Non-protected

Equality impact assessment

Template and guidance

sportscotland the national agency for sport


Sport for life


# Name of policy: Hybrid Working Policy

# Introduction

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Lead officer** | Jo Dixon, Head of HR |
| **Others involved in the assessment** | Callum MacInnes, HR Manager |
| **Date(s) of assessment** | 22 August 2022 |

# Description of policy

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Purpose and outcomes** | The COVID-19 crisis has challenged all organisations to change the way they operate, in this respect, **sport**scotland is no different. While a health pandemic is a more extreme situation than we would ever want or choose, COVID-19 has tested the operational possibilities. It has shown us that we can adapt at speed, we can be responsive, we can work differently, be more sustainable, yet perform and deliver our organisational objectives.  Our hybrid workingmodel has been aligned to Scottish Government in response to COVID-19 but also reflect staff feedback to make **sport**scotland a safe, sustainable, modern, flexible, and responsive place to work.  This policy recognises that wasteful practices built into traditional ways of working no longer reflect what we want to promote as an organisation. Working in a hybrid manner encourages innovation, collaboration, productivity, equality, inclusion and care for our people and our environment.  This policy includes the principles of how we will work and references the other related policies that are integral to the success of hybrid working.  Our Hybrid Working model focuseson the work that we do, not where we do it. Hybrid workingis about our people, performance, and our culture. It is about encouraging and supporting the way people work. It’s about empowering our people and introducing a more modern and flexible way of working to deliver better results.  This policy aims to:   * Improve staff engagement * Improve employer reputation * Provide a better work-life balance for our people * Encourage better collaboration, creativity, and innovation * Reduce our carbon footprint * Create a more inclusive and diverse culture * Attract, recruit, and retain high quality talent regardless of where they live in Scotland * Better manage and utilise our property estate * Reduce our travel and subsistence costs   To prepare for the launch of a hybrid working policy sportscotland have carried out several pulse surveys and focus groups to canvass the views of employees as well as being in regular dialogue with our recognised Trade Union, PCS about the impact of hybrid working, which were considered in the compilation of this EQIA. Whilst the surveys and working groups did not focus specifically on protected characterises it is apparent that views and preferences on Hybrid working vary significantly from employees who wish to work 100% from home to those who wish to work exclusively from their workplace, with most employees somewhere in between.   It was encouraging from the surveys that employees strongly felt that their wellbeing was being looked after during the pandemic, therefore it is vitally important that sportscotland maintains these high standards of support as we transition and, in many cases, have transitioned to living with Covid status. |
| **How it links to sport**scotland **corporate strategy and business plans** | The Covid-19 pandemic continues to disrupt society and significantly impacts our organisation. One of the principles in Sport for Life is to be responsive. We need to adapt what we do based on what’s happening around us. As the employment environment worldwide changes, along with employee expectations and health and safety standards, our ways of working and our working practices needs to evolve. With this context in mind, we remain committed to supporting our employees and the delivery of our strategic objectives through our business plan as we emerge from the Covid-19 public health crisis while also looking to the future and continuing to collaborate and plan the recovery of sport and physical activity with inclusion at the core. |
| **How we intend to implement the policy** | The policy will be implemented using a consultative approach with our Senior Management Team and recognised Trade Union, PCS, being key partners and in some ways advocates of this policy. Individuals from a cross section from throughout **sport**scotland will also asked to input before implementation, and each individual employee will also be canvassed for feedback prior to launch. |

# Impact of policy

## Who policy is likely to impact on and how

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Who will the policy benefit (i.e., who is the customer?) If applicable, you should consider how sport**scotland’s **investment is spent in the context of this policy.** | Potentially all our employees directly. There may be an indirect impact on stakeholders and service users as communications methods may adapt to hybrid working. |
| **Is it designed to impact on one/some/all people who share a protected characteristic? How?** | No, this policy is designed to potentially impact all employees, however realistically some employees may experience no direct impact to their working practices due to the nature of their role. |
| **How will customers be involved in the development and roll out of the policy? If no involvement mechanism, how will customer needs be identified and addressed?** | There will be a review process with our Trade Union, and all employees will have visibility of proposals prior to launch, with the opportunity to discuss their wishes with their line manager and appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. |
| **Which partners will be involved in the development and roll out of the policy? How?** | The Head of Human Resources, PCS, Trade Union, Senior Management Team |

## Impact on General Equality Duty

Think about the impact the policy will have on eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between different groups. Also consider whether there is potential for indirect discrimination.

## Equality evidence resources

The following 10-minute video from the Scottish Government provides a helpful summary of the benefits of doing EQIAs: [Mountains for All EQIA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARCg9AGB9U0&feature=youtu.be). Table 2 outlines a range of sources you can use to find evidence for your EQIA.

**Table 2: Equality evidence**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **sport**scotland **resources** | **Scottish Government / Other resources** |
| * [2020\_Sport and Equality Database](https://sportscotland.sharepoint.com/:x:/r/sites/PLAN_Research/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B92F7C8EA-FFA7-4A03-8700-9A248C8614F1%7D&file=2020_Sport%20and%20Equality%20Database.xls&action=default&mobileredirect=true) * [Equality and Sport Research 2020 / 2016](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-publications/archive/equality-and-sport-research-2020/) * [Equality in sport learning notes](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/2602/equality-in-sport-learning-notes-combined-pdf.pdf): Includes a chapter for each protected characteristic. * [Summary of COVID-19 impact - Oct 2020](https://sportscotland.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PLAN_Equality/Equalities%20Reporting/COVID%20evidence%20summary.docx?d=w845caf51c08d492bb4ca1ea622ff77f0&csf=1&web=1&e=seyXzu) * [sportscotland employee information reports](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/equality-at-sportscotland/equality-reporting/) * [Clubs and communities – Information for 2021-23 business planning](http://ssc-sharepoint/eo/pod/202123%20Business%20Plan/Clubs%20and%20communities%20-%20Information%20and%20data%20to%20inform%20business%20planning.docx) * [Schools and education – Information for 2021-23 business planning](http://ssc-sharepoint/eo/pod/202123%20Business%20Plan/Schools%20and%20Education%20-%20Information%20and%20data%20to%20inform%20business%20planning.docx) * [Schools and education - Contribution to ASOF 2019-20](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6129/asof-key-findings-report-scotland-schools-2019-20.pdf) * [Clubs and communities - Contribution to ASOF 2019-20](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6128/asof-key-findings-report-scotland-clubs-2019-20.pdf) * **Wider evaluations**    + [Clubs and communities equalities learning note](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/3543/learning-note-equalities-clubs-and-communities.pdf)   + [Coaches and coaching equalities learning note](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/3441/coach-wider-evaluation_-equalities-learning-note_final.pdf)   + [Schools and education equalities learning note](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/3545/learning-note-equalities-schools-and-education.pdf) | * [Equality Evidence Finder](https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-equality-evidence-finder/) * [Equality Evidence Reviews](https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/Equalevrev): Includes a chapter on sport for each protected characteristic. * [Equality Evidence Toolkit](https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20170701200513/http:/www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/03/6567) * [Children and Young People statistics](https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children): Includes data on care-experience. * [Out for Sport](https://www.equality-network.org/our-work/policyandcampaign/out-for-sport/): Scotland’s first research into homophobia and transphobia in Scottish Sport produced by Equality Network * [Out sport](http://www.out-sport.eu/): First European research project specific to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in sports * [Right 2B Active](http://ssc-sharepoint/eo/eq/Equality%20Evidence%20Reviews/Right%202B%20Active%20-%20Report%20on%20care-experienced%20young%20people%27s%20engagement%20with%20sport%20and%20physical%20activity.pdf) - Report on care-experienced young people's engagement with sport and physical activity |

Other

* [Young Workers Need Companies to Prioritize Mental Health (hbr.org)](https://hbr.org/2020/01/young-workers-need-companies-to-prioritize-mental-health) [1][Older Adults Risks and Vaccine Information | cdc](https://www.cdc.gov/aging/covid19/covid19-older-adults.html) [2]
* [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/developing-next-generation\_tcm18-10268.pdf [3](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/developing-next-generation_tcm18-10268.pdf%20%5b3)]
* <https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/managing-an-age-diverse-workforce_2015-what-employers-need-to-know_tcm18-10832.pdf> [4]
* [https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/covid19/covid-deaths-report-week-19.pdf [5](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/covid19/covid-deaths-report-week-19.pdf%20%5b5)]
* <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/health--wellbeing/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-older-people_age-uk.pdf> [6]
* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/inequalities-by-disability-in-the-context-of-covid-19-slide-pack/> [7]
* <https://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/article/1743007/number-of-trans-people-who-hide-their-identity-at-work-increasing> [8]
* Appendix E: Is ethnicity a risk factor for infection or mortality from COVID-19? - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) [9]
* [Summary of COVID-19 impact - Oct 2020](https://sportscotland.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PLAN_Equality/Equalities%20Reporting/COVID%20evidence%20summary.docx?d=w845caf51c08d492bb4ca1ea622ff77f0&csf=1&web=1&e=seyXzu) [10]
* [Remote work can be more equitable and inclusive to LGBTQ employees (cnbc.com)](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/06/22/remote-work-can-be-more-equitable-and-inclusive-to-lgbtq-employees.html) [11]
* [Pregnancy and coronavirus (COVID-19) - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/pregnancy-and-coronavirus/) [12]
* [Scottish study leads to calls for more pregnant women to get fully vaccinated - News - Public Health Scotland](https://publichealthscotland.scot/news/2022/january/scottish-study-leads-to-calls-for-more-pregnant-women-to-get-fully-vaccinated/) [13]
* [Concerns rise as scale of cost-of-living crisis hits home | theHRD (thehrdirector.com)](https://www.thehrdirector.com/business-news/living/concerns-rise-scale-cost-living-crisis-hits-home/) [14]
* <https://sgcp.helpeap.com> [15]
* [An isolated generation: the impact of COVID-19 on children and young people | Feature from King's College London (kcl.ac.uk)](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/an-isolated-generation-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-children-and-young-people) [16]
* [Our Vision and Strategic Plan: 2018 - 2022 - whocaresscotland.org](https://www.whocaresscotland.org/who-we-are/our-vision/) [17]
* [We believe in care experienced young people | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/because-you-believe/care-experienced-young-people) [18]
* [Exercising their 'Right to Be Active'? Care experienced young people's perspectives on physical education and school sport (lboro.ac.uk)](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/journal_contribution/Exercising_their_Right_to_Be_Active_Care_experienced_young_people_s_perspectives_on_physical_education_and_school_sport/12563216/1) [19]
* Return to Workplace Survey 1  [20]
* Return to Workplace Survey 2  [21]
* Return to Workplace Survey 3  [22]
* *“Lessons Learned”* workshops -link to follow [23]
* [People from ethnic minorities less likely to accept Covid vaccine, says poll | Coronavirus | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/16/people-from-ethnic-minorities-less-likely-to-accept-covid-vaccine-says-poll) [24]
* [Working From Home: Menopause Support | workingwise.co.uk](https://www.workingwise.co.uk/hybrid-working-and-the-menopause-how-to-support-your-employees/) [25]

# Assessment template

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Protected characteristic[[1]](#footnote-2)** | **What do we know about this group in the context of this policy?[[2]](#footnote-3)** | **What is the potential impact (positive, neutral, and negative) on people who share the characteristic?** | **What could we do to reduce any negative impacts, maximise positive impacts and ensure quality information? What further evidence should we collect?**  **Information captured here will form the basis of the improvement action plan.** |
| Age | Our age profile taken from our [Employee Information Report](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6555/employee-information-report-2021.pdf) (April 2021) is detailed below:   prefer not to say 2 %  65+ years – 3%  55 – 64 years – 13%  45 – 54 years 30%  35 – 44 years 35%  25 – 34 years 18%  16 – 24 years 1% | Young people often enter the workforce with little sense of context. It’s important to consider how such a significant change so early in their career may impact them and to support/help them make the transition to a kind of pressure many have never faced before [1].  The NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) has been stretched for years [15]. The pandemic has exacerbated this leaving waiting lists even longer than before. The Centre for Mental Health has predicted that 1.5 million children and young people will need new or additional mental health support because of the pandemic.  Therefore, if we don’t offer opportunities for engagement in a physical environment/ **sport**scotland offices, this could reduce the opportunity for networking and engagement across the workforce, and negatively impact mental health and wellbeing, particularly for younger employees.  Young people may also be more likely to be living in shared accommodation or less likely to have suitable working space at home. This may result in greater need to have the option to work from the **sport**scotland offices as part of the hybrid working policy.    Whilst we recognise that many older employees are highly capable when it comes to using new technologies, some older employees may not be as comfortable, though CIPD (2015) advise caution when making generalisations, about technical abilities.[3] Age UK (2021) state that those with pre-existing health conditions (particularly those advised to ‘shield’) have been some of the hardest hit by the pandemic. Although restrictions were placed on all our lives, people who are classed as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) were advised not  to leave the house at all, which they believe has taken its toll on their health. **sport**scotland should consider how even an implied suggestion to work from home may more significantly impact the wellbeing of older people. [6]  Hybrid Working could allow a greater work life balance for those with caring responsibilities including children and older relatives, as well for staff members managing their own physical and mental health and wellbeing.  Given the cost-of-living and energy crisis it would be reasonable to surmise that older people and younger people may be disproportionally affected by this, either through the direct cost of heating a home, or by underlying health conditions being exacerbated by them not being able to afford to heat their home.   * negatively impact the workforce, | Training and support should be provided to staff who require it, around technologies required to carry out day to day duties such as Teams and other Microsoft products, therefore supporting all employees regardless of their age and technical abilities is advised.  There should be the opportunity for employees to use the office whenever they wish with no unnecessary scrutiny or judgement over their decision to do so. They may not wish to state that they are feeling isolated or can’t afford to heat their home so the process for hybrid working/working from the office should be as flexible as possible.  Our Employee Assistance Programme aims to reduce negative impact from the pandemic highlighted in the second column. Hybrid working enables a physical environment for colleagues to work in, ensuring younger employees have the opportunity for face-to-face networking.  Evaluation plan to review and evaluate the approach to hybrid working – opportunity to gather information / feedback from younger / older staff members in particular. |
| Disability | We asked our employees “Do you consider yourself to have a disability?” the results are detailed in our [Employee Information Report](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6555/employee-information-report-2021.pdf) (April 2021) which are detailed [below](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6555/employee-information-report-2021.pdf):  Prefer not to say - 1 %  Yes – 11 %  No - 88%  9% of employees with caring responsibilities are also disabled. | Scottish Government Research tells us that disabled people are:  More likely to live in a household in poverty  Less likely to be in employment  More likely to be paid below the living wage  More likely to live in social rented housing  Less likely to view their neighbourhood as a very good place to live  Less likely to feel safe walking alone in their local area after dark  More likely to have poorer mental health  Less likely to meet physical activity recommendations  More likely to experience child material deprivation [7]  However, it has been suggested that during the Covid-19 pandemic hybrid working has presented opportunities for disabled people to have more control over their working day including more support and flexibility, less travel to work, ability to attend meetings more easily and attend multiple meetings in the same day at different locations.  There may be an impact on those with physical disability who require specialist adaptations and who require support (e.g., software, chairs, adjustable desks, or additional equipment) at home or in the office.  There may also be positive impacts in terms of providing the flexibility to work in an environment that is the best match in terms of meeting both work requirements, and those that relate to the specific needs of each individual disability, e.g., reduce the impact of distractions typical in an open plan office.  There may be both positive and negative impacts of hybrid working for employees with mental health conditions; some staff may find the increased flexibility supportive while others may find home-working isolating. This should be monitored by line management. | Our Health and Safety Officer can fully support in sourcing the appropriate equipment, following a robust assessment. There may be an impact on those with neuro-diverse conditions who may require certain adjustments to working environments or practices, this should be considered accordingly.  As above - there should be the opportunity for employees to use the office whenever they wish with no unnecessary scrutiny or judgement over their decision to do so. They may not wish to state that they are feeling isolated or can’t afford to heat their home so the process for working from the office should be as flexible as possible.  Evaluation plan – impact on colleagues with a disability. |
| Gender reassignment | We asked our employees if they had ever identified as transgender. 238 people responded to this question. 99% stated that they have never identified as transgender while 1% selected “prefer not to say”. | A 2021 survey (YouGov, reported in People Management), which included 410 trans employees throughout the UK, found that 65% of trans people didn’t reveal their gender identity at work. The study also found that a third (32%) had experienced discrimination in the workplace in the last five years, and more than two in five (43%) had quit because their work environment was unwelcoming – an increase of 7% since 2016. [8]  **sport**scotland must be mindful that although we have no employees who have ever identified as transgender, research suggests that some individuals may not be comfortable sharing this information with their employer.  It could be surmised that hybrid working could allow added discretion for an individual going through gender reassignment, however this is not substantiated by research yet. | There was no evidence found that suggests that any individual who has experienced or is considering gender reassignment may be disproportionately impacted by hybrid working.  An action could be speaking to a charity or individual with specialist knowledge in gender reassignment to canvas their view. |
| Race | We asked our employees as part of the data gathering for our [Employee Information Report](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6555/employee-information-report-2021.pdf) to select which ethnic group they identified with most. 73% identified as white Scottish. This is followed by 19% who stated that they were white other British and 3% who identified as being from another ethnic group.  White Scottish - 73.2% White other British - 19.2%  “Other” ethnic group 2.9%  White Irish 2.1%  Prefer not to say 1.7%  Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian…0.4%  Mixed or multiple ethnic groups 0.4% | Minority ethnic staff are more likely to fall into the ‘vulnerable health groups’ classification of the population, and  have a higher risk of serious illness from Covid-19 [9]. The opportunity to work from home reduces the risk of exposure to Covid-19, and therefore reduces the extent of Risk for some people from minority ethnic groups in terms of risk in the workplace.  The research around this topic is complex and it has been further stated in [9] that the risk for some ethnic groups may increase when some characteristics are considered. For example, some ethnic groups may have lower incidence of certain diseases that are related to COVID-19 mortality, such as dementia, and as a result when these data are added in the regression model the risk of mortality for some ethnic groups increases.  A poll as published in the Guardian suggested that people from an ethnic minority background are less likely to be vaccinated, which could compound the inherent risk. [24]  **sport**scotland evidence findings from October 2020 [10] also found existing social inequalities in the areas of poverty, health, housing, and employment may mean that people from diverse ethnic communities are disproportionately impacted by the negative fall-out of this public health crisis and may find it more difficult to access support.  Continued working from home may lead to greater isolation however digital homeworking could enable a more inclusive environment for all where all colleagues are treated equally with no labels. | Even although a low percentage of our workforce is from a minority ethnic community, it is vitally important that we consider these risks within a model of hybrid working. Employees will have more choice about how and where they work which we hope with have a positive impact on this group.  Evaluation plan – impact on colleagues from diverse ethnic communities. |
| Religion or belief | We asked our employees as part of the data gathering for our [Employee Information Report](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6555/employee-information-report-2021.pdf) to identify their religion or belief. Just over half (53%) stated that they held no religious belief. This is followed by 24% who were Church of Scotland and 9% who were Roman Catholic. 6% of employees identified as following another Christian faith. 4% did not wish to disclose their religion.  None - 53.4%  Church of Scotland - 23.9%  Roman Catholic - 9.2%  Other Christian - 5.9%  Prefer not to say - 4.2%  Another religion or belief: - 2.1%  Buddhist - 0.8%  Muslim - 0.4% | Hybrid working encourages flexibility, therefore colleagues who undertake specific actions in relation to their religion at regular times (observing religious practice, fasting, prayer, religious holidays etc). will have more of an opportunity to do so through a hybrid working model. | It may be worthwhile speaking to different religious group stakeholders to consider if hybrid working has a particular impact, as there is no obvious negative impact at the time of writing this EQIA. |
| Sex | We asked our employees the question “Which one of the following best describes your gender?” 53% stated that they were male while 46% stated that they were female. 1% of employees selected “prefer not to say” when asked to describe their gender while no employee chose to describe their gender “in another way”. This is line with recent surveys which showed the gender split to be relatively even. 2018 was the only year where females made up majority of responses.  Male - 53%  Female - 46%  In another way - 0%  Prefer not to say - 1%  A common experience for our staff is having caring responsibilities. Caring for children (42%) for adults (9%) and both (4%).  We know:   * Of all employees with caring responsibilities: 52.5% Male, 47.5% Female * Children – 55.5% M / 44.5% F * Adults – 43% M / 57% F * Both – 33% M / 67% F | Women are more likely to be primary caregivers, therefore increased Hybrid working could have a positive impact on the balance between home and work  While people of both sexes can be and are victims of domestic abuse, women are more likely than men to face  repeated instances of domestic abuse, and are more likely to be seriously injured, killed, and face controlling or  coercive behaviour, than men.  Potential for increase of domestic abuse if working from home [10] During lockdown, the ONS  reported a significant increase in the number of arrests in England and Wales for domestic abuse-related crimes from 2020 onwards.    This means working fully from home constitutes potential additional risk for people who experience domestic abuse, who are more likely to be female.  People going through the Menopause may benefit from a Hybrid approach, allowing flexibility in working while experiencing menopausal symptoms. According to research earlier this year by [My Menopause Centre](http://www.mymenopausecentre.com/) and [BritainThinks](https://britainthinks.com/), over two thirds of menopausal women agreed that the menopause can negatively impact their performance at work and their career; while a 2019 report by Bupa and the CIPD revealed that almost one million women had left their jobs due to menopausal symptoms [25] | As previous stated the hybrid working model should allow employees to work from the office whenever needed. This could potentially mitigate employees experiencing domestic violence from working from home.  Menopause support should be reviewed as part of the wellbeing working group (or wider), as information and learning on this subject develops. |
| Sexual orientation | We asked our employees as part of the data gathering for our [Employee Information Report](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6555/employee-information-report-2021.pdf) “Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?”. 93% identified as heterosexual followed by 3% who identify as homosexual and 1% as bisexual. Fewer than 1% of employees stated that another term would best describe their sexual orientation.  Heterosexual / Straight - 92.8%  Gay/ lesbian - 3.4%  Prefer not to say - 2.1%  Bi/Bisexual - 1.3%  Other term - 0.4% | A [survey of remote workers](https://projectinclude.org/remote-work-report/) in tech from the research group Project Include found that online harassment and hostility went up for LGBTQ workers during the pandemic. Some said existing pressures on marginalized workers — including young, female, and nonbinary employees — got worse in the transition to working remotely. [11]  There are other benefits however and in the same article one LGBTQ professional found that sharing their pronouns on their LinkedIn page, in their email signature and on their videoconferencing, profile is “like being at a party and wearing a nametag. Being able to work remotely and having your [virtual presence] represent you by sharing your pronouns right off the bat has been a huge benefit. I’m not constantly having to introduce my pronouns.”” | Even with some of the inclusive benefits of remote work, companies must pay close attention to how they support and protect employees while virtual. [11].  **sport**scotland can ensure through management support and training that they have the skills, confidence, and competence to use our policies accordingly if they witness any unacceptable behaviours online or offline. |
| Pregnancy and maternity\* | It is normal for **sport**scotland to have individuals within the organisation who are pregnant or on maternity leave. The numbers are available from HR however not viewed to be pertinent for the purposes of this assessment and were not included in the **sport**scotland employee information report. | According to the NHS [12], if an individual is pregnant, they are at higher risk of getting seriously ill from Covid-19. Covid-19 late in pregnancy can also put the baby at risk.  The EAVE-II project, found in the Public Health Scotland [13], analysed data relating to more than 87,000 women in Scotland and found that pregnant women are less likely to be vaccinated against COVID-19 than women of a similar age who are not pregnant.  Considering above, the ability to work from home should minizine the risk of Covid transmission in many cases.  Increased flexibility could help improve work/life balance for pregnant employees or those with caring responsibilities.  Re-induction for colleagues returning from maternity leave to the organisation can be more difficult when working remotely. | **sport**scotland should continue to support pregnant employees and those on maternity leave.  Furthermore, **sport**scotland should consider allowing pregnant women to work fully from home where possible as the standard practice if this is requested. |
| Marriage/civil partnerships\* | **sport**scotland has a significant number of employees who are married or in a civil partnership, and those who are not. The specific numbers were not deemed to be pertinent for the purposes of this assessment. | There is no evidence to suggest that those married or in a civil partnership would be disproportionately affected by hybrid working.  Reflection is given to the above research on domestic abuse (10), for the purposes of due consideration and should be referred to accordingly. | This area should continue to be monitored considering any additional evidence that should be considered. |
| Most deprived communities \*\* | Employee data on this area has not been gathered. For the purposes of this assessment, it would be pertinent to assume that **sport**scotland employs or seeks to employ individuals from the most deprived communities in Scotland. | **sport**scotland findings [10] state that  households experiencing poverty are more likely to rely on public transport, and to make more low value shopping trips so can be at higher risk of COVID-19 infection.  [14] Health Assured, the UK and Ireland’s largest independent employee assistance programme (EAP) provider, has reported a worrying increase in the number of employees seeking help for financial concerns. The CEO at Health Assured stated: *“Help with financial concerns is one of the subjects our counsellors commonly deal with, but never have we seen such a stark increase year on year for any issue. It’s something that should ring alarm bells with every employer as well as the Government. With soaring energy costs, increases to the weekly food shop, and the constantly rising cost of fuel and public transport, people are struggling. The worry about how they are going to pay their bills is real and the impact this is having on peoples’ mental health cannot be overstated. With further increases to energy bills expected to come in October, this situation will only get worse. There are other ways that employers can help support employees financially when giving a pay rise is simply not possible.*  *“For example, financial literacy and education should be on the mind of every employer and can form a foundational part of an organisation’s package and reward scheme”*  Research found in [16] states So far, it seems that Black/Black British children bore the brunt of economic disadvantage during the pandemic, with research finding that they were three times more likely to live in a household that had fallen behind with bills, rent, or mortgage since the pandemic, compared to children in the White British group. This is a risk factor for mental illness, raising concerns about how these young people have fared throughout the pandemic. | **sport**scotland should address the impact of rising costs for all employees by communicating the support available for employees from our [Employee Assistance Programme](https://sgcp.helpeap.com) [15] who offer independent financial advice and support as well as counselling for those who need it, all free of charge.  There should be the opportunity for employees to use the office whenever they wish with no unnecessary scrutiny or judgement over their decision to do so. They may not wish to state that they are feeling isolated or can’t afford to heat their home so the process for hybrid working/working from the office should be as flexible as possible. |
| Care-experienced young people | Employee data on this area has not been gathered, however it is known that **sport**scotland has some employees with care-experience. | Various sources were looked at [17,18.19] to consider the potential impact of hybrid working on care-experienced young people and no significant finding could be sourced.  We know however how young people can be impacted by hybrid working (e.g., potentially less likely to have a suitable work environment at home, and challenges with costs involved in setting this up), and that care-experienced young people may have different challenges to those without care-experience.  Hybrid working could reduce costs of commuting for younger care experienced people again where money could be more of an issue.  Given the above, we should continue to be aware of potential challenges. | **sport**scotland should continue its close links with Who Cares? Scotland, and continue to learn from them as an organisation and educate our workforce on how best to recruit and manage care-experienced young people. |

\* where policy is HR related

\*\* Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>

# Consultation

Where there are gaps in understanding, you should address them through research or consultation with people sharing specific characteristics. Below are questions to consider when consulting:

What additional information do you need to understand the potential impact of the policy?

Who needs to be consulted? Are there any experts or local groups that you can contact to get more information?

What methods can you use to ensure target groups participate fully in the consultation process?

How will you feed in the results of the consultation to the EQIA process?

Speak to the strategic planning team for more information on how to consult on an EQIA. It may be that there are several EQIAs that require external consultation at the same time, and it is important this is coordinated.

## Who will be consulted externally on this EQIA?

|  |
| --- |
| PCS, recognised trade union  We will share this EQIA with CEMVO for feedback.  We met with Scottish Enterprise to understand how they had supported their staff and the approach they had taken in implementing hybrid working.  We had visibility of several hybrid working policies developed by non-departmental public body equality forum colleagues as well as guidance provided from Scottish Government to inform our future approach and policy.  We will continue to engage with other public bodies and the NDPB equality forum about their approach and the equality impacts on working arrangements post-COVID-19 to inform our thinking going forward. |

## Who will be consulted internally on this EQIA?

Please consider anyone internally who may be impacted by the actions you have identified, have additional knowledge in the policy area, or who may have an interest in this EQIA.

|  |
| --- |
| Darren McKay – Planning and Improvement Manager  Atta Yaqub – Equality and Diversity Manager  Gareth Bevan - ICT Infrastructure Lead |

# Action plan

## What recommended steps should we take to improve the policy and monitor its equality impact?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Responsibility** | **Timeline** |
| Review and evaluate the approach to hybrid working. Opportunity to gather information / feedback from staff and look at impact on particular groups. All protected characteristics should be considered, as should other groups such as care experienced young people and employees from the most deprived areas or those who may be impacted by cost of living challenges. | Head of HR / HR Team Managers (HR/L&D/Office Facilities Managers) | We will pilot our hybrid working model for an initial 12 month period, with 3 monthly check-ins to review how effective our new way of working is and to continually shape the way we work in the future. |
| Continue to promote our Employee Assistance Programme and the opportunity for employees to use the office whenever they wish to reduce negative impact from the pandemic / rising costs. | HR Manager / Office Facilities Manager | EAP will be promoted in Inside Track at least Quarterly. With immediate effect i.e. following the launch of the Hybrid Working Policy, employees will be able to use the office as/when required. |
| Training and support should be provided to staff who require it around technologies required to carry out day to day duties such as Teams and other Microsoft products. | L&D Manager / ICT Infrastructure Lead | With immediate effect training will be rolled for employees to carry out day to day duties such as Teams and other Microsoft products. This training will be on-going and reviewed after 12 months. |
| Health and Safety Officer can fully support in sourcing the appropriate display screen equipment (DSE) and support adjustments to working environments. | Office Facilities Manager / Health and safety Officer | With immediate effect and ongoing. |
| Furthermore, **sport**scotland should consider allowing pregnant women to work fully from home where possible as the standard practice if this is requested. | HR Manager | With immediate effect and ongoing, this will be considered as part of sportscotland’s current risk assessment for pregnant mothers process. |

# Sign off

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessment signed off by:** | Senior management team |
| **Sign off date:** | February 2023 |

# Appendix 1: Characteristics to be considered

## Protected characteristics

The following defines the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010[[3]](#footnote-4). For EQIAs we also consider the needs of care-experienced young people and people from our most deprived communities.

### Age

Age refers to a person belonging to a particular age (32-year old’s) or range of ages (18 - 30-year old’s).

### Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### Gender reassignment

Gender reassignment is the process of transitioning from one gender to another.

### Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'.

### Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth. This includes treating a woman unfavorably because she is breastfeeding.

### Race

Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

### Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it, but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g., Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

### Sex

Sex refers to whether a person is a man or a woman.

### Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation refers to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

## Other focus characteristics

### Care-experienced young people

Under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, we are required to produce a corporate parenting plan. This outlines how we will implement processes and systems to secure positive outcomes for care-experienced young people in Scotland. Care experience is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act; however, we have included care-experience in our EQIA template as corporate parenting is a strategic driver for inclusion and has a strong connection with our equalities duties. For more information please see: [corporate parenting guidance.](http://ssc-sharepoint/eo/eq/Corporate%20Parenting/Corporate%20Parenting%20Guidance.docx)

### Our most deprived communities

‘Deprivation’ is a specific term; it does not just mean ‘poor’ or ‘low income’. It can also mean people have fewer resources and opportunities. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's official tool to define and identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland. The SIMD considers inequality across income, education, employment, health, access to services, crime and housing. When we reference our most deprived communities, this is the 20% most deprived communities according to the SIMD, unless otherwise stated.

1. See Appendix 1 for more information. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Best practice would involve gathering evidence through internal and external consultation. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Taken from [Equality and Human Rights Commission on 7 August 2019](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics)  [↑](#footnote-ref-4)