Social Security Scotland
Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report
(Assistive Technology Training)

Dignity,
fairness,
respect.

Background

This report is a summary of the Equality Impact Assessment conducted on Assistive Technology training. The Equality Impact Assessment has considered the potential effects of Assistive Technology Training and how it impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

This Equality Impact Assessment focused on the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty: identifying 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 Scope of the Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of the proposed activity is to outsource Assistive Technology training, ensuring that our colleagues who utilise Assistive Technology receive the appropriate level of training and upskilling required to effectively complete their job role. This contributes to the strategic objective of training our people to ensure they have the knowledge, confidence and understanding they need to do their jobs.[i]

Key findings

Age

Evidence:

Social Security Scotland's age statistics can be viewed below:

Age range	Number in category	% of employees
16-19	17	0.4
20-29	829	20.6
30-39	**1238**	**30.7**
40-49	982	24.4
50-59	802	19.9
60-64	133	3.3
65 and over	25	0.6

Impact:
- Positive impact of activity - it can make digital interfaces more accessible to employees of all ages, helping to bridge the digital divide that can be more pronounce in older colleagues.
- There may be opportunity for a negative impact on older colleagues who may not be digital natives, giving them reduced confidence with technology.

Allowing employees to learn at their own pace, by providing training materials in advance of sessions and course notes afterwards may reduce this impact.

Disability

Evidence:

Social Security Scotland's disability statistics can be viewed below:

Employee status	Number in category	% of employees
Disabled	396	9.8
Not Disabled	1614	40.1
Prefer not to say	64	1.6
Unknown	1953	48.5

Impact:
- Assistive technology is likely to have a positive impact on colleagues who have a disability and who require support from this software. The software can be transformative for employees with disabilities, providing them with the tools they need to perform tasks that support them in achieving their objectives.
- Negative impacts could occur where training is not delivered correctly by the supplier; learner feedback will be gathered to evaluate supplier and improvements will be suggested to the supplier based on feedback.
- Negative impacts could occur where the Assistive Technology on learner's laptops do not work correctly which could lead to frustration from the learner. The learner will be supported to contact the IT service desk as soon as technical issues arise with their equipment.
- Negative impacts could occur where the organisation's systems are not compatible with the Assistive Technology. The Accessibility team will work to mitigate this, by supporting live issue identification, escalation and resolution.

Gender reassignment

Evidence:

The organisation doesn't currently hold data on gender reassignment status of our colleagues and the Scottish government has not yet published related statistics on the equality evidence finder[ii], however data collated during the EQIA workshops is discussed below.

Impact:
- Positive impact of activity - our colleague will be upskilled on the software they require to effectively and confidently complete their job role.

- Negative impacts could occur where a colleague is transitioning which could alter the tone of their voice and software may not pick up this change in the short term.

Pregnancy and maternity

Evidence:

The organisation doesn't currently have accessible data on the pregnancy and maternity status of our colleagues. However, given that we offer flexible working arrangements and promote a positive work life balance we can presume we will attract people who have desires to start a family whilst maintaining a career.

Impact:
- A positive impact of this activity is that it could support pregnant colleagues in maintaining productivity and engagement and on return to work after maternity leave.
- Negative impacts could occur where colleagues have intense training on return to work and become overwhelmed by the steep learning curve. To mitigate this, additional support will be provided and exact learning needs, and potential barriers, will be considered when organising the training.

Race

Evidence:

Social Security Scotland's ethnicity statistics can be viewed below:

Ethnic status	Number in category	% of employees
Ethnic Minority	150	3.7
White	2163	53.7
Prefer not to say	25	0.6
Unknown	1689	41.9

Ethnic minority group includes: African, Caribbean or Black; Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British; Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group; Other Ethnic Group.

Impact:
- Positive impact will be created by offering our colleagues the appropriate training to enable them to use the software required to support them in their daily tasks.
- Negative impacts can occur where software does not understand certain dialects or languages. When communicating with suppliers, language proficiency of the learner will be highlighted to ensure language barriers to not arise.

Religion or belief

Evidence:

Social Security Scotland's Religion statistics can be viewed below:

Employee status	Number in category	% of employees
Non-religious	1340	33.3
Church of Scotland	252	6.3
Roman Catholic	379	9.4
Other Christian	128	3.2
Other Religion	131	3.3
Prefer not to say	109	2.7
Unknown	1688	41.9

Impact:
- Positive impact will be created by offering our colleagues the appropriate training to enable them to use the software required to support them in their daily tasks.
- Negative impacts may occur where training sessions are booked on religious holidays or festivals. To mitigate this impact, there will be open communication with the learner prior to organising the date/time of the session.

Sex

Evidence:

Social Security Scotland's Sex statistics can be viewed below:

Sex status	Number in category	% of employees
Female	2472	61.4
Male	1555	38.6

Impact:
- Positive impact will be created by offering our colleagues the appropriate training to enable them to use the software required to support them in their daily tasks.
- Potential negative impact can occur if Assistive technology software does not pick up high pitch tones in a learner's voice, female colleagues may be more likely to be impacted; the organisation will work with learners who may experience these issues.

Sexual orientation

Evidence:

Social Security Scotland's sexual orientation statistics can be viewed below:

Employee Status	Number in category	% of Staff
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual	253	6.3
Heterosexual/Straight	2000	49.7
Prefer not to say	87	2.2
Unknown	1687	41.9

Impact:
- Positive impact will be created by offering our colleagues the appropriate training to enable them to use the software required to support them in their daily tasks.
- The only potential negative impact could be prejudice of the trainer whom is provided by the supplier. The organisation will work with learners to create open conversations and safe space for discussion; if the learner highlights concerning behaviours of their trainer, this will be dealt with immediately and addressed with the supplier.

Care Experience

Evidence:

The organisation doesn't currently have accessible data on the care experienced status of our colleagues.

Impact:
- Assistive Technology training can positively impact our care experienced colleagues; it gives them access to specialist trainers who can upskill them on software that supports them in their day to day tasks.
- A negative impact could occur where digital literacy is low which may make the training session more challenging for the learners. Ensuring

Recommendations and Conclusions

This Equality Impact Assessment has found that overall, Assistive Technology training would have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics. Where areas of improvement have been identified, we have made changes to better meet the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Actions	Protected characteristic	Owner	Timeline
Support for learners: • Allowing employees to learn at their own pace, by providing training materials in advance of sessions and course notes afterwards may reduce any impact of digital illiteracy. • Learner feedback will be gathered after the training event to understand learner experience. Improvements will be suggested to the supplier based on feedback received and the supplier will be supported to implement these. • The learner will be encouraged to contact the service desk if, and as soon as, technical issues arise with their equipment to ensure their Assistive Technology training is not impacted upon. • The accessibility team will work to mitigate against technological incompatibility between Social Security Scotland systems and Assistive Technology software, by supporting live issue identification, escalation and resolution. • Learner's pronouns will be considered and respected across the board by the organisation and the supplier. The organisation will work with the suppliers to ensure there is choice for the learner in variables such as the gender of the trainer and the location of the training (where gender neutral toilets may be required) to ensure an inclusive learning environment is created. • Attention will be paid to training materials to ensure they are not culturally sensitive and that they take language proficiency into account.	All	Learning and Leadership team Accessibility team External suppliers External suppliers	Ongoing throughout the duration of Assistive Technology training

• Considerations will be made to the timing of these Assistive Technology learning events. Open communication with the learner is required to avoid coinciding scheduled learning events with religious holidays or festivals, and/or prayer times.		Learning and Leadership team	
• Training will provided in a manner that is respectful to all religions and beliefs, and these beliefs must be accommodated. The learner should have options surrounding their training and freedom of choice to ensure their religious needs are met. For example, the option to select a male or female trainer.		External suppliers	
• Attention will be paid to training materials and behaviour of the trainer, to ensure that gender bias is not implemented in the design of the materials nor the delivery of them.		External suppliers	
• A person centred approach to training will be taken whereby needs of the learner and IT literacy is taken into account when organising ad delivering the training.			
Accessibility: • Accessible training locations at Social Security Scotland buildings will be made available along with virtual classrooms to ensure everyone has access to these learning opportunities.			

[i] Social Security Scotland's Corporate Plan 2020-2023
[ii] Equality Evidence Finder