



Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Social Security Scotland Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report

Organisational Restructure and Staff Movement

Dignity,
fairness,
respect.

Background

This report is a summary of the Equality Impact Assessment conducted on organisational restructure and staff movement, which considered the potential effects and impact of organisational restructure and staff movement upon groups of colleagues with protected characteristics.

This Equality Impact Assessment focused on the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty: identify opportunities to reduce discrimination; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The intention of the proposed new process is to allow us to rebalance our resource between the six divisions and the wider organisation.

The Scope of the Equality Impact Assessment

This process follows on from the implementation of Social Security Scotland's Establishment Control Process. It aims to fulfil Social Security Scotland's resourcing requirements in a practical and cost-effective manner. Upon completion of organisation-wide planning and reprioritisation exercises, the proposed new process will identify areas of unassigned resource and reassign colleagues to business areas requiring extra resource. This will reduce the need to advertise vacancies externally and consequently minimise resourcing spend. The process will involve facilitating the movement of unassigned permanent employees to internal vacancies on a permanent lateral transfer basis.

The EQIA informs and develops the redeployment guidance, by assessing the potential equality impacts for those with protected characteristics. The results of these findings will also be used to understand the equality impacts before scaling up and finalising the redeployment guidance.

Key findings

Age

Evidence:

- [Social Security Scotland Workforce Information Statistics](#) show that as of September 2023, Social Security Scotland employed a total of 4,027 people. 31.2% are within 30-39 age range. 0.3% of colleagues are in the 16-19 Age category, while 18.2% are in the 20-29 category. 25.1% of colleagues are aged 50 or over.
- We have no data currently to link age with grades or roles within Social Security Scotland, however, we know anecdotally that younger colleagues will tend to occupy lower grades, usually A grades, or B1 due to being at the start of their career.

Impact:

- Under the new process we would expect significantly reduced capacity to attract young people from the external market to fill entry level roles. We would therefore need to encourage interest in internal sideways moves by emphasising the development opportunities of learning new skills.

Disability

Evidence:

- Social Security Scotland Workforce Information Statistics show that, as of September 2023, 412 colleagues of 4,027 identify as having a disability (10.2%). 1574 colleagues (39.1%) reported 'not disabled', 65 (1.6%) colleagues reflected an answer of 'prefer not to say', with the status of 1,976 (49.1%) colleagues 'unknown'.
- Social Security Scotland adopts a number of recruitment schemes and partnerships to specifically help meet our commitments to Diversity. These schemes often start at our entry level grades.

Impact:

- A reduction in the number of entry level posts being offered externally could impact on our ability to fill roles in a diverse manner.
- Disabled colleagues may have concerns around their ability to adapt to training for their new role or worry or may require different support mechanisms, as well as more time to find and apply for roles.
- Potential software/ IT incompatibility may reduce the number and quality of available roles. Adaptations would need to be available to work with the new role.
- Support mechanisms that colleagues have in place must be considered and relevant adaptations made before the colleague moves to the new role.

Gender reassignment

Evidence:

- The 2022 Social Security Scotland internal results, taken from the UK Civil Service People Survey results, showed that 9% of transgender colleagues reported they had experienced discrimination in the workplace. This is compared to 3% of cisgender colleagues.

Impact:

- This process should have no direct impact on this protected characteristic, however to mitigate any potential negative impacts, managers will be encouraged to support employees throughout any change of role and team.

Pregnancy and maternity

Evidence:

- While there is not any information held for Social Security Scotland colleagues, an equality impact assessment on the Scottish Government's workplace adjustments onboarding process highlighted: A higher percentage of women report having childcare responsibilities at A3, A4, B1, and C1 grades. A higher percentage of men report having childcare responsibilities at B2, B3, SCS and other grades.

Impact:

- There is no direct impact expected for this protected characteristic. However, there is the potential impact that managers may not keep their team members (currently on maternity leave) up to date about new vacancies or opportunities.

Race

Evidence:

- Social Security Scotland Workforce Information Statistics shows that as of September 2023, 146 colleagues out of a total of 4,027 (3.6%) identified as being from an ethnic minority group. 26 (0.6%) colleagues answered, 'prefer not to say' with 1,727 (42.9%) not recorded and reflected as 'unknown'. 2,128 (52.8%) identified as 'white'. Due to a high percentage of non-disclosed information, it could be anticipated that the number of colleagues from an ethnic minority group is higher.
- A report by the University of Strathclyde Fraser of Allander on Economic outcomes for minority ethnic groups in Scotland shows that people from minority ethnic backgrounds have a higher poverty rate, a higher unemployment rate and a higher economic inactivity rate than average. From this we can infer a link between race and lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- Social Security Scotland adopts a number of recruitment schemes and partnerships to specifically help promote the hiring of people from lower socio economic backgrounds. These schemes often start at our entry level grades.

Impact:

- A reduction in the number of entry level posts being offered externally could impact on our commitment to reflect the diversity of Scotland.

Religion or belief

Evidence:

- Social Security Scotland Workforce Information Statistics show that as of September 2023, 749 (18.6%) of colleagues identified as Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic, or Other Christian. 32.7% identified as having no religion or belief. 3.2% identified as other religion or belief. 2.7% of colleagues preferred not to say what their religion or belief is. 42.9% of our colleagues are reflected as 'unknown.'

Impact:

- This process should not have a direct impact on this characteristic. However, colleagues who move to a busier role/department may be concerned about the availability and accessibility they will have to prayer time, and to quiet private spaces for praying.

Sex

Evidence:

- Social Security Scotland Workforce Information Statistics show that as of September 2023, 61.6% of our colleagues are female and 38.4% are male.
- We have no data currently to link sex with grades or role types within Social Security Scotland. However, the Office for National Statistics examination of Women in the Labour Market shows that men in the UK are more likely to be employed in higher skilled jobs than women. The report also shows that men tend to work in professional occupations associated with higher levels of pay.
- The Gender Pay gap among full-time employees as of April 2023 was 7.7% in the UK as per the Office for National Statistics examination of [Gender Pay Gap in the UK 2023](#).

Impact:

- There have been no direct impacts identified for this protected characteristic, however If there are more women within lower grades within Social Security Scotland, this will negatively impact more women, as the restructure and staff movement may affect entry level and lower-level grades.

Sexual orientation

Evidence:

- Social Security Scotland Workforce Information Statistics show that as of September 2023, 6.2% of our colleagues identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other. 2.1% preferred not to say, and 49.0% of colleagues identify as heterosexual/straight. 42.8% of colleagues within the organisation have not updated their information and are therefore reflected as 'unknown.'

Impact:

- No impacts identified for this protected characteristic.

Care Experience

Evidence:

- Our Corporate Parenting Plan 2019-2021 sets out our commitment to promote the interests of care experienced young people, including to "actively promote our recruitment opportunities to care experienced young people through specific workshops and roadshows".
- Social Security Scotland adopts a number of recruitment schemes and partnerships to specifically help promote the hiring of Care Experienced individuals. These schemes often start at our entry level grades.

Impact:

- As recruitment schemes in place to support and promote the hiring of care experienced people are at our entry and lower-level grades, moving existing staff into these roles instead of recruiting could reduce these numbers.

- A reduction in the number of these entry level posts being offered externally could impact on the number of care experienced people being recruited into Social Security Scotland.

Marriage and Civil Partnership (only if activity relates to employment practises or issues)

Evidence:

- N/A

Impact:

- No impacts identified for this protected characteristic.

Recommendations and Conclusions

This Equality Impact Assessment has identified potential impacts on Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, and Care Experienced as a result of the introduction of organisational restructure and staff movement. Where areas of improvement have been identified, we have made changes to better meet the needs of people with protected characteristics.

This assessment and the changes made as a result will ensure that:

- There are no barriers to inclusion within our processes.
- People with protected characteristics are not prejudiced by the implementation of this new process.
- All colleagues affected by the new process are fully supported.
- Affected colleagues will develop depth of experience and knowledge in roles, helping them to find the ideal career path and move into areas of interest, as opposed to only moving where there are promotion opportunities.

Main themes identified through this exercise are:

- Sharing clear and supportive communications about the new process
- Identifying roles which could be filled diversely
- Improving clarity and accessibility of job adverts
- Supporting colleagues into new roles
- Supporting staff on parental leave

Actions that will be taken are displayed in the below table.

Actions	Protected characteristic	Owner	Timeline
Communication Clear and supportive communications about the process will be created and shared via the Line Manager Cascade, Saltire, and awareness sessions. Line managers and other members of management should emphasise to colleagues that processes will be managed properly and professionally, and colleagues will be supported throughout the move to their new role and team. Information sessions on advertised roles will be held for potential candidates where practical, to help dispel any myths and answer any questions about culture and the support available.	Disability Race Religion and belief Pregnancy and maternity Care experienced	Resourcing Communications	April – June 2024
Identifying roles which could be filled diversely Resourcing team will review and identify roles which could be filled in a more inclusive and diverse manner. Where approval is received to recruit externally for entry level roles, employability programmes will be considered in the first instance.	Disability Race Care experienced	Resourcing	April – June 2024

Job adverts Internal job adverts will be written in Plain English, avoiding complex essential criteria or technical jargon, to improve accessibility to all colleagues. They will clearly state the technological and practical requirements and expectations of the role, as well as the training which will be made available.	Disability Race	Resourcing	April – June 2024
Supporting colleagues into new roles Consideration will be given to the training methods adopted for disabled colleagues learning a new role.	Disability	Learning & Leadership	April – June 2024
Supporting staff on parental leave Clear guidance to be developed for line managers and employees regarding how this process impacts those on maternity leave, for example: keeping in touch protocol; at which stage they engage in the process; and contractual agreements around the right to return to their previous post.	Pregnancy and maternity	People Advice	April – June 2024