



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba

Mainstreaming and Equality Outcome Report 2021-2025

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Summary: This is the SFC equality mainstreaming report for the period 2021-2025. It details our activity to support the colleges and universities that we fund meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. It also details our own work as a public body to deliver on the Public Sector Equality Duty. This report also details progress made against the Equality Outcomes set for the period 2017-2021, and we set out our new equality outcomes for the period 2021-2025.

FAO: Staff and students of Scotland's colleges and/or universities and SFC staff

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Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the strategic equality outcomes set by SFC for the period 2021-2025 and to reflect on the progress made in the period since our last equality update report published in 2019. This report has five distinct sections.
 - Section 1 sets out the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the context we are working in.
 - Section 2 sets out the activity we have undertaken to mainstream equality in our work.
 - Section 3 outlines details about us as an organisation including key datasets including the profile of applicants for jobs at SFC.
 - Section 4 outlines our progress in delivering our published equality outcomes from 2017-2021.
 - Section 5 outlines our equality outcomes for 2021-2025.
2. We are proud that we have made progress against the equality outcomes set. The diversity of our student profile has improved and the quality of the information we have about the diversity of the student body continues to improve. This means that in 2021 for the first time we will be able to publish statistics about gender identity, religion and belief and sexual orientation declared by entrants to Further and Higher Education alongside data about their age, disability status, gender and race.
3. Alongside these improvements we recognise that we have more to do to tackle continued under representation in our workforce and we have set ourselves an ambitious equality outcome to make sure we take the steps necessary so that we reap the rewards that a diverse workforce brings.
4. Our commitment to continual improvement underpins our approach to embedding equality in our work and is the reason why SFC was the first Non-Departmental Public Body to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) designed to put more emphasis on our compliance with the General Duties of the PSED and with the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC). More information about our MoU is noted in the first section of this mainstreaming report.
5. The content of this report demonstrates that we have taken a pro-active approach to ensure that we consider equality effectively in our core activities. In addition, information included in this report shows that we have taken every opportunity to lead by example and encourage the colleges and universities

that we work with to consider how they advance equality and diversity in their activity. As such, we are pleased to be able to show that the advancement of equality permeates through every aspect of our work. However, we know that there is always more that can be achieved. Our reviewed equality outcomes highlight the areas where we recognise that we need to make more effort to tackle inequalities. We have committed to adding to our equality outcomes by September 2021 and will at that time set a number of national equality outcomes specifically related to student experience. These will be based on evidence and will be supported by measurement frameworks.

Section 1: Context

About this report

6. In this report we set out our objectives to advance equality and tackle inequalities for the period 2021-2025 and we report on the progress we have made between 2017 and 2021. This report is split into five sections. In this section we set out the legislative and current policy context that directs our work to advance equality. The rest of the report is structured as follows:
 - 1) Section 2: we provide an overview of the work we have taken to advance equality and mainstream equality in our work.
 - Section 3: we provide information about SFC as an employer.
 - Section 4: we include a progress report against our equality outcomes for the period 2017-2021.
 - Section 5: we set out information about our new equality outcomes for the period 2021-2025.

Public sector equality duty

7. The public sector equality duty (PSED) consists of a general duty and specific duties. The general duty consists of three main needs. The specific duties support delivery of the general duties and provide a helpful framework for SFC to demonstrate compliance with the PSED.

The general duty

8. The general duty requires SFC, in the exercise of our functions, to have due regard to the need to:
 - 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people from different equality groups, considering the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Met the needs of people with protected characteristics.
 - Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

- Foster good relations between people from different protected characteristics groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

The specific duties

9. The specific duties exist to help SFC develop evidence based policies and practices, improve transparency and accountability, and deliver better outcomes for everyone in Scotland. To meet the specific duties, SFC is required to:

- 1) Report on progress of mainstreaming the general duty into all functions every two years. Our last mainstreaming report was published in 2019.
 - Publish and deliver a set of equality outcomes that cover all protected characteristics (or explain why not all protected characteristics are covered) every four years. We first published our equality outcomes in 2013. Following a review we updated our equality outcomes in 2017 and this report provides a progress report against our equality outcomes.
 - Assess the impact of new and revised policies and practices against the needs of the general duty on an ongoing basis.
 - Gather information on the protected characteristics of employees and publish every two years, starting in 2013, as part of mainstreaming reports if not published elsewhere.
 - Publish board diversity information as part of mainstreaming reports from 2017. We were pleased to report that SFC benefitted from having a gender balanced board in our last report and this continues to be the case.
 - Publish gender pay gap information every two years, and publish statements on equal pay and occupational segregation for gender, race and disability every four years, starting in 2013.
 - Have due regard to the general duty in specified procurement practices on an ongoing basis.
 - Publish the above information in a manner that is accessible.

SFC's Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability

10. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a helpful legislative lever that supports SFC to effect change, widen access and increase success in post-16 education in Scotland. In June 2020, Richard Lochhead MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, commissioned SFC to undertake a review of coherent provision and sustainability. The objectives of the review are:

- 1) To consider how best to achieve coherence and sustainability in the delivery of further and higher education during the COVID-19 crisis, EU exit transition, and beyond, while maintaining and enhancing quality.
 - To ensure the sectors can address the outcomes we need to achieve in Scotland.
 - To propose changes needed to SFC's funding, operations, and accountability frameworks in order to respond effectively to new challenges and opportunities.
 - To provide advice, where appropriate, to Scottish Ministers on relevant changes to policy, funding and accountability frameworks for tertiary education and research in Scotland.
11. A key element of the review especially in relation to equalities is our response to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way that we work overnight and the impact of lockdown has served both to highlight and exacerbate inequalities that persist in society and in further and higher education.
12. At SFC we quickly worked to identify the key risks to learning and to the safety of staff and students, developing an evidence base to help direct our work. We provided significant investment to ensure that students had access to emergency sources of funding and to support institutions take steps to address issues such as digital exclusion. More information about the range of funding measures that we put in place to offer support in the immediate term can be found on our website. We also increased our funding so that institutions could offer an increased number of places to Scottish domiciled students. These places were accessed by school leavers and individuals who were returning to full time education because of labour market changes. In addition, we provided funding to colleges and universities so that flexible, accredited, learning opportunities for people who need to retrain as a result of changes in employment opportunities.
13. More details on this review which include our response to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis can be found on our [Review web page](#) and we are aiming to publish the final report in early summer.
14. This review places equalities and students at the heart of everything we do. A key element to drive forward that commitment is our work with the EHRC. This is detailed below.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission and SFC Memorandum of Understanding

15. In recognition of the importance of the PSED and its relevance in effecting change and increasing success in post-16 education in Scotland SFC worked with the EHRC to develop a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MoU) designed to increase the scrutiny of compliance with the PSED in our engagement with colleges, universities and other funded bodies. The MoU was signed in March 2020 and commits SFC and the EHRC to working together to establish national equality outcomes for the tertiary education sector and to ensure that our activities take all reasonable steps to advance equality, tackle discrimination and foster good relations between groups. We are proud that SFC was the first public body in Great Britain to enter in this type of MoU with the EHRC and we are delighted that other public bodies are now following suit.

Equality Outcomes

16. We published updated equality outcomes in our last mainstreaming report dated 2017. At that time we set 2 internal facing equality outcomes and 5 external facing outcomes. These remained unchanged in 2019 and we published our progress against these in our [update report](#) in April 2019. Supporting data relating to our workforce is presented in Section 3 of this report and we have provided links to more detailed analysis reports that provide data about the entrants to Further and Higher education courses funded by SFC. Our progress against our equality outcomes from our last PSED reporting cycle is detailed in Section 4 of this report.
17. Our analysis and reporting extends beyond the protected characteristics covered by the PSED and includes data about Care-experienced students and students from different socio economic areas. This approach to reporting reflects the policy context in which we work and the targets that we working towards, particularly with regard to widening access.
18. As part of our MoU with the EHRC we committed to developing national equality outcomes that address persistent inequalities in the further and higher education sector. The [action plan that supports the MoU](#) details this work.
19. The impact of remote working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic combined with the SFC review means that SFC will not be setting equality outcomes that relate to student outcome and experience until September 2021. This timeframe will allow SFC to work with the EHRC to assess relevant evidence about the inequalities that have persisted over the last 10 years in further and higher education as well as addressing inequalities that are likely to persist or be exacerbated without intervention as a result of the consequences of the national lockdown and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These national

equality outcomes will replace the 'external' equality outcomes set in for the PSED reporting period 2017-2021.

20. Our new equality outcomes relevant to SFC as an employer, funder and sectoral oversight body are set out in [Section 5](#) of this report.

Section 2: Advancing Equality in SFC

Embedding equality in our policy and practice

Our approach

21. SFC is an evidence based organisation. We work hard to consider how our policies, guidance and funding for the sectors can help advance equality and tackle exclusion in the further and higher education sector. Accordingly, our inclusion work extends beyond protected characteristics and includes a focus on closing the attainment gap between the richest and poorest in our society. This means that we consider work that tackles disadvantage experienced by veterans, Care-experienced people, school children and people living in areas of socio economic disadvantage. And through the process of equality impact assessment we consider how this work promotes positive outcomes for people from all equality groups.

Our evidence

22. SFC is an official provider of statistics. This means that we work within agreed frameworks to prepare robust data sets. We employ statisticians and information management professionals so that we can develop profiles for staff and student numbers across the college and university sector. We use this information to identify trends and measure progress against objectives. We publish a range of technical reports that can be used by SFC and others as a data source for the purpose of effective policy making.
23. The statistics that are used in a variety of ways, such as:
 - 1) National and Official Statistics Reports.
 - Providing advice to Ministers.
 - Informing the decision-making process on Further and Higher Education policy in Scotland.
 - Inclusion in reports, briefings and news articles.
 - Academic research and public enquiry.
24. SFC also publishes technical guidance for Colleges and Universities on the data that institutions should use to collect and report progress on in their outcome agreements.
25. Our college collections now ask for data on 9 protected characteristics, with eight from the nine being mandatory (only gender identity is optional at present). It also has a flag for British Sign Language (BSL) to monitor this

outwith the disability categories.

26. Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) are currently running a consultation on potential changes and additions to the information collected in their Student and Staff records relating to personal characteristics and equality data.
27. These potential changes take into account changes to the information being collected in the national censuses and are further informed by discussions HESA have held with Advance HE about their proposed updates to questions, responses and guidance around the relevant fields.
28. One of the proposed changes is the addition of a new field to the Student record to indicate whether the student was currently pregnant or had been pregnant in the last year.
29. This information would be collected annually for each student at enrolment. The proposal is that this new field would be introduced for the Student Record for 2022-23.
30. The HESA consultation about changes to the collection of equality data opened on 17 March and closes on 17 June. Further information on this consultation is available at <https://consultation.hesa.ac.uk/data-innovation/personal-characteristics-equality-data/>
31. Over the last two years we have continued to invest in our Business Intelligence tools. Staff at SFC have access to Qlikview, allowing them to interrogate Outcome Agreement measures information at institutional level by various protected characteristics, including age, sex, disability and race as well as care experience. We have also developed a National Articulation Dashboard that allows users to interrogate articulation data by protected characteristics.

Publishing our data and reports

32. We have maintained the [INFACT](#) tool for external users to query college student data. This tool allows anyone who can access our website to generate a variety of custom data reports about the profile of college students.
33. We have made much more data publicly available via the Report on Widening Access background tables. This covers students, qualifiers, staff, retention and outcomes, as well as leaver destinations. That too is split by various protected characteristics.
34. We make reports like this one, and our technical data reports mentioned above, publicly available on our AA compliant website. We raise awareness of our publications using a range of channels and offer to provide documents in alternative formats if required.

35. We feature blogs and news stories on our website that highlight the importance of advancing equality in further and higher education and make every effort to ensure that information about what we do is easy to locate.
36. We operate subscriber mailing lists and encourage staff, students and members of the public to [register](#) for updates relevant to their interests. We have a specific subscriber list for people interested to hear more about our equality and inclusion work.
37. We also use twitter to share information about our work; our twitter address is @ScotFundCouncil.

Equality Impact Assessment

38. We have integrated Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) into our policy development process. Our impact assessments are led by policy area leads and should be completed before policies can be signed off by the SFC management team. However, we are mindful that we could be doing more to embed equality impact assessment in our work.
39. Our Equality and Diversity Group instructed a review of our published equality impact assessments in early 2019. This review found that staff understood the importance of conducting equality impact assessments but often had difficulty understanding what questions to ask or where to access relevant evidence and insight.
40. To improve the information literacy of staff we developed an evidence portal on our staff intranet page and a rapid equality impact assessment guide. These resources support policy teams to consider the questions that they needed to answer in the course of their equality impact assessment. Lead officers responsible for conducting an EIA are also able to ask for input in an equality impact assessment clinic session with the SFC equality lead.
41. We are once again reviewing our approach to equality impact assessment to ensure that our approach is consistent and is able to meet future requirements in respect of equality and human rights impact assessment.
42. To support the sector conduct equality impact assessments, Advance HE worked with representatives from colleges and universities to develop a toolkit to aid [strategic equality impact assessment](#). The toolkit was made available for use in 2020.
43. As part of our obligations to meet the requirements of the General Duty we will continue to critically review equality impact assessments provided to SFC in support of funding applications. Furthermore, we will ensure equality features appropriately in evaluation and impact reports from partner organisations in receipt of our funding.

Capacity building in the college and university sector

44. In 2020 SFC worked with EHRC to run workshops to provide good practice advice about equality outcome setting. These workshops build on the previous support funded by SFC and delivered by Advance HE to support the college and university sector meet the requirements of the PSED.
45. SFC provided funding to Advance HE from 2018 for a three year programme of work to support institutions embed equality in their work
46. Table 1 illustrates the range of activities forming the Advance HE work plan for the period 2018-2021.

Table 1: Advance HE Scotland programme – projects for 2018-21

ECU Scotland programme – projects for 2018-21	
Supporting institutions in meeting the Scottish specific duties – workshops and guidance ahead of reporting.	Scotland specific disability project - supporting improved outcomes for priority groups of disabled students, and students with specific types of impairments.
Tackling Racism on Campus project – this work was directed by a sector led steering group and produced a range of resources to support institutions to take action to challenge racism and support confident conversations about race.	Scotland biennial national conference –. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the 2020 conference and this was held virtually in March 2021.
Intersectionality and equality in student recruitment – supporting ambitious positive action measures and the adoption of intersectional approaches to better deliver GAP commitments and equality outcomes.	Strategic mainstreaming: developing strategic equality impact assessments – collaborate with colleges and universities to develop good practice guidance on strategic EIA.
Scottish violence against women project - develop tailored research and guidance and enable coordinated activity amongst colleges and universities. This work included a specific response to support individuals at risk of violence during lockdown.	Persistent inequality research – with EHRC and SFC, map out research relevant to the EHRC / SFC persistent inequality work.
Progressing staff equality in colleges – follow up sector survey, focus on an ageing workforce and disability.	Strategic Scottish race equality project - supporting the Scottish race network, and colleges and universities to meaningfully engage with race equality.
Scottish Athena SWAN support - tailored support for Scottish universities to achieve and sustain high rates of Scottish success so that participation in Athena Swan impacts positively on equality outcomes and targets set elsewhere (e.g. GAPs).	UK wide projects extended to Scotland: Research Excellence Framework (REF), charters (Athena Swan (AS)/Race Equality Charter (REC)), HE stats reports, stats development/consultation.

Source: Advance HE

48. SFC refined the Advance HE work plan in 2019. Changes included a new stream of work to produce resources for use across the whole sector to support a coherent response to the findings of the EHRC inquiry into racism on campus. Furthermore, SFC asked Advance HE to provide secretariat to a new Scottish Equality Forum, chaired by sector representatives. This group brings equality leads from colleges and universities together to engage with SFC, Scottish Government and others on topics relevant to equality in further and higher education.

Sharing good practice and working collaboratively

49. As well as our funding to Advance HE for the period 2018-2021 we work collaboratively with a range of organisations in order to promote good practice and involve a range of stakeholders in our work. Examples of these include our response in partnership with Deaf Action to the Scottish Government's BSL National Plan including a BSL Led Showcase event and our commitment to secure 80 mental health counsellors across the college and university sector working with organisations such as the Scottish Association for Mental Health and counselling organisations.

Mainstreaming equality in funding allocations

50. We use our engagement with colleges and universities to ensure that individual organisations are considering equality and diversity in their work. For example any application for strategic funding to support research or other activity must be accompanied by an equality impact assessment. In addition, our assessment of delivery against outcome agreements asks for demonstrable equality evidence.
51. In the current outcome agreement guidance institutions have been asked to commit to developing evidence based equality outcomes as part of their own PSED reporting and further, we have asked that all policy and practice is equality impact assessed.
52. As part of our MoU with the EHRC we have committed to reviewing the equality outcomes set by institutions. This work will be complete by September 2021. We will use this review to share good practice and encourage institutions who could improve their outcome setting to do so.
53. SFC provides annual grants to various non-institutional bodies in pursuit of sectoral objectives. SFC is either the main funder, buys specific services, or contributes a proportion of the organisation's funding (often as part of a UK-wide arrangement). These payments are not covered by SFC's Financial Memoranda with colleges and universities, and occur under a variety of mechanisms including Service Level Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding as well as Outcome Agreements. Examples include our funding

of Education Scotland and the Quality Assurance Agency. Our approach to embedding equality and diversity in these funding arrangements, including our allocation of time-limited Strategic funds remains as reported in our Mainstreaming Report of 2017.

54. All of the above actions mean SFC now has a standard process ensuring EIAs are undertaken prior to any organisation being considered for Strategic funding and that equality is considered in the reporting on the impact of this funding.
55. We are investing in the development of our staff so that we have a consistent approach assessment of the evidence of equality impact assessments submitted by stakeholders in receipt of SFC funding.

Section 3: Our diverse workforce

Overview

56. As at 31 March 2021 SFC has some 107.9 full time equivalent (FTE) employees. Our headcount can vary depending on secondments, use of agency staff and factors such as extended leave. Employees work across four Directorates with a small team working in the Chief Executive's Office. More details on the profile of the SFC workforce and applicants for vacancies with SFC are provided at the end of this section of the report.

Our approach and culture at SFC

57. SFC encourages employees to work flexibly. SFC staff can work reduced hours, compressed hours and working from home is also supported. Over the past year 2020-21 we have been working remotely from home in line with Government advice, and this will continue into 2021-22. As a consequence our formal office space which is fully accessible and equipped with a variety of work spaces, as well as specific adaptations for individual members of staff, has not been available. In moving to home working we have assessed individual needs and supported the provision of equipment to enable staff to work from home. The move to remote working has placed an added impetus to the need to ensure staff wellbeing, both mental and physical. We developed a wellbeing hub with guidance for staff and managers. We introduced compulsory training for all line managers about team mental health and wellbeing. We also ran wellbeing seminars for all staff aimed at maintaining good mental health.
58. Our approach to flexible working has developed further during the COVID-19 pandemic closely following the Government's Fair Work agenda. Through these principles we have ensured that staff are not disadvantaged due to suspected or actual COVID-19 related absences or where they are shielding or have had a higher than normal level of caring responsibilities. This has been achieved by ensuring there is considerable flexibility in working arrangements for all staff to enable them to balance work and caring commitments during the pandemic and the additional pressures caused by periods of lockdown.
59. We believe that our approach to flexible working contributes to our low turnover rates and our 100% return to work rate for new parents returning from maternity leave.
60. We also take staff involvement seriously. We work in partnership with Unite the Union when we are developing or reviewing staff policies. Consultation and negotiation on updating these policies takes place at SFC's Policies and Procedures Working Group (PPWG) and new/updated policies and procedures are ratified at the Joint Negotiation and Consultation Forum (JNCF).

61. We have already set out how our employees build equality into their work. However, it is important that our culture and values promote dignity and respect and value the differences of our employees.
62. As previously highlighted, staff working across each directorate have responsibilities to promote equality and ensure compliance in their work. SFC staff also participate in a range of activities to increase their equality knowledge and confidence.
63. In March 2021 SFC commissioned, through its contract with Advance HE, a leadership session with Dr John Amaechi, OBE. This session challenged SFC staff and leadership teams working across further and higher education in Scotland to consider their individual actions and how these advance, or hinder, equality in our work. The focus of the session was about race and racism but Dr Amaechi covered other aspects of inclusion. This webinar also provided an opportunity for SFC staff to hear from Khadija Mohammed, a senior lecturer in education, who has been leading work on behalf of SFC to produce resources to support institutions tackle racism on campus. More information about the steering group Khadija chaired and the work that they led can be found on the [Advance HE website](#).
64. Throughout the pandemic SFC funded work that enabled SFC staff and students and staff working in our colleges and universities to access a range of webinars addressing issues such as [allyship](#), [black lives matters](#), and [gender based violence](#). We have continually updated our intranet pages to ensure that staff can access to up-to-date research and opinion pieces on a range of topics. For example, we collated a list of social media accounts from thought leaders and academics who talk about inclusion so that SFC staff could diversify their social media feed. Furthermore, we share information about books that might be of interest to people wanting to know more about the impact of gender, identities, or Ethnicity in research and policy making.

Our balanced board

65. SFC is proud to be one of the first public bodies to achieve a gender balanced board. Appointments to our board are made by the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science and are regulated by the Commission for Ethical Standards in Public Life. As such, we have no control of the appointments made but we do work in partnership with the Scottish Government public appointments team to ensure that our skills matrix and succession planning takes into account the diversity, skills and knowledge needed to ensure our governance arrangements support us in all aspects of our work in a way that properly considers equality impact.

Equal Pay

66. SFC is committed to equal pay and this is reflected via a Job Grading and Evaluation Procedure that ensures each role is aligned to the correct pay grade, as well as a Salary Determination Procedure that is used to ensure that each member of staff is offered a fair salary in relation to others with equivalent experience. Since 2003 SFC has reported on equal pay on a year by year basis, through [pay audits](#) and now via the published Mainstreaming Reports.

Gender pay gap

67. A gender pay gap analysis is given below for April 2017-March 2020. The figures for 2020 are based on the 2019-20 salaries and do not take account of the 2020-21 pay award and the impact of pay progression on earnings as negotiations are still ongoing at the time of writing.

Hourly Rate for SFC Employees	Average 1 April 2017	Median 1 April 2017	Average 1 April 2018	Median 1 April 2018	Average 30 Mar 2019	Median 30 Mar 2019	Average 31 Mar 2020	Median 31 Mar 2020
Female	£20.18	£17.99	£19.51	£17.99	£21.63	£19.37	£21.95	£19.08
Male	£26.92	£22.32	£24.31	£21.91	£24.30	£22.26	£24.67	£23.22
Gender Pay Gap	25%	19%	19.8%	17.9%	11.7%	13%	11%	18%*
All	£22.94	£19.16	£21.47	£18.83	£22.60	£20.39	£22.99	£21.00

****Note in 2020 the median pay gap has increased to 18% from 13% the year before. One reason for this is that there were six times as many female new starters/promotions in 2019 to 2020 as there were male, with most changes being at E2 level and this had a more significant impact on the median hourly rate than the average. Those joining or being newly promoted tended to be nearer the bottom of the relevant pay range as they had less experience. With minimal changes in the male staff contingent there was less impact on the median rate of pay.***

68. Our average gender pay gap has shown positive movement between April 2017 and March 2020. Factors that have influenced this included the increase in female representation within our senior management team and the impact of successive pay reviews where consistent pay progression has been implemented. As at March 2020 similar numbers (approximately 53%) of male and female staff were at the top of their respective pay ranges.

Occupational Segregation

69. The overall gender ratio as at March 2020 at SFC is 62:38, female to male. Fewer males are employed in our entry level grades at E2 and below, and this will continue to have a major impact on the gender pay gap, unless it changes, as lower hourly rates at these grades impacts on the average and median for females relative to males. As at March 2020, the average grade pay gaps for our main staff groups, E1, E2, E3 and M1) are noted in the table below. We have shown our 2019 figures and the 2017 average pay gaps for comparison:

Average Pay grade gaps (Negative % means female hourly pay is higher than male hourly pay)

Pay Grade	Pay gap 2017	Pay Gap 2019	Pay Gap 2020	Number of staff March 2020
M1	-2.4%	-0.4%	-1.5%	18
E3	1.6%	0.1%	0.7%	37
E2	2.3%	-0.2%	0.7%	33
E1	1.9%	-6.3%	-2.8%	15

70. It is important to note that fluctuations can occur when experienced, higher paid members of staff leave a grade and are replaced by less experienced members of staff who enter on lower pay points within a grade, and the relative numbers of males to females in each grade also varies considerably, especially at E2, E1 and A2.
71. The profile of our senior management team has changed since our last mainstreaming report. As at March 2020 we had a predominantly female senior management team (6 posts out of 9 were held by female colleagues).

	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020
Chief Executive	Male (Interim Appointment)	Female	Female
Chief Operating Officer	Male	Male	Male
Director of Finance	Female	Female	Female
Director of Research & Innovation	Male	Male	Male
Director of Access, Learning and Outcomes (formerly known as Access, Skills and Outcome Agreements)	Male	Male	Female
Interim Director (short	-	Male	-

term post to April 2019)			
Deputy Director Access, Learning and Outcomes (Temporary role)	-	-	Female
Head of External Affairs		Female	Female
Chief Funding and Information Officer	Male	Male	Male
Assistant Director of HR & OD	Female	Female	Female

The profile of our current workforce and applicants

72. Our employed staff update their own personnel record and this includes information related to protected characteristics. The declaration levels vary by protected characteristic and the percentage of staff that have chosen not to disclose information has remained broadly the same in 2020 as 2019:
- 1) In 2020, 12% of SFC staff declared that they had long term condition or disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
 - The percentage of staff declaring that their sexual orientation is gay, lesbian or bisexual remained at 5% in 2020. In 2018 2% of staff declared that their sexual orientation is gay, lesbian or bisexual.
73. We will continue to work with staff with a view to increasing declaration levels and improving the quality of the staffing data that we hold.
74. There have been 11 vacancies in the period January to December 2020. Of these two have been advertised as fixed term posts to deal with specific time limited work or as temporary posts to backfill temporary internal moves.
75. Applicants are asked to complete an equality monitoring form. Completion of this form is optional. In the 12 month period to December 2020 around 75% of applicants returned the monitoring form. This level of disclosure allows us to conduct meaningful analysis. Our analysis of applicant data has informed our review of our organisational equality outcome developed to improve the diversity of our workforce.

Scottish Funding Council staff and applicant data tables

Scottish Funding Council directly employed staff equality profile

Age	2018	2019	2020	Sex	2018	2019	2020
Up to 25	1%	2%	2.6%	Female	59%	60%	61%
26-35	13%	16%	16.5%	Male	41%	40%	39%
36-45	31%	27%	21.7%	Sexual Orientation			
46-55	34%	35%	35.7%	Heterosexual	75%	68%	68%
56-65	22%	20%	22.6%	Gay/Lesbian	2%	5%	4%
Over 66	0%	0%	0.9%	Other	0%	0%	0%
Disability				Not disclosed	24%	27%	28%
Yes	11%	12%	12.2%				
No	84%	82%	81.7%				
Not Disclosed	5%	6%	6.1%				
Race				Caring Responsibilities			
BME	<5%	<5%	0%	None	24%	31%	35%
Any white	86%	83%	83%	Not disclosed	52%	43%	40%
Not disclosed	>5%	>5%	17%	Primary carer - child	19%	21%	20%
Religion				Primary carer – adult	2%	3%	3%
Any Christian	34%	30%	30%	Secondary carer	4%	3%	3%
Other religion	3%	2%	2%				
Not disclosed	23%	27%	27%				
None	41%	41%	41%				

76. The following table provides information about the profile of applicants for posts with SFC.

77. Our recruitment activity in 2020 was less than in the period 2018-2019. In 2018-19 we advertised 21 vacancies compared with 11 in 2020. Unlike 2018-19, in 2020 we were recruiting to fill mainly permanent posts.

Scottish Funding Council Applicant data

Age	Period 2017-18		Period 2018-19		Period Jan–Dec 2020	
	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
16-24	6%	3%	6%	4%	7%	3%
25-34	35%	42%	29%	23%	32%	31%
35-44	13%	8%	21%	22%	19%	19%
45-54	14%	17%	20%	20%	9%	12%
55+	0%	0%	5%	6%	4%	7%
Information missing	32%	31%	20%	24%	29%	27%
Disability	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
Yes	8%	11%	13%	18%	5%	9%
No	59%	53%	63%	54%	64%	66%
Not Disclosed	33%	36%	24%	29%	31%	25%
Marital status	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
Cohabiting/In a relationship	14%	14%	19%	19%	19.6%	25.9%
Separated/Divorced/ Dissolved Civil Partnership	2%	3%	2%	2%	2.4%	3.4%
Single	28%	31%	21%	18%	21.2%	8.6%
Not disclosed	32%	31%	22%	27%	29.1%	27.6%
Marriage/Civil Partnership	24%	22%	36%	33%	27.7%	34.5%
Race	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
Black & Minority Ethnic	10%	5%	6%	6%	5.4%	3.4%
Any white	60%	67%	73%	70%	64.9%	72.4%

	Period 2017-18		Period 2018-19		Period Jan–Dec 2020	
Not disclosed	30%	29%	21%	24%	29.7%	24.1%
Religion	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
Christian	18%	14%	22%	19%	18.8%	19.0%
Other religion/belief	6%	3%	2%	2%	4.0%	1.7%
Not disclosed	36%	36%	27%	33%	33.3%	32.8%
No religion/belief	40%	47%	49%	46%	43.9%	46.6%
Sex	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
Female	38%	42%	51%	53%	42%	59%
Male	35%	39%	36%	38%	30%	19%
Information missing	27%	19%	13%	9%	28%	22%
Sexual Orientation	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
Bisexual	3%	5%	2%	0%	3%	4.7%
Gay Man	4%	2%	4%	4%	3.3%	0%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	1%	0%	1%	1%	0.4%	0%
Heterosexual	59%	58%	67%	65%	59.9%	65.6%
Other	2%	6%	3%	0%	0.8%	0%
Not disclosed	33%	34%	25%	30%	32.7%	29.7%
Caring Responsibilities	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted	Applied	Shortlisted
None	4%	56%	47%	37%	52.7%	60.3%
Not disclosed	32%	31%	23%	30%	29.5%	22.4%
Primary carer - Child	9%	8%	23%	28%	14.0%	12.1%
Primary carer - Adult	1%	3%	1%	1%	0.8%	3.4%
Secondary Carer	4%	3%	5%	4%	3.0%	1.7%

78. In comparison with past years our applicant data now shows that people who identify as Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic are less likely to be shortlisted for positions with SFC. A similar situation exists for applicants who have disclosed a religion or belief that is not Christian. We are currently reviewing our approach to recruitment and we have set a specific equality outcome to address the under representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and Disabled staff in the SFC workforce. Furthermore, in 2020 applicants who identified as male made up 30% of all applicants but only 19% of those shortlisted were male. The data also shows that male applicants identifying as being gay were not shortlisted. We will consider this data in our work to diversify our workforce, however we are mindful that the applicant data is not complete with between 20% and 30% of applicants not disclosing some or all of their equality information.

Section 4: Progress against our equality outcomes 2017 to 2021

79. This section sets out information about our progress towards the following Equality Outcomes:

The internal Equality Outcomes

- 1) We will better understand and improve equality and diversity within our workforce through improved disclosure and positive action and development initiatives [updated in 2017].
- Equality and diversity responsibilities will be clearly established in our strategic and operational planning and advanced through forward job plans and evaluation processes [updated in 2017].

The external Equality Outcomes

- 1) To achieve more even patterns – at both a sectoral and an institutional level - of participation, retention and success by different groups of learners, from protected characteristic groups and including those from areas of deprivation and care backgrounds where they interact.
- Understand the diversity of college staff, management and governing bodies leading to specific recommendations and guidance for Colleges in AY 2019-20 [introduced in 2017].
 - Support the university sector to achieve a diverse and representative workforce [introduced in 2017].
 - To achieve an improved and aligned evidence base for equality, informed by increased rates of disclosure across protected characteristics.
 - Equality and diversity considerations are evident in outcome agreements and across all core and strategic funding agreements. [updated in 2017].

Internal Equality Outcome 1				
To better understand and improve equality and diversity within our workplace through increased disclosure and positive action initiatives.				
Task (Objective)	Our actions	Status	Impact	Next steps
Increase the level of disclosure.	We encourage staff to maintain their own personnel record on an annual basis.	Ongoing	Disclosure rates have maintained.	Continue to explain the benefits to staff of disclosure and build trust in the monitoring process.
Translate applications from underrepresented groups into appointments.	We have analysed our applicant data and continued to highlight inclusion in our job marketing materials.	Ongoing	We have identified that people who are currently under represented in our workforce and the working population in the public sector have in the last two year period been less likely to apply and be shortlisted for appointments.	We have set a new equality outcome focussed on making necessary changes. In preparation we have funded a project to support SFC and the sector consider practical measures to improve recruitment outcomes.

Internal Equality Outcome 2				
Equality and diversity responsibilities will be clearly established in our strategic and operational planning and advanced through forward job plans and evaluation processes				
Task (Objective)	Our actions	Status	Impact	Next steps
Ensure Equality & Diversity Impact Assessments are used at the outset of the policy making process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIA is prioritised for all activity from finance allocation to policy development. Our EIA tool was 	Ongoing	Equality impact assessment is recognised as an important activity. However, recognition that SFC requires to build capability in this area.	We have set a new equality outcome to further improve our approach to EIA.

	<p>refreshed in 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our EIA's are published on our website. • We instructed a review of SFC EIA activity in Feb 2019. 		<p>EIA's are published on our website. This enables scrutiny and supports our aim to be transparent.</p>	
<p>Produce statistical reports that support SFC and others to take action to advance equality.</p>	<p>We publish a range of statistical reports on our website. We have a set schedule for publication and provide annual updates on our core statistics.</p> <p>As well as our publications and detailed background tables, visitors to our website can use our INFACT tool to interrogate college student data.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Our reports are available on our website, and in other formats on demand.</p> <p>We have increased the amount of granular data that we publish, for example about outcomes by specific Ethnicities and disability types.</p> <p>SFC staff can interrogate data to inform policy decision making.</p>	<p>Raise awareness of our statistical reports to external audiences.</p> <p>Continue to publish analytical reports that consider each protected characteristic and intersectionality.</p> <p>Include data about sexual orientation, religion and belief and gender identity in future reports when data quality allows. Starting with the Report on Widening Access to be published in 2021.</p>

External Equality Outcome 1

To achieve more even patterns – at both a sectoral and an institutional level – of participation, retention and success by different groups of learners, from protected characteristic groups and including those from areas of deprivation and care backgrounds where they interact.

Task (Objective)	Our actions	Status	Impact	Next steps
Improve student profile data quality.	We funded Advance HE to work with institutions on our behalf to support activity to build trust in reporting systems.	Complete for period of the equality outcome	Declaration rates have increased across all protected characteristics. From 2021 we can publish student data covering 7 protected characteristics.	Continue to build confidence in the system, and improve the quality of information collected as part of our core activity.
Report on outcomes.	We established a baseline for participation, retention and success by different groups of learners.	Complete for period of the equality outcome	We now report more detailed data in our annual Report on Widening Access.	Using the evidence we have as part of our work to determine new national equality outcomes (our persistent inequality work) and aligning oversight & measurement with the outcomes of the SFC Review.

External Equality Outcome 2

Understand the diversity of college staff, management and governing bodies leading to specific recommendations and guidance for Colleges in AY 2019-2020

Task (Objective)	Our actions	Status	Impact	Next steps
Report on the College staff profile.	We have worked with standardise staff data collection process we have worked with the sector to improve the declaration rates in staff data collection exercises.	Ongoing	We continue to publish reports on the profile of the College workforce. Our most recent report was published in March 2021.	To be determined following our review of sustainable provision.
Improve the diversity of members of college governing bodies.	We funded Advance HE to provide tailored support to Colleges.		We have identified that colleges need support if they are to achieve gender balance and greater diversity. Advance HE have provided guidance to colleges.	To be determined.
Understand the experience of staff working in colleges.	We funded Advance HE who conducted a large scale survey of college staff to understand experiences.		Staff survey report is published on the Advance HE website.	

External Equality Outcome 3				
Support the university sector to achieve a diverse and representative workforce				
Task (Objective)	Our actions	Status	Impact	Next steps
Provide high quality, sector level information about the HE/FE workforce to enable institutions to understand the national profile of HE/FE staff and use this data to inform their own benchmarking and target setting as appropriate.	SFC has undertaken extensive work to establish a baseline data set that will enable SFC to undertake longitudinal analysis of staff profiles and trends in line with HESA analysis.	Ongoing	SFC has identified areas that require attention. SFC set up a sector led working group in 2019 to address issues of workforce under representation.	We will consider the findings of the working group when these are published in Summer 2021.
Working with universities, Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) and other key stakeholders to support the recommendations of the university Governing Bodies equality and diversity report 2015, supporting all protected characteristics.	Advance HE have provided ongoing support to universities to support diversity in board governance arrangements.	This work was paused due to COVID-19.	Progress has been made regarding balanced boards (executive and non-executive).	To be determined.
Promoting and supporting career development programmes such as those provided by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, the Higher Education Academy and Vitae	We have taken a proactive approach to involve Athena Swan. To respond to the impact of COVID-19 we	Complete for time period.	Scotland continues to perform well in Athena Swan submissions in comparison to rUK.	To be determined.

<p>Career Progression.</p>	<p>worked with The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) to re-profile money to support researchers impacted by lockdown restrictions, with a focus on parents and people with caring responsibilities, disabled researchers, researchers who had been shielding and researchers who are Black, Asian or from Minority Ethnic backgrounds.</p>		<p>We are awaiting detailed analysis of the impact of the RSE COVID-19 Researcher fund awards.</p>	
<p>Work in partnership with the UK funding bodies to build and embed equality and diversity into the development of UK level higher education policy, with a particular focus on major policy initiatives such as Teaching Excellence Framework and REF2021.</p>	<p>SFC participates in the REF2021 Equality & Diversity Advisory Panel as the representative of the UK funding bodies.</p>	<p>Complete for time period</p>	<p>Equality and diversity is embedded in the REF2021 assessment exercise. As part of the exercise institutions will be expected to submit a satisfactory Code Of Practice in relation to the fair and transparent</p>	<p>We continue to exploring opportunities to work with the UK funding bodies to maximise the potential to embed equality into major policy initiatives.</p>

			identification of staff and the selection of outputs.	
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External Equality Outcome 4				
To achieve an improved and aligned evidence base for equality, informed by increased rates of disclosure across protected characteristics.				
Objective	Our actions	Status	Impact	Next steps
Ensure our data collection and processing activity is legally compliant.		Ongoing	Data tables published by SFC meet stringent requirements. All data published is GDPR compliant.	Continue.
Ensure good practice is followed with regard to data collection by colleges.	We have provided guidance and we set up a new Scottish Equality Forum so that equality practitioners can share practice and address common challenges.	Complete for time period.	Student declaration rates have broadly increased and staff declaration levels are improving.	We will continue to work with colleges to improve data quality and collection.
Ensure good practice is followed with regard to data collection by universities.	We have provided guidance and we set up a new Scottish Equality Forum so that equality practitioners can share practice and address common challenges.	Complete for time period	Student declaration rates have broadly increased and staff declaration levels are improving.	We will continue to work with universities and partner organisations to improve data quality and collection.

External Equality Outcome 5

Equality and diversity considerations are evident in outcome agreements and across all core and strategic funding agreements.

Objective	Our actions	Status	Impact	Next steps
Use our assessment of Outcome Agreements to ensure Equality & Diversity is considered by colleges and universities as they deliver against key targets.	We updated our Outcome Agreement process to ask for evidence that equality & diversity is considered against all delivery areas.	Complete for time period – with changed approach due to COVID-19 and our MoU with the EHRC.	The request for Equality & Diversity information has raised the profile of Equality & Diversity in the outcome agreement process and has led identification of issues as well as positive change. However the increased focus has not resulted in the expected step change and it has created an additional reporting burden on the sector.	To be determined by the results of our work with the EHRC to identify persistent inequalities and our work to establish new measurement frameworks as part of our review of sustainable coherent provision.
Ensure our core and strategic funding agreements support the advancement of equality.	We stipulate that any funding request is accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment.	Ongoing	SFC has set a new Equality Outcome to embed Equality impact assessment in our funding agreements and SFC entered into a MoU with the EHRC to give more focus to our	

			compliance with the general duty of the Equality Act 2010.	
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Section 5: Our equality outcomes for 2021-2025

80. SFC does not provide services direct to the public. This means that when we set our equality outcomes we must consider how we can advance equality, tackle discrimination and foster good relations in our core activities.
81. Our new set of equality outcomes relate to our activities as an employer, as a funder and as a sectoral oversight body. We have set organisational equality outcomes, which are set out below. As previously highlighted, we are in the process of developing additional equality outcomes that relate specifically to our oversight work. These will be published in September 2021 and referred to as our national equality outcomes. They will be evidence based, measurable equality outcomes that will aim to advance equality in the experiences and/or outcomes for students with protected characteristics.

Organisational Equality Outcome 1

82. We have considered our workforce profile data combined with information from the wider public sector and education sectors in Scotland. These data tell us that our own workforce does not benefit from the diversity that it should and that the organisations where our staff usually gain prior experience before coming to join SFC do not benefit from Ethnic diversity or high proportions of disabled staff.
83. We have also considered the findings of research reports such as the Close the Gap report into the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women in the labour market that highlighted experiences and perception of racism in public sector employment alongside the findings of the Scottish Parliamentary Committee inquiry into race and employment. This qualitative evidence tells us that we have more to do if we are to successfully attract, recruit and retain Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff.
84. In addition to evidence from external qualitative research reports and analysis of our own, and external sources of workforce data, analysis of our recent applicant data shows that we have not been as successful at attracting applications from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic people or disabled people. Furthermore, people who identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic were for the first time less likely to be shortlisted than white Scottish counterparts. Our previous analysis of applicant data highlighted consistent shortlisting rates for all protected characteristics with the exception of age.
85. Our previous analysis showed that people in the youngest age bracket were both less likely to apply and less likely to be shortlisted, reflecting that the majority of roles at SFC require degree level education and in most instances

prior experience of work. As a result, we are currently considering how we might take action to offer more graduate and entry level positions and experience of work opportunities.

86. Considering the qualitative evidence and the changes in outcomes at shortlisting stage we recognise that we need to address the issue of under representation in the workforce. We know that if we continue to approach our recruitment and selection in the same way as we have always done we will not be successful in our aim of diversifying the SFC workforce.
87. Therefore we have set a measurable equality outcome committing us to improve the diversity of our workforce.

SFC Organisational Equality Outcome 1	
Identified Inequality	Disabled people and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic People are less likely to apply and to be appointed to SFC positions.
SMART Equality Outcome	Over a four year period the diversity of SFC will improve so that SFC better reflects the profile of staff and students that work and study in Scottish colleges and universities.
General Equality Duty	This equality outcome will address each aspect of the General Equality Duty: eliminating discrimination, fostering good relations and advancing equality.
Link to Strategic Priority	<p>National Equality Action Plans for Disability and Race. SFC Strategic Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Values: We will value our people, and champion inclusion, creativity and wellbeing. • Our Operating Plan (Objective 4): Contributing to a more equal society by embedding equality and diversity across all our functions and by placing good relations at the heart of our organisation. <p>Civil Service Recruitment Principles: all appointments made on the basis of merit through fair and open competition. Duty to seek to attract a strong and diverse field of applicants.</p>
Outputs	To be determined following the availability of the outputs of the SFC funded project to tackle under representation in the work place and the research commissioned to identify alternative approaches to recruitment to support this equality outcome.

Activities	<p>To be determined over next 2-3 months. Likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with SG/other NDBPs and/or the tertiary sector. • Action to offer internships and shadowing opportunities. • Recruitment audits and research with candidates. • Activity to attract a broader range of candidates.
Measuring Progress	<p>Annual review of recruitment and appointment data. Ongoing candidate feedback that provides qualitative data about candidate experience. We will report progress every two years.</p>

88. We have partnered with the University of Strathclyde and are supporting the placement of a Masters Student who is studying International Human Resource Management. The student is conducting research on our behalf to identify appropriate interventions that will support hiring managers make changes to existing practice.
89. Furthermore, in 2019 after a review of SFC workforce information and FE and HE workforce information we established a project to put in place practical support to enable institutions, and SFC, take positive action to tackle under representation in the workforce. The outputs of this project will be available from May 2021 and information about these can be found on our [tackling racism on campus micro site](#) hosted by Advance HE.
90. In 2020 SFC committed to being an anti-racist organisation. We are currently planning how we use the resources developed as part of our work to tackle racism on campus as part of our learning and development strategy.
91. SFC continues to be a disability confident employer. SFC offers a flexible work environment and attracts staff from across the central belt, the Borders and Fife. Furthermore, the current COVID-19 restrictions mean that we are currently working remotely and anticipate that we will have a higher level of remote working set up in the future.
92. We believe that our flexible approach to work will enable us to continue to attract and retain employees from a range of backgrounds who benefit from flexibility in work place and work pattern.

93. By exploring new approaches to recruitment and by building on our ability to offer flexible working patterns and accessible work environments we intend to deliver the changes set out in our organisational equality outcome 1.

Organisation Equality Outcome 2

94. We have already set out in this report our commitment to embedding equality in our work. However, we recognise that we need to improve our approach to understanding and assessing the impact of our policies and practices on equality.
95. In response to the changes in the sector caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 we issued refreshed Outcome Agreement guidance. This guidance was streamlined with a view to reducing the bureaucratic burden placed on institutions so that efforts could be directed to supporting staff and students working and studying in challenging times. Instead of stipulating specific equality and inclusion asks we used the emergency year outcome agreements to ask that institutions improve their equality performance through equality impact assessments of their policy and practices and by setting evidence based, measurable equality outcomes. Further details can be found in the emergency year equality outcome guidance for [colleges and universities](#).
96. However, we recognise that we need to do more to ensure that we are explicit in our equality asks for key policies. For example, our recent funding for mental health counsellors specified that the funding must be used in a way that ensured provision for mental health counselling for students from different protected characteristic groups. This is because our analysis of relevant evidence highlighted protected characteristics influenced trends in access of mental health support and could affect people’s experience of accessing support if the provision could not meet their needs.
97. We have therefore amended our previous equality outcome about equality impact assessment.

SFC Organisational Equality Outcome 2	
Identified Inequality	Evidence suggests that outcomes for students belonging to particular protected characteristic groups vary. This means that consideration of the needs of and barriers faced by individuals sharing a protected characteristic must be explicitly considered in our development of policy and guidance.
SMART Equality Outcome	Over a four year period SFC will improve its approach to equality impact assessment.

	<p>We will produce reports that identify the how effective EIA has influenced and informed the development of our policy and guidance. We will publish this analysis annually from September 2022.</p>
General Equality Duty	<p>This equality outcome will address each aspect of the General Equality Duty: eliminating discrimination, fostering good relations and advancing equality.</p>
Link to Strategic Priority	<p>SFC Strategic Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Values: We will value our people, and champion inclusion, creativity and wellbeing. • Our Operating Plan (Objective 4): Contributing to a more equal society by embedding equality and diversity across all our functions and by placing good relations at the heart of our organisation.
Outputs	<p>We will publish high quality, evidence based and informed EIAs for our published policies and guidance.</p> <p>We will refresh our EIA guidance and processes so that staff capacity to conduct EIAs is increased.</p>
Activities	<p>Where applicable our guidance to the sector will highlight specific equality considerations and relevant sources of evidence so that institutions can take appropriate steps to address equality impacts that we have identified at a national level.</p> <p>A formal approach to involvement will be developed, with input from sector equality groups and key stakeholders.</p> <p>We will continue to develop our equality evidence resources and ensure that our staff are supported to undertake effective EIA.</p> <p>We will refresh our EIA guidance for use by our own staff and make this available for others to access and use.</p>

Measuring Progress	<p>We will review and report on our equality impact assessment findings annually, with our first report in September 2022.</p> <p>We will refer to the impact and measurements specified in other equality outcomes that we have set.</p> <p>We will monitor the number of EIA's conducted and the numbers of staff involved in conducting EIA's.</p>