



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - RESULTS

Title of Policy	Fair Start Scotland
Summary of aims and desired outcomes of Policy	<p>Employability plays an essential role in delivering the Scottish Government's aims of tackling poverty, supporting inclusive growth, promoting social justice and creating a fair and prosperous Scotland. The Scottish Government is committed to supporting those furthest from the labour market and those at risk of long term unemployment into work.</p> <p>From 3 April 2018, Scotland's new, devolved employability service, Fair Start Scotland, aims to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Design and deliver a high quality service that maximises delivery of real and sustained job outcomes, to targeted individuals, treating them with fairness, dignity and respect.2. Focus support on those further from the labour market for who work is a realistic prospect.3. Establish and transition to a distinctly Scottish service that creates a strong platform for future employability services.4. A nationally consistent service, delivered locally and utilising private, public and third sector capabilities.5. Integrate and align services in order to maximise value for money. <p>Fair Start Scotland will be a voluntary service and we aim to support a minimum of 38,000 starts.</p>
Directorate: Division: team	Employability Division, Fair Work, Employability & Skills Directorate,

Executive summary

Scotland's Economic Strategy focuses on the complementary goals of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequality. It is an approach supported by a growing body of international evidence which shows that countries with more equal societies typically enjoy stronger, more sustainable growth over the long run. We believe that promoting growth in employment opportunities and tackling inequality within the labour market are not mutually exclusive. In fact, we believe that tackling inequality is essential to the sustained, long-term prosperity of the Scottish economy.

Employability services have a key role to play in addressing long standing barriers in the labour market so that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. From 3 April 2018, the Scottish Government will introduce a new, devolved, employment service, Fair Start Scotland.

This is an entirely voluntary programme providing tailored, person-centred support for people with a disability or health condition and those who are long-term unemployed and who want to find and retain work. A key aim of Fair Start Scotland is to deliver employment services to those groups with protected characteristics with a view to tackling inequalities in the labour market. Consequently the service will provide early (and in some cases), immediate entry to the service for many, including, Minority Ethnic groups, disabled groups, refugees, lone parents.

Employment rates vary significantly across geographic areas but also among specific customer groups. Understanding the drivers of inequality and taking action to address it is key to the success of Fair Start Scotland, and the Scottish Government's aim of treating people with Dignity, Fairness and Respect.

Background

The Smith Agreement set out the basis on which DWP contracted employment support would be devolved to Scotland. Whilst Scottish Ministers have long argued for Scotland to have full control over employment and employability powers, this has been limited by the UK Government to the contracted services previously provided through schemes such as Work Programme and Work Choice.

Section 31 of the Scotland Act 2016 gives the Scottish Government the legislative competence to create employment schemes to assist those at

risk of becoming long-term unemployed who are receiving UK benefits such as Universal Credit, and to help disabled people into work, including schemes which seek to help employers find suitable employees. The Scottish Parliament will be able to make provision for arrangements to provide facilities, support or services to help people into work. Following Royal Assent of the Act in April 2016, the powers set out in Clause 31 commenced on 5 September 2016. Transitional employability services, Work First Scotland and Work Able Scotland, were put in place in April 2017 and these services stopped taking referrals on 9 March 2018. An EQIA was completed for these services.

The Scottish Government is fully committed to remaining engaged with providers, service users and other third sector bodies to ensure that we have a full understanding of how successfully the service is providing support to those further from the labour market.

The Scope of the EQIA

It is clear that Fair Start Scotland will affect many people in Scotland, directly or indirectly.

The EQIA has been informed by detailed analysis of existing evidence and data (both qualitative and quantitative) in order to draw out the potential impacts of the policy for the eight protected characteristics:

Age, Disability, Sex, Pregnancy and maternity, Gender reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion and Belief

The evidence for this EQIA was taken from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), International Labour Organisation (ILO), Census data 2011, and Labour Force Survey.

The Scottish Government has also used both formal and informal stakeholder feedback to inform policy, including through the 2015 Consultation exercise. The Scottish Government published its response: 'Creating a Fairer Scotland: A New Future for Employability Support in Scotland' on 22 March 2016. The report, published on the Employability in Scotland website, can be accessed here: http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/521504/creating_a_fairer_scotland_-_employability_support_-_analysis_of_responses.pdf.

The EQIA has provided evidence that there are groups who have difficulty in the labour market, this includes those with protected characteristics. This analysis has contributed to the design of Fair Start Scotland which will

provide early entry to disabled groups, minority ethnic groups and lone parents (who are predominantly female), with the aim of having a positive impact.

Providers have been asked to demonstrate how they will proactively reach out to all the groups we have identified that struggle to find employment, and how the delivery of Fair Start Scotland will not discriminate against those with multiple barriers to sustained employment.

The policy proposition relating to FSS will primarily have an impact on unemployed individuals and their families and the communities and neighbourhoods where people work and live. In particular, the service will benefit:

- Disabled people
- Those with Health Conditions acting as a barrier to work
- Care Leavers
- Refugees
- Ethnic Minorities
- Lone Parents
- People with convictions (someone who has completed a custodial sentence or a community sentence) or offenders (someone who is completing a community sentence)
- Those resident in the 15% most deprived Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas (SIMD)

Disabled Groups

Disabled people are significantly less likely to be in employment than people who are not disabled. In 2016, the disability employment gap was 37.4 percentage points. The aim of Fair Start Scotland is to ensure those with a disability can access the service immediately and gain the support they need for sustained employment. Fair Start Scotland will also require providers to liaise with employers and third sector groups to raise awareness and support to employers in employing those from this group.

Racial Equality

Some ethnic minority groups suffer disadvantage in the labour market, and when broken down by gender, the employment rate for women in these groups is even lower. There are many reasons for this. Service Providers must engage positively to support ethnic minority groups in to the service and collaborate with employers for sustained employment outcomes for this group, whilst recognising the geographic variations in ethnic minority

populations, and being sensitive to the cultural issues affecting them, particularly women and refugees.

Gender

Occupational segregation continues to negatively affect women in terms of income levels. Caring responsibilities can mean that women tend towards lower skilled, lower paid jobs, often temporary in nature and the Scottish Government is keen to support actions to address the negative impact of such outcomes, which often lead to in-work poverty. Since 2008, the number of temporary workers has increased by 2,000 to 110,000. It is accepted that temporary employment tends to be lower skilled and lower paid positions. 53.1% of temporary workers were women.

In line with Scottish Government's Fair Work ambitions, it will be important for Service Providers to deliver a service that understands the support needs of women seeking employment. Service Providers will use levers at their disposal to encourage employers to consider flexible working approaches which enable more women to take up a broader, more rewarding range of work opportunities.

These must align with any caring responsibilities they have. We are seeking a gendered approach to employability support with Service Providers demonstrating how they can support women into higher paid jobs in sectors where participation has traditionally been lower.

Lone Parents

FSS will allow early entry to this group. Providers will work to those within that cohort, to provide the necessary specialist advice, e.g. on confidence and skill building as well as early calculations on benefit of work against benefits.

People with Convictions

Over one third of the adult male population and nearly one in ten of adult females in Scotland have a criminal record, which can be a significant barrier an individual may face in entering employment. Providers have been asked to work with employers to support this group towards employment.

Other Groups

The Scottish Government recognises the difficulty in the labour market for groups such as Care Leavers, refugees and those with alcohol and drug dependency issues and service providers have been asked to deliver services to all those groups.

Other groups with protected characteristics e.g. gender, religion, sexual orientation will be able to access the service if they meet the eligibility criteria, such as long term unemployment (24 months), or risk of long term unemployment (6 months). The groups mentioned above will be supported through early and immediate entry, for example those with a disability will be given an immediate start on the service.

The Fair Start Scotland Service

Participants will receive a range of specialised support to address the employability issues and issues related to their health condition through up to 12 months pre-work support and up to 12 months in-work support.

The service has been built on the principles of the Scottish Government Supported Employment Framework, and although not all Customers will follow the Framework, they can all expect a service including key elements of supported employment.

Service offers have been designed which focus on the relevant barriers an individual may face in entering employment. This recognises that the benefit the individual receives is not necessarily a good indicator of the level of support required to attain employment, and reinforces the focus on a personalised approach.

Analysis has been performed to understand the likely composition of the 38,000 participants on FSS. Whilst evidence has been drawn from employment programmes and tested to develop assumptions on participation these should be considered within the context that few directly comparable fully voluntary programmes exist in the UK.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The EQIA process has not altered the policy intention but it has identified evidence gaps and likely data that will be required going forward to allow for policy implementation to be monitored. The evidence suggests that this policy will have potential positive effects on particular protected

characteristics, specifically: age, disability, sex and black and minority ethnic employment.

During the process of policy implementation, the EQIA will be used to inform decisions on implementation and on the interaction with other employment support policies. A clear ambition of the Service is to add to existing evidence and data on successful interventions for these protected groups.

The Scottish Government is asking Service Providers to collect the following data in relation to protected characteristics:

Gender;
Age;
Disability / long term health condition;
Race;
Religion;
And Sexual orientation.

The equality impact analysis has shaped and informed the Scottish Government's policy development by:

Driving changes to the Policy Statement and Operational Guidance. It has assisted in focussing the development of Fair Start Scotland policy on protected groups and has shaped the approach being taken to monitor success in this regard, building on the information being offered to providers giving breakdowns of the demography within their contract areas.

Committing to continuous improvement and using evaluation and management information collected throughout to improve and help shape future delivery of employability services.

Using the devolution of employment services as a significant opportunity to design and deliver effective and more targeted employment support services in Scotland that better meet the needs of the unemployed , particularly those in protected groups, through services that reflect national and local labour markets, and which build on, and integrate with, existing service delivery in Scotland.

Setting employment support services within a wider, coherent and forward looking Scottish labour market strategy based on core Scottish Government principles of sustainable economic growth, equality, fair work, and social justice.

Framing an approach to monitoring the effectiveness of the service in supporting protected groups. This EQIA will be referred to during the evaluation processes for Fair Start Scotland. We have disseminated analysis of the demographics within each contract package area to the lead service providers. This analysis contains detailed breakdowns of age, sex, gender, race and religion, of the cohorts within their area. We will monitor provider's performance on a monthly basis and this will include progress on provision to those with protected characteristics in their areas.