

Equality Impact Assessment - Screening Review

A screening review:

- is undertaken as the exception where the policy owner has approached the Equality Team and reached agreement that a full Equality Impact Assessment (“EqIA”) may not be proportionate,
- can be undertaken on policies and practices where there is little or no evidence that the policy or practice would have an impact on people,
- is not published but does provide a record of the rationale as to why it is not proportionate or appropriate that a full EqIA is not required,
- is considered by the Equality Management Review Group who either accept the information provided in the screening review or require a full EqIA to be completed. Further information on this point is provided at the end.

We describe all our policies and practices as ‘policies’.

If you require any support or assistance in completing this screening review please contact Brynley Pearlstone, Equality Impact Assessment Manager (brynley.pearlstone@sqa.org.uk)

Name of Policy

Accredited Qualification Zero Uptake Policy

Aims or Rationale of Policy

The rationale for this policy is to facilitate SQA’s Accreditation Coordination Group (ACG) removing the accreditation of any qualification that has no uptake for a period of two consecutive years and where there is no clear evidence from the awarding body (AB) of candidate demand for the qualification.
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It is intended to ensure that awarding bodies approved by SQA Accreditation manage their qualifications portfolio through regular and systematic review. This policy will be applied when no actions for qualifications with zero update have been undertaken by awarding bodies.

Does the policy directly affect staff or learners? Provide reasoning for your response
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As this relates to qualifications with no uptake there is no impact on learners (since there are none for the associated qualifications).

In application the policy is prompting staff in the AB to undertake qualification review and actions that they are reasonably expected to anyway. As such, there is no perceived additional impact on staff caused by any actions resulting from the policy.
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Would there be any data or wider evidence, within SQA and externally that would be useful in considering the reasons for a particular policy? <i>(For example, is this policy due to a national strategy or feedback from users)</i>
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Can you think of any evidence that would be useful to have to assist your understanding as to why SQA requires this policy?

The primary reason for this policy is to encourage ABs to review and manage their qualification portfolio. If there have been no learners registered for a live qualification for a period of two years, it is reasonable for the currency/value of the qualification to be questioned. In doing so there are basically two available options for ABs: undertake
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supporting actions to better market and encourage uptake of the qualification (for which they are asked to provide a rationale for the qualification to continue to be offered), or; make the decision to cease offering the qualification and make a withdrawal submission to ACG.

It might be useful for SQA Accreditation to keep a log of all qualifications included in zero uptake communications to ABs – recording all relevant details, title, AB, dates and, actions – to provide an ongoing monitor for review and analysis, which could provide important trend analysis and identify any potential areas of concern.

Can you think of any evidence that would be useful to consider how effective this policy might be? *Or how you would be able to find out the impact on employees or learners? For example, is there any current employee monitoring data? Have any responses from a learner panel been collected that may be relevant? Is there any current evidence from SQA Networks (the Networks themselves could be asked, or the Equality Team or HR).*

Recording the resultant actions for qualifications included in zero uptake qualifications to ABs could be useful – showing which qualifications are withdrawn and which are continued following the prompt of the inquiry from SQA Accreditation.

We could ask relevant ABs (ie. we do not need to ask ABs that have not had any qualifications with zero uptake) for their views on the policy.

Would this policy apply to all of SQA or across all staff or learners? If the policy does not affect a large group of staff or learners, could it have the potential to significantly affect a small group of people?

This policy is the responsibility of SQA Accreditation staff only. However, if there are SQA awarding body qualifications that have zero uptake then relevant SQA (AB) staff would be contacted and be required to take action/s in line with the policy. It is important to recognise however that the policy is about encouraging monitoring, review and decisions regarding qualifications, which are actions that should be taking place by these staff anyway.

As mentioned before with it relating to qualifications that have no registrations there are therefore no learners being impacted

Could this policy affect how a person interacts with SQA functions, both internally for staff and externally for learners? Provide a rationale for the response.

This policy facilitates decisions and actions that should already be undertaken by staff. Therefore, if this hasn't happened for zero uptake qualifications then it could be seen to have the affect of reminding staff of something they are supposed to do. As such, this is regarded as being of positive impact.

As mentioned before with it relating to qualifications that have no registrations there is therefore no learners to be impacted

Take the example of one Protected Characteristic – Disability.

Could this policy be relevant to someone with a disability?

Could this policy affect how someone with a disability interacts with SQA?

If you are unsure, how could you find this out? [note – not all disabilities can be 'seen' A useful starting point for further information is here

<https://sganow.sharepoint.com/sites/C196800107/SitePages/Disability-Network.aspx> on SQA's Disability Network intranet page.

It is not believed that this policy directly impacts someone with a disability. However it might be prudent when publishing the revised policy to ask all ABs for their view on this and their view on potential (or actual) impact on any of the protected characteristics.

The remaining Protected Characteristics are located [here](#). Look at a sample from the list and answer:

Could this policy be relevant to someone with this Protected Characteristic?

Could this policy affect how someone with this Protected Characteristic interacts with SQA?

If you are unsure, how could you find this out?

Similar to the above response there is understood to be no direct impact in the application of this policy on someone with any of the protected characteristics. It may however be beneficial for SQA Accreditation to undertake a brief survey of ABs in this regard.

Has anyone in your team undertaken an EqIA?

Have any related policies had an EqIA? (There are similar functions across SQA that are implemented by different teams.)

Yes. EqIA's have been completed by our Head of Service and Senior Regulation Manager.

Other policies have had EqIA's however none are directly related to the Zero Uptake Policy.

Check with the Equality team as they will be able to help as to whether there might be an EqIA which is relevant to your business area and will be able to advise if the policy is relevant to SQA's overall Equality Outcomes.

Please submit this completed form to equality@sqa.org.uk

This form will initially be reviewed by the Equality Impact Assessment Manager who will return to you with any relevant supporting advice.

After which the screening review will be considered by the Equalities Management Review Group at their next scheduled meeting. The group will either:

- Agree with the screening review and record its reasoning,
- Agree with the overall screening review; however, require the policy owner to undertake further actions to complete a sufficiently robust screening review,
- Disagree with the screening review decision and provide feedback as to why a full EqIA is required.

The group will provide its decision within five working days of the meeting.