

Equality Impact Assessment

Date:

22 April 2026

Name of Policy or Practice:

Whistleblowing Policy (updated)

What does this aim to achieve?

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Consumer Scotland has procedures in place to enable all those who work within, or with, the organisation to raise their concerns about wrongdoing at an early stage and in the right way, and how those concerns will be investigated.

Who will this policy affect?

This policy will affect all staff at Consumer Scotland, current and future, including permanent, temporary and agency staff, contractors, and third parties.

What might prevent the desired outcomes being achieved?

The outcomes may not be achieved if the process guidance lacks clarity and/or staff do not feel supported to raise a concern.

Consumer Scotland will need to ensure that the Whistleblowing Policy is easily accessible and understood by all staff, making the process easier for those who wish to raise whistleblowing concerns.

How has this policy been developed?

The Whistleblowing Policy was developed by the HR team at Consumer Scotland, with reference to the Scottish Government policy on Whistleblowing for guidance. It has been reviewed by the Executive Team and approved by the Board.

The policy is reviewed, updated and sent to the Board for approval annually.

Evidence and Impact Analysis

We have considered each protected characteristic individually, and the direct and indirect impacts the Whistleblowing Policy may have on each group. We have presented statistics relating to each characteristic where appropriate.

Characteristic	Evidence gathered	Impact
Age	<p>HR, Executive Team and Board input.</p> <p>Breakdown of age:</p> <p>20-29 7 (15.2%) 30-39 15 (32.6%) 40-49 12 (26.1%) 50-59 10 (21.7%) 60-69 2 (4.3%)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any member of Consumer Scotland staff can raise a whistleblowing concern, regardless of age.</p> <p>Therefore, there should be no impact due to age in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.</p>
Disability	<p>HR, Executive Team and Board input.</p> <p>All aspects of disability were considered, e.g. physical, mental, hidden.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There could potentially be barriers to staff with a disability, especially in relation to mental health or anxiety, as whistleblowing can be a stressful process.</p>

	Consumer Scotland have a number of staff who have declared a disability.	Our Whistleblowing Policy ensures people feel encouraged to step forward where required, with adequate support pathways in place.
Sex	<p>EDI Champions Group and Executive Team input.</p> <p>Breakdown of sex:</p> <p>Female 25 (54.3%) Male 21 (45.7%) Other/Prefer not to say 0 (0%)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Potentially <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any member of Consumer Scotland staff can raise a whistleblowing concern, regardless of sex.</p> <p>Therefore, there should be no impact due to sex in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.</p>
Pregnancy, maternity and paternity	<p>EDI Champions Group and Executive Team input.</p> <p>We have a number of staff who have caring responsibilities to children.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Potentially <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If a member of staff wished to raise a concern whilst on pregnancy related absence, maternity or paternity leave, our Whistleblowing Policy is published on our website and therefore limited access to internal policies during this time would not act as a barrier to anyone wishing to raise a concern.</p>

<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>EDI Champions Group and Executive Team input.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any member of Consumer Scotland staff can raise a whistleblowing concern, regardless of gender.</p> <p>Therefore, there should be no impact due to gender in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>EDI Champions Group and Executive Team input.</p> <p>Consumer Scotland have a number of staff who identify as LGBTI+</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any member of Consumer Scotland staff can raise a whistleblowing concern, regardless of sexual orientation.</p> <p>Therefore, there should be no impact due to sexual orientation in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.</p>

Race	EDI Champions Group and Executive Team input.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially <input type="checkbox"/> Any member of Consumer Scotland staff can raise a whistleblowing concern, regardless of race. Therefore, there should be no impact due to race in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.
Religion of belief	EDI Champions Group and Executive Team input.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially <input type="checkbox"/> Any member of Consumer Scotland staff can raise a whistleblowing concern, regardless of religion or belief. Therefore, there should be no impact due to religion or belief in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.
Marriage or Civil Partnership	EDI Champions Group and Executive Team input.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<p>Consumer Scotland have a number of staff who are married or in a civil partnership.</p>	<p>Potentially <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any member of Consumer Scotland staff can raise a whistleblowing concern, regardless of marriage or civil partnership.</p> <p>Therefore, there should be no impact due to marriage or civil partnership in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.</p>
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Conclusion

The EQIA has demonstrated that there are no real areas of concerns across the protected characteristics in relation to the Whistleblowing Policy.

Potential barriers such as lack of access to information or guidance has been addressed within. We are comfortable that the policy being publicly available on our website (in PDF and HTML format) allows those working within, or with, Consumer Scotland to understand the process of raising a concern, including a concern believed to go against the core values in the Civil Service code.

We have not identified any negative impacts that would lead us to change our Whistleblowing Policy. However, we will aim to review the Whistleblowing Policy annually with the Board to ensure we consider any new factors in our assessment.