



Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) – Screening on criminal unusually large expenditure (ULE)

Stage 1 – Screening

1.1. What's the aim/purpose of your policy/measure?

The policy sets out how SLAB applies the criminal legal aid regulations when deciding whether to grant, part-grant, or refuse prior approval for unusually large expenditure (ULE). It defines what counts as unusually large expenditure, sets the threshold for approval, and explains the reasonableness test that decision-makers apply.

1.2. What's the impact of your policy/measure on children?

This policy appears to have limited impact on children. ULE requests are made by solicitors and relate to high-cost single items of work, which almost always arise in adult criminal cases. In the years' worth of data we considered, we did not identify a single ULE request made on behalf of a child applicant.

We acknowledge that it is *possible* that a child applicant could seek our approval for work of unusually large expenditure. We further recognise that there are some hypothetical scenarios where there could be a direct link to the child's age: for instance, if an unusually expensive special measure was required for a vulnerable child applicant on account of their age. However, we reiterate that we are not aware of such situations arising in practice.

1.3. Are certain groups of children more affected than others?

The policy does not routinely affect children and does not itself differentiate between groups of children. Any possible interaction with children (for example, an unusually high-cost special measure) would be rare and case-specific. In theory, children requiring special measures or interpreting/translation services exceeding the ULE threshold are those who could be more likely to be affected, but in general terms, we are not aware of any actual evidence suggesting certain groups of children would be more affected than others, or that those who may be more affected would therefore face particular barriers or difficulties as a result of the policy position.

1.4. Is a full CRWIA required?

The EqIA identifies equality relevance for adults (for example, with regards to disability and race and possible needs for ULE), but it does **not** indicate any negative impacts on children. No age-related differences or child-specific issues were found in relation to ULE.

The number of children affected is very small to none. We identified no examples of ULE requests made on behalf of children or relating to child-specific circumstances.

No external consultation is required. The policy is technical, internal and procedural, and children do not interact directly with the approval process.

Evidence gaps exist simply because children are not using this approval route in practice. This supports a proportionate screening-only CRWIA rather than a full assessment.

It is somewhat challenging for us to evidence the actual impacts simply because of the lack of relevant applications: however, in practice, in line with the conclusions of the EqIA more broadly, our view is that it is reasonable to anticipate that there would no problematic impacts on children arising directly from our policy position, if they were to seek approval for ULE.

A full CRWIA is not required. A screening-only CRWIA is proportionate and appropriate, given the policy's minimal, indirect and hypothetical relevance to children.

Director/SRO sign off: 26/05/2026.

Chief Executive approval: 26/05/2026.

CRWIA review date

13/05/2029.