EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy title:	Probation Policy
Policy lead/ owner:	HR Business Partner
Others involved in EqIA assessment group	Assessment group included: HR Adviser HR Adviser
Policy implementation date:	01/11/2023

1   Framing the policy

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

This policy aims to support new employees to SRUC who are subject to probation and details the process should an employee not meet the standards expected of them during their probation process. It ensures that all employees are treated fairly and consistently and given timely and appropriate support to help you achieve these standards.

   The aims of this policy are to:
- Set out a structured procedure for all new employees to welcome them to SRUC, provide initial training, explain required standards and set objectives for the probationary period.
- Set out a structured procedure for all new employees to introduce them to the main duties and responsibilities of their post and to allow the opportunity for both the individual and the manager to objectively assess whether or not the employee is suitable for the role.

- Provide a framework for addressing any concerns, offering support and training to address perceived unsatisfactory performance or conduct at an early stage.

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

Reviewed in line with SRUC Policy review cycle.

1.3 Who is affected by this policy?

The Probation period applies to all new employees to SRUC, including those on fixed term contracts.

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

Capability Policy, Attendance Management Policy, Flexible Working Policy.

2 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.

2.1 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
In the year May 2022 – April 2023 there were 215 employees who were taken through the SRUC probation process. Of these 215, 47 were completed successfully, 5 were moved on to MPM process before completing the full probation process. 32 have not yet set objectives.

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	More than a third of probationers (33.4% - 74/215) in the period were aged between 25 – 34. Followed by just under a quarter (22.7%) aged 35 – 44. 18% were aged 45 – 54, 15.3% aged 16 – 24 and 8.8% aged 55- 69. Out of the 32 employees who have not yet started the probation process by setting objectives 18.75% were aged 55-69 (almost half of employee in this age group – 2% did not receive a probation. Of the 33 employees aged 16-24 who started with SRUC in this period, 24.2% (8) of them did not receive a probation and no objectives were set.
Disability	Internal data	7.39% of SRUC employees report having a disability.

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).
		81% of employees on probation reported having no known disability. 12% of employees on probation reported having a disability. 4.18% prefer not to say, 2.79% information has not been provided.
Ethnicity	Internal data	The majority (53%) of employee on probation reported Scottish ethnicity. Followed by 20% British and 11% as Other.
Gender	Internal data

ONS | 59% of SRUC employees identify as female, 38% as male, 0.2% identify as other and just over 2% of employees prefer not to say/unknown. In comparison, 51% of Scotland's population are women, 49% men.

59% of employees in this period identified as female and 38% as male. 1.86% is unknown and 0.93% prefer not to say.

The numbers of new starts on probation mirrors the overall SRUC population.

Of the 32 employees who did not receive a probation 47% identified as male, and 50% as female. |
| **Gender Reassignment** | Internal data | The data collection is insubstantial for reporting |
| **Sexual orientation** | Internal data

ONS | SRUC data shows 74.9% of employee's sexual orientation is heterosexual, 21.7% is unknown/prefer not to say and 3.4% of employees identify within LGBT+ groups. In comparison 95.2% of Scotland's population identify as |

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).
		Heterosexual or straight, 1.8% as gay or lesbian, 1.6% as bisexual, 0.6 as other and 0.7% Don't know or refuse. 86.5% of probationers identified as Heterosexual, just over 5% identify as Bisexual, 1.39% as Lesbian and 6.97% prefer not to say or did not give data.
Religion or Belief	Internal data	The majority of probationers (62.8%) reported having no religion or philosophical belief. This is followed by 13.5% of employees who reported Christian – Protestant.
Pregnancy or maternity	Internal data	SRUC does not currently collect pregnancy or maternity data for new starts and probationers through Equality monitoring.
Marriage or civil partnership	Internal data	The majority of probationers reported being Married (39%), 12 then Single (34.88%), 13 and Living Together (20.46%) Of the 32 probationers who did not receive a full probation 34.28% are married, 40.6% are single and 18.75% are Living Together.

2.2   **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.

2.3 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

3 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?**
- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not**? How can this be achieved?
- **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?
    3.1 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		Unconscious bias may lead to managers viewing younger employees as less experienced, or older employees as not having the skills expected. SRUC encourages all employees to take unconscious bias training to reduce this. The policy will be launched with managers guidance and drop in sessions to encourage managers to look at all employees objectively as part of their probation and requirements of the role. SRUC are also going through a full pay and grading review which will mean all role profiles are being reviewed and standards will be explicit and clear for all employees. Attendance at work may be impacted for employees who are experiencing menopausal symptoms, SRUC has a Menopause and Menstruation Policy in place
	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 support employees including reasonable adjustments.
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. The policy will be published with the option of immersive format and accessibility mode. All new employees joining SRUC receive a health screening as part of onboarding, these health checks highlight any required reasonable adjustment required. The policy and guidance ensure that all employees are given any reasonable adjustments before proceeding with the procedure. The policy advises that managers should consider reasonable timeframes, including extended timescales for completion, for review at all stages of the procedure.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Race	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC includes a statement in the policy to encourage engagement with people of
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			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	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			different races and directs employees to alert HR if the policy presents any barriers. We will continue to promote this policy and monitor uptake, disaggregated by race.
Sex	Potential for discrimination		X		The policy advises that managers should consider reasonable timeframes, including extended timescales for completion, for review at all stages of the procedure. Managers are reminded to consider working patterns, especially part time, when setting review periods in the policy and supporting guidelines. The policy uses inclusive language. Attendance at work may be impacted for employees who are experiencing menopausal or menstruation symptoms, SRUC has a Menopause and Menstruation Policy in place to support employees including reasonable adjustments.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Gender Reassignment	Potential for discrimination			X	The policy advises that managers should consider reasonable timeframes, including extended timescales for completion, for review at all stages of the procedure.
	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	
					Employees taking any absence from work should have timescales considered in line with performance. SRUC promotes engagement with the policy to people who identify with this protected characteristic directs employees to alert HR if the policy presents any barriers. The policy uses gender neutral language throughout. We will continue to promote this policy and monitor, disaggregated by gender reassignment.
Sexual orientation	Potential for discrimination			X	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 policy uses gender neutral language throughout the policy. The policy will be open to all employee for feedback, including the staff Rainbow Staff Network.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Religion or Belief	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC promotes engagement with the policy to people who identify with this protected
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			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	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			characteristic directs employees to alert HR if the policy presents any barriers.
Pregnancy or maternity	Potential for discrimination			X	Managers should consider period of leave when reviewing an employee's probation. The guidance asks for a pragmatic approach to any employee who is due to go on family friendly leave during their probation to ensure that employees are not put at detriment. The policy advises that managers should consider reasonable timeframes, including extended timescales for completion, for review at all stages of the procedure. Managers are reminded to consider working patterns, especially part time, when setting review periods in the policy and supporting guidelines.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)	Potential for discrimination			X	SRUC promotes engagement with the policy to people who identify with this protected characteristic directs employees to alert HR if the policy presents any barriers.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

3.2   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?

3.3   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.

4   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.

4.1   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)
Completion of Probation within procedure timescales	HR Business Data and Reporting	Monthly/Annual
Continue to promote and use the SFC guidance for completion of onboarding documents, linked with start dates.	HR Hub	Continually, at onboarding
HR collation of employee equality and personal data for HESA and monitoring	HR Data	Annual

4.2   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
No actions		

5   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.

5.1   Senior Responsible Owner/ Committee sign off.
Job/ Committee title: Chief People Officer
Date: 18/01/2024

5.2   Equality impact assessment review date.
Date: 18/01/2029

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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