

//EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy title:	Shared Parental Leave
Policy lead/ owner:	HR Business Partner
Others involved in EqIA assessment group	Assessment group included: HR Adviser, HR Adviser, HR Adviser
Policy implementation date:	21/02/2023

1 Framing the policy

1.1 Briefly describe the outcomes, aims and purpose of the policy:

This policy sets out the entitlements and support available to employees who wish to take shared parental leave.

The aims of this policy are to:

- help employees understand the rules and regulations which apply to shared parental leave.
- let employees see what rights and benefits apply to them.
- inform employees of their obligations regarding notification.

1.2 Is the policy new or being changed, reviewed or stopped?

Review in line with Policy review cycle.

1.3 Who is affected by this policy?

This policy applies to all eligible employees who have a contract of employment with SRUC.

1.4 Are there any other SRUC policies that may be affected by this policy?

[Special Leave](#), [Paternity/Partner Leave](#), [Maternity Leave](#), [Flexible Working Policy](#), [Paternal Leave](#), [Adoption Leave](#), [Attendance Management Policy](#), [Career Break Policy](#).

Evidence relevant to the policy including consultation

The information you gather in this section will:

- help you to understand the importance of your policy/ practice/ process/ service for different equality groups,
- inform the depth of equality impact assessment you need to do (this should be proportional to the potential impact on equality groups), and
- provide justification and an audit trail behind your decisions, including where it is agreed an equality impact assessment is not required.

1.5 Evidence: Set out in the table what you know about the experiences of people in terms of each equality group. Consider the diversity within each group (e.g. experiences of people from different religions or faiths) as well as the differences between groups. There may also be cumulative barriers experienced by people when you look at more than one group together (e.g. experiences of women of different minority ethnic groups, so the intersectional impact of sex and race).

General evidence

The policy is developed in line with legislation explained here [Shared Parental Leave and Pay: Eligibility for birth parents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and has been reviewed against the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) guide on maternity leave and rights [How shared parental leave works: Shared parental leave and pay - Acas](#)

Shared Parental Leave is open to all eligible SRUC employees. To qualify for Shared Parental Leave, the employee must share the main responsibility for the care of the child at the time of the birth/placement for adoption. The mother and partner must have worked for their employers continuously for at least 26 weeks up to the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

According to [People Management](#), the UK government introduced Shared Parental Leave in 2015 to help drive a cultural shift in relation to the gender pay gap by allowing working couples to split up to 50 weeks of statutory leave and 37 weeks of statutory pay on the birth or adoption of a child. It is estimated that in the financial year of 2019/20, only 3.6 per cent of eligible fathers took shared parental leave. This is in line with [findings from the CIPD](#), which state the uptake of shared parental leave specifically in relation to men, remains low, 1% of those entitled to take up the opportunity. Data on other genders from external sources is not readily available.

These findings are in line with SRUC internal data which shows 0.23% of employees took Shared Parental Leave between April 2021 and March 2022. This equates to a limited amount of internal data in relation to overall employee proportions and shared parental leave trends.

Although uptake is low, we ultimately conclude that the policy closely reflects the ACAS guidelines and covers SRUC's statutory obligations. The policy has been developed to be inclusive and will be promoted to increase uptake of shared parental leave.

You can add more rows to present the evidence if required.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/ practice/ process/ service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
Age	Internal data	<p>According to SRUC internal data, the highest proportion age range of employees are between 50-54 at 13.5% in 2022. This is followed by employees aged 55 to 59 at 12.1%.</p> <p>Of the employees taking up shared parental leave, the highest proportion (66.6%) were aged between 25-34, 33.3% were aged between 35-44.</p>
Disability	Internal data	<p>7.22% of SRUC employees report having a disability. 33.3% of the employees who took SPL in 2022 declared a disability. In 2022, 83.6% of SRUC employees declared as having no known disability. This increased in 2023 to 83.9%. There is also a slight increase of the number of employees declaring a disability between 2022 and 2023, 7.2% to 7.8% respectively.</p> <p>SRUC promotes engagement with the policy to people who identify with this protected characteristic and directs employees to alert HR if the policy presents any barriers. The EQIA group discussed the importance of accessible formatting and easy accessibility. Disability is not directly relevant to the shared parental leave policy, as the ability to apply for shared parental leave is related to length of service.</p>
Race	Internal Data	<p>Equality data is collated by SRUC on Race and Ethnicity, there is limited internal data through the SPL policy. Shared Parental Leave is available to all employees that meet the criteria, regardless of race. 33.3% of employees taking shared parental leave declared themselves as White</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/ practice/ process/ service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		British, the remaining 67% chose not to declare their ethnicity. Given the uptake of Shared Parental Leave and undeclared race and ethnicity data, there is no statistically significant data to show any trend between race and ethnicity and Shared Parental Leave. Furthermore, the policy allows for the promotion of good relations as the related adoption policy is inclusive of adoption from overseas
Sex	Internal Data	<p>In 2022 57.7% of SRUC employees identify as female, 40.2% as male, 0.2% identify as other and just over 2% of employees prefer not to say. In comparison 51% of Scotland's population are women, 49% are men.</p> <p>All employees who took SPL in 2022 were male. All employees had also taken paternity/partner leave prior to the SPL, suggesting that employees are interested in taking longer periods of leave irrespective of gender. There is a variance of 17.5% between in favour of employees identifying as female in a male/female comparison but this does not equate to under representation.</p> <p>The shared parental leave policy is available to all eligible staff regardless of sex or gender and no employee will be denied leave based on this characteristic.</p> <p>The policy uses gender neutral language throughout. We will continue to promote this policy and monitor uptake, disaggregated by gender reassignment.</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/ practice/ process/ service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
Gender Reassignment		<p>Equality data is collated by SRUC on Gender Reassignment, there is limited internal data through the Shared Parental Leave policy. The policy uses gender neutral language throughout.</p> <p>Gender reassignment is not a barrier to the uptake of shared parental leave within SRUC. This policy ensures that any employee who has a gender reassignment history will be entitled to apply for shared parental leave without being discriminated against.</p> <p>Gender reassignment is not a barrier to the uptake of shared parental leave within SRUC.</p>
Sexual orientation		<p>Equality data is collated by SRUC on Sexual orientation, however there is limited internal data through the SPL policy. Sexual Orientation is not a barrier to the uptake of shared parental leave within SRUC, this policy will allow any employee, no matter their sexual orientation to apply for shared parental leave without being discriminated against.</p>
Religion or Belief		<p>Equality data is collated by SRUC on Religion or Belief however there is limited internal data through the Shared parental leave policy.</p> <p>Employees taking shared parental leave in 2022 did not declare any religion or belief. This is in line with the overall employee proportions in relation to Religion and Belief, the highest percentage of which declared no religion or belief, 41.3% in 2022. Employees declaring no Religion or Belief has increased, with a 2% variance in 2022, and 7% variance in 2023.</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	https://maternityaction.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Shared-	<p>Internal SRUC data shows 21 employees took Maternity Leave in 2022. The shared parental leave policy has the potential to foster good relations through promotion within the SRUC Maternity Intranet and</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/ practice/ process/ service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	<p>Parental-Leave-briefing-May-2021.pdf</p> <p>Internal Data</p> <p>Shared Parental Leave: Exploring Variations in Attitudes – K Twamley (2020)</p>	<p>Policy. This characteristic is not a barrier to applying for shared parental leave.</p> <p>Despite internal promotion and external government promotion, uptake of shared parental leave has remained low, leading Maternity Action group to request the initiative be replaced in order to gain equity of childcare within households with a view on lessening the gender pay gap. According to Maternity Action, the reason for the low uptake is not due to lack of demand, but due to design flaws, specifically referring to it as transferable maternity leave, and not a standalone benefit. This speaks to SRUC internal data(?); out of the eleven employees who took paternity/partner leave in 2021, two employees took Shared Parental Leave which would suggest that employees are interested in taking a longer period of leave off. SRUC offer similar terms to those taking Shared parental Leave as Maternity leave. According to recent research, a high proportion of expectant Mothers express a favourable view of shared parental leave but highlighted the role of social norms in relation to career advancement and the unusualness of fathers taking shared parental leave as a barrier to uptake which may help in understanding SRUC employees' possible reluctance to take up the opportunity.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	<p>Feelings, relationships and pregnancy - NHS (www.nhs.uk)</p> <p>Shared leave, happier parent couples? Parental leave and</p>	<p>Equality data is collated by SRUC on marriage or civil partnership. There is limited internal data through the SPL policy. However, research shows that a new child can sometimes put pressure on relationships. SRUC has recently launched a safe leave procedure for employees who may have experienced GBV.</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy/ practice/ process/ service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	<p><u>relationship satisfaction in Germany – 2022</u></p> <p><u>Same-sex male parents get on average 22 fewer weeks of paid parental leave than heterosexual couples in 29 OECD countries</u></p>	<p>Shared Parental Leave was initially drafted as a way of addressing the gender pay gap and allow greater flexibility (Is this fact?). Recent research from Europe in relation to Heterosexual couples, suggests parents who had taken shared parental leave have a higher relationship satisfaction. Research into parental leave of same-sex couples in 34 countries, found only four countries which offer the same parental leave for all couples, suggesting same-sex male couples in the UK receive 2 weeks fewer leave. This research again highlights social norms in relation to care giving being a feminine role and wider marriage inequality.</p> <p>SRUC internal data confirms the number of employees to take up shared parental leave to be low, however Marriage or Civil Partnership does not present a barrier to applying for this leave.</p>

1.6 Consultation and stakeholder involvement: Speaking to people who will be affected by your policy/ practice/ process/ service can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups. Describe below what you learned from the consultation/ involvement. Consultation can take time so make sure that you build this into your policy review/ development timeline.

This policy is currently being developed in consultation with all SRUC recognised Trades Unions, Prospect, EIS and Unison, who represent all staff throughout the organisation.

In addition, as this is an internal policy, SRUC will also consult with all employees through the policy review process. These include SRUC Rainbow Network.

This policy will be launched through with all family friendly policies to increase awareness.

1.7 Record here if you need to undertake a full equality impact assessment based on your evidence above.

Outcome of Step 2 following initial evidence gathering and relevance to equality characteristics	Yes/ No (Y or N)	Next steps
There is no relevance to equality	No	Proceed to sign off (step 5) to agree with decision makers that no EqIA is required based on current evidence
There is relevance to some or all of the equality groups	Yes	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA
It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all of the equality groups	Yes	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA

2 Impact on equality groups and changes to policy

You must consider the three aims of the general duty for each protected characteristic. The following questions will help:

- **Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?** Yes. This will be mitigated by ensuring confidentiality and promoting a fair and consistent application of the policy. The policy offers legislative minimum requirements. SRUC offers support through the Grievance Policy and Dignity at Work policy to ensure that any potential discrimination, victimisation or harassment can be investigated and addressed. The data around Shared Parental Leave will be reported on under the PSED through the HR MI reporting.
- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved? The shared parental leave policy should advance opportunity for those employees protected by "Pregnancy and maternity" and other employees who have caring responsibilities. The policy is available to all employees, regardless of sex. The policy uses inclusive language throughout.

- **Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved? Through the promotion of the equality section of the Policy scope through the rainbow network.

SRUC will launch this policy with all family friendly policies (maternity, adoption/surrogacy, paternity/partner) to promote awareness and hopefully lead to an increase of uptake.

2.1 Does the policy have any impacts (whether intended or unintended, positive or negative) on any of the equality characteristics? In the tables below, record the impact of the policy, as it is planned or as it operates, might have on each equality characteristic and describe what changes in policy or actions will be required to mitigate that impact or to take advantage of a positive impact.

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
Age	Potential for discrimination			X	The policy applies to all employees of SRUC employees regardless of ages. Length of service is the only prohibitive factor, meaning new employees may not be eligible to apply, however this is relevant regardless of age.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Disability	Potential for discrimination	X			The policy uses inclusive language. The policy is formatted to promote accessibility. The policy also offers the employee to access alternative formats.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					The policy will be published with the option of immersive format and accessibility mode. The Policy is applicable to all regardless of disability status.
Race	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC does not restrict access to the policy based on this protected characteristic.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Sex	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC acknowledge the link between the uptake of Shared Parental Leave and sex. SRUC also acknowledges the link between employees who have accessed the paternity/partner leave policy and shared parental leave policy – the acknowledgement that the maternity leave policy offers an enhanced entitlement compared to the paternity/partner leave. The policy highlights the option of flexible working to all employees equally. The managers guidance prompts managers to proactively discuss flexible working options with employees during their leave
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					to take into consideration the requires 14 weeks' notice for flexible working. Managers guidance updated to include conversations around team vacancies during leave.
Gender Reassignment	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC does not restrict access to the policy based on this protected characteristic. The policy uses gender neutral language throughout.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Sexual orientation	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC does not restrict access to the policy based on this protected characteristic. The policy uses gender neutral language throughout.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Religion or Belief	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC does not restrict access to the policy based on this protected characteristic.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Pregnancy or maternity	Potential for discrimination	X			SRUC does not restrict access to the policy based on this protected characteristic. The shared parental leave policy is promoted within the maternity
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					policy. Shared parental leave is promoted across all family care leave policies and will be highlighted during booked HR drop-in sessions
Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC have a safe leave policy in place to support employees who experience GBV. SRUC will promote all family friendly policies through the Rainbow staff network and HR drop-in sessions.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

2.2 Think about and describe below how your assessment impacts on your policy review/ development timeline including but not limited to:

- Procurement criteria: do you need to include specific equality criteria as part of the technical specification ?
- Communication plan/ products: do you need to communicate with people affected by this policy/ practice/ service/ process in a specific format (e.g. audio, subtitled video, different languages)?
- Cost: do you propose any actions because of this assessment which will incur additional cost?
- Resources: do the actions you propose require additional or specialist resource to deliver them?

2.3 Record the outcome of this assessment below having considered the potential or actual impacts of your policy/ practice/ process/ service on equality groups. Choose from one of the following (mark with an X or delete as appropriate):

Note: You must take action to remove barriers or take advantage of positive opportunities BEFORE the policy goes live.

Please select (X)	Implications for the policy/ practice/ process/ service
X	No major change: Your assessment demonstrates that the policy service is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.
	Adjust the policy: You need to take steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality of to foster good relations. You have set actions to address this and have clear ways of monitoring the impact of the policy when implemented.
	Continue the policy: The policy will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. You have justified this with this assessment and shown how this decision is compatible with our obligations under the public sector equality duty. When you believe any discrimination can be objectively justified you must record in this assessment what this is and how the decision was reached.
	Stop and remove the policy: The policy will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.

3 Monitoring policy impact and further actions

It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your policy/ practice/ process/ service on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. Your monitoring information will also inform a future review of the policy.

3.1 Record in the table below how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy/ practice/ process/ service on equality groups. In the table below you should:

- list the relevant measures,
- Identify who or which team is responsible for implementing or monitoring any changes

- Where the measure will be reported to (e.g. committee, ELT, Board) and how often.

Measure	Lead department/ individual	Reporting (where/ frequency)
Shared Parental leave uptake	HR Business Support Data and Reporting Analyst	Annual
Flexible working application on the back of leave	HR Business Support Data and Reporting Analyst	Annual

3.2 Record further actions or changes required after the policy is implemented in the table below. Make it clear if there are no outstanding actions.

Action	Lead department/ individual	Action target date
Recording flexible working outcomes on tracker	Hub Team leader	End March 2023
Record Shared Parental Leave uptake on tracker and ensure CBS updated	Hub Team leader	End March 2023
Promote Shared Parental Leave as part of the family leave HR drop-in sessions	Wider HR Team – individual sessions assigned	End May 2023

4 Sign off and future review

Equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Head of Service/ Department, even where an EqIA is not required. Also note here when you plan to review the policy and accompanying EqIA which should be no later than 5 years from policy implementation.

4.1 Senior Responsible Owner/ Committee sign off.

Job/ Committee title: Chief People Officer

Date: 17/03/2023

4.2 Equality impact assessment review date.

Date: 16/03/2029

Important: You must send the final version of this equality impact assessment to:

- the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Lead.
- the Communications team for publication on SRUC's equality page on the external website.

Document control		
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