



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Summary results of the EqIA

Title of policy/practice/process/service: Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures.

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

Revision of existing policy and Managers' Guidelines to include mention of the Disability Confident Scheme.

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

This policy applies to all employees applying for a role within SLAB and all prospective employees. Recruitment is a key stage in the lifecycle of an employee and is a time during which there is a risk of discrimination occurring in relation to the attraction of candidates, the selection of candidates, and the terms upon which employment is offered. All protected characteristics are therefore of relevance.

Summary of actions taken because of this assessment:

- More specific wording is added into the policy about what SLAB will do to ensure equal opportunities in recruitment and employment, eliminate discrimination, and ensure greater diversity
- Adverts will carry the statement that SLAB are an 'equal opportunities employer'
- All managers engaged in recruitment and selection are trained in unconscious bias, equality and diversity awareness, and competency-based selection and interviewing
- Unless there are exceptional circumstances, all job advertisements should state that SLAB will consider applications to work flexibly under the terms of the Flexible Working Policy
- Consideration is given to opening recruitment to external candidates as often as is practicable
- Vacancies should generally be advertised to as diverse a pool as practicable
- Where relevant, we will take steps to advertise to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented within SLAB
- Two people are always involved in selection processes
- Specific wording is added in about the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates and the responsibility for that
- Amended approach to testing to ensure that there is evidence that it is an appropriate and necessary means of narrowing the field, and not therefore indirectly discriminatory
- Where an identical or similar internal vacancy occurs, we will consider whether a recruitment exercise should be run internally and/or externally to improve the diversity of candidates available
- An amended approach to where there are personal relationships between applicants and existing employees, to ensure that any decision not to appoint is not taken on discriminatory grounds.

Ongoing actions beyond implementation include:

In the next stage of review, we will incorporate, as relevant and proportionate, the Scottish Government Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit.

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

Head of 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 & Accounts.

Publication date (for completion by Communications):

09/06/2025.

Step 1 – Framing the planned change

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

This policy explains the recruitment and selection procedure and the roles and responsibilities of line managers and Human Resources staff at each stage of the procedure. SLAB is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. No job applicant will be discriminated against due to their protected characteristics. The aim of the policy is to recruit and select people with the right skills and experience in a fair, objective and cost-effective manner. It is recommended that the policy should also aim to recruit in a non-discriminatory manner and aim to take steps with the policy to improve the diversity of our workforce.

The Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures is one of a range of people policies that support the delivery of SLAB's services and aim to:

- Attract the right calibre of people to help us fulfil our purpose and deliver our strategic objectives
- Retain people to ensure continuity of service, and the sharing of knowledge and expertise
- Empower our people to bring out the best in themselves and the best in SLAB.

The policy has also been reviewed against Scottish Government's Resourcing Policy and against the Scottish Government's [recruitment toolkit](#) designed to support employers to better recruit more people from minority ethnic backgrounds and incorporate good practice where reasonable.

The Managers' guidelines have been reviewed to include mention of the Disability Confident Scheme.

1.2. Why is the change required?

This is a review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy to ensure it is fit for purpose in terms of current employment and equality law, with current guidance and good practice from Human Resources and equalities perspective.

The EqIA is being reviewed following the addition of the disability confident scheme to the Managers' guidelines.

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

This policy applies to current and prospective employees applying for a role within SLAB.

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

12/06/2023.

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

- Flexible Working Policy
- Pay Process Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Best Practice Recruitment Guide
- Best Practice Job Evaluation Guide.

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

1.1 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?
All equality groups	(1) Expert insight on employment and discrimination law standard	<p>It is standard practice to insert a section on equality opportunities either into the recruitment policy itself or in the equality in employment policy (1).</p> <p>It is recommended that organisations add in a strategic aim about improving the diversity of the workforce to reflect the public you serve (1).</p> <p>It is recommended that more flexibility in terms of working hours is stated clearly in job adverts and which is likely to improve the diversity of people applying for roles. (1)</p> <p>Ensure starting salary wording aligns with pay policy to ensure consistency in decision making on pay and risks of equality pay and/ or pay discrimination issues arising. (1)</p> <p>It is recommended that a factor in determining whether recruitment should be internal or external would be whether opening recruitment could improve diversity in a particular area or more generally. (1)</p> <p>It is recommended that those on long term sick leave are asked if they want vacancies sent to them and how often. (1)</p> <p>Simplify policy in terms of potential conflicts of interest to allow people to self-declare. (1)</p> <p>Selection criteria and sift should be competency based to reduce discrimination risks and to evidence non-discriminatory decision-making base on objective factors. (1)</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service?
		<p>It is recommended that two people do the sift. Good practice to have two to reduce risk of discriminatory decision-making. (1)</p> <p>Recommend that line managers are trained in competency based shortlisting as well as interviewing and include unconscious bias and diversity/race awareness training. Good practice and reduces discrimination risks. (1)</p> <p>Recruitment panels should be as diverse as practicable in the context of the role being recruited. (1)</p> <p>Any testing could be indirectly discriminatory so should be proportionate to the role and carried out by trained assessors. (1)</p> <p>Consider when to offer roles automatically to reserve candidates or whether the exercise should be run again to improve diversity of candidates. (1)</p>
Age	<p>(1) SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019</p> <p>(3) Older people and employment, 2018</p> <p>(4) Too much experience: Older workers' perceptions of ageism in the recruitment process – Centre for Ageing Better</p>	<p>SLAB 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%) and our next largest age group is 35-44 (20-25%). The SLAB <i>mean</i> employee age as of March 2022 is 46 years; a slight increase from 45 years in 2019-20. (1)</p> <p>Proportionally, our age demographic is similar to the 2019 Scottish population in employment. The main difference is across the lower age ranges where we have <5% aged ≤24 years and 10-15% aged 25-34 years compared to the 2019 Scottish population in employment which is 11.9% aged ≤24 years and 23% aged 25-34 years. (1) (2)</p> <p>The Recruitment data shows that in 202-2022 those aged under 24 made up a higher proportion of job applicants (25-30%) and of those appointed (15-20%) than they do of the SLAB workforce (<5%), reflecting a trend from the previous period. This age group appeared to do well in recruitment exercises in 2021-22 and 2020-21 given the relatively higher proportion who are appointed. This group were less than 5% of those appointed in 2019-20. This is probably down to the nature of the jobs that were advertised in these two periods. (1)</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/practice/process/service?
		<p>Those aged 25-34 also make up make up a higher proportion of job applicants (35-40%) and those appointed (25-30%) than they do of the SLAB workforce (10-15%). Their appointment rate is broadly consistent with their application rate. This could show that SLAB is doing well at attracting and appointing younger candidates, a trend consistent with preceding two years. (1)</p> <p>Those aged 35-44 make up 10-15% of applicants and a slightly higher proportion of those appointed (20-25%). This corresponds with their proportion in the SLAB workforce (20-25%). This age group made up 25-30% of those appointed in 2020-21 and 30-35% of those appointed in 2019-20. Not certain any firm conclusions can be drawn from this on the basis that the figures may be impacted by the nature of the posts advertised in those years. (1)</p> <p>Those aged 45-54 make up 10-15% of applicants, 20-25% of those interviewed, and 20- 25% of those appointed in 2021-22, in contrast to less than 5% in the preceding period. This may suggest that this age group has performed comparably well in recruitment exercises in 2021-22, and the figures from the previous year could be influenced by the nature of the recruitment exercises in 2020-21. In comparison, in 2019-20 this age group made up 10-15% of applicants and 20-25% of appointees. However, this group represents 30-35% of the workforce. (1)</p> <p>The lower proportion of applicants in this group as compared to existing employees' age composition could be caused by employees joining the organisation earlier in their careers and aging while employed by SLAB, a positive trend suggesting good retention rates.</p> <p>There is an opposite pattern with those in the 55-64 age group, who make up less than 5% of applicants, but 20-25% of those interviewed and 20-25% of those appointed. Their appointment rate is consistent with this age group in SLAB's workforce (20-25%). This may suggest that this group do very well in recruitment exercises given the difference between the numbers of applicants and those appointed. These numbers are reflective of the previous period; however, this</p>

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		<p>could be an anomaly given that in 2019-20 this group made up less than 5% of applicants and 5-10% of appointees. (1)</p> <p>The proportions of those over 65 that apply and are appointed is consistent with the numbers in SLAB workforce (<5%) and their appointment rate is consistent with their application rate (<5%). These figures are consistent with previous years. (1)</p> <p>In terms of type of recruitment, the highest proportion of external & internal applicants in 2021-22 came from the 25-34 age group (35-40%), who make up only 10-15% of the SLAB workforce. (1)</p> <p>The highest proportion of internal applicants came from the 45-54 age group (40-45%), which is just over the proportion that this age group represent in the SLAB workforce (30-35%). (1)</p> <p>The lowest proportion of external & internal applicants were the 55-64 and over 65 groups at less than 5% respectively. (1)</p> <p>The lowest numbers of internal applicants at less than 5% came from the under 24s and the over 65s. The under 24s are better represented amongst external applicants where they make up 15-20% of applicants. (1)</p> <p>The patterns are consistent with the previous year (except for the 45-54 group being the most prevalent among internal applicants, as opposed to the 35-44 group previously). (1)</p> <p>Age discrimination in recruitment is a wider issue that needs to be considered. The Women and Equalities Committee reported in 2018 that discrimination, bias and outdated practices on age grounds exists across workplaces and that the UK Government's strategy, Fuller Working Lives, recognises that discrimination, whether conscious or unconscious, is one of the most significant barriers to the recruitment of older workers. (3)</p> <p>These findings are reflected in the research carried out by the Centre for Ageing Better. (4)</p>
Disability	<p>(1) SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Staff Survey, 2021</p>	<p>In 2021-22, 15-20% of all SLAB employees disclosed a disability. (1) This level remains higher than the 2019 Scottish population in employment figure of 13.8% but lower</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?
	<p>(3) Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019</p> <p>a. SLAB Mental Health Check 2019</p> <p>b. DANWE Staff Survey 2021</p> <p>(4) The Scottish Health Survey 2020 edition</p> <p>(5) Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020-21</p> <p>(6) SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(7) Toolkits: Employing disabled people and people with health conditions</p> <p>(8) Increasing employment of disabled people in public sector: analysis of consultation responses</p> <p>(9) Equality Act 2010</p> <p>(10) Equality Act 2010 Code of Practice - Employment Statutory Code</p> <p>(11) Expert insight on employment</p>	<p>than the 25.9% of people with a disability in the general population. (3)</p> <p>However, in the 2021 SLAB Staff Survey 35% said they had a condition which lasted or was likely to last for 12 months and 11% said they had a mental health condition. (2) This might suggest that the actual level of Equality Act disability amongst staff could be higher than is reported through our self-service equality data gathering process.</p> <p>Our 2019 Mental Health Check (MHC) found that 36% of respondents had experience of a mental health condition (70% of employees participated). (3a)</p> <p>In SLAB's DANWE staff survey undertaken in Feb/Mar 2021 (3b), it was found that whilst the percentage of respondents rating their mental health as very good/good had increased since the 2020 survey (by 4 percentage points to 80%); negative ratings had also increased (by 2 percentage points to 6%). Managers were more likely to rate their mental health as 'poor/very poor' (11%) as opposed to 4% of non-managers.</p> <p>In the Scottish Health Telephone Survey 2020, over a fifth (22%) of adults recorded a GHQ-12 score of four or more (indicative of a possible psychiatric disorder). Rates were highest for those aged 16-44 (24%) and 45-64 (25%) compared to 13%-15% among those aged 65 and over. Just over one in ten (11%) adults reported two or more symptoms of depression and 13% recorded two or more symptoms of anxiety. (4)</p> <p>In 2021 in Scotland (5):</p> <p>April 2020-March 2021 – the employment rate for the disabled population was estimated at 47.4% which was significantly lower than the employment rate for those not classed as disabled (80.2%), meaning that the disability employment gap was 32.8%.</p> <p>The disability employment gap was lower for women aged 16 to 64 (26.9 percentage points) than men (39.5 percentage points) and across all other age bands.</p> <p>The disability employment gap was lower for young people</p>

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	<p>and discrimination law standards</p> <p>(12) Disabled workers' access to flexible working as a reasonable adjustment, TUC</p> <p>(13) Is Flexible Working Really Better for Disabled People? – Careers with Disabilities</p>	<p>and increased with age with the gap being highest for those aged 50 to 64.</p> <p>There is evidence that flexible working practices can benefit persons with disabilities which could in turn affect more candidates with this protected characteristic. (12) (13)</p> <p>In terms of applications to SLAB in 2021-22, less than 5% of external and internal applicants and 5-10% of internal candidates declared a disability. This would suggest that people with disabilities make up a lower proportion of applicants than the current make up of SLAB staff (15-20% disabled). (6)</p> <p>Whilst 5-10% of all applicants to SLAB declared a disability and 10-15% were interviewed, less than 5% were appointed. 85-90% of applicants were non-disabled and made up a slightly lowered proportion of those interviewed (80-85%) but also a slightly higher proportion of those appointed (90-95%). (6)</p> <p>The DWP Guidance on employing disabled people and people with health conditions includes making reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes and refers to the Disability Confident Scheme, part of which can include guaranteeing interviews (when reasonable) for disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria for a role.</p> <p>The training for hiring panels on unconscious bias, competency-based interviews and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations and improve equality of opportunity for this equality group. (7)</p> <p>The Scottish Government consultation on Increasing employment of disabled people in public sector included guaranteeing an interview as an example of other measures that could be taken to increase disability employment rates in the public sector and gave details of its own participation in it. The response to the consultation found that a quarter felt that Disability Confident Employer status should be more widely used and publicised. (8)</p> <p>There is a duty on employers to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities under s.20 of the Equality Act. This duty extends to job applicants and covers</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?
		<p>all aspects of recruitment including any formal or informal policies, rules, practices, arrangements, criteria, conditions, prerequisites, qualifications or provisions. The EHRC Code of Practice on Employment states that employers may need to arrange for recruitment materials to be provided in alternative formats (10). The Code also references guaranteeing interviews for disabled candidates as a permitted form of positive action. (9)</p> <p>Concerns regarding disability-related absences impacting on recruitment have been raised in the 2023 staff consultation. (12)</p> <p>The 2023 staff consultation responses also highlighted that online forms can be difficult for people with disabilities to fill in. (13)</p>
Race	<p>(1) Staff SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019</p> <p>(3) The McGregor-Smith Review: Race in the Workplace - 2017</p> <p>(4) Scottish Government Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit</p>	<p>The demographics of SLAB staff by race are as follows: 80-85% white majority, 5-10% white minority, less than 5% non-white minority ethnic, and 5-10% prefer not to say. (1)</p> <p>Our employee demographic is broadly comparable to the 2019 Scottish population. Our representation of people from a white minority ethnic group is slightly lower than that reported in the 2019 Scottish population (6.8%) and for those in employment (8.2%). (2)</p> <p>The ethnic breakdown of internal job applicants is broadly reflective of the staff demographics. Amongst external applicants there is a higher proportion of white minority ethnic (15-20%) and non-white minority ethnic applicants (15-20%). This suggests that advertising externally attracts a more diverse pool of candidates. (1)</p> <p>The higher numbers of minority ethnic applicants do not translate through to interview or appointment stage. The proportion of those interviewed and appointed in 2021-22 was 5-10% white minority ethnic and 5-10% non-white applicants. Whilst this is a corresponding/slightly higher proportion than is currently represented in SLAB staff, steps should be taken to improve the interview and appointment rates. (1)</p> <p>The McGregor-Smith Review identified that minority ethnic individuals in the UK are both less likely to participate in and</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?
		<p>then less likely to progress through the workplace, when compared with white individuals. In terms of recruitment processes the Review recommended considering the entry requirements, the drafting of job specifications and the posting of adverts in locations that attract more diverse applications. Once applications are received, organisations should also consider how unconscious biases can be removed (3).</p> <p>Specific advice and guidance is contained in the Scottish Government toolkit. It recommended that all applications should be anonymised. (4)</p>
Sex	<p>(1) Staff SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Regional Employment Stats 2018</p> <p>(3) Carer's census Scotland 2019-20 and 2020-21</p> <p>(4) Unpaid Care - Houses of Parliament research briefing, July 2018</p> <p>(5) Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020-21</p> <p>(6) Office for National Statistics - Data and analysis from Census 2021</p> <p>(7) Gender matters: Roadmap towards equality, Engender</p> <p>(8) Jobs offering flexible hours attract 20% more female applicants – HR Review, 2020</p>	<p>Women make up 60-65% of the SLAB workforce. (1)</p> <p>This is reflective of the higher proportion of women in public sector employment in Scotland – 16.3% of men in employment work in the public sector compared to 35.4 % of women. (2)</p> <p>The proportions of women employed by grade are broadly in line with the overall numbers employed by SLAB, albeit that the proportions are slightly lower in the top grades (55-60% in Grade 7+) and higher in the lower grades (70-75% in Grade 1-3). (1)</p> <p>Female staff are more likely to be primary care givers; 76% of working age carers in Scotland were female in 2020-21. (3)</p> <p>Research shows that providing unpaid care is associated with a negative impact on the carer's employment. (4)</p> <p>Women are far more likely to work part time than men, amounting to around 73% of Scotland's part time employees. (5) Within SLAB 80-85% of part timers are women, a slightly higher proportion than the Scottish average. (1)</p> <p>In November 2022 in Scotland the employment rate for women was 75.6% and 77.6% for men. (6)</p> <p>Part time employment accounted for a higher proportion of women's employment compared with men's in 2020-2021 in Scotland; 38.3 per cent of all women's employment compared with 13.4 per cent of all men's employment. (5)</p>

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		<p>According to Engender, the trends of women in part time work are linked to lack of employment opportunities that can be reconciled with unpaid care. (7)</p> <p>Engender also states that women are more likely to be underemployed relative to their skill and qualification level and are affected by occupational segregation trends. (7) This is of particular importance in relation to potential biases in the recruitment process.</p> <p>According to HR Review, women are 20% more likely to apply for senior roles where these are advertised as offering flexible hours. (8) This is of particular importance to vacancy advertising practices.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>(1) Staff SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Government Equalities Office, Trans People in the UK</p> <p>(3) Scottish Public Health Network – Health Care Needs Assessments of Gender Identity Services, 2018</p> <p>(4) Transgender people more likely to be out of work and on lower pay - Personnel Today, 2020</p> <p>(5) LGBT in Britain - Work Report (2018) Stonewall</p>	<p>Fewer than 5% of SLAB's staff indicated that they are not the same gender identity they were assigned at birth. (1)</p> <p>The Government Equalities Office estimates that there are approximately 200,000 to 500,000 trans people living in the UK. (2)</p> <p>There is no precise estimate on the number of trans people in Scotland, but the most used figure is 0.5% (around 24,000 adults). (3)</p> <p>There is evidence from other jurisdictions that transgender people are 11.7% less likely to be employed than equivalent non-transgender individuals. (4)</p> <p>The findings of Stonewall research state that almost one in five LGBT people (18%) looking for work have faced discrimination trying to get a job because of who they are. (5)</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>(1) Staff SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019</p>	<p>In 2022, fewer than 5% of SLAB's staff indicated they are either lesbian, gay or bisexual. Fewer than 5% of SLAB's staff described their identity as "Other/not sure" (1); this is comparable to national statistics. (2)</p> <p>In 2018, people who identified as 'LGB and other' were twice as likely to be unemployed compared to those who identified as 'heterosexual' (4% versus 2%). A higher proportion of</p>

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	(3) LGBT in Britain - Work Report (2018) Stonewall	<p>those identifying as 'LGB and other' were in the age groups 16-24 and 25-34, which were also the age groups where unemployment was higher. (2)</p> <p>In terms of recruitment, in 2021-22 the proportion of external and internal, as well as internal only applicants, who declared LGB was higher (5-10% and 10-15% respectively) than amongst the current staff (less than 5%). The proportion of those interviewed was slightly higher at 10-15% than those who applied at (5-10%), but the number of those appointed (5-10%) was consistent with the number of applicants and higher than the existing LGB employee proportion (less than 5%). The proportion of those appointed is higher than the year before and may not be reflective of a consistent trend within SLAB. However, the consistent relatively high numbers of external LGB applicants, reflected also in the year prior, suggest that external recruitment encourages a more diverse pool of applicants. (1)</p> <p>The findings of Stonewall research state that almost one in five LGBT people (18%) looking for work have faced discrimination trying to get a job because of who they are. (3)</p>
Religion or Belief	<p>(1) Staff SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019</p> <p>(3) Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions – Protected Characteristics Publication Charts</p>	<p>In 2022, of all staff less than 40% of employees declared a religion or belief (35-40% Christian and less than 5% other religion). (1)</p> <p>This is below the Scottish national picture 49.5%) declaring any sort of religion or belief. (2)</p> <p>In 2018, Christian (Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic and Other Christian) represented 46% of the adult population. Over the past decade there has been an increase in the proportion of adults reporting not belonging to a religion, from 40% in 2009 to just over a half of adults (50%) in 2018. (2)</p> <p>The percentage of SLAB employees declaring no religion (45-50%) is lower than the 2019 Scottish population (53.7%) and significantly lower than those in employment (60%). (1) (2)</p> <p>The number of employees identifying with other religions (collating Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and others, for example Jewish) is <5% (1), in line with the 2019 national profile of 3.1%. (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?
		<p>Our 'prefer not to say' figure is relatively high at 15-20% which represents a gap in our knowledge. (1)</p> <p>The proportion of Christians applying to SLAB was higher externally (25-30%) than internally (15-20%) and in both groups noticeably lower than the proportion in staff cohort (35-40%). However the proportion of those from another religion was higher amongst external applicants (5-10%) than amongst the current staff cohort (<5%). This may suggest that external recruitment either attracts a more diverse pool or there is a better level of reporting by applicants. This slightly higher proportion does not feed through to interview stage (less than 5%) but is reflected in the number of appointees (5-10%). (1)</p> <p>In Scotland in 2021, the highest employment rates were seen for those with no religious beliefs (74.7%) followed by Christians (72.3%), other religion (68.7%), Hindus (68.4 per cent), Buddhists (66.5 per cent) and Muslims (46.5%). The employment rate for Scotland was 73.2%. (2)</p> <p>SLAB collects statistics on the breakdown of employees of a non-Christian religion, but small numbers mean this cannot be reported due to data suppression. (3)</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	<p>(1) SLAB Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination and disadvantage: final reports, 2016</p>	<p>In 2021/2022 100% of maternity leavers returned to work at SLAB. Of these, 20% requested a variation to their contractual hours on return to work and all were approved on a permanent basis. (1)</p> <p>There is no data available on what impact, if any, maternity leave has on internal promotion and progression.</p> <p>The EHRC's research into pregnancy and maternity discrimination found that 70% of employers surveyed believed women should declare upfront during recruitment if they are pregnant and some said they were unwilling to employ pregnant women. A quarter of employers felt it was reasonable to ask women about their plans to have children at interview. Those employers who provided training for managers involved in recruitment were less likely to believe that women should declare if they are pregnant during recruitment. (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?
Marriage/civil partnership	(1) Expert insight on employment and discrimination law standards	<p>There is reference in the policy being reviewed to some circumstances in which it is inappropriate for SLAB to appoint a person who has a personal relationship with an existing employee. This could impact on those who are married or in a civil partnership. Whilst the reason for rejection would not be the PC of marital status per se (as opposed to the identity of the person the candidate was married to), there is a risk that a rejected candidate uses this as a basis for a claim. (1)</p> <p>We have no other evidence in relation to SLAB employees or from wider desk research that there is a significant impact, positive or negative, for this group in terms of this policy. Marriage or civil partnership status is not relevant to the recruitment process and the data is not collected as part of the process.</p>
Care Experienced <i>(corporate parenting duty)</i>	<p>(1) SLAB staff demographics, 2021-22</p> <p>(2) Who Cares? Scotland: Outcomes for care experienced children and young people - Archived, 2016</p> <p>(3) Care experience and employment Iriss, 2021</p>	<p>5-10% of all staff members declare they are care-experienced, 80-85% are not and 10-15% prefer not to say. (1)</p> <p>Scottish Government's statistics show that nine months after leaving school, 30% of care experienced young people are classed as unemployed, compared to only 8% of their non-care experienced peers. (2)</p> <p>Studies show that for care experienced young people the idea of getting a job (even applying for a job) can be overwhelming, as are the many surrounding issues usually taken for granted - clothing, travel, food, socialising, workplaces. (3)</p> <p>Any steps taken to make recruitment more open and accessible in relation to the other protected characteristics are likely to have a positive impact for care leavers.</p>

1.2 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.

Based on the information gathered above, there are several potential impacts across the protected characteristics that warrant further investigation to assess the degree of impact of the current policy

from an equalities perspective. These characteristics include sex, age, disability, race, religion or belief and pregnancy/maternity.

Proposed changes to the policy include a) stating commitment to guaranteeing an interview for disabled candidates meeting minimum criteria, b) opening recruitment to external candidates as often as practicable, c) offering to send information on vacancies to those on long-term leave, with specific wording added in about the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates and where responsibility lies for that. All managers engaged in recruitment and selection are trained in unconscious bias, equality and diversity awareness, and competency-based selection and interviewing.

1.3 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	N	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

Step 3 – stakeholder involvement and consultation

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

Yes.

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

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

1.3 What did you learn from the consultation/involvement?

Union and Employee Consultation – April 2023.

Negative impact on protected characteristics at application stage – disability, where a few respondents noted that they felt candidates with disabilities would be disadvantaged with the application and interview stages.

In addition, there were some comments on the potential for managers being biased. However, most respondents' comments were regarding external candidates being favoured over internal candidates.

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?

All or multiple equality groups	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	X		<p>Section on equality of opportunity is now reflected in this policy. Policy now states that those on long term sick leave or other absence, such as maternity or shared parental leave, will be asked if they want regular communications about job vacancies.</p> <p>Wording in the policy has been made clear in relevant sections that the selection criteria and sift are competency based to reduce discrimination risks and to evidence non-discriminatory decision-making base on objective factors.</p> <p>We have updated the policy to state that sifts, and competency based interviews, are conducted by either two line managers (or one line manager and HR representative). If two managers conduct the sift, HR may check the sift before candidates are contacted for interview. Also, HR representative or another suitably trained manager will also attend and support recruitment at manager grades and above.</p> <p>Unconscious bias e-learning is already recommended to all SLAB managers new to recruitment. This is hosted in our learning management system.</p> <p>Any tests are already only used to assess attributes of the role/job and would be a means to narrowing the field. Training would need to be provided to HR staff for psychometric testing (see 6.1).</p>
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			<p>Managers are required to consider whether the role can lend itself to flexible working arrangements to attract a wider range of candidates.</p> <p>Advertise internally and externally at the same time, unless a vacancy is for a specialist role and the skills needed are likely only to exist within the organisation, or there are other factors that make internal</p>

				<p>recruitment more appropriate. Only the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development can approve internal recruitment.</p> <p>Where an identical or similar internal vacancy occurs, we will consider whether a recruitment exercise should be run internally and/or externally to improve the diversity of candidates available. However, in some circumstances it may be appropriate to offer it the role to internal reserve candidates.</p> <p>Explicitly stated in policy that we may take positive action where this is required to improve the diversity of SLAB's workforce. To improve the potential to advance equality of opportunity, interviewers from outside the organisations may be used.</p>
Age	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			<p>Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.</p> <p>For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.</p>
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	Details
potential for discrimination	X	X		<p>There does not appear to be a significant impact on any age group in terms of SLAB's recruitment data. There are changes to the policy that will help to mitigate any risk that SLAB's recruitment practices could discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of age. All age groups will therefore benefit from opening up recruitment exercises to external candidates as often as is practicable and vacancies being advertised to as diverse a pool as practicable.</p> <p>Female employees who are more likely to have caring responsibilities and will benefit from all jobs being open to consideration under the Flexible Working Policy. Amendments in relation to disability will also have a positive impact for older employees who are more likely to become disabled.</p>
potential for developing good relations	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			However, the changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.

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	X		There does not appear to be a significant impact by sex in terms of SLAB's recruitment data. The gender balance of those interviewed and appointed, reflects the current gender balance within SLAB. In addition to the changes made of all equality groups (see above), the following changes should assist in addressing any risk that SLAB's recruitment practices could discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of sex: a) opening recruitment to external candidates and vacancies being advertised to as diverse a pool as possible, as is practicable b) female employees who are more likely to have caring responsibilities will benefit from all jobs being open to consideration under the Flexible Working Policy.
potential for developing good relations	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			However, the changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group. All relevant employees, including those part time contracts more prevalent among female employees, will have equal access to training opportunities. Managers are required to consider whether the role can lend itself to flexible working arrangements to attract a wider range of candidates, which is likely to be particularly relevant to female employees.
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	X	<p>Based on the evidence set out above and given the relatively low numbers of disabled candidates applying, the following steps and changes to the policy should improve the numbers of candidates with a disability applying and being appointed to SLAB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) opening recruitment to external candidates b) people with a disability will benefit from all jobs being open to consideration under the Flexible Working Policy which may allow them to agree working arrangements to accommodate their disability c) specific wording has been added to the policy on duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates, and responsibility for this, across the recruitment process d) testing will only take place when there is evidence that it is an appropriate and necessary means of narrowing the field e) current practice is now better reflected in the policy that disability-related absence is not considered in the selection process and health-related questions are only asked in a lawful way at selection and interview stage f) The policy now specifies commitment to guaranteeing an interview for every candidate with a disability meeting the minimum criteria, when reasonable to do so. The training on unconscious bias, competency based interviews and diversity awareness for hiring panels could help to foster good relations for this equality group. <p>The policy specifies that for candidates with disabilities, reasonable adjustments will be made throughout the recruitment process.</p>
potential for developing good relations	X		<p>The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.</p>
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X		<p>The changes being made under 'All or multiple equality groups' above could impact on this group.</p> <p>The policy now specifies commitment to guaranteeing an interview for every candidate with a disability meeting the minimum criteria, when reasonable to do so. This will advance equality of opportunity at the recruitment stage for people with disabilities. Managers are required to consider whether the role can lend itself to flexible working arrangements to attract a wider range of candidates, which is likely to be particularly relevant to disabled employees.</p>

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	X		The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group. In line with GEO Guidance referred to in section 2, diversity awareness and unconscious bias training has been added into the policy, with wording about not asking candidates about trans status at interview and not assuming someone's gender simply by their appearance. We have also included wording in relation to HR dealing with ID docs sensitively at section 10 of the policy and highlighting the circumstances in which it is a criminal offence to disclose trans status.
potential for developing good relations	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
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	X		Whilst there does not appear to be a significant impact on ethnic minorities in terms of SLAB's recruitment data, there is some evidence from the recent data that might suggest that the proportion of minority ethnic applicants did not translate into the same proportions at interview or appointment stage. In addition to the changes made for all equality groups (see above), the following steps will reduce any risk that SLAB's recruitment practices could discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of race:

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> opening recruitment to external candidates as often as is practicable, and vacancies being advertised to a more diverse pool as practicable and proportionate advertising to particular groups identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented within SLAB; Policy has been developed referring to the Scottish Government Minority Ethnic Toolkit testing will only take place when there is evidence that it is an appropriate and necessary means of narrowing the field where an identical or similar internal vacancy occurs, we will consider whether a recruitment exercise should be run internally and/or externally to improve the diversity of candidates available.
potential for developing good relations	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
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	X		The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
potential for developing good relations	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
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	X		The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
potential for developing good relations	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
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	X		SLAB has a high level of maternity returners. There is no data available on what impact, if any, maternity leave has on internal promotion. We will investigate good practice in adding pregnancy and maternity to recruitment equality monitoring (see Step 6.1). However, in addition to the proposed changes set out for all equality groups (see above), the following should assist in addressing any risk that SLAB's recruitment practices could discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of pregnancy or maternity.
potential for developing good relations	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
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	X		The policy now clarifies that managers must not discriminate against staff on various protected grounds and to take advice from HR before a decision is made not to appoint is taken on grounds of a personal relationship.
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	X		The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.
potential for developing good relations	X			The changes being made under ' All or multiple equality groups ' above could impact on this group.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The training on unconscious bias, competency based recruitment and diversity awareness could help to foster good relations for this equality group.

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 Trade 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. (HR from June 2023).

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.

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>
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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.

From January 2022: Regular reviews and updates to the EqIA between the Policy team and Human Resources, with input from Morton Fraser.

March 2023: Consultation with employees and our recognised Trade Union.

April/May 2023: Following consultation with employees and our recognised Trade Union, changes made to the policy and EqIA.

Step 6 - Post-implementation actions and monitoring impact

6.1 Record any ongoing actions below.

Action	Owner	Timeline
Determine how people would indicate they are eligible for the guaranteed interview scheme	Human Resources	In line with upgrade to Oracle Recruitment
Investigate good practice in adding pregnancy and maternity to recruitment equality monitoring	Human Resources and Policy Officer (Equalities)	Post policy implementation
We will incorporate relevant parts of the Scottish Government Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit, for example improving our recruitment reach to minority ethnic groups	Human Resources	Next stage of review, TBC

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)
Gathering and use of equality information from both internal and external candidates to track experience and success through the stages of recruitment from application to appointment	Human Resources with Policy team support	Annually, published externally
Monitor the outcome of recruitments by equality group where we offer to a reserve candidate from a recruitment exercise for a role that was identical or similar internal vacancy	Human Resources	Annually

6.3 EqIA review date.

12/06/2026.

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 EqlA is not required. The Chief Executive must approve all assessments.

Director/SRO sign off: 15/04/2025.

Chief Executive approval: 07/06/2023.