EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

Summary results of the EqIA

Title of policy/practice/process/service:
Network Desktop and Security Policy

Is the policy new (proposed), a revision to an existing policy or a review of current policy?
A review of the current Network Desktop and Security policy.

We needed to look at our workstation set-up with the changes in home working requirements. Previously, staff used a PC, screen(s), mouse and keyboard within the office. Now one laptop will be provided to staff to be used in and out of the office. A screen, keyboard, mouse, laptop bag and headset has also been provided for home working. In the office staff are expected to plug their laptop into a docking station. Pool laptops are available within each of the offices, for those who cannot carry laptops.

Key findings from this assessment (or reason why an EqIA is not required):
This review showed that no changes are required to the policy.

Summary of actions taken because of this assessment:

- Ensure that pool laptops are available in the office for anyone that cannot carry a laptop to and from the office.
- Ensure that helpdesk staff provide assistance, for those that require it, with plugging in their laptops to the docking stations when in the office.
- Ensure that specialised equipment is provided as required in the form of hardware (mouse, keyboard) or software (Read & Write Gold).

Ongoing actions beyond implementation include:

- Ensure that pool laptops are cleaned and checked regularly to ensure they are fully operational.
- Ensure staff have the appropriate equipment to work in the office and at home.

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

- IS Manager
- Senior Technical Specialists

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 and Accounts

Publication date (for completion by Communications):
21/06/2023

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Version/Author	**Date**	**Comment**
V0.1	April 2022	Initial draft for discussion and review by equalities colleagues
V0.2	May 2022	Full draft for review by equalities colleagues
V0.3	May 2022	Full draft for review by Director of Corporate Services and Accounts
V0.4	June 2022	Full draft for review by Director of Strategic Development
V0.5	January 2023	Initial draft for discussion and review by equalities colleagues
V0.6	January 2023	Full draft for review by equalities colleagues
V0.7	January 2023	Full draft for review by Director of Corporate Services and Accounts
V0.8	June 2023	Full draft for review by Chief Executive

Step 1 – Framing the planned change

Discussing step 1 and step 2 with the Policy Officer (Equalities) at an early stage will help identify appropriate evidence. This may include support from the wider Policy and Development team.

1.1 Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/practice/process/service. *You can use the information in your project specification, business case etc.*

The policy is mainly concerned with management of information security to preserve the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all information held by the organisation. The policy has been updated to describe the hardware to be used by staff for access to the information held by SLAB and the workstation set-up for office use. It is important to cater for all accessibility needs to ensure that access to information can be gained securely by providing equipment staff can use comfortably. Failure to do so adds to the risk of error and compromised security. The aim of the new workstation set up is to ensure that all staff can use their homeworking laptop when in and out of the office, and ensure that any other equipment they require is provided. The key objective is to have workstations that are easily accessible for staff to connect their laptop to screens and peripherals. The purpose is so they can work from any permitted desk within and outside of our offices.

1.2 Why is the change required? *Legislative, routine review etc.*

This is a routine review of our current policy.

1.3 Who is affected by this policy/practice/process/service? *Be clear about who the 'customer' is.*

All staff are affected.

1.4 Policy/practice/process/service implementation date? *Project end date, date new legislation will take effect.*

27/06/2022

1.5 What other SLAB policies or projects may be linked to or affected by changes to this policy/practice/process/service? *The EqIA for related policies might help you understand potential impacts, and/or your findings might be relevant to share.*

Our health and safety policy (internal), and display screen equipment policy (internal) are linked to this policy.

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

The information you gather in this section will:

- *help you to understand the importance of your policy/practice/process/service for different equality groups,*
- *inform the depth of equality impact assessment you need to do (this should be proportional to the potential impact on equality groups), and*
- *provide justification and an audit trail behind your decisions, including where it is agreed an equality impact assessment is not required.*

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

Stay focused on the topic and scope of your policy/practice/process/service. Does the policy/practice/process/service relate to an area where there are already known inequalities? Refer to the EqIA guidance for sources of evidence. Remember, this step in the EqIA process is NOT about the impact your policy has on equality groups and what we need to do to mitigate those. That assessment is done under Step 4.

Note: If you proceed to a full EqIA you should continue to add to this section as you develop the policy/practice/process/service, come across new evidence and/or undertake a consultation.

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?** *Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).*
All protected characteristics	Health and safety and the use of laptops	For staff regularly working at the office or those who engage in regular hybrid working, carrying a laptop and other equipment may increase the risk of manual handling issues, such as strain in the back, neck and shoulder. Further, laptops are a prime target for theft. Staff having to carry their work equipment with them are under increased risk of theft and assault.

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? *Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).*
Age	(1) SLAB's experience/ feedback in operating the policy (2) Engagement with Trade Union (3) Creaky Joins website (4) Age UK	There was no specific evidence from desk research that this kind of policy has an impact on people of different ages. (1, 2) However, older people may have issues with hand dexterity which could hinder plugging in the laptop to the docking station. Grip strength is closely associated with two widely acknowledged signs of aging: sarcopenia (muscle loss) and dynapenia (strength loss). Starting in your late thirties, you naturally begin to lose both muscle mass and strength — including in your hand grip. This is particularly pertinent to people with arthritis, as they often experience a faster decline in grip strength and at younger ages. (3) Devices come with a range of features which can be adjusted to help people who may experience, for example hearing or sight loss as they get older. (4)
Disability	(1) Independent Living website (2) Citizen's Advice (3) SLAB Equalities data	People with disabilities are more likely to use specialised software or equipment or to use the accessibility options already available. (1) People with some disabilities may not be able to carry equipment like a laptop. An example of a disability could be the result of a medical condition - like arthritis in your hands that means you can't grip or carry things as well as other people. (2) 15-20% of people who work at SLAB consider themselves to have a disability. (3)
Race	Desk research	No specific evidence has been found.
Sex	Desk research	No specific evidence has been found.
Gender Reassignment	Desk research	No specific evidence has been found.
Sexual orientation	Desk research	No specific evidence has been found.
Religion or Belief	Desk research	No specific evidence has been found.

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? *Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/need for consultation (step 3).*
Pregnancy or maternity	(1) SLAB internal data (2) NHS information	SLAB may have several women who are pregnant or on maternity leave at any given time. (1) Common symptoms can include back pain and pelvic pain which may affect mobility. (2)
Marriage/civil partnership	N/A	This protected characteristic is only relevant with regards to employment law.
Care Experienced *(corporate parenting duty)*	Desk research	No specific evidence has been found.

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

Our workstation set up has an impact on those who find it difficult to carry a laptop in and out of the office but pool laptops are available to these staff so they don't have to carry it. Assistance is also available for those who have dexterity issues and require assistance in plugging in their laptop to the docking station. Costs would need to be considered for the purchase of additional specialised software or equipment for staff members.

2.3 Outcome of step 2 and next steps. Complete the table below to inform the next stage of the EqIA process.
Consult with the project group and/or Corporate Policy Officer (Equalities) on completing this section.

Outcome of Step 2 following initial evidence gathering and relevance to equality characteristics	Yes/ No (Y or N)	Next steps
There is no relevance to equality or our corporate parenting duties		Proceed to Step 5: agree with decision makers that no EqIA is required based on current evidence
There is relevance to some or all of the equality groups and/or our corporate parenting duties	Y	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA

It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all of the equality groups and/or our corporate parenting duties		Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA

Step 3 – stakeholder involvement and consultation

This step will help you to address any gaps in evidence identified in Step 2. Speaking to people who will be affected by your policy/practice/process/service can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups.
Remember that sufficient evidence is required for you to show 'due regard' to the likely or actual impact of your policy/practice/process/service on equality groups. An inadequate analysis in an assessment may mean failure to meet the general duty.
The Policy and Development team can help to identify appropriate ways to engage with external groups or to undertake research to fill evidence gaps.

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

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

Scottish Government, Nature Scot, Developing a New Work Environment (DANWE) internal project board.

3.3 What did you learn from the consultation/involvement? *Remember to record relevant actions in the assessment action log.*

The addition to the policy surrounding the new workstation environment was discussed with Scottish Government and Nature Scot. Scottish Government had completed an EqIA and identified that they were required to set up dedicated pods for staff to work from that contained laptops. They also had bookable ones available. Nature Scotland had bookable laptops available for staff to use.

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

You must consider the three aims of the general duty for each protected characteristic. The following questions will help:

- **Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?** *How will this be mitigated?*
- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not?** *How can this be achieved?*
- **Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?** *How can this be achieved?*

4.1 Does the policy/practice/process/service have any impacts (whether intended or unintended, positive or negative) on any of the equality characteristics?

In the tables below, record the impact the policy/practice/process/service might have on each equality characteristic, as it is planned or as it operates, and describe what changes in policy/practice process/service or actions will be required to mitigate that impact. Copy any actions across to the project action log.

All protected characteristics	**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**	
potential for discrimination			X	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			The laptops chosen are of a size and weight that they can be carried to the office. For those whose who are not able to carry their laptop, pool laptops are available to be used. Laptop bags with wide straps and back support are available for staff to be used to carry their laptops and other equipment to work. It is not

				immediately visible that a laptop is transported, which may minimise the risk of theft, violence and assault. All staff have access to pedestals or lockers. Laptops could also be safely locked away in these. This of course requires individual planning by the staff member to take into account whether they want to work at the office the next day.

Age	**Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)**			**Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.** For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	**Negative impacts**	**No impact**	
potential for discrimination			X	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Staff members who suffer from dexterity issues or other conditions such as sarcopenia, dynapenia or arthritis and struggle plugging in their laptops into the docking station will receive assistance and appropriate adjustments, so they can use their laptop at the office. On their first day at the office, new staff receive an induction from IS, where they receive mouse, keyboard and headphones to work with at the office and are generally set up to use their laptop in the office. Any required assistance or adjustments can be arranged then as well.

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**	

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

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**	
potential for discrimination			X	We provide pool laptops to staff who are not able to carry their laptop to the office. Pool laptops are pre-bookable from the helpdesk and can be used on the days they attend the office. Some staff may require specialised software or equipment, which can be installed on our pool laptops and made available to staff.
potential for developing good relations	X			By providing specialised equipment and software for office and home working we are not limiting the choice of any one where they can work.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			By providing specialised equipment and software for office and home working we are not limiting the choice of any one where they can work.

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**	
potential for discrimination			X	

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

Race	**Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)**			**Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.** For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	**Negative impacts**	**No impact**	
potential for discrimination			X	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	

Religion or Belief	**Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)**			**Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.** For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	**Negative impacts**	**No impact**	
potential for discrimination			X	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	

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

Pregnancy & Maternity	**Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)**			**Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.** For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	**Negative impacts**	**No impact**	
potential for discrimination	X			Pool laptops are available for those who are pregnant or returning from maternity so they are not required to carry laptops to and from the offices.
potential for developing good relations	X			
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			

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**	

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

Care experienced young people	**Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)**			**Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take.** For example, to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
	Positive impacts	**Negative impacts**	**No impact**	
potential for discrimination			X	
potential for developing good relations			X	
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	

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

This revision will have no impact on the rest of the policy.

Laptops that got purchased as part of a bulk purchase have been used to accommodate having pool laptops in our offices. The laptops for staff are securely stored within the computer room at Thistle House. The helpdesk will ensure that a laptop is made available for the person requiring to use it.

4.3 Having considered the potential or actual impacts of your policy/practice/process/service on equality groups, you should now record the outcome of this assessment below.
Choose from one of the following (mark with an X or delete as appropriate):

Please select (X)	Implications for the policy/practice/process/service
X	**No major change** Your assessment demonstrates that the policy/practice/process/service is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.
	Adjust the policy/practice/process/service 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.
	Continue the policy/practice/process/service with adverse impact The policy/practice/process/service will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. You have justified this with this assessment and shown how this decision is compatible with our obligations under the public sector equality duty. When you believe any discrimination can be objectively justified you must record in this assessment what this is and how the decision was reached.
	Stop and remove the policy/practice/process/service The policy/practice/process/service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.

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

You must discuss the findings of this assessment with senior decision makers during the lifetime of the project/review and before you finalise the assessment. Relevant groups include, but are not limited to, a Project Board, Executive Team or Board members. EqIA should be on every project board agenda therefore only note dates where key decisions have been made (for example draft EqIA sign off, discussion about consultation response).

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.

The changes to the policy were triggered by the DANWE project and the need to equip staff for new ways of working.
The policy was adjusted to have a pool of laptops and not designated areas set-up with laptops for staff members unable to carry their laptop back and forth between their home and office.
We also have IS staff available to help with connecting pool laptops to the docking stations if required.

Step 6 – Post-implementation actions and monitoring impact

There may be further actions or changes planned after the policy/practice/process/service is implemented and this assessment is signed off. It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your policy/practice/process/service on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. This will also highlight any unforeseen impacts.

6.1 Record any ongoing actions below.

This can be copied from the project action log or elsewhere in this assessment and should include timescales and person/team responsible. If there are no outstanding items please make this clear.

Action	Lead department/individual	Frequency
Engage with staff/managers to get their input on the change in workstation set up	IS	As required/ and on an annual basis
Communications for approval with the Union on any alterations	IS	On an annual basis

6.2 Note here how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy/practice/process/service on equality groups. *In the table below you should:*

- *list the relevant measures,*
- *identify who or which team is responsible for implementing or monitoring any changes,*
- *identify where the measure will be reported to ensure any issues can be acted on as appropriate.*

Measure	Lead department/ individual	Reporting (where/ frequency)
Review and record uptake of laptops available for office use for anyone unable to carry their laptop to and from the office. This will determine whether this service is needed or any other services/changes are required.	IS	IS to review stock of laptops and have a minimum of 5 available laptops for office use. **THIS HAS BEEN COMPLETED.**
IS to be available in the office to help employees experiencing difficulty connecting their laptop to the docking station. Record and report uptake on this service and report to ET.	IS	IS to include updates in their report to the DANWE PB and Executive Team.
Review and monitor any additional software or equipment requirements which may need to be made available for office use if unable to carry back and forth between office and home. Consider costs against benefits to staff members.	IS/Project Board	Include in report to the Executive Team and the DANWE PB.

6.3 EqIA review date.

This EqIA should be reviewed as part of the post-implementation review of the policy/practice/process/service. The date should not exceed three years from the policy/practice/process/service implementation date.

06/06/2024

Step 7 – Assessment sign off and approval

Once final consultation has been undertaken with Corporate Policy Officer (Equalities), all equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Director or Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), even where an EqIA is not required. The Chief Executive must approve all equality impact assessments. Note the relevant dates here:

Director/SRO sign off: 03/03/2023
Chief Executive approval: 26/05/2023

All full equality impact assessments must be published on SLAB's website as early as possible after the decision is made to implement the policy, practice, process or service.