**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM**

**Not all projects require a full impact assessment. If however you answer YES to any of these** [**questions**](https://scotent.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/Intranet/Corporate/Net-pols-procs/P-project_life_cycle_mgt/EXoOkRz0MJdGpS8L3Ofqg5wBll2jWNNrCO5EcpM-5zlbog?e=oSKHkV) **– then this Impact Assessment must be completed.**

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| **Name of Business Unit** | CFO – Governance and Risk Assurance |
| **Name/designation of person(s) responsible for managing/ conducting this process** | Gary Stewart – Director of Governance and Risk Assurance |

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| **Name of Policy / Function / Service / Strategy / Action Plan / Programme / Project etc.** | SE Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy | |
| **What is the status?** | Existing policy with changes | |
| **Is the policy contracted out? (Delete as applicable)** | No |  |
| **If yes, who delivers this policy for the organisation?** | N/A | |
| **Is responsibility for delivery shared with others? (Delete as applicable)** | No | |
| **If yes, who are your partners?** | N/A | |

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| **Could there be possible impacts or effects in respect of the following protected groups? (Delete as applicable)** | | | |
| **Age** | **No** | **Disability** | **Yes** |
| **Gender Re-Assignment** | **No** | **Marriage & Civil Partnership** | **No** |
| **Pregnancy & Maternity** | **No** | **Race** | **No** |
| **Religion or Belief** | **No** | **Sex** | **No** |
| **Sexual Orientation** | **No** | **Human Rights** | **No** |

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| **Timescale for**  **Assessment** | September / October 2024 | **Timescale for Involvement/Consultation** | September / October 2024 |
| **Start Date** | 1st September 2024 | **Completion Date** | 17th October 2024  Updated 24th February 2025 |
| **EO Champion review by** | Jennifer Paul | **Date** | 17th October 2024  24th February 2025 |
| **SRO name and email approval on file** | Douglas Colquhoun, Chief Financial Officer | **Date** | 26th March 2025 |

## 1. Identify ALL the Aims of the Policy/Project (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What is the purpose of the policy/project? (consider explicit and implicit aims)  2. Who does the policy/project affect?  3. Who does the policy/project benefit directly? (e.g. employees/service users; equality groups, other stakeholders)  4. What results/outcomes are intended? |

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| 1. This policy is designed to:  * support SE’s values; * ensure SE’s employees can raise concerns in good faith without fear of suffering detriment; and * provide a transparent and confidential process for dealing with concerns.  1. This process applies to all SE employees, contractors/agency workers working on SE premises, consultants, suppliers and other relevant stakeholders. 2. This process benefits all SE employees, contractors/agency workers working on SE premises, consultants, suppliers and other relevant stakeholders. 3. The anticipated results/intended outcomes are creation of an environment in which individuals feel able to raise any matters of genuine concern internally without fear of suffering adverse treatment or disciplinary action. |

## 2. Consider the Evidence (data and information) - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What information or data would it be useful to have? What data (quantitative and qualitative) is available? (in-house/external) How reliable/valid/up to date is it?  2. What does the data/information tell you about   * Different needs? * Different experiences? * Different access to services, information or opportunities? * Different impacts/different outcomes?   3. Are there any gaps that you should fill now/later by further evidence gathering/commissioning or by secondary analysis of existing data?  4. Are there any experts or stakeholders you should involve/consult now? Have you involved/consulted any experts already? What were their views? |

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| In terms of SE’s workforce, the SE Equality Mainstreaming Report 2023 ([Scottish Enterprise. Equality Mainstreaming Report. April 2023 (scottish-enterprise.com)](https://www.scottish-enterprise.com/media/iyemtsf4/equality-mainstreaming-report_2023.pdf)) provides data about SE’s workforce and, where possible, the associated equality characteristics.  In terms of disability (which is highlighted as a protected characteristic where there may be an adverse impact), the report notes that there is limited data which restricts any meaningful analysis and conclusions, but the following information is given:    In terms of whistleblowing, data/information on whistleblowing is provided to either the specified SE contacts by the policy users as and when required. There are very low number of whistleblowing disclosures made within SE which makes it difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions about the equality impact of the Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy. Whistleblowing data/information may also be anonymous.  Consultation is ongoing with key stakeholders such as:   * Internal Audit; * SE Board nominated whistleblowing champion; and * SE Audit and Risk Committee.   No specific comments or actions noted to date. |

## 3. Assess the likely impact on different groups - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. Does your analysis of the evidence indicate any possible adverse impact on a particular group (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) or does it breach human rights legislation.      1. If it is adverse,  * Does this amount to unlawful discrimination? (See guidance)  1. In what areas does it have an impact? E.g. access to information, experience of services? 2. Even if there is no evidence of adverse impact, is there an opportunity to actively promote equality or foster good relations between different groups? |

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| In relation to the protected characteristic of disability, there may be reasonable adjustments required for those who use the Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy, for example those with certain disabilities may experience challenges in accessing the anonymous Microsoft Forms reporting link or accessing the signposted charity website. Also, an individual with neurodiversity may experience greater difficulties in articulating a whistleblowing complaint or reading complex information relating to a complaint.  SE will provide the necessary adjustments, for example access to additional equipment, access to alternative formats or access to British Sign Language interpreters where needed, accompaniment to meetings, the offer of virtual meetings etc. Scottish Enterprise’s existing processes will be followed for this. |

## 4. Consider alternatives - (use these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. How can you change your proposal in a way that is proportionate, and will   * Remove unlawful discrimination or comply with human rights? * Reduce any adverse impact? * Advance/promote equality? * Foster good relations between different groups? * Help us achieve our published equality outcomes (See guidance)?   2. If there are no actions proposed, can the policy/project still be justified?  3. Can the aims be met in some other way? What can you do now/later?  4. If the project involves procuring a service or product is there any scope to encourage suppliers to have a greater focus on equality for example signing up to the Business Pledge? Are there any positive action activities you could consider which might address disadvantage experienced by protected groups, like targeting women owned businesses or applying reserved contracts? Are there any other project specific actions you could state to help with our equality duties e.g. monitoring of uptake of the service to identify under-representation or encouraging certain groups to participate in the project (see guidance)?  5. What are you recommending? |

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| As noted in the preceding section, analysis indicated that there is a possibility that some users of the Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy with a disability may encounter potential adverse impacts when accessing and using the anonymous Microsoft Forms reporting link or accessing the independent charity website and advice line. Reasonable adjustments may be required and Scottish Enterprise will provide those necessary adjustments, for example additional IT equipment, access to alternative formats or access to British Sign Language interpreters where needed. Scottish Enterprise’s existing processes will be followed for this.  To ensure that colleagues are aware of the support that is available to them when using the Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy, it is recommended that the current version of the Policy is updated to highlight to colleagues that support is available to help them to raise a concern if they have any additional requirements. This will help to advance equality of opportunity for those colleagues who have a disability.  It is recommended that the adjusted Policy is finalised, approved and published to all SE employees, contractors/agency workers working on SE premises, consultants, suppliers and other relevant stakeholders. |

## 5. Involve/Consult relevant stakeholders if appropriate - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What are the views of the people who are likely to be affected or who have an interest about   * Whether you have identified the right issues? * Whether you have proposed suitable modifications? * Whether your proposals will meet their needs?   2. Should you involve people in the re-design of the policy?  3. How will you consult once changes have been made?  4. Whom do you need to get views from?(internally/externally)  5. What methods will you use? (consider “hard to reach” groups)  6. What formats will you use for communicating with different groups? |

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| The Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy has been in place for a number of years and is subject to periodic update to reflect changes in SE’s nominated whistleblowing contacts or changes to organisational/reporting arrangements. The approach to consultation on the recent updates to the Policy is set out within Section 2 of this Equality Impact Assessment. |

## 6. Decide whether to adopt this policy/project - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What were your findings from the consultation/involvement?  2. Taking into account all of the data, information, potential impact issues and consultation feedback, what will you recommend? (Choose & state one option)   * **Reject the policy** – there is evidence of actual/potential unlawful discrimination or breach of human rights. * **Accept the policy** – The EIA demonstrates the policy is robust with no adverse impacts and all opportunities to promote equality/foster good relations have been taken. * **Modify the policy** – Adjust the policy to remove barriers or better promote equality * **Continue with the policy** – Issues with the policy have been identified but you wish to continue with the policy. Clearly set out justification for doing this. Compelling reasons will be needed.   3. If the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is on a high-level policy/strategy state here  if further EqIAs need to be carried out on projects emanating from the policy/strategy  and inform project managers. |

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| This is an update to an existing Policy and the updated version will be submitted for approval and, subject to that approval, communicated to all SE colleagues. The whistleblowing process is required to ensure SE meets all applicable requirements (for example, the Scottish Public Finance Manual) around whistleblowing arrangements and enables colleagues to report concerns about wrongdoing within or by SE. |

## 7. Make Monitoring (and review) Arrangements - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. How will you know what the actual effect of the policy/project is?  2. In what ways will you monitor? e.g. continuously or irregularly, quantitative methods such as surveys, qualitative methods such as interviews  3. How often will monitoring information be analysed?  4. When will you review the policy/project taking into account any monitoring information? |

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| Whistleblowing referrals and activity are regularly reviewed by the Director of Governance and Risk Assurance and by the Internal Audit team. This ongoing monitoring of the use of the Policy provides an indication of the effectiveness of the Policy and its impact.  No specific equality issues or impacts have been highlighted from review of the most recent management reports and whistleblowing activity, however this will be kept under review to identify any trends that suggest colleagues are being disadvantaged directly or indirectly when using the Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy.  Opportunities to engage with SE’s Disability Positive diversity community on the aims, use and impact of the Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy will also be explored.  The Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy and this associated Equality Impact Assessment will be reviewed annually. The annual review will be informed by considering the use of the Policy in practice and benchmarking with the approaches of other organisations. |

**8. Equality Impact Assessment review**

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| Please forward the completed document to your equality champion for review. This should then be approved by the SRO and returned to your champion for publication on the Scottish Enterprise external website. |

**9. Summary of Actions**

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| List any actions agreed and indicate dates for review. |

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| This Equality Impact Assessment will be updated at time of next Policy review (Autumn 2025) or as the result of any other significant change e.g. change in supplier or change in legislative requirements.  Monitoring of the use of the Policy will continue and this will consider any identifiable equality impacts.  Opportunities to engage with SE’s Disability Positive diversity community on the aims, use and impact of the Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy will also be explored. |