



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(EqIA)

Summary results of the EqIA

Title of policy/practice/process/service:

Prior approval for unusual work: civil legal assistance.

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

Review of current policy.

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

Our assessment is that this policy does have relevance to equality groups, in particular with regards to age, disability and race in some circumstances, but potentially more broadly. However, we also note that there are many forms of unusual work which would have no link to applicants' equality characteristics and associated needs at all, and requests which appear to have a direct relevance to equality groups are infrequent.

We note that for a few protected characteristics (sex and race), there is significant variation in the grant rate. However, our view is that this variation does not arise as a direct result of the interaction of our policy position on applicants' protected characteristics but because of intervening factors, such as case subject matter, and we conclude there is no evidence of discriminatory impact.

More broadly, based on the evidence available to us, our conclusion is that the factors in the policy are framed in such a way that would allow us to take into account requests which relate to a person's protected characteristics (across any of the nine protected characteristics) and that overall, the policy assists in advancing equality of opportunity, with no amendment required.

Finally, we also note for clarity that an applicant's protected characteristics will not be relevant to our decision-making in and of themselves: these require to be tied into the policy factors which we set out to be considered.

Summary of actions taken because of this assessment:

No specific actions taken.

Ongoing actions beyond implementation include:

Continue monitoring and analysis of decisions.

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

Head of Civil and Children's Legal Assistance.

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

Director of Operations.

Publication date (for completion by Communications):

21/05/2026.

Step 1: Scoping the work being assessed

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

SLAB's policy on prior approval for unusual work sets out how SLAB operationalises and records the requirements of the relevant Regulation. The purpose of a policy statement is to identify a definition and a test to be undertaken by decision-makers where approval is sought to carry out work of an unusual nature. In this case the test is whether it is 'reasonable' to approve the proposed 'unusual' work. We then define what is meant by 'unusual' work. The relevant section of the policy statement is set out below.

“Definition of unusual

“For the purposes of this policy, SLAB's definition of 'unusual' work is work which would not ordinarily and as a matter of course be expected to be carried out in the typical case of its kind, and/or in the particular circumstances of the case at hand.

“Work which would otherwise require our prior approval because it involves the employment of counsel, the use of experts, or which will result in unusually large expenditure cannot fall into this definition: these forms of work require prior approval in their own right.

“Test applied to proposed unusual work

“Where the proposed work falls within the definition above, the test we apply in making a decision on whether grant approval is **whether the proposed work is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case.**

“We will grant a request to undertake unusual work where it is shown that:

- a) the work is likely to advance the case or assist in its resolution; and
- b) shows due regard for economy of litigation.

“Where the work proposed consists of family therapy or any closely related work, we will grant a request as reasonable only where it is shown that the proposed therapist is registered with a relevant regulator, or can otherwise show they are a member of an accredited register of therapists subject to appropriate quality assurance requirements.

“Retrospective requests for the approval of unusual work

“For retrospective requests for unusual work, the first limb of the test (set out in the Regulations) is whether approval would have been granted had it been sought timeously. As stated in the parent policy statement, SLAB's policy is to apply exactly the same test and factors to the request as if it had been received in time.

“For the second limb, our policy on ‘special reason’ is that where a solicitor can show that:

- they were prevented from making a timeous application for prior approval by circumstances which were beyond their control and these circumstances were ones which could not have been reasonably foreseen; or
- the circumstances were within the solicitor’s control, and ought to have been foreseen, but the oversight was nonetheless justifiable given the particular or unusual circumstances in which the expense was incurred

“this will generally be accepted as a special reason for late submission of a request for approval of unusual work. SLAB’s policy is that the particular circumstances described must amount to more than simply plain oversight or ignorance of the Regulations to suffice as a ‘special reason’.”

1.2. Why is the policy/practice/process/service being examined?

Review of policy/process/service/practice.

1.3. Who is affected by this policy/practice/process/service?

The customer for the purpose of this policy is the assisted person in receipt of civil legal assistance, whose case the unusual work is intended to have some sort of impact on. The extent to which assisted persons (and by connection, their solicitors and, where appropriate, counsel) can undertake unusual work in relation to their case will be affected by how SLAB sets its policy in this area.

There may also be an impact on other parties to the proceedings, and to other parties within the justice system (for example, other parties involved in the proceedings, the judiciary and the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service).

1.4. Policy/practice/process/service implementation date.

Currently live.

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

As set out in the policy statement, there is a relationship between what SLAB approves at this stage (or retrospectively, also under the terms of this policy), and what may eventually be paid for.

Where SLAB’s policy on what is likely to be ‘reasonable’ changes, this may have implications for what can later be paid for.

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?

General information about the policy/practice/process/service

In terms of volumes of requests, in 2024-25, the total number of requests for approval for unusual work was 2,427 (or around 200 per month). Of this total, fewer than 1% related to retrospective prior

approval. The vast majority (>95%) were made in Sheriff Court proceedings, with the remainder primarily in the Outer House of the Court of Session.

Overall, the grant rate under this policy was 45%. For context on the grant rate, discussions with Operational leads indicate that a primary reason for refusal under this policy is because prior approval was not required (for instance, because we do not deem the proposed work to be unusual), rather than a substantive refusal on the grounds due that the request was not reasonable with regards to the factors set out in this policy.

Consideration of the applications data indicates that the range of work proposed under the unusual work policy is fairly large, with no particular types predominating. Types of request which were more frequent included costs in relation to supervised contact, mediation, and child welfare reports (these reflect the preponderance of family cases amongst the requests). Whilst there are several types with potential relevance to equalities (discussed in relevant sections below), there are various forms of requests in which there is no obvious bearing on equalities whatsoever: for instance, requests for multiple solicitors, travel costs, and some forms of medical testing, for instance DNA and drugs testing.

More broadly, we suggest that this is a specific and niche policy area of the Scottish legal aid system, for which no obvious external equivalents are available that might enable comparison with other public decision-making bodies (for instance).

Age

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

Age band	Percentage of requests for unusual work	Percentage of applications for civil legal aid
<=24	7.1%	5.2%
25-34	38.2%	21.7%
35-44	35.7%	27.4%
45-54	11.4%	19.2%
55-64	4.9%	16.3%
65+	2.6%	10.2%
Total	100%	100%

Age band	Granted	Not granted
<=24	52.6%	47.4%
25-34	45.6%	54.4%
35-44	43.7%	56.2%
45-54	43.1%	56.9%
55-64	37.8%	62.2%
65+	46.0%	54.0%
Total	44.8%	55.2%

The initial table above shows that the profile of persons requesting approval for unusual work is somewhat different to the profile of applicants for civil legal assistance generally, with applicants requesting approval for unusual work skewing considerably younger. Our view is that an explanation

for this may be the patterning of case subject matter by age and how this relates to requests for unusual work: in particular, whilst applications in relation to adults with incapacity make up a significant proportion of civil legal aid applications, and might be expected to be associated with older applicants, they make a disproportionately small number of requests for unusual work (perhaps because the AWI process is relatively straightforward and standardised). In contrast, a larger proportion of requests for unusual work are comprised of family matters, such as contact, variation and residence, where the applicants are more likely to be in the 25-34 and 35-44 age bands. We note that we are not aware of evidence that suggests our policy position presents particular barriers for people in older age bands.

There is a degree of difference in the grant rate by age, with the youngest applicants having a somewhat higher grant rate, and those in band 55-64 having a comparatively low grant rate. We note that where a child is represented by a curator, it is likely that the court will put the costs of such outlays onto their grant of legal aid, as they don't usually have a contribution; this may account for the higher grant rate for younger people. More broadly, having undertaken statistical testing of the applications data, we can confirm that this variation is not statistically significant. In the absence of broader evidence (for instance complaints), we cannot conclude that there is clear evidence of problematic differences in outcomes by age under this policy.

- **Data relevant to the policy**

Evidence on different age categories

One form of work for which prior approval for unusual work is required is the taking of evidence on commission.

In terms of why taking the evidence of a witness by commission may be required, we anticipate that one reason could be where the witness is vulnerable: this could include where they are either particularly young (that is, a child) or elderly. In practice, requests to cover these types of cost are very infrequent.

We are aware of external research on issues faced by children and other vulnerable people in engaging with legal proceedings and adaptations which can be made in order to facilitate their evidence being given in an appropriate way: for instance, research in relation to Scottish Government's 'Bairns' Hoose' initiative suggests that special measures for child witnesses are in line with trauma-informed practice and can avoid re-traumatisation of children involved in legal proceedings, and are intended to be child-friendly in a way that supports the reliable giving and collecting of evidence.¹

Some of these measures could potentially require prior approval for unusual work – in particular, where evidence of a witness is to be taken by commission. We note again, however, that requests to approve work along these lines are rare.

It is also important to note that many common special measures (such as expert-recommended breaks during evidence) do not require unusual work approval and therefore fall outside this policy.

¹ [Bairns' Hoose, Support measures for child victims and witnesses in connection with giving evidence in criminal cases, 10 November 2025.](#)

Disability

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

Disability status	Percentage of requests for unusual work
One or more disabilities	18.0%
No disability	82.0%
Total	100%

We note that the disclosure rate for this protected characteristic was only 50%, which will obscure the true profile of applicants somewhat. Looking at the table above, the rate of disability appears to be somewhat low when compared to Scottish population figures (the 2023 Scottish Household Survey figure being 28% of the population).²

Whilst, in principle, this policy can cover work which arises in relation to an assisted person's disability, we are not aware of other evidence that suggests that the policy is particularly important for persons with disabilities: our view is that there are unlikely to be any problematic barriers for disabled persons in submitting requests under this policy.

Disability status	Granted	Not granted
One or more disabilities	41.5%	58.5%
No disability	45.1%	54.9%
Total	44.4%	55.6%

The grant rate for applicants with disabilities is similar to that for applicants without disabilities. Statistical testing confirms that the difference is not statistically significant. We are aware that a number of requests when an applicant's disability was mentioned were refused: these appeared to be requests which should have been for an expert witness (for example, for a learning disability psychiatric assessment) or where the report sought was factual and so did not require prior approval, and the refusal did not relate directly to the applicant's disability.

In the absence of broader evidence (for instance complaints), we conclude that there is no evidence of problematic differences in outcomes by age under this policy.

Data relevant to the policy

We note that a small number of requests related to a client intermediary; for instance, where the client was deaf or had learning disabilities.

Evidence on different disabilities

- **Physical disabilities**

No specific evidence found.

- **Learning disabilities**

No specific evidence found.

² [Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2023 - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-survey-core-questions-2023/pages/100-109-disability-and-health.aspx).

- **Mental health**

There were several requests made which specifically mentioned issues relating to disability: a number of these pertained to covering the costs of seeking an applicant’s medical records from their GP, for example, to speak on their mental health issues in the proceedings. This establishes that this policy does have potential relevance to equalities issues.

Sex

Statistics

- **SLAB’s data**

Sex (86% disclosure)	Percentage of total requests for unusual work	Percentage of applications for civil legal aid
Male	42.2%	39%
Female	53.5%	61%
PNTS	4.4%	N/A
Total	100%	100%

The table above indicates that whilst more requests for unusual work come from female applicants, when compared to the profile of applications for civil legal aid, a (slightly) disproportionately high level of requests come from men. It is not clear why this is the case, or how far this simply reflects the role of the ‘prefer not to say’ data, rather than a systematic impact of our policy. We note for context that men are considerably more likely to be the pursuer in cases, with female applicants more likely to be defenders; there is also a degree of variation by subject matter, with a greater proportion of requests for unusual work from men made from within contact cases (47.6% vs 30%), whilst the converse was true for residence cases (27.8% of requests from female applicants, but only 19.9% for men). Overall, we do not conclude that the data above should not be read as suggesting there are any particular barriers for female applicants caused by the operation of our policy.

Sex (86% disclosure)	Granted	Not granted
Male	42.3%	57.7%
Female	48.0%	52.0%
PNTS	56.7%	43.3%
Total	45.9%	54.1%

The table above shows that the grant rate for men is lower than for women. (The grant rate for prefer not to say is higher, but it is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions from that data in which the protected characteristic is not specifically closed). Statistical testing indicates that there **is** a statistically significant difference in the grant rate by sex.

There are a number of case types in which there is a notable degree of difference in the grant rate for unusual work by sex: in particular, divorce proceedings for both divorce (two years) and divorce on the grounds of unreasonable behaviour show a gap in the grant rate of about 15% between men and women; in adults with incapacity (with welfare element), there is a 10% gap, and for declarator of parentage cases, a gap of over 20%.

However, overall, we are satisfied that variation in the grant rate by sex is likely to be explained by an intersection between sex, subject matter, the type of procedure/court type and the factors set out in

our policy: whilst there are differences in outcomes, our view is that these are legitimate outcomes in the context of our policy intent.

In the absence of other evidence to support a finding that this difference in grant rate reflects a meaningful difference resulting from our policy position, our view is that the policy does not result in unjustifiable differences in outcomes by sex.

Evidence on women

No specific evidence seen.

Evidence on men

No specific evidence seen.

Race

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

Race (63% disclosure)	Percentage of total requests
White majority	51.1%
White minority	2.0%
Non-white ethnic minority	4.0%
Prefer not to say	42.9%
Total	100%

The usefulness of the applications data set out above is limited by the very high rate of prefer not to say, combined with 37% of applicants not disclosing data against this protected characteristic: this is likely to obscure the true picture. (This is most obviously the case for applications from the white majority group, which is very low compared to the profile of the Scottish population – in 2023, the Scottish Household survey data figure for this group would be around 85%). Moreover, the fact that individual applicants can submit multiple requests for unusual work also complicates the picture.

Race (63% disclosure)	Granted	Not granted
White majority	44.3%	55.7%
White minority	23.3%	76.7%
Non-white ethnic minority	52.5%	47.5%
Prefer not to say	52.8%	47.2%
Total	47.9%	52.1%

The table above shows variation in the grant rate across groups within this protected characteristic. Statistical testing confirms that the differences in the grant rate are significant, with the grant rate for white minority applicants being particularly low.

However, our assessment is that this reflects variation in the types of requests being submitted: in particular, amongst white minority applicants, there appeared to be a higher proportion of requests relating to interpreting and translation, where unusual prior approval is not (generally) required: these requests are refused as unnecessary, accounting for the lower grant rate. That is, a higher rate of refusal does not in itself indicate a substantive barrier for particular groups created by the policy position. As such, notwithstanding the data above, we are not minded to conclude that the operation of the policy leads to unjustifiable variation in the grant rate by race.

- **Data relevant to the policy**

Evidence on different ethnicities

No specific evidence seen.

Evidence on people whose first language is not English

A small number of requests for unusual work related to interpreting and translation costs: some of these were granted, and others were refused. We note generally that interpreting costs do not require prior approval. Requests which were granted therefore either involved an additional 'unusual' element (for instance, costs beyond the normal rates though below the 'unusually large' threshold) or were perhaps granted in error.

Gender reassignment

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

No data available.

- **Data relevant to the policy**

Evidence on trans people

No evidence found.

Sexual orientation

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

No data available.

- **Data relevant to the policy**

Evidence on gay men

No evidence found.

Evidence on gay women/lesbians

No evidence found.

Evidence on bisexual people

No evidence found.

Religion or belief

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

No data available.

- **Data relevant to the policy**

Evidence on different religions

No evidence found.

Pregnancy or maternity

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

No data available.

- **Data relevant to the policy**

Evidence on pregnancy and maternity

No specific evidence found. Whilst formerly, prior approval for unusual work was required for a solicitor to make a home visit to a client who is heavily pregnant (for example), we no longer require such work to be covered by prior approval, meaning such work can now proceed more quickly.

Marriage/civil partnership (only applies to policies related to employment)

This protected characteristic is not relevant for the purpose of this EqIA.

Care Experienced

Statistics

- **SLAB's data**

Care experienced? (63% disclosure)	Percentage of total requests
Yes	2.1%
No	34.8%
Prefer not to say	63.1%
Total	100%

As with race, the high rate of prefer not to say, combined with gaps in the disclosure rate, mean that the true profile of requests by applicant care experience is somewhat obscured. We are not aware of any evidence that suggests our policy presents particular barriers to people with experience of care.

Care experienced? (63% disclosure)	Percentage of requests granted	Percentage of requests not granted
Yes	34.4%	53.1%
No	46.9%	53.1%
Prefer not to say	49.1%	50.9%
Total	100%	100%

Whilst there is a clear degree of variation in the grant rate, statistical testing indicates that the difference is not significant in nature. We note that a high proportion of care-experienced applicants were female (71.9%) when compared to the profile of all applicants who requested approval for unusual work (51.7%). It is unclear why this might be or how far this has any significance. Similarly, applicants with care experience were somewhat more likely to be pursuers; more likely to be involved in Court of Session (Outer House) proceedings; and more likely to be involved in contact or residence proceedings, as well as declarator of parentage and adoption proceedings.

- **Data relevant to the policy**

Evidence on care experienced people

We did not find any evidence that suggested there may be a clear link between this characteristic and the need to instruct any particular forms of unusual work.

2.2. Using the information above and your knowledge of the policy/practice/process/service, summarise your overall assessment of how important and relevant it is likely to be for equality groups.

Our policy on prior approval for unusual work does appear to have some relevance to a few protected characteristics, in particular age and possibly disability, where these are relevant to certain forms of special measures, such as evidence being taken by commission, or an intermediary being made available.

In these circumstances, our current policy is that some (though by no means all) forms of special measure are defined as unusual, and thus SLAB's approval is required for such work to be undertaken. Similarly, with regards to race, in certain circumstances, where the work involved is not of a standard nature, interpreting or translating may require prior approval for unusual work, though in practice this appears to be infrequent.

However, other than the example above, SLAB's policy on approval for unusual work does not necessarily appear to be more important for some equality groups rather than others; nor does it appear to impact unevenly on equality groups based on the evidence considered at this stage.

There are various forms of request which have no equalities aspect at all – for instance relating to shorthand writers and the recovery of documents. There are also certain forms of work which require prior approval and may be *indirectly* relevant to an applicant or other party's protected characteristics (for instance certain costs relating to child contact), though the applicant's protected characteristics are not directly relevant to our decision-making in such scenarios.

With regards to equalities, the definition and the factors used in our policy (in particular, whether the work will advance the case) are broad enough to enable consideration of any unusual work – including work which may be sought in relation to applicants' protected characteristics - where that can be shown to be relevant to our policy position. An applicant's protected characteristics in and of themselves will not be relevant to our decision-making.

Whilst we note that for a few protected characteristics, there are significant differences in the grant rate, our view is that these are likely to be accounted for by intervening factors (or instance intersection with case subject matter) and do not reflect unjustifiable outcomes arising from our policy position.

2.3. Outcome of Step 2 and next steps. Select the outcome below to inform the next stage of the EqIA process.

Please select your decision: Proceed to Step 3 - complete full EqIA.

Please outline the reasoning behind your decision:

As noted above, given we are aware of requests which do have a direct relevance to applicants' protected characteristics, a full EqIA assessment is required.

Step 3: Stakeholder involvement and consultation

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

No.

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

No consultation planned.

3.3. What did you learn from the consultation/involvement?

N/A.

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?

Cross-cutting observations

SLAB has a wide degree of discretion available in terms of its policy on prior approval for unusual work. The factors that appear in the agreed policy are broadly framed: our assessment is that they are framed in such a way that – where relevance to the factors is demonstrated – issues relating to any of the protected characteristics with regards to a possible need to undertake unusual work can be considered. In incorporating such a degree of flexibility, our view is that the policy position advances equality of opportunity.

Age

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

In terms of relevance, as noted above, there are some forms of special measures – for instance the use of commissioners – which could be directly related to an applicant’s age and vulnerability. There were also a number of granted requests in relation to AWI documentation. More broadly, however, age does not appear to be obviously relevant to most requests made.

Our view is that on the evidence available to us, there is no change required to the policy. While there appears to be a degree of variation in the grant rate, as we noted above, any variation in grant rate is unlikely to reflect discriminatory impacts arising from our policy position.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Disability

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

In terms of relevance, we note above that a limited number of requests for unusual work appeared to have a linkage to issues relating to an applicant's mental health.

Our view is that on the evidence available to us, there is no change required to the policy. The minor variation in the grant rate was non-significant. More broadly, our assessment is that any variation in grant rate is unlikely to reflect discriminatory impacts arising from our policy position.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Sex

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

Although our analysis of the data in section 2.1 indicates that there is a statistically significant variation in the grant rate by sex, our view is that on the evidence available to us, there is no change required to the policy. Our assessment is that the difference in the grant rate does not arise because of applicants' protected characteristic of sex in and of itself.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Race

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

Although our analysis of the data in section 2.1 indicates that there is a statistically significant variation in the grant rate by race, our view is that on the evidence available to us, there is no change required to the policy. There is no obvious basis on which to conclude that there are discriminatory impacts arising from our policy position as a direct result of race, and that the variation in grant rate is explained at least in part by requests being refused as unnecessary, rather than substantive refusals on the merits of the request.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into

account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Gender reassignment

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

We did not find any evidence that indicated a specific relevance of our policy on unusual work with regards to this protected characteristic, or which suggests that applicants are more or less likely to seek and to be granted approval to undertake unusual work depending on their gender reassignment status. However, nor are we aware of any current issues. There are no known adverse impacts to be mitigated.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Sexual orientation

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

We did not find any evidence that indicated a specific relevance of our policy on unusual work with regards to applicants' sexual orientation, or which suggests that applicants from particular sexual orientations are more or less likely to seek and to be granted approval to undertake unusual work. However, nor are we aware of any current issues. There are no known adverse impacts to be mitigated.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Religion or Belief

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

We did not find any evidence that indicated a specific relevance of our policy on unusual work with regards to applicants' religion or belief, or which suggests that applicants from particular religious backgrounds are more or less likely to seek and to be granted approval to undertake such work. However, nor are we aware of any current issues. There are no known adverse impacts to be mitigated.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Pregnancy & Maternity

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

We did not find any evidence that indicated a specific relevance of our policy on unusual work with regards to pregnancy or maternity, or which suggests that applicants within this protected characteristic group are more or less likely to seek and to be granted approval to undertake such work. However, nor are we aware of any current issues. There are no known adverse impacts to be mitigated.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

Marriage & Civil Partnership (only applies to policies related to employment)

This protected characteristic is not relevant for the purpose of this EqIA.

Care experience

Potential for discrimination: No impact.

Potential for developing good relations: No impact.

Potential to advance equality: Positive impact(s).

As noted under section 2.1, there is no significant difference in the grant rate by this protected characteristic. We found no broader specific evidence or data that allows us to see a clear linkage between applicants with this protected characteristic, requests to undertake unusual work, and grant rate. However, nor are we aware of any current issues. There are no known adverse impacts to be mitigated.

As noted above in [cross-cutting observations](#), our assessment is that the factors set out within the policy are broad enough to allow for issues relating to any protected characteristic to be taken into account where relevance can be demonstrated; and that this means that the policy has a positive impact with regards to equality of opportunity.

4.2. Which actions have you taken as part of this assessment?

Please select the outcome of the assessment: Confirm that the policy/practice/process/service described in section 1.1 was robust.

Please explain the changes that have been made: Given the conclusion that the policy is robust, no changes have been identified.

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.

In the development of this assessment, we discussed the available evidence with key operational decision-makers and sought their insights as to their experiences of applying the policy. The policy is due for consideration by senior leadership staff on the GALA Review Group in April 2026.

Step 6: Post-implementation actions and monitoring impact

6.1. Record any ongoing actions below

No current actions.

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

Measure	Lead department or individual	Reporting (where and frequency)
Analysis of numbers of requests, grants and refusals for prior approval to undertake unusual work by assisted person protected characteristic, by case type if possible, ensuring unusual work can be split out from work of unusually large expenditure more broadly.	AMI (data extraction) with Policy (analysis)	In line with review cycle (three yearly) – to Head of Civil and Children’s Legal Assistance

6.3. EqIA review date

09/04/2029.

Step 7: Assessment sign off and approval

Director/SRO sign off: 09/04/2026.

Chief Executive approval: 09/04/2026.