

# Equality Impact Assessment

**Exploration workshops on curriculum core competencies**

May 2024

## Equality Impact Assessment Record

<b>Title:</b>	Exploration workshops on core competencies
<b>Senior Lead Officers</b>  <b>Operational lead</b>	Ollie Bray - Strategic Director  Andy Creamer - Head of Learning and Teaching
<b>Directorate: Division: Team</b>	National : Learning and Teaching and Curriculum Innovation Teams
<b>Is this new policy or revision to an existing policy?</b>	<p>New exploratory projects have been developed in response to the recommendation set out above from the 2021 OECD report: Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future.</p> <p><b>3.4 Develop a systematic approach to curriculum review:</b> Scotland could consider establishing a systematic curriculum review cycle with a planned timeframe and specific review agenda, led by specialist stand-alone agency</p>

# Screening

This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) aims to evaluate the impact of exploratory workshops on curriculum core competencies.

The workshops have been developed in response to the recommendation in the OECD report of June 2021 which advised that attention be paid to develop a systematic approach to curriculum. In recent publications it has also been recommended that a regular curriculum review process should be established to ensure that the curriculum remains fit for purpose, reflects contemporary learner needs, and can be effectively delivered in ways to ensure that all learners in Scotland have high quality curricular linked learning experiences.

In December 2023 the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills announced that Scotland would establish a systematic curriculum review cycle to ensure that the curriculum remains fit for purpose and reflects contemporary learner needs. It was announced that this newly introduced 'curriculum improvement cycle' would begin with Maths followed by English. Education Scotland has been initially tasked with leading this work.

While work is now at an early stage to develop a planned timeframe and specific review agenda for the eight curricular areas (including Numeracy & Mathematics and Languages) we are at the same time keen to do some early exploration work into an initial range of cross-cutting curriculum areas that are considered by many to be core competencies for 2024 and beyond.

Initially we are exploring the following areas: Careers Education, Creativity, Digital Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Financial Education and Learning for Sustainability (LfS). We also want to conduct some exploratory work within the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing (the current responsibility of all).

Our aim is to do the initial exploratory work over a series of three face-to-face events with an option for a group of critical friends to work together on-line if unable to join the in person sessions. Two of these events will be before the summer break and one after the break. We have invited a range of practitioners from a variety of settings, backgrounds and locations to support this work who can represent the needs and aspirations of all our children and young people. Importantly, we are not looking for practitioners who consider themselves 'specialists' in these areas but rather those who understand that these themes are important and have a place in the current and future curriculum.

With a view to 2025 and beyond we will explore and identify the knowledge, skills, and attributes that children and young people will require to successfully engage with the core competencies. Our collective intention is to identify the big ideas in each core competency.

This work will run with a total of approximately 450 participants from May 2024 to September 2024.

### Who will it affect?

It is anticipated that there will approximately 450 participants across the 11 workstreams in Careers education, Creativity, Digital literacy, Entrepreneurship, Financial education, Health and wellbeing, Learning for sustainability, Literacy and Numeracy. The participants will be made up of 8 stakeholders, 8 academics and 32 practitioners from across all sectors in each stream.

## The Scope of the Equality Impact Assessment

In undertaking this assessment, the impact on each of the protected characteristics has been considered against the three needs of the general equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity; and,
- foster good relations.

## Key Findings

This assessment has identified some positive impacts on one or more of the protected characteristics. While the way we are undertaking the programme may positively affect one or more of the protected characteristics, it may also have a disproportionate negative impact on one or more of the protected characteristics. Where identification of negative impact applies, we will seek to mitigate where appropriate and, where possible, eliminate these. We recognise that there may be some potential indirect and disproportionate negative impacts of the measures we have taken on one or more of the protected characteristic groups within the practitioner population. These are set out and explored further in this impact assessment, with mitigating actions identified.

## What might prevent the desired outcomes being achieved?

There are a range of issues that might affect the delivery and prevent the desired outcomes from being achieved. These include, but are not exclusive to:

- lack of specific data relating to the educator and general population making it difficult to ascertain the actual potential impact.
- lack of response from participants on any specific adjustments required

Although the factor above is out with our direct control, we have conducted this EQIA utilising the data covering our delegates from 3-18 educational settings and also from Industry. It is also important to recognise that during this impact assessment we have also carefully considered the accessible design of the programme content to ensure we support our aim of providing opportunities for all.

# Stage 1: Framing

## Results of framing exercise

The planning and delivery associated with this work is managed and led by a small team of Education Scotland staff within the National Directorate. The team work in partnership with colleagues from key organisations across the Scottish education sector. Throughout the planning discussions have taken place, which have informed our thinking including: Education Scotland staff, Hotel staff, Venue staff. As a result of our framing exercise, we identified that there was potential for the programme to have moderate impact on some protected characteristic groups, with some being more disproportionately impacted, either negatively or positively, than others.

### Protected characteristic: age

We did not encounter evidence that educators from any age groups would be disproportionately adversely affected by the exploration workshops on curriculum core competencies. The nature of both in person and option for on-line critical friends exercise itself will provide opportunities for educators of different ages and at different stages of their career to engage with the work. This may not have been possible if all were in person events.

### Protected characteristic: disability

Adopting a mixed approach ensures attendance from this protected characteristic is available to all. Consideration had been given to needs of a range of disabilities, with care given to ensuring that the range of support considers the specific needs of all educators in Scotland. For example, where reasonably possible, we will explore if presenters are able to provide early insight to presentations. Furthermore, although the majority of hotels and venue providers throughout Scotland are built to mitigate accessibility issues, we ensured the following specifications were considered when choosing the location: adequate lift access; hearing loop service (case by case basis); catering needs – options for allergies; paper copy handouts (on request).

### Protected characteristic: gender reassignment

We are currently not aware of any evidence that the approach taken will affect educators transitioning from one gender to another. We have selected venues where there are individual toilet facilities if required and will ensure language is inclusive.

### Protected characteristic: marriage or civil partnership

N/A

\*Please note, this protected characteristic is only applicable when policies, programmes and services are relevant to employment.

## Protected characteristic: pregnancy and maternity

We are currently not aware of any evidence that the mixed model will affect educators who are pregnant, on maternity leave or returning to work.

For the in person-events within this protected characteristic group in Scotland are more likely to require breastfeeding friendly spaces when attending physical events. Although this will be managed at supplier level, we ensured this was available when choosing the most appropriate physical location.

## Protected characteristic: race

We are currently not aware of any evidence that this will affect educators differently with different racial identities.

For the in person-events we will ensure catering options consider the needs of educators from different racial identities. In addition, we will make sure the content of the programme is representative and inclusive of this protected characteristic group.

## Protected characteristic: religion or belief

We are currently not aware of any evidence that this project will affect educators with different religions or beliefs.

Educators with different religions and beliefs in Scotland may require prayer rooms for religious observance when attending physical event locations and require catering needs. Although this will be managed at supplier level, we ensured this was considered when choosing the most appropriate physical location.

## Protected characteristic: sex

We did not encounter evidence that educators from any sex would be disproportionately adversely affected by this project. However, evidence shows that women spend around 10% to 30% more time on caring responsibilities than males. It is therefore possible that the option of the “critical” friend on-line element will have a positive impact on female participants. The content and language will be inclusive.

## Protected characteristic: sexual orientation

We are currently not aware of any evidence that this project will affect those in the LGBTI+ community. Ensure inclusive language in all our work.

## Interaction with Other Policies (Draft or Existing)

The exploration workshops on curriculum core competencies will align with Education Scotland's Accessible Events Policy.

## Extent/Level of EQIA required

The framing exercise has highlighted the need for the following actions:

- Review and optimise the accessibility of both the material and physical event locations which will be used for delivery.

## Stage 2: Data and evidence gathering, involvement and consultation

On the booking form we ask “Please give details of any accessibility requirements that are needed to support you to access the venue and learning sessions” We may get some responses from attendees although we have conducted this EQIA utilising the following data covering our delegates from 3-18 educational settings

- ELC Teacher Census 2018 and 2019
- Primary and Secondary Teacher Census 2020 and 2021
- College Funding Sector Census



# Stage 3: Assessing the impacts and identifying opportunities to promote equality

Protected characteristic: **age**

The prototype group will provide opportunities for educators of different ages and at different stages of their career to engage.

Potentially may not be able to attend due to caring responsibilities, potential mobility issues not disclosed as disability, temperature of the room could impact those experiencing menopausal symptoms, eyesight issues and incontinence issues.

Although this will be managed at supplier level, we ensured the following specifications were considered when choosing the physical location: adequate lift access; event rooms close to main entrances; and a sufficient number of restroom facilities. In addition, we will also ensure that clear and concise joining instructions are available.

Protected characteristic: **disability**

Potentially may not be able to attend due to factors such as travel, illness etc. May find it difficult to sit at chairs etc, find the amount of people overwhelming.

Consideration had been given to needs of a range of disabilities, with care given to ensuring that the range of support considers the specific needs of all educators in Scotland. For example, where reasonably possible, we will explore if presenters are able to provide early insight to presentations. Furthermore, although the majority of hotels throughout Scotland are built to mitigate accessibility issues, we ensured the following specifications were considered when choosing the location: adequate lift access; hearing loop service (case by case basis); catering needs – options for allergies; paper copy handouts (on request).

Protected characteristic: **gender reassignment**

We do not foresee this work to have a negative impact on educators because of gender reassignment. We have selected venues where there are individual toilet facilities if required and will ensure language is inclusive.

Protected characteristic: **pregnancy and maternity.**

Educators within this protected characteristic group in Scotland are more likely to require breastfeeding friendly spaces when attending physical events. Although this will be managed at supplier level, we ensured this was available when choosing the most appropriate physical location.

Protected characteristic: **race**

We do not foresee the prototype group to have a negative impact on educators because of their race. We will ensure catering options consider the needs of educators from different racial identities. In addition, we will make sure the content of the programme is representative and inclusive of this protected characteristic group.

Protected characteristic: **religion or belief**

Educators with different religions and beliefs in Scotland may require prayer rooms for religious observance when attending physical event locations and require catering needs. Although this will be managed at supplier level, we ensured this was considered when choosing the most appropriate physical location.

Protected characteristic: **gender**

Potentially may not be able to attend due to caring responsibilities.  
The location has plenty of bathrooms as the percentage of females attending will be higher.

Protected characteristic: **sexual orientation**

The content and language on the day will be inclusive.

# Stage 4: Decision making and monitoring

## Identifying and establishing any required mitigating action

Have positive or negative impacts been identified for any of the equality groups?	The mixed model of the group can have both positive and negative impacts to varying degrees for most protected characteristic groups. The impact on disabilities requires careful consideration, particularly for those with underlying health conditions, for whom moving around physical event locations could be a challenge. Some groups may also have conflicting pressures on their time out with work and therefore balancing attendance at physical events with other work/family commitments may be difficult. However, attending the on-line session remotely can also be beneficial for many protected characteristic groups, contributing to increased attendance and reducing barriers educators could face when attending physical event locations. Physical event locations can increase collaborative networking and could reduce the time taken to identify if additional support needs are required. Joining on- line can also enable a more inclusive environment where educators are treated equally in the absence of 'labelling'.
Is the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010 <sup>17</sup> ?	Indirectly. The measures taken to support the prototype group both in person and on-line in such a way that they do not create unlawful discrimination relating to the Equality Act 2010.
If the policy is indirectly discriminatory, how is it justified under the relevant legislation?	Comply with Education Scotland's Accessible Events Policy
If not justified, what mitigating action will be undertaken?	N/A

## **Monitoring and Review**

This assessment has highlighted the potential impacts that the exploration workshops on curriculum core competencies group could have on participants across the Scottish education system. These findings will inform the decisions taken by the team. We will continue to monitor and review our decisions on a routine basis.

## Stage 5 - Authorisation of EQIA

Please confirm that:

This Equality Impact Assessment has informed the development of our return to offices plan.

Yes

No

Opportunities to promote equality in respect of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation have been considered, i.e.:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
- Removing or minimising any barriers and/or disadvantages;
- Taking steps which assist with promoting equality and meeting people's diverse needs;
- Encouraging participation (e.g., in public life)
- Fostering good relations, tackling prejudice, and promoting understanding.

Yes

No

If the Marriage and Civil Partnership protected characteristic applies to this policy, the Equality Impact Assessment has also assessed against the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in respect of this protected characteristic:

Yes

No

Not applicable

### Declaration

**I am satisfied with the equality impact assessment that has been undertaken and give my authorisation for the results of this assessment to be published on the Education Scotland website.**

**Name: Ollie Bray**

**Position: Strategic Director**

**Authorisation date: 17.05.24**

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