree and less likely to agree with all six wellbeing statements in the survey (physical health, mental health, stress levels, switching off from work effectively, knowing where to raise concerns, good work-life balance) Disabled respondents were more positive about their wellbeing compared with the 2021 survey, especially in relation to effectively switching off from work, and maintaining a good level of mental health. (2) <p>The ONS statistics on flexible working trends among the UK workforce issued in early 2023 state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> having a disability or long-term illness had little effect on levels of homeworking disabled workers reported similar levels of homeworking (18%) compared with those without a disability (16%).

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	<p>(6) The Changing Workplace: Enabling Disability-Inclusive Hybrid Working, Work Foundation, 2022</p> <p>(7) Give disabled people the right to work from home after Covid-19, says UNISON, UNISON, 2020</p> <p>(8) Making Hybrid Inclusive - Key Priorities for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers who had a long-term condition for 12 months or more reported homeworking at 18% compared with 15% without. (3) <p>2022 guidance published by the CIPD states that “hybrid and flexible working has the potential to support inclusion and fairness through opening up the labour market to employees who cannot work in a traditional office based role”, which is likely to be particularly relevant to workers with disabilities and other long-term conditions. (4)</p> <p>Disabled employees are particularly likely to be excluded from employment, as according to Scottish Government statistics in 2021 in Scotland the employment rate for disabled people aged 16 to 64 was estimated at 49.6%; significantly lower than the rate for non-disabled people (80.8%). (5)</p> <p>The 2022 research report on disability and hybrid working carried out by Work Foundation states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to remote and hybrid working can be particularly important for disabled people: 80% of disabled workers surveyed said that working from home would be essential or very important if they were looking for a new job; 88% of those reporting four or more impairments agreed that being able to work from home would be essential or very important if they were looking for a new job. Remote working presents distinct benefits for disabled people over and above the wider benefits for all remote workers, as suggested by the current limited evidence. The benefits

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	<p>Policymakers , Work Foundation and Chartered Management Institute, 2021</p> <p>(9) Disabled workers' access to flexible working as a reasonable adjustment, TUC, 2021</p> <p>(10) SLAB Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023</p>	<p>include greater flexibility, autonomy, access to training and networking opportunities, the ability to work around medical needs, and improved health and wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive findings are counterbalanced by the challenges that some disabled workers experienced during the initial transition to flexible working, such as lack of computing and adaptive equipment (chair, desk, software), difficulties participating in online meetings, and social isolation. • Accessible working environments and specialist equipment can play an important role, and autonomy around where and when they work can also be essential for many disabled people. (6) <p>A 2020 survey of disabled workers carried by UNISON found that a lack of reasonable adjustments, IT and workstation issues caused pain and fatigue and led to reduced productivity, while inaccessible communication systems increased isolation and loneliness among disabled staff. (7)</p> <p>A 2021 report by Work Foundation and Chartered Management Institute states that working from home can mean reduced visibility in the workplace and there is evidence that reduced visibility to colleagues and senior staff may result in different rates of progression. Consequently, those who may already face disadvantage in the workplace and who may be more likely to work remotely, such as disabled workers, are more likely to be affected. (8)</p>

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		<p>A 2021 TUC publication refers to fears that after the pandemic has ended, those who continue to work from home, likely to be disproportionately disabled people and women, may be subject to discrimination and disadvantage because of their work location. (9)</p> <p>The report by Work Foundation and Chartered Management Institute states that disabled people, among other groups, were identified by managers as at risk of facing challenges when working remotely, including isolation from the office and risking missing out on opportunities for learning and development. (8)</p> <p>In 2022-23, 83% of employees on long term disability related absence leave returned to work and 17% remained absent in the reporting period. These figures include employees who did not declare a disability, but who were supported in the context of requiring a reasonable adjustment. (9)</p>
Race	<p>(1) Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023</p> <p>(2) Characteristics of homeworkers</p>	<p>Our data (1) tells us that our employee ethnic origin demographic is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85-90% White Scottish and other British • <5% White minority • <5% minority ethnic groups • 5-10% selected prefer not to say. <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 2021-22 report, 'white - minority' has moved from 5-10% of our staff complement to <5%.</p>

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	, Great Britain: September 2022 to January 2023, ONS (3) Time To Flex: Embracing Flexible Working, NCVO, 2022	<p>The ONS statistics on flexible working trends in the UK workforce issued in early 2023 state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers in the "Black or Black British" ethnic group reported the highest levels of travelling to work without the option to work from home (60%) compared with workers in the "White British/Irish" ethnic group (46%). (2) <p>People who already experience structural discrimination will face additional barriers to accessing flexibility, so it is critical we listen carefully and understand the specific barriers that people of colour, and other marginalised groups, experience so they can be addressed. For example, of those who adopted home working because of the pandemic, 40% of Black, Asian and minority ethnic workers reported working more hours than they had before (compared to 29% of White workers) but 37% of the same group said they were more productive (compared to 24% of White workers). (3)</p>
Sex	(1) Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023 (2) DANWE Hybrid Working survey, 2023	<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 findings of the 2023 DANWE Hybrid Working survey state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Working Hybrid - mostly remote' remained the most preferred future work styles by both male and female staff, although female staff were more likely to prefer this work style than their male counterpart (42% and 31% respectively).

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	<p>(3) Characteristics of homeworkers, Great Britain: September 2022 to January 2023, ONS</p> <p>(4) What does “flexible working” mean?, TUC, 2021</p> <p>(5) Fathers’ Perceptions of the Availability of Flexible Working Arrangements: Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Working Exclusively remote’, and ‘working Hybrid - regular’, were the second and third popular choices by both groups, although male staff were slightly more likely to prefer these work styles than their female counterparts. • Male staff were nearly three times more likely to prefer working exclusively onsite in the future, as compared to female staff (8% and 3% respectively). (2) <p>The ONS statistics on flexible working trends among the UK workforce issued in early 2023 state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more men reported travelling to work without the option to work from home (48%) compared with women (44%) • there was little difference in the levels of homeworking only and hybrid working reported by men and women • 16% of men and 17% of women reporting homeworking only and 27% and 29% reporting hybrid working, respectively. (3) <p>A 2021 TUC publication refers to data suggesting that remote work is desired by UK workers, and there is an even stronger desire for remote work among women. (4)</p> <p>The 2020 analysis of 2015 UK household survey data published in the Work, Employment and Society Journal states that normalising flexible working by boosting its use in all positions and levels of seniority will help to challenge the stereotype of women as carers, and by men working flexibly caring responsibilities could be shared more equally between partners which can in turn support women’s career progression. This is further supported by findings that flexible working</p>

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	<p>from the UK, Work, Employment and Society Journal, 2020</p> <p>(6) Covid-19, Flexible Working, and Implications for Gender Equality in the United Kingdom, Gender & Society Journal, 2021</p> <p>(7) The pandemic hasn't drastically changed the flexible working landscape,</p>	<p>arrangements have potential to increase fathers' involvement in family life since they allow autonomy over schedule, location, and hours. (5)</p> <p>These findings are supported by 2021 research on Covid-19, flexible working, and implications for gender equality states that the sharp rise in number of workers working from home, especially that of fathers, may have enabled a more equitable distribution of unpaid work among heterosexual dual-earning couples, and consequently may have helped ease the increased demand of care and housework responsibilities that households, particularly women, faced. (6)</p> <p>A 2021 blog article by Close the Gap states that the lack of quality flexible working opportunities in the UK labour market remains a key cause of the gender pay gap, and the lack of flexibility sustains women's concentration in low-paid, low-skilled work, resulting in women's under-representation at management level and in senior grades. It further states that improving access to flexible working is thus critical to addressing women's low pay, tackling women's poverty and child poverty, and closing the gender pay gap. (7)</p> <p>According to 2022 TUC analysis of UK workforce statistics, women are much more likely than men to be in flexible working arrangements meaning list hours and therefore pay. (8)</p> <p>A 2021 TUC publication refers to fears that after the pandemic, those who continue to work from home (likely to be disproportionately disabled people and women) will be subject to discrimination and disadvantage because of their work location. It lists making flexible working</p>

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	<p>we still need regulatory and cultural change, Close the Gap, 2021</p> <p>(8) Women much more likely than men to have flexible work arrangements that lead to loss of hours and pay, TUC, 2022</p> <p>(9) Disabled workers' access to flexible working as a reasonable adjustment, TUC, 2021</p>	<p>truly the default, unlocking the flexible working available in all job roles and making it the norm in all workplaces. (9)</p> <p>A 2021 report by the Work Foundation and Chartered Management Institute states that among other groups, women, parents, and those with caring responsibilities were identified by managers as at risk of facing challenges when working remotely, including isolation from the office and risking missing out on opportunities for learning and development. (10)</p> <p>A 2023 CIPD publication states that supporting and normalising flexible working arrangements can help to reduce gender pay gap and enable more women to progress into leadership positions. (11)</p> <p>The data on caring responsibilities among SLAB employees state that rates of caring responsibilities are similar among male and female colleagues (13):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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% of female employees have caring responsibilities. • 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% of male employees have caring responsibilities. <p>However, external evidence suggests that in practice the burden of unpaid care falls on women: a 2021 report by the Centre for Progressive Policy states that despite issues around measurement,</p>

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	<p>(10) Making Hybrid Inclusive - Key Priorities for Policymakers, Work Foundation and Chartered Management Institute, 2021</p> <p>(11) Flexible working: the business case, CIPD, 2023</p> <p>(12) SLAB employee information 2022-2023</p>	<p>enough evidence has been collated to demonstrate that women perform a disproportionate amount of unpaid care in the UK. (13)</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>
	(13) What Women Want: Tackling gender inequalities in unpaid care and the workplace, Centre for Progressive Policy, 2023	
Gender Reassignment	(1) Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023 (2) Time To Flex: Embracing Flexible	<p>We monitor data in relation to gender reassignment but do not publish it due to the risk of disclosure and identifying individuals. (1)</p> <p>A 2022 publication by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working reduced or flexible hours, working from home, and job sharing could also be ways in which transgender employees are supported, especially during a period of gender transition. • Flexible working is critical for supporting LGBTQ+ staff, as it can support individuals who may otherwise feel compelled to change their appearance or mannerisms, or to hide part of their identity, at work. (2)

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>
	Working, NCVO, 2022 (3) LGBT in Britain: Trans Report, Stonewall, 2018) (4) Staff consultation on People policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2018 Stonewall LGBT in Britain Trans Report states that half of trans and non-binary people (51% and 50% respectively) have hidden or disguised the fact that they are LGBT at work because they were afraid of discrimination. (3) <p>No feedback specific to the protected characteristic of gender reassignment has been received through the staff consultation carried out in September 2023. (4)</p>
Sexual orientation	(1) Annual Report and Accounts (2) Time To Flex: Embracing Flexible Working, NCVO, 2022	<p><5% of employees identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other/unsure. LGBT and ‘Other’ representation appear 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)</p> <p>A 2022 publication by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations describes flexible working as critical for supporting LGBTQ+ staff because “Flexible working can support individuals who may otherwise feel compelled to change their appearance or mannerisms, or to hide part of their identity, at work.” (2)</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) LGBT In Britain: Work Report, Stonewall, 2018</p> <p>(4) Staff consultation on People policies</p>	<p>The 2018 Stonewall LGBT in Britain Work Report states that more than a third of LGBT people (35%) have hidden or disguised that they are LGBT at work in the last year because they were afraid of discrimination. (3)</p> <p>No feedback specific to the protected characteristic of sexual orientation has been received through the staff consultation carried out in September 2023. (4)</p>
Religion or Belief	<p>(1) SLAB Annual Report</p> <p>(2) HM Government Consultation on modern workplaces, 2011</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. The number of employees identifying with other religions (collating Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and others, for example Jewish) is <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)</p> <p>A 2011 HM Government impact assessment on extending flexible working requests to all employees concluded that flexible working could support individuals of any faith in religious observance; for example, where an individual is required to fast during daylight hours, they would</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>
		be able to request flexible start and finish times, or to work from home to ensure that they can get home in time for sunset. (2)
Pregnancy or maternity	(1) SLAB Annual Report (2) Maternity Action, 2021 (3) Staff consultation on People policies	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) Maternity Action's 2021 Action Plan to end pregnancy and maternity discrimination at work called for a "flexible by default" approach, including clear criteria on refusal and an appeal process. (2) No feedback specific to the protected characteristic of pregnancy or maternity has been received through the staff consultation carried out in September 2023. (3)
Marriage/civil partnership	(1) Staff consultation on People policies	No feedback specific to the protected characteristic of sexual orientation has been received through the staff consultation carried out in September 2023. (1)
Care Experienced (<i>corporate parenting duty</i>)	(1) Staff demographics (2) Staff consultation on People policies	5-10% of all staff members declare they are care-experienced, 80-85% are not, and 10-15% prefer not to say. (1) No feedback specific to SLAB's corporate parenting duties or care experience has been received through the staff consultation carried out in September 2023. (2)

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) Corporate parenting literature review	No evidence was found that indicates that there is a direct impact of this policy on this protected characteristic, however, being care experienced is linked to higher levels of mental ill health and poorer educational outcomes, as well as a greater likelihood of being involved in the criminal justice system or experiencing homelessness. (3)

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.

The policy is likely to be relevant to most equality groups, especially impacting those with the protected characteristics of disability and sex.

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 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.

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.

Consultations to be carried out with SLAB leadership team, all employees, and the Union.

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

Union and Staff Consultation - August 2023:

- 8% of respondents felt the policy would have different impact on different groups of people based on protected characteristics.
- Negative impact on protected characteristics - disability and sex.
- Some respondents suggested that people with disability or caring responsibility, especially women, would be more likely to be impacted by not being able to use flexi time to cover for appointments or unforeseeable circumstances. The importance of flexi time was particularly highlighted in those cases.

In addition to providing their observations, a small number of respondents also made some suggestions. Many respondents asked to keep/re-instate the ability to carry over debits and credits of time, or at least to allow for a restricted balance, instead of removing it completely. Many suggested that colleagues should be allowed to carry over five hours in credit from the previous month.

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.

Cross-cutting impact	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		The evidence suggests that flexible working arrangements allowing the employee a degree of choice of the preferred working style are valued by all age groups. The policy maximises the positive impact of flexible working provisions by removing the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabling all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office,

				<p>instead tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>The policy takes steps to ensure that all flexible working requests are fairly considered regardless of any protected characteristic that the employee making the request may share. To achieve this, a clear application process including a written decision and training provided to decision makers are to be implemented.</p> <p>It is recognised that access to the full range of flexible working may not be equal for all employees due to the requirements of their role. The policy approach is to respond to each request on a case-by-case basis as dictated by the legitimate aim of meeting the requirements of the role, rather than applying a blanket approach towards some of the roles or departments.</p> <p>It is recognised that decreasing the month-to-month debit and credit hours carryover allowance might impact more on employees in protected characteristic groups who may need to rely on these provisions due to their specific needs. To minimise these, managers will have discretion over the maximum amount of carryover were dictated by business needs or special circumstances. A guidance for managers will be issued to support equitable implementation of the updated approach among different teams.</p> <p>To improve awareness and understanding of the updated policy provisions, information sessions for all employees will be carried out following the policy's implementation.</p>
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potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	

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		<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working arrangements allowing the employee a degree of choice of the preferred working style are valued by all age groups. The policy maximises the positive impact of flexible working provisions by removing the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model, and enabling all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours, and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office, instead tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>The evidence above suggests that “positive discrimination” of older employees in granting flexible working requests may have negative consequences. The policy prevents this negative impact through explicitly stating that all employees, regardless of their age, are eligible to make a flexible working request.</p>

				It is recognised that decreasing the month-to-month debit and credit hours carryover allowance might impact more on employees in some of the age groups who may need to rely on these provisions due to their specific needs. To minimise these, managers will have discretion over the maximum amount of carryover were dictated by business needs or special circumstances. A guidance for managers will be issued to support equitable implementation of the updated approach among different teams.
potential for developing good relations	X			<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working has the potential to improve workforce participation levels of older workers, thus reducing prejudice and improving understanding of the value that older workers bring to the workforce. The positive impact is to be maximised by the policy measures improving access to flexible working as described above.</p> <p>The policy promotes access to flexible working as a right for all groups rather than a benefit for older workers or workers with caring responsibilities only, thus preventing potential positive discrimination that could impact on the good relations between older and younger workers, and those with and without caring responsibilities.</p>
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The evidence suggests that flexible working has the potential to improve workforce participation levels of older workers, thus advancing the equality of opportunity for this group. The positive impact is to be maximised by the policy measures improving access to flexible working as described above.

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
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	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
potential for discrimination	X	X		<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working is valued by both sexes, but holds a special value for female employees. To maximise this positive impact, the policy removed the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabled all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. The policy also states that all employees, regardless of their sex, can make a flexible working request. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office, instead tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>It is recognised that decreasing the month-to-month debit and credit hours carryover allowance might impact more on female employees who may need to rely on these provisions due to their specific needs arising from the protected characteristic of sex. To minimise these, managers will have discretion over the maximum amount of carryover where dictated by business needs or special circumstances. A guidance for managers will be issued to support equitable implementation of the updated approach among different teams.</p>
potential for developing good relations	X			The evidence suggests that flexible working has the potential to improve equality between the sexes as expressed by participation in unpaid domestic work and career progression, as well as on a wider level in the society. The positive impact is to be maximised by the policy measures improving access to flexible working (listed above).
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X	X		The evidence suggests that flexible working has the potential to improve workforce participation levels of female workers and their career

				<p>development, thus advancing the equality of opportunity for this group. The positive impact is to be maximised by the policy measures improving access to flexible working as described above.</p> <p>It is recognised that flexible working may have potential negative effect on career progression opportunities of female employees. Following the recommendation to implement flexible working as default option for all groups to mitigate this negative impact, the policy implements a range of methods to embed flexible working within SLAB's culture (listed above).</p>
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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			<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working is valued by both disabled and non-disabled workers, with the preferences of disabled workers within SLAB overall differing slightly from their non-disabled counterparts. To maximise this positive impact, the policy removed the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabled all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. The policy also states that all employees, regardless of whether they have a disability, can make a flexible working request. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office, instead tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p>

				The policy takes steps to ensure that all flexible working requests are fairly considered regardless of any protected characteristic that the employee making the request may share. To achieve this, a clear application process including a written decision and training provided to decision makers are to be implemented.
potential for developing good relations	X			The evidence suggests that flexible working has the potential to improve workforce participation levels of disabled workers, thus reducing prejudice and improving understanding of the value that disabled workers bring to the workforce. The positive impact is to be maximised by the policy measures improving access to flexible working as described above.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X	X		<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working has the potential to improve workforce participation levels of disabled workers, thus advancing the equality of opportunity for this group. The positive impact is to be maximised by the policy measures improving access to flexible working as described above.</p> <p>It is recognised that flexible working may have potential negative effect on career progression opportunities of disabled employees. Following the recommendation to implement flexible working as default option for all groups to mitigate this negative impact, the policy implements a range of methods to embed flexible working within SLAB's culture (listed above).</p> <p>It is recognised that decreasing the month-to-month debit and credit hours carryover allowance might impact more on disabled employees who may need to rely on these provisions more due to their specific needs. To minimise these, managers will have discretion over the maximum amount of carryover were dictated by business needs or special circumstances.</p>

				A guidance for managers will be issued to support equitable implementation of the updated approach among different teams.
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Gender reassignment	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			<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working provisions are likely to have a positive impact on transgender employees as, among other benefits, they allow to accommodate commitments related to transition. To maximise this positive impact, the policy removed the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabled all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. The policy also states that all employees, regardless of their trans status, can make a flexible working request. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office, instead tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>The policy takes steps to ensure that all flexible working requests are fairly considered regardless of any protected characteristic that the employee making the request may share. To achieve this, a clear application process including a written decision and training provided to decision makers are to be implemented.</p>
potential for developing good relations			X	

potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The evidence suggests that flexible working provisions are likely to have a positive impact on transgender employees as, among other benefits, they allow to accommodate commitments related to transition, thus having a positive impact on work absences that can affect employee's career progression opportunities. The policy implements a range of methods to maximise access to flexible working opportunities and embed flexible working as default within SLAB's culture (listed above).
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Race	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 evidence suggests that there are some existing discrepancies in the access to flexible working provisions among minority ethnic workers within the UK workforce. SLAB's data shows that nearly all employees have access to remote work, and where remote work is not possible due to the nature of the role, other appropriate forms of flexible working are made available to the employees affected.</p> <p>To maximise access to flexible working and its positive impact, the policy removed the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabled all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. The policy also states that all employees, regardless of their race, can make a flexible working request. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to</p>

				<p>attend the office, instead tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>The policy takes steps to ensure that all flexible working requests are fairly considered regardless of any protected characteristic that the employee making the request may share. To achieve this, a clear application process including a written decision and training provided to decision makers are to be implemented.</p>
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Maximising access to flexible working options is anticipated to allow more employees in this group to enjoy the benefits of flexible working.

Religion or Belief	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			<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working provisions are likely to have a positive impact on this protected characteristic as they facilitate participation in religious observance and belief-related practices. To maximise this positive impact, the policy removed the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabled all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. The policy also states that all employees, regardless of their religion, can make a flexible working request. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office, instead</p>

				<p>tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>The policy takes steps to ensure that all flexible working requests are fairly considered regardless of any protected characteristic that the employee making the request may share. To achieve this, a clear application process including a written decision and training provided to decision makers are to be implemented.</p> <p>It is recognised that decreasing the month-to-month debit and credit hours carryover allowance might impact more on employees who need to rely on these provisions more due to their religion or belief. To minimise these, managers will have discretion over the maximum amount of carryover were dictated by business needs or special circumstances. Guidance for managers will be issued to support equitable implementation of the updated approach among different teams.</p>
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working provisions are likely to have a positive impact on employees in this group as, among other benefits, they allow to accommodate religious observance and belief-related practices, thus having a positive impact on work absences that can affect employee's career progression opportunities. This positive impact on advancing equality of opportunity will be maximised by the measures described above.</p>

Sexual Orientation	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			<p>The evidence describes flexible working as essential in supporting LGB employees. To maximise this positive impact, the policy removed the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabled all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. The policy also states that all employees, regardless of their sexual orientation, can make a flexible working request. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office, instead tailoring employee's attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>The policy takes steps to ensure that all flexible working requests are fairly considered regardless of any protected characteristic that the employee making the request may share. To achieve this, a clear application process including a written decision and training provided to decision makers are to be implemented.</p>
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	

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
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	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
potential for discrimination	X	X		<p>The evidence suggests that flexible work is beneficial to pregnant workers, and a “flexible by default” approach is conducive to remove barriers related to requesting flexible work. The policy implements the “flexible by default” approach as it removed the requirement to make a flexible working request to access the hybrid model and enabled all employees to make a flexible working request from day one. Additionally, the policy states that all employees, regardless of their pregnancy or maternity status, can make a flexible working request. It also eliminates the requirement to work within predefined core hours and does not impose a minimum number of days an employee is required to attend the office, instead tailoring employee’s attendance to business needs and individual preference.</p> <p>The policy takes steps to ensure that all flexible working requests are fairly considered regardless of any protected characteristic that the employee making the request may share. To achieve this, a clear application process including a written decision and training provided to decision makers are to be implemented.</p>
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			<p>The evidence suggests that flexible working provisions are likely to have a positive impact on pregnant employees as they allow to accommodate prenatal appointments as well as health and wellbeing needs related to pregnancy, thus having a positive impact on work absences that can affect employee’s career progression opportunities. This positive impact</p>

				on advancing equality of opportunity will be maximised by the measures described above.
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Marriage & Civil Partnership	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	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	

Care experienced young people	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 positive impact on those with mental health conditions will translate to the positive impact on care experienced employees.
potential for developing good relations	X			As above.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			As above.

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

- We conducted a consultation with all staff and our recognised Union seeking views on the refreshed policy and made changes to the policy as a result.
- Managers Guidelines and documentation will be produced along with specific training for managers.
- 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
	No major change 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.
X	Adjust the policy/practice/process/service 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.
	Continue the policy/practice/process/service with adverse impact 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.
	Stop and remove the policy/practice/process/service The policy/practice/process/service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.

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. EqlA should be on every project board agenda therefore only note dates where key decisions have been made (for example draft EqlA 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 the date you presented progress to each group and an extract from the minutes to reflect the discussion.

August 2023 - Consultation with Employees and our recognised Trade Union.

October and November 2023 - Following consultation with employees and our recognised Trade Union changes made to the policy and EqlA.

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.

- Examine flexible working requests applications and reasons by each of the protected characteristics to help us form any better conclusion in terms of equality (People & OD team - ongoing)
- All employees making decisions will be alerted to this refreshed policy and given training as required on understanding unconscious bias and diversity awareness. (People & OD team - ongoing)
- Understanding unconscious bias training will be mandatory for all employees (People & OD team from December 2023).

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)
Flexible working application requests and reasons disaggregated by protected characteristic.	People & OD with policy support for analysis	Annually as part of our regulatory reporting
Staff survey	People & OD with policy support for analysis	Every two years, to project board and Executive Team

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.