

Equality Impact Assessment

Summary

Name of policy or practice	Standards and Awarding 2024
New Policy or Revision	New
Policy Owner (role)	Director of Approach, Analysis and Standards
Date Policy Owner Confirmed Completion	27 February 2024
Agreed Schedule Review Date	1 December 2024
Additional review date (Action review date)	

Action plan

Required Actions	Owner	Date	Comment and Review
Actions taken to monitor standards and awarding and the impact on equality groups (evidence and consultation).			[ONGOING RECORD]
Diet 2023 Evaluation — analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from surveys and interviews with learners, practitioners, Senior Appointees and SQA Qualifications staff.	Standards Team	April 2024	Complete
Methodology 2024 Report — outlines SQA’s approach to awarding National Qualifications in 2024.	Head of Standards	August 2024	This will be published in August 2024.
Analysis of grade boundary statistics and report.	Standards Team	August 2024	This will be reviewed once published in Autumn 2024.
Regular engagement with the wider organisation in the preparation for Grade Boundaries 2024, to ensure approach is accurately implemented.	Standards Team	Ongoing	This is an ongoing piece of work.
Review SQA Equalities Monitoring Report.	Standards Team	August 2024	This will be reviewed once published in August 2024.
A Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment has also been undertaken and will require to be updated based on any new evidence.	Standards Team	August 2024	This is an ongoing piece of work.

Identified Actions	General Equality Duty	Owner	Date	Comment and Review

Policy aims

What is the rationale for this policy or practice?

Three principles underpin SQA's approach to qualifications and assessment:

1. Fairness to all learners
2. Safe and secure certification of qualifications
3. Maintaining the integrity and credibility of the qualifications system, ensuring that standards are maintained over time, in the interests of learners

The approach to standard setting and awarding in 2024 ensures these principles are achieved — principally, the commitment to fairness and to the maintenance of standards over time.

SQA's approach to standard setting uses a set of well-established procedures, which can be found in the [Guide to Setting Grade Boundaries](#) — an approach that has been retained this year.

Full course assessment was re-introduced this year, which included SQA-assessed coursework for many subjects and levels for the first time since 2019.

Our approach this year is to use our well-established awarding procedures and where appropriate consider the impact of changes on learners brought about by the return of full course assessment as we return to established awarding.

The [2024 Methodology Report](#) details how this approach was put into practice.

What evidence is there to support the implementation or development of this policy or practice?

Awarding is a core part of SQA's business as an awarding body.

In 2022 and 2023, following the return of external exams after their cancellation in 2021 and 2021 due to the global pandemic, we adopted an approach to awarding that retained key features of our established awarding procedures. We also sought to provide an extra layer of protection to ensure learners were not unfairly disadvantaged in a disrupted environment that had remained uncertain for learners and teachers or lecturers.

In 2022 we adopted a generous approach to grading recognising learners were sitting exams in challenging circumstances for the first time since the pandemic. In 2023, a sensitive approach to grading was adopted in recognition of the continued, though lessening, impact of the pandemic. Adjustments to grade boundaries were smaller in 2023 than 2022, reflecting recovery in the education system.

Full course assessment was re-introduced this year, including the first SQA assessed coursework for many subjects and levels since 2019. Our approach to awarding in 2024 is designed to take this into account and provide safeguards for learners. Following on from the generous and sensitive approaches to awarding in 2022 and 2023 respectively, our approach this year is to use our well- established awarding procedures and where appropriate consider the impact of changes on learners brought about by the return of full course assessment as we return to established awarding.

Our approach to awarding is broadly aligned to that in other nations in the UK who have returned to normal pre-pandemic grading arrangements.

Other services which support learners, including those with protected characteristics, with equality of access to assessments are Assessment Arrangements, Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) and Appeals service. These services do not impact the grade boundary and awarding process.

SQA carried out an evaluation of the approach to awarding used in 2023. Those involved in the awarding process – senior appointees and qualification teams - provided positive feedback that the final outcomes were fair to learners as all factors impacting on performance had been thoroughly considered during awarding meetings. These findings mirror those from the evaluation carried out in 2022. The approach to awarding in 2024 builds on this good practice in relation to the provision of supporting data and documentation, and the management of the awarding meetings.

What are the aims of this policy or practice?

Awarding is a key component of SQA’s statutory duties and responsibilities, as outlined in .

As in any year, the aim is to ensure the approach to awarding delivers fair grades to all learners through consistent application of the approach and ensuring the standards of our qualifications are maintained over time through the grade boundary decisions we make.

How is the content of these aims relevant to equality groups?

The approach to awarding applies equally to all learners undertaking National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications, to ensure a consistency of approach that aims to maximise fairness to all groups of learners, including equality groups. Qualitative and quantitative evidence used to support awarding decisions relates to the cohort as a whole. No information on learners' protected characteristics is made available during the awarding process. As such, it is not possible to identify potential impacts on specific equality groups. Grade boundary decisions apply equally to the entire cohort of learners, with no exception.

Evidence, consultation and engagement

What stakeholders have you engaged with in the development of this policy or practice?

Feedback was sought from learners on the awarding process as a whole through SQA's Evaluation of Diet 2023.. Senior management also visited schools and spoke with learners about their experiences of awarding.

A high-level approach to awarding was presented to the Board of Management, NQ Strategic Group, and NQ Partner Communications Group. These groups include representatives from the following stakeholders:

- Scottish Qualifications Authority
- Scottish Youth Parliament
- Student Participation In Quality Scotland
- National Parent Forum of Scotland
- Scottish Government
- Education Scotland
- Colleges Scotland
- Universities Scotland
- School Leaders Scotland
- Scottish Council of Independent Schools
- Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
- Educational Institute for Scotland
- Scottish Secondary Teachers Association (SSTA)
- National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)

What evidence about equality groups do you have to support this assessment?

Age

This approach applies to graded National Courses and only applies to learners taking National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications in schools, colleges and training providers. The age range would normally be 15+ and learners are enrolled in a range of National Courses at schools and colleges in Scotland.

A breakdown of the ages of learners who were entered for a National Course in the academic year 2022–23 can be found in [SQA’s Equality Monitoring Report 2023](#). 99.3% of entries at National 5, 99.0% of entries at Higher and 99.5% at Advanced Higher are from candidates aged between 15 and 18.

More than 99% of learners for each of the National Courses covered by the awarding approach are aged between 15 and 18 and therefore are considered children, following the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). Due to this, a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) has been completed for awarding.

Disability

No specific disability groups were consulted, and no learners were asked to declare a disability for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.

As part of the SQA’s Evaluation of Diet 2023 (to be published in due course), 3437 learners were surveyed and 450 (13%) reported as either a disabled learner or a learner with ASN. These learners were less likely to agree that they received information on how their grades would be determined early enough, and also less likely to agree that they understood how their grades would be determined. This feedback will impact how this approach is shared but does not affect the content of the approach itself.

Race

Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.

More than 99% of learners undertaking National Courses are between the ages of 15 and 18, so information provided in Scottish Government’s [Schools in Scotland 2022](#) is relevant:

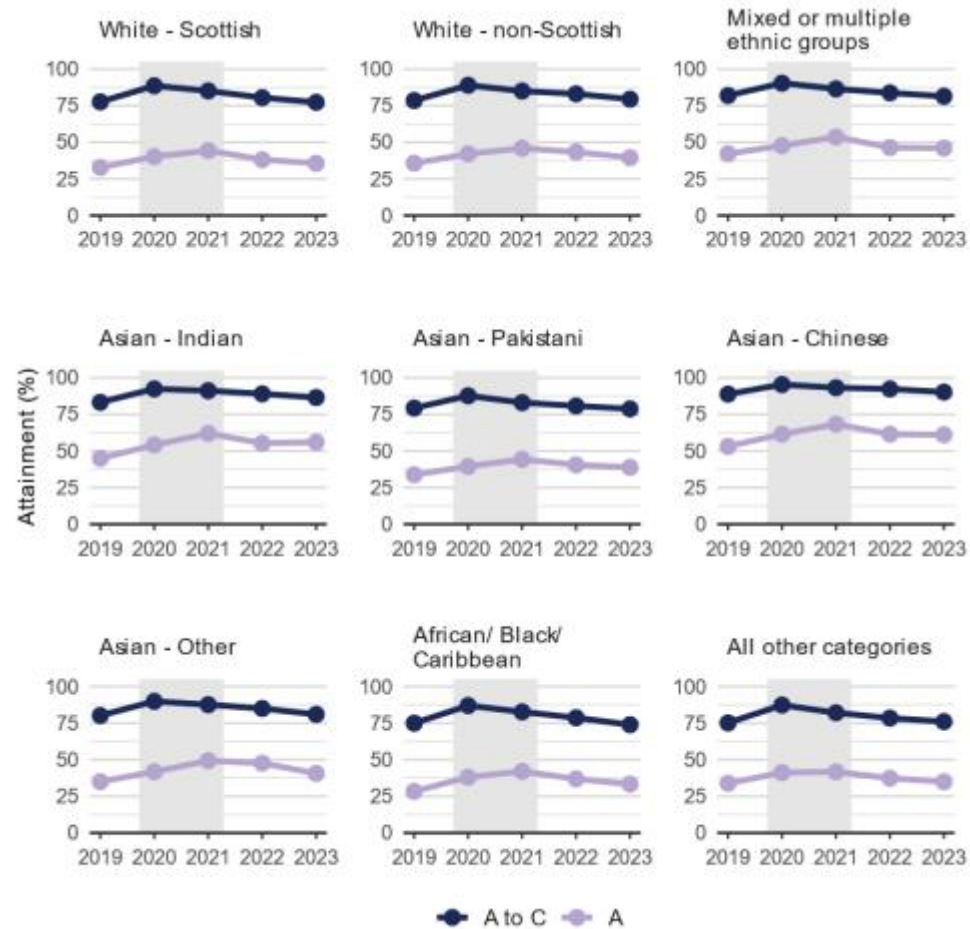
Ethnicity	Female	Male	Total
White - Scottish	258,319	268,796	527,115
White - Other British	22,187	23,532	45,719
White - Irish	728	767	1,495
White - Polish	8,323	8,774	17,097

White - Gypsy/Traveller	703	766	1,469
White - Other	12,388	12,991	25,379
Mixed	6,081	5,990	12,071
Asian - Indian	4,102	4,212	8,314
Asian - Pakistani	7,395	7,632	15,027
Asian - Bangladeshi	708	730	1,438
Asian - Chinese	2,602	2,640	5,242
Asian - Other	2,569	2,650	5,219
Caribbean/Black - Scottish/British	483	472	955
Caribbean/Black - Other	270	300	570
African - Scottish/British	3,659	3,603	7,262
African - Other	2,591	2,660	5,251
Arab	2,154	2,354	4,508
Other	2,470	2,707	5,177
Not known	6,223	6,778	13,001
Not disclosed	1,689	1,876	3,565
Total	345,644	360,230	705,874

[SQA's Equality Monitoring Report 2023](#) states the following regarding attainment at National 5:

'In general, where one group had higher attainment than another group historically, this remained the case in 2023. For example in 2023, as in several previous years, the A rate and A to C rate was greater for Asian-Chinese compared to other ethnicity groupings... . Caution is advised in interpreting some of the percentage point changes for different groups over time. For most ethnicity groups (except White-Scottish and White-non-Scottish), the numbers on which the percentage breakdowns for each of the different levels are calculated on [*sic*] are small and likely to be more variable as a result.' The following graphs show the percentage rate of A–C and A passes at National 5 for different ethnicity groupings from 2019 to 2023. A similar pattern can be seen across all groups: both pass rates rise in 2020 over 2019, and rise again for A in 2021 (but decline slightly for A–C). Both rates tend to return to 2019 levels in 2022 and 2023, as assessment returns to pre-pandemic approaches.

The following graphs show the percentage rate of A–C and A passes at National 5 for different ethnicity groupings from 2019 to 2023. A similar pattern can be seen across all groups: both pass rates rise in 2020 over 2019, and rise again for A in 2021 (but decline slightly for A–C). Both rates tend to return to 2019 levels in 2022 and 2023, as assessment returns to pre-pandemic approaches.



Religion or belief	Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners. This information is also not captured in SQA’s Equality Monitoring Report or the Scottish Government’s pupil census.
Sex	<p>Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.</p> <p>Data on the difference between female and male attainment can be found in SQA’s Equality Monitoring Report 2023:</p> <p>National 5</p> <p>‘Female candidates had higher A to C and A attainment rates than male candidates at National 5 for each year in the period 2019 to 2022. This remains the case in 2023. The difference in A attainment between female candidates and male candidates in 2023 was 7.6 percentage points (in favour of females). This is similar to the 2022 value of 7.8 percentage points also in favour of female candidates. In 2019, the difference in A attainment between female candidates and male candidates was 8.4 percentage points.</p> <p>‘In 2023, the A to C attainment rate at National 5 for female candidates was 80.6%. This was a decrease of 1.9 percentage points on the previous year but an increase of 0.4 percentage points on 2019. Male candidates saw a similar decrease in 2023 from 2022, a value of 2.3 percentage points, but an increase of 0.9 percentage points when compared to 2019. The difference in A to C attainment between female candidates and male candidates in 2023 was 3.7 percentage points (in favour of females). This is similar to the 2022 value of 3.3 percentage points, also in favour of females. In 2019, the difference in A to C attainment between female candidates and male candidates was 4.2 percentage points.’</p> <p>Higher</p> <p>‘Female candidates had higher A to C and A attainment rates than male candidates at Higher for each year in the period 2019 to 2022. This remains the case in 2023.</p> <p>‘The A attainment rate at Higher in 2023 has decreased on 2022 for both female candidates and male candidates: 2.5 and 1.4 percentage points respectively. Overall, the 2023 A attainment rate for female candidates at Higher is an increase of 5.1 percentage points on 2019 and an increase of 4.2 percentage points for male candidates.</p> <p>‘The difference in A attainment between female candidates and male candidates in 2023 was 5.6 percentage points. This is less than the 2022 difference of 6.7 percentage points (both in favour of female candidates). In 2019, the difference in A attainment between female candidates and male candidates was 4.7 percentage points.</p>

	<p>‘In 2023, the A to C attainment rate for female candidates was 79.5%. This was a decrease of 1.6 percentage points on the previous year but an increase of 2.7 percentage points on 2019. Male candidates also saw a decrease in 2023 from 2022, a value of 2.1 percentage points, but an increase of 2.1 percentage points when compared to 2019.</p> <p>‘The difference in A to C attainment between female candidates and male candidates in 2023 was 5.2 percentage points. This is similar to the 2022 value of 4.7 percentage points (both in favour of female candidates). In 2019, the difference in A to C attainment between female candidates and male candidates was 4.6 percentage points.’</p> <p>Advanced Higher</p> <p>‘Female candidates had higher A to C and A attainment rates than male candidates at Advanced Higher for each year in the period 2019 to 2022. This remains the case in 2023.</p> <p>‘The A attainment rate at Advanced Higher in 2023 has decreased on 2022 for both female and male candidates by a similar amount, 0.8 and 0.7 percentage points respectively. Relative to 2019, the 2023 A attainment rate for female candidates at Advanced Higher is an increase of 1.8 percentage points and an increase of 0.4 percentage points for male candidates.</p> <p>‘The difference in A attainment between female candidates and male candidates in 2023 was 1.9 percentage points, in favour of female candidates. This is very similar to the 2022 value of 2.0 percentage points, also in favour of female candidates. In 2019, the difference in A attainment between female candidates and male candidates was 0.5 percentage points.</p> <p>‘In 2023, the A to C attainment rate for female candidates was 82.2%. This was a decrease of 1.7 percentage points on the previous year but an increase of 0.8 percentage points on 2019. Similarly, male candidates also saw a decrease in 2023 from 2022, a value of 1.3 percentage points, but no change when compared to 2019 as the A to C attainment rate for male candidates at Advanced Higher was also 76.8%.</p> <p>‘The difference in A to C attainment between female candidates and male candidates in 2023 was 5.4 percentage points. This is similar to the 2022 value of 5.8 percentage points (both in favour of female candidates). In 2019, the difference in A to C attainment between female candidates and male candidates was 4.6 percentage points.’</p>
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.</p> <p>3437 learners were surveyed as part of SQA’s Evaluation of Diet 2023 (to be published in due course). Learners were asked if they identified as part of the LGBTQIA+ community. 17% of learners responded that they did. Although not directly comparable to the survey questions, according to the ONS, 3% of the UK population aged 16 years and over identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in 2022. For those aged 16 to 24 years, 9% identified as LGB.</p>

<p>Gender re-assignment (Gender identity and transgender)</p>	<p>Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.</p> <p>3437 learners were surveyed as part of SQA’s Evaluation of Diet 2023; 59% of respondents described their gender as woman / girl, 35% described their gender as man / boy and 2% described their gender as non-binary. Survey results show that non-binary learners had statistically significant lower communication satisfaction scores than other learners.</p>
<p>Marriage / civil partnership</p>	<p>Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.</p> <p>As more than 99% of learners undertaking National Courses are between the ages of 15 and 18, it is unlikely that many learners will be married or in a civil partnership. It has not been possible to source any data relating to the number of individuals between the ages of 16 and 18 in Scotland who are married. The National Records for Scotland report that: ‘The average age at marriage has risen for both males and females. For first marriages, the average age of males has risen from 24.3 in the mid-1970s to 34.5 in 2019; the comparable figures for females are 22.4 in the mid-1970s and 32.9 in 2019.’ The ONS give marital status by age but the groups are under 20 and 20–24, which does not provide useful data for this assessment — it also does not include Scotland in the data.</p>
<p>Pregnancy / maternity</p>	<p>Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.</p> <p>The National Records for Scotland report that the fertility rate for women aged 15–19 is at a historic low, showing the lowest rate (under 20 per 1000) since 1951. Due to this, and the fact that more than 99% of learners undertaking National Courses are aged between 15 and 18, it is unlikely that many learners will be covered by this protected characteristic.</p>
<p>Care experience (where relevant)</p>	<p>Learners were not asked for this information for the purposes of developing this approach. As noted above, this approach and associated process applies equally to all learners as the awarding and grade boundaries processes are applied at cohort level and not to individual learners.</p> <p>While no evidence of any potential barriers was identified as part of this review, SQA is a proud corporate parent and acutely aware of the unique challenges that care experienced people face. Our approach is, as with all learners, to protect the learner wherever possible and minimise any disadvantage or distress. SQA understands that ‘child’ means everyone under the age of 18, unless ‘under the law</p>

applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier'. For this reason, a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) has also been undertaken for awarding.

According to the [Scottish Government's Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland: 2021 to 2022](#) report (published April 2023), on 31 July 2022, 14,627 children in Scotland were looked after or on the Child Protection Register — 1.5% of Scotland's under 18 population. There were 12,596 looked after children in Scotland, a decrease of 5% from 31 July 2021. However, according to [Who Cares? Scotland](#), these statistics do not take into consideration circumstances such as informal kinship care. Moreover, some learners may have historic care experience even if they are not currently in care.

In August 2023, the [Scottish Government](#) published information on attainment and leaver destinations, for school leavers in Scotland who were looked after during the 2021–22 school year. Headline figures show that more care experienced children are staying in school for longer and achieving higher qualifications than the previous year. However, there are still large gaps compared with all learners. The latest figures show that:

- care experienced school leavers continue to have lower attainment than other school leavers.
- care experienced children and young people leave school earlier than their non-care experienced peers.
- care experienced children are less likely to be in positive destinations nine months after leaving school.
- the rate of exclusions among care experienced children is much higher than among the general school population.
- the more disruption a child faces — for example placement moves — the higher their likelihood of exclusion.
- at all levels, care experienced students have lower rates of course completion at university and college than other students.
- care experienced children are automatically deemed to have additional support needs, unless otherwise assessed.

The [SQA Corporate Parenting Plan 2023–26](#) provides the following data:

- 31.7% of looked after school leavers left in S4 or earlier (down from 37.3% in 2020–21), compared with 12.4% of all leavers in 2021–22.
- 78.3% of looked after school leavers with one or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better (up from 70.9% in 2020–21), compared with 96.4% of all leavers in 2021–22.

Impact and opportunities for action

Protected characteristic: Age
General equality duties:
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
<p>This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach do not have either a positive or negative impact on this equality group. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner without any unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The aims of this approach do not have a negative impact on this equality group and SQA does not feel that there is potential to discriminate.</p> <p>The approach applies equally to all learners to ensure a consistency of approach that aims to maximise fairness to all groups of learners, including equality groups. Quantitative and qualitative evidence used before and during awarding meetings (such as statistical outcome data and assessment evidence) corresponds to the cohort as a whole. Grade boundary decisions at upper A, A and C are determined using this process and computed for all other grades. This decision is then applied equally to the entire cohort of learners with no exceptions; therefore, no actions are provided.</p>
Advance equality of opportunity
<p>This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach have a positive impact on this equality group. By ensuring that standards are maintained on a year-by-year basis, this ensures that every learner is getting an equal opportunity to achieve these qualifications regardless of when they sit them. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner, which promotes equality of opportunity between learners of all ages. Regardless of age, grade boundaries are set in line with the intended demand of the assessment, and are adjusted appropriately if the assessment did not function as intended — they are not affected by the performance of individual candidates or groups.</p> <p>The approach applies equally to all learners to ensure a consistency of approach that aims to maximise fairness to all groups of learners, including equality groups. Quantitative and qualitative evidence used before and during awarding meetings (such as statistical outcome data and assessment evidence) corresponds to the cohort as a whole. Grade boundary decisions at upper A, A and C are determined using this process and computed for all other grades. This decision is then applied equally to the entire cohort of learners with no exceptions; therefore, no actions are provided.</p>
Foster good relations
<p>This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach have a positive impact on this equality group. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner which fosters good relations between learners of all ages by ensuring that the standard of our qualifications is set appropriately and maintained over time and across courses. This fosters good relations between past and current cohorts as they can be</p>

assured that they were given the same opportunity to gain a qualification, and if for any reason the assessment did not function as intended, this was considered to ensure that this standard remained consistent.

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Protected characteristic: Disability

General equality duties:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

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Protected characteristic: Race

General equality duties:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

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Protected characteristic: Religion or belief

General equality duty

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

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Protected characteristic: Sex

General equality duty

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach do not have either a positive or negative impact on this equality group. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner without any unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The aims of this approach do not have a negative impact on this equality group and SQA do not feel that there is potential to discriminate. Although the data does point to an attainment gap based on the sex of the learner, it is not considered as a characteristic during the awarding and grade boundary process.

The approach applies equally to all learners to ensure a consistency of approach that aims to maximise fairness to all groups of learners, including equality groups. Quantitative and qualitative evidence used before and during awarding meetings (such as statistical outcome data and assessment evidence) corresponds to the cohort as a whole. Grade boundary decisions at upper A, A and C are determined using this process and computed for all other grades. This decision is then applied equally to the entire cohort of learners with no exceptions; therefore, no actions are provided.

Advance equality of opportunity

This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach do not have either a positive or negative impact on this equality group. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner which promotes equality of opportunity between all learners. Regardless of sex,

grade boundaries are set in line with the intended demand of the assessment and are adjusted appropriately if the assessment did not function as intended — they are not affected by the performance of individual candidates or groups.

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Foster good relations

This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach do not have either a positive or negative impact on this equality group. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner, which fosters good relations between all learners by ensuring that the standard of our qualifications is set appropriately and maintained over time and across courses.

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Protected characteristic: Sexual orientation

General equality duty

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Advance equality of opportunity

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Protected characteristic: Gender re-assignment (gender identity and transgender)

General equality duty

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corresponds to the cohort as a whole. Grade boundary decisions at upper A, A and C are determined using this process and computed for all other grades. This decision is then applied equally to the entire cohort of learners with no exceptions; therefore, no actions are provided.

Advance equality of opportunity

This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach do not have either a positive or negative impact on this equality group. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner which promotes equality of opportunity between all learners. Regardless of gender re-assignment, grade boundaries are set in line with the intended demand of the assessment and are adjusted appropriately if the assessment did not function as intended — they are not affected by the performance of individual candidates or groups.

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Protected characteristic: Marriage or civil partnership

General equality duty

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Advance equality of opportunity

This approach is rooted in SQA's well-established awarding processes. The aims of this approach do not have either a positive or negative impact on this equality group. It is an inherent feature of this approach that it applies to every learner which promotes equality of opportunity between all learners. Regardless of marital status, grade boundaries are set in line with the intended demand of the assessment and are adjusted appropriately if the assessment did not function as intended — they are not affected by the performance of individual candidates or groups.

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Protected characteristic: Pregnancy or maternity

General equality duty

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

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Advance equality of opportunity

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corresponds to the cohort as a whole. Grade boundary decisions at upper A, A and C are determined using this process and computed for all other grades. This decision is then applied equally to the entire cohort of learners with no exceptions; therefore, no actions are provided.

Considered by SQA: Care experience (where relevant)

General equality duty

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Although the data does point to an attainment gap based on the learner's experience of care, it is not considered as a characteristic during the awarding and grade boundary process and the approach does not address this.

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Advance equality of opportunity

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Rationale

If you are proceeding with a decision that may have a negative impact and are not putting in place actions to mitigate against this, please explain how this is objectively justified.

While no negative impacts have been identified, SQA does acknowledge that there are attainment gaps highlighted within this report. SQA does not feel these are as a result of the grade boundary and awarding processes and approach, but are reflective of wider societal trends across the UK.