



## Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) form

### A. General Information

<b>Name of proposal</b>	Career Break Policy
<b>Responsible department</b>	Human Resources

### B. Aims of the proposal

<b>What do you hope to achieve?</b>	<p>The SSSC is committed to supporting work-life balance for all employees.</p> <p>The Career Break Policy allows the opportunity for employees with over 1 years' service to take a break from work for a period of up to 12 months.</p> <p>The guidance covers all employees across the organisation and aims to treat everyone fairly regardless of any protected characteristic. It seeks to ensure that there are no barriers to anyone accessing and making use of the policy. The policy will be continually monitored by HR and the Partnership Forum through the policy review channel.</p>
<b>Why is the proposal needed?</b>	<p>We recognise the importance of supporting work-life balance for all employees and this policy is part of a suite of flexible working policies supporting the SSSC's commitment to this. The Career Break Policy allows employees to take extended periods of time out of work to help strike a</p>

	balance between paid work and personal life whilst retaining the option to return to their previous job.
<b>How will the proposal contribute to the SSSC's strategic objectives and/or priorities?</b>	<p>This policy links to strategic outcome 3 - Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and proposal makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.</p> <p>As the strategic plan states "we are committed to investing in our own workforce the same way we are invested in the external workforce". This policy links to that as it is there to support all employees work life balance. The policy seeks to ensure there are no barriers to anyone making use of the policy and there are no detriments to anyone in accessing this.</p>
<b>How will the proposal address the SSSC's Equality duties?</b>	The policy addresses all 3 of the equality duties in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, <a href="#">Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)</a> ie eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### **c. Data and evidence gathering**

<b>What evidence has been used to come to the decisions contained in this EqIA?</b>	It is not possible to predict when an employee might need the supports of this policy. Therefore, various groups in the SSSC have been consulted on the policy and asked to provide their comments/feedback. Any changes have then been made to the policy as required.
<b>Has the proposal been the subject of relevant engagement and/or consultation?</b>	The Consultation Log will detail the consultation with the Policy and Intelligence Team, Partnership Forum, OMT and EMT members and is currently in progress. Once consultation has taken place, this will be updated.

<b>Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?</b>	See evidence below.
<b>Have any gaps been found in the data?</b>	No.

#### **D. Assessing impact and identifying opportunities to promote equality**

<p><b>Age</b> – remember different age groups have different concerns. When considering age remember that some individuals are more vulnerable or have issues that may need additional consideration.</p> <p>Neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of age.</p>
<p><b>Disability</b> – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities. How does this proposal affect disabled people? Are there any impairment groups who are unfavourably affected by the policy?</p> <p>Neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of disability.</p>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b> – does your proposal include people of different gender identities? Will your proposal impact transgender individuals in any way?</p> <p>The policy seeks to be inclusive by using gender neutral language throughout and therefore promotes work life balance more widely than had it used gender specific pronouns or language.</p>
<p><b>Marriage and civil partnership</b> – it is unlawful discrimination for people who are married/civil partnership/same-sex couple to be treated less favourable in employment than those who are not married/civil partnership/mixed-sex couple.</p> <p>Neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of marital or civil partnership status.</p>

**Pregnancy and maternity** – protection against maternity discrimination covers 26 weeks after giving birth – this includes treating a woman unfavourable because she is breastfeeding.

Neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of pregnancy and maternity.

**Race** – have you covered all minority ethnic groups? Consider the impact your proposal has on someone from a minority ethnic group and remember this impact may differ depending on the gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation or ethnicity of the person as different cultures have different views on what is acceptable. Consider language and format.

Neutral impact. The guidance applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of race. The policy recognises that there may be different traditions and practices associated with different cultures and is not exhaustive of all situations where a career break may be approved and each application will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

**Religion or belief** – does your proposal take into account different festivals, holidays, religious days and traditions? Will the different faith beliefs impact on women from that group and exclude or prevent them from using the service?

Neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of religion or belief. The SSSC already offers time off/flexible working arrangements for religious and/or cultural events, including attending specific rites or ceremonies. The policy recognises that there may be different traditions and practices associated with different cultures and is not exhaustive of all situations where a career break may be approved and each application will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

**Sex** - does the proposal take account of different roles and responsibilities? Does it assume, perhaps wrongly that men have no caring responsibilities? Is the proposal flexible enough to provide a service that everyone can access?

Neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of sex.

**Sexual orientation** – what are the issues for this group in terms of your proposal? Does it meet the needs of this group?

Neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of sexual orientation.

### **E. Challenges and opportunities for groups living in an island community**

This section considers the impact or effect of the proposal on island communities and whether this could be significantly different from its effect on other communities.

Eliminating unlawful discrimination - the Career Break Policy is inclusive of all employees in the SSSC, there is no discrimination against any employee, regardless of protected characteristics or not. All dealings with any of the agencies or groups mentioned within the policy will ensure that everyone is treated fairly with the same opportunities.

In terms of any challenges and opportunities for groups living in an island community, there is neutral impact. The policy applies equally to all employees and is accessible regardless of geographic location.

An ICIA (Islands Community Impact Assessment) is not required.

### **F. Child rights and wellbeing**

This section considers the impact of the proposal on children and young people, or specific groups of children and young people, in Scotland.

This policy, while not directly aimed at children, addresses in part the rights contained in article 27 of the UNCRC. In particular article 27 which requires that every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for their mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Assisting our employees to adopt a work life balance will mean that those with children are well placed to meet this right. By promoting a work life balance, this will assist with meeting this right.

### **G. Health and wellbeing and health inequalities**

This section considers the impact of the proposal on physical and mental health and wellbeing; this includes for example, participation, creativity and developing potential.

Positive - this policy will have a positive impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all employees in terms of adopting a work life balance. The SSSC are committed to promoting a healthy work life balance to all its employees through its management policies, support services and health promotion campaigns.

### **H. Economic and social sustainability**

Whilst there are significant financial savings to be made by having a healthy work life balanced workforce, other benefits for both the SSSC and its employees are:

- increase retention of employees
- an attractive employee benefit and part of the wider Total Reward package
- helps bring new skills and motivates employees.

### **I. Care experienced children, young people and adults**

This section concerns our duties to put Scotland's care experienced children, young people and adults at the heart of what we do.

Describe the impact your proposal will have on:

- The well-being of children and young people
- Promoting the interests of eligible children and young people
- Providing opportunities to eligible children and young people
- How we exercise our functions in relation to eligible children and young people]

This is dependent on the reason for the career break. If to provide care and wellbeing to a young person then this will have a significant positive impact as the career break policy will allow unpaid time off for supporting carer responsibilities for a young person who may need full time care and support for a period of time.

## J. Decision making

Which of the following statements best describes the action that should be taken following the EqIA in relation to your proposal?

<b>No major change</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Adjust the policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Continue with Policy</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Stop and remove the policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Outline the reasons why you've selected this option

We should continue with the policy because by increasing our suite of flexible working policies in the workplace; this will have a positive impact on the SSSC by supporting a healthy work life balance and in turn a more motivated and productive workforce. This will not only benefit the wider economy and society as a whole but will also raise the profile of the SSSC's corporate responsibility to further demonstrate and enhance the high standards set for employees' health, wellbeing and work life balance.

**K. Monitoring and reviewing**

How will the implementation of the policy/proposal be monitored? How and when will the impact of the proposal be reviewed? Outline the actions that will be taken, the timescale for these and who will be responsible for carrying out these actions.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
The policy will be reviewed every three years making amendments as appropriate in consultation with the Partnership Forum and the Health and Safety Committee.	Every 3 years	Human Resources

**L. SIGN OFF**

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**Title:** Interim Head of Human Resources

**Date approved:** January 2021