



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - RESULTS

Title of Policy	A Future Skills Action Plan for Scotland
Summary of aims and desired outcomes of Policy	A Future Skills Action Plan for Scotland - Scotland's skills system will offer support to individuals throughout their working lives and inspire confidence among employers. Built on the principles of alignment and collaboration between partners and institutions, the publication reaffirms the importance of skills in helping people reach their potential and achieving our goal of an inclusive, growing and more productive economy.
Directorate: Division: team	Directorate for Employability, Fair Work and Skills. Skills Division Future Skills Team

Executive summary

The Future Skills Action Plan fulfills a 2018 Programme for Government commitment to set out how the Scottish Government will respond to emerging socio-economic challenges and enable individuals and employers to access the upskilling and retraining opportunities they require.

Phase One of the Plan sets out our strategic vision to re-orientate the skills system and ensure that it is responsive, agile and financially sustainable.

Background

Scotland's labour market continues to perform well and our workforce is more highly qualified than ever before. However, the proportion of those with low or no skills has not improved since 2015 and employers continue to highlight skills gaps across all sectors. In addition, Scotland faces a range of emerging challenges, including the global climate emergency, demographic changes and technological developments. It is crucial that the skills system is flexible, agile and responsive so it can continue to deliver strong results in an uncertain future.

The Scope of the EQIA

The Equalities Impact Assessment carried out takes account of Phase One of the Plan, a high level strategic plan. The EQIA process outlines the work that will be carried out throughout Phase Two of the plan and the need to assess each outcome and action as Phase Two develops.

Key Findings

The Future Skills Action Plan has the potential to have a meaningful and lasting impact on those with protected characteristics. However, this will only be achieved if a fully considered approach to equalities is taken throughout its second phase.

By reviewing each action that emerges from the work streams this will ensure that a tangible difference can be made in relation to access for those with protected characteristics.

The Plan has the potential to effect key areas of occupational segregation including the Gender Pay Gap and improving the opportunities for flexible working particularly for women and disabled people.

Recommendations and Conclusion

It is recommended that each task emerging from Phase Two should be scrutinised to assess their effect on equalities. It is not envisioned that the Plan's actions will have a negative impact on those with protected characteristics. However, work carried out in Phase Two has the potential to positively impact those with protected characteristics.

Significant consultation work should be undertaken with equalities groups and skills system stakeholders to address and mitigate existing inequalities that arise across the system.