



Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) – Screening on work of an unusual nature

Stage 1 – Screening

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

The policy explains how SLAB applies the relevant criminal legal aid regulations when deciding whether prior (or retrospective) approval is required for “work of an unusual nature.” It sets out the definition of unusual work, the reasonableness test used to assess requests, and the boundaries between unusual work, expert-witness approval and unusually large expenditure.

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

Our assessment is that direct impacts on children are likely to be rare, as unusual work requests primarily arise in criminal cases involving adults. However, we recognise that it is possible within the scope of this policy that unusual work requests could relate to special measures that facilitate how evidence is taken from children: for example, evidence by commissioner or a child accused giving evidence from a non-court location. In these limited circumstances, the decision to approve unusual work could influence how a child participates or gives evidence. Another narrow scenario in which unusual prior approval could be required is for some (but by no means all) work involving interpreting, which could again affect some child applicants.

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

The policy does not routinely affect children, but in the limited circumstances where unusual work overlaps with special measures, children with communication needs, disabilities, or trauma-related vulnerabilities may be more likely to be affected by this policy. These characteristics may influence whether adaptations are sought, though such requests are very infrequent and many special measures do not require unusual-work approval at all. Similarly, in the narrow circumstances where unusual prior approval is required in relation to interpreting or translation work, children who do not speak English (or speak limited English) would be more likely to be affected by this policy.

1.4. Is a full CRWIA required?

The EqIA shows no evidence of negative differential impacts on children, but it identifies a small number of situations where unusual work may be relevant to special measures involving children. These cases are narrow in scope and infrequent.

Only a very small number of unusual work requests relate in any way to children (<1%): in the years’ worth of data we considered, only a single request for unusual prior approval was made by an applicant under the age of 18.

No external consultation is planned. Solicitors (not children) are responsible for submitting requests and as such, any administrative burden would affect them rather than children. We anticipate that direct engagement with children on their experience of criminal proceedings would be challenging to undertake; internal engagement appears proportionate.

Robust evidence on child-specific impacts is limited because unusual-work requests involving children are extremely rare. However, broader insights from the EqlA may be relevant to an intersectional assessment (for example, with regards to age, race and disability).

Because requests are case-specific and uncommon, it is difficult to specifically evidence the impacts on children. However, at a policy level, the clear factors set out in the policy, and insights from the EqlA, mean that we are confident that there are unlikely to be any problematic impacts on children that should be anticipated.

While the policy may intersect in a very small number of cases with work relating to special measures or interpreting involving children, the scale, frequency and indirect nature of these impacts are limited. The Equality Impact Assessment shows no evidence of negative or differential impacts on children, and data indicates that fewer than 1% of unusual work requests relate to applicants under 18.

The policy is procedural in nature, applies primarily in adult criminal cases, and does not target children as a distinct group or alter safeguards affecting children's participation in criminal proceedings. On this basis, a screening-level CRWIA is sufficient, and a full CRWIA is not required.

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

Chief Executive approval: 26/05/2026.

CRWIA review date

13/05/2029.