



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Summary results of the EqIA

Title of policy/practice/process/service: SCL Rota – solo working shifts.

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

Review of current service.

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

There are several areas where the revised review of the current service could have an impact on equalities groups within the staff team. These will be addressed mainly through clear operational rules.

Summary of actions taken because of this assessment:

- Emergency procedures/solo working guidance completed
- Risk assessment completed.

Ongoing actions beyond implementation include:

- Ongoing review of risk assessment.

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

Manager, Solicitor Contact Line.

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

Director of Client Legal Services.

Publication date (for completion by Communications):

11/02/2025.

Step 1 – Framing the planned change

1.1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/practice/process/service.

The change to service aims to review the existing practice of two members of staff being on a 12 hour shift by routinely having one member of staff on a 12 hour shift. Not all staff are routinely impacted. Only two lines out of 16 within the rota are routinely impacted due to regular scheduled solo shifts. However, all staff may, on occasion, require to work solo shifts. Included within the scope of the review is:

1. Risk assessment
2. Operational guidance to cover key scenarios.

1.2. Why is the change required?

1. Staff vacancies
2. Scottish Government spending constraints
3. Demand data – volume of calls is not as expected.

a) Who is affected by this policy/practice/process/service?

Solicitors working for Solicitor Contact Line.

b) Policy/practice/process/service implementation date?

1 December 2024.

c) What other SLAB policies or projects may be linked to or affected by changes to this policy/practice/process/service?

Existing EqIA for Solicitor Contact Line in respect of previous review of the department.

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

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

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?
Age	<p>1) Employee characteristics data (internal and published)</p> <p>2) HSE - Managing shift work: Health and safety guidance</p> <p>3) How social isolation impacts on our energy</p>	<p>The age profile of SCL staff in post at 31 March 2024 had a bigger proportion in the age 35-44 and 65+ bands, as compared to our general staff data. (1)</p> <p>HSE guidance notes “the ability to adapt to shift work decreases with age”. (2)</p> <p>Social isolation associated with solo working increases the feeling of fatigue. (3)</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?
Disability	1) Employee characteristics data (internal and published) 2) HSE - Managing shift work: Health and safety guidance 3) The impacts of lone working on mental health	<p>The proportion of SCL staff reporting they had a disability was much lower as compared to the overall employee group. (1)</p> <p>HSE guidance notes “shift work may also exacerbate existing health problems such as diabetes, asthma, epilepsy and psychiatric illness”. (2)</p> <p>A range of potential issues with mental health are associated with lone working, with recognised approaches to address these. (3)</p>
Race	1) Employee characteristics data (internal and published)	Compared to the overall employee group, the proportion of SCL staff from Non-white minority ethnic groups was higher. (1)
Sex	1) Employee characteristics data (internal and published) 2) HSE - Managing shift work: Health and safety guidance 3) The Fawcett Society: Close the gender pay gap	<p>In contrast to the general staff group, SCL staff are more likely to be male than female. (1)</p> <p>The HSE guidance notes: “A work schedule that clashes with domestic responsibility can lead to a compromise between routines suited to work and those suited to less conflict at home. Shift workers, especially those who are primary carers, may spend more time with their family or fulfilling their domestic duties at the cost of sleep. This will result in fatigue and its consequent implications for health and safety.” (2)</p> <p>Women play a greater role in caring for children, as well as for sick or elderly relatives. (3) The SCL data indicates this is true in their team (for whom we have data) as women are more likely to be carers than the men. (1)</p>
Gender Reassignment	1) Employee characteristics data (internal and published)	The data has been reviewed for the SCL and compared to the general staff group. Due to low data completion no analysis can be provided. (1)
Sexual orientation	1) Employee characteristics data (internal and published)	The data has been reviewed for the SCL and compared to the general staff group. Due to low data completion no analysis can be provided. (1)

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service?
Religion or Belief	<p>1) Employee characteristics data (internal and published)</p> <p>2) HSE - Managing shift work: Health and safety guidance</p> <p>3) Psychological Impact of Shift Work</p> <p>4) Community Union Guidance on Faith and Belief</p>	<p>The proportion of SCL staff reporting “Prefer not to say” for their religion or belief was much higher than the overall staff group. Despite this, “Other” religion was a higher proportion as compared to general SLAB staff. (1)</p> <p>The HSE guidance notes: “A happy social and domestic life is an important foundation for health and well-being. The amount and quality of time spent with family and friends can, however, be affected by unusual patterns of work” (2)</p> <p>Social participation can be negatively impacted by shift work; this includes religious activities. (3)</p> <p>Specific guidance for workers has been developed by trade unions on the topic of religion and belief in the workplace. (4)</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	<p>1) HSE - Managing shift work: Health and safety guidance</p> <p>2) Shift work and the risk of miscarriage and preterm delivery</p>	<p>The HSE guidance notes new and expectant mothers as a group that is more vulnerable than others and “Reproductive problems in female shift workers have also been reported. While the association for reproductive effects is less strong, it would be wise to consider shift work, especially night shifts, as a potential risk to reproduction”. (1)</p> <p>The impact on pregnancy varies depending on the type of shift pattern. (2)</p>
Marriage/civil partnership	N/A	None.
Care Experienced <i>(corporate parenting duty)</i>	N/A	None.

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 evidence gathered shows that shiftwork and the design of the rota is important and relevant for equality groups. The evidence for the current staff group indicates there are people in the team who may be more affected by certain forms of shiftwork than others.

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

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		Proceed to Step 5: agree with decision makers that no EqlA is required based on current evidence
There is relevance to some or all the equality groups and/or our corporate parenting duties	Y	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqlA
It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all the equality groups and/or our corporate parenting duties		Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqlA

Step 3 – stakeholder involvement and consultation

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

Draft EqlA will be shared with SCL staff for review/discussion.

Staff feedback sought on draft risk assessment and guidance document prior to final version being approved.

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

Solicitor Contact Line staff, Director of Client Legal Services, People & OD, GMB Union, Executive Team.

3.3 What did you learn from the consultation/involvement?

Staff reported concern regarding implications for those with a disability and the right to practice religious beliefs.

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

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.

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	Details
potential for discrimination		X		Shift work can have an impact on fatigue levels for all age groups. Solo working shifts have the potential to increase this impact. A full risk assessment has been completed and operational guidance produced to cover break times, fatigue and includes mitigations and assistance that can be called upon from the court/police duty solicitors when/if required. Current staff who may be impacted by a vacant line resulting in regular solo shifts have the option of requesting a move to a different line within the rota to reduce the impact. All staff may be impacted by ad hoc solo shifts. Risk assessment and related guidance address identified material concerns.
potential for developing good relations	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
Sex	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	Details
potential for discrimination		X		Shift work can have an impact on female staff who are more likely to be primary caregivers to children/older adults. Solo working shifts have the potential to increase this impact. A full risk assessment has been completed and operational guidance produced to cover break times, fatigue and includes mitigations and assistance that can be called upon from the court/police duty solicitors when/if required. Current staff who may be impacted by a vacant line resulting in regular solo shifts have the option of requesting a

				move to a different line within the rota to reduce the impact. All staff may be impacted by ad hoc solo shifts. Risk assessment and related guidance address identified material concerns.
potential for developing good relations	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
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	Details
potential for discrimination		X		Shift work can have an impact on staff with a recognised disability. Solo working shifts have the potential to increase this impact. A full risk assessment has been completed and operational guidance produced to cover break times, fatigue and includes mitigations and assistance that can be called upon from the court/police duty solicitors when/if required. Current staff who may be impacted by a vacant line resulting in regular solo shifts have the option of requesting a move to a different line within the rota to reduce the impact. All staff may be impacted by ad hoc solo shifts. Risk assessment and related guidance address identified material concerns.
potential for developing good relations	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
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	Details
potential for discrimination			X	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
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	Details
potential for discrimination			X	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
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	Details
potential for discrimination		X		Shift work can have an impact on staff with certain religious beliefs. Solo working shifts have the potential to increase this impact. A full risk assessment has been completed and operational guidance produced to cover break times, fatigue and includes mitigations and assistance that can be called upon from the court/police duty solicitors when/if required. Current staff who may be impacted by a vacant line resulting

				in regular solo shifts have the option of requesting a move to a different line within the rota to reduce the impact. All staff may be impacted by ad hoc solo shifts. Risk assessment and related guidance address identified material concerns.
potential for developing good relations	X			Open communication with staff concerned. Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Open communication with staff concerned. Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
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	Details
potential for discrimination			X	
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 justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	Details
potential for discrimination		X		Shift work can have an impact on staff who are pregnant. Solo working shifts have the potential to increase this impact. A full risk assessment has been completed and operational guidance produced to cover break times, fatigue and includes mitigations and assistance that can be called upon from the

				court/police duty solicitors when/if required. Where feasible, reasonable adjustments will be made and occupational health input sought. Current staff who may be impacted by a vacant line resulting in regular solo shifts have the option of requesting a move to a different line within the rota to reduce the impact. All staff may be impacted by ad hoc solo shifts. Risk assessment and related guidance address identified material concerns.
potential for developing good relations	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Completion of risk assessment and staff guidance highlights staff concerns have been taken into consideration thereby developing good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.
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	Details
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	Details
potential for discrimination			X	

potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	

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

For SCL staff, any requirement to work solo shifts will be subject to clear rules to avoid the possibility of discrimination. A degree of discretion and consideration of appropriate equalities-related issues will be part of those rules to be applied by the manager.

Full risk assessment and operation guidance will be key to mitigate any impact on respective groups. Staff impacted by regular scheduled solo shifts have the option to request to move lines thereby placing any impact on newly recruited staff. However, there may still be ad hoc occasions whereby solo working shifts for existing staff occur due to unexpected absences and/or management decisions regarding the proportionate allocation of resources.

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 <i>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.</i>
X	Adjust the policy/practice/process/service <i>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.</i>
	Continue the policy/practice/process/service with adverse impact <i>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.</i>
	Stop and remove the policy/practice/process/service <i>The policy/practice/process/service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.</i>

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

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.

Director of Client Legal Services and Solicitor Contact Line staff.

Step 6 - Post-implementation actions and monitoring impact

6.1 Record any ongoing actions below.

Monitoring of risk assessment.

6.2 Note here how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy/practice/process/service on equality groups.

Measure	Lead department/Individual	Reporting (where/frequency)
Review of SCL risk assessment	SCL/Manager	Quarterly
Seeking feedback from SCL staff	SCL/Manager	Quarterly
Monitoring demand data at least monthly	SCL/Manager	Monthly

6.3 EqIA review date.

This EqIA 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 assessments must be signed off by the relevant Director or Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), even where an EqIA is not required. The Chief Executive must approve all assessments.

Director/SRO sign off: 16/12/2024.

Chief Executive approval: 06/02/2025.