

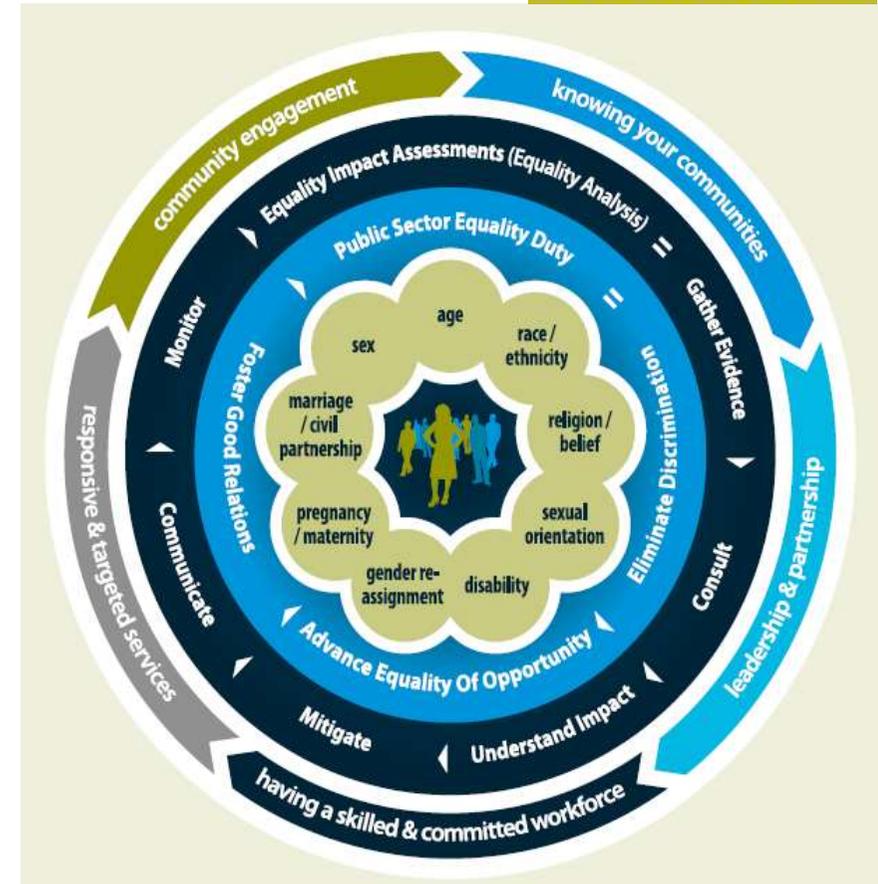
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

EqIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.



EqIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then create an action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-users¹. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010². They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached them.³

An EqIA needs to be completed **as a project starts** to identify and consider possible differential impacts on people and their lives, inform project planning and, where appropriate, identify mitigating actions. It must be completed **before** any decisions are made or policy agreed so that the EqIA **informs that decision or policy**. It is also a live document; you should review and update it along with your project plan throughout.



Full guidance notes to help you are embedded in this form – see the End Notes or hover the mouse over the numbered notes.
 If your project/proposal relates primarily to staff – e.g. a restructure – there is a specific EqIA template available

You should first consider whether you need to complete this full EqIA – the end-notes may help you and you can get advice from the Equalities Team. If you do not, you will need to document somewhere – e.g. in a report to departmental management board or Member Panel – your decision not to fully assess the impact on equality, including the reasons why you reached this decision.
If there is any potential for an impact on service users or staff, you should complete this full EqIA.

1. Who is completing the EqIA⁴ and why is it being done?

Title of service / proposal / project / strategy / procurement you are assessing⁵	
Names of those involved in completing the EqIA	
Head of Service or Business Manager	
Team/Department	
Lead officer contact details	
Focus of EqIA – what are you assessing?⁶ What are the aims of the service, proposal, project? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What are the reasons for the proposal or change? Do you need to reference/consider any related projects?	
Stakeholders Who will be affected? Which protected characteristics (<i>see end-notes 11-20</i>) is it most relevant to? Consider the public, service users, partners, staff, Members, etc	

3. Analysis and assessment: review of information, impact analysis and mitigating actions

Protected characteristic group	<p>What do you know⁷? What do people tell you⁸?</p> <p>Summary of data and feedback about service users and the wider community/ public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who uses the service? • Who doesn't and why? • Feedback/complaints? • Any differences in outcomes? Why? 	<p>What does this mean – what are the potential impacts of the proposal(s)⁹?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider positive and negative impacts - On service users / the public - <i>AND, where relevant, staff</i> 	<p>What can you do¹⁰?</p> <p>What reasonable mitigations to reduce or avoid the impact can you propose?</p> <p>How will you communicate/engage or provide services differently to create a 'level playing field' – e.g. consultation materials in easy read or hold targeted engagement events</p> <p><i>If there is no current way of mitigating any negative impacts, clearly state that here and consider other actions you could take in the action plan in section 4.</i></p>
Age ¹¹			
Disability ¹²			
Gender reassignment ¹³			
Pregnancy and maternity ¹⁴			
Race ¹⁵			
Religion or belief ¹⁶			
Sex/Gender ¹⁷			

Protected characteristic group	What do you know⁷? What do people tell you⁸? Summary of data and feedback about service users and the wider community/ public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who uses the service? • Who doesn't and why? • Feedback/complaints? • Any differences in outcomes? Why? 	What does this mean – what are the potential impacts of the proposal(s)⁹? - Consider positive and negative impacts - On service users / the public - <i>AND, where relevant, staff</i>	What can you do¹⁰? What reasonable mitigations to reduce or avoid the impact can you propose? How will you communicate/engage or provide services differently to create a 'level playing field' – e.g. consultation materials in easy read or hold targeted engagement events <i>If there is no current way of mitigating any negative impacts, clearly state that here and consider other actions you could take in the action plan in section 4.</i>
Sexual orientation¹⁸			
Marriage and civil partnership¹⁹			
Carers²⁰			
Other relevant groups²¹ Consider if there is a potential impact (positive or negative) on areas such as health and wellbeing, crime and disorder, Armed Forces community.			

Opportunity to advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations²²

Conclusion of your analysis and assessment - select one of the outcomes below²³ and summarise why you have selected i, ii, iii or iv; what you think the **most important** impacts are; and the key actions you will take.

OUTCOME AND NEXT STEPS	SUMMARY
<p>i. No equality impacts identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- No major change required to proposal	
<p>ii. Minimal equality impacts identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Adverse impacts have been identified, but have been objectively justified (provided you do not unlawfully discriminate)- Ensure decision makers consider the cumulative effect of how a number of decisions impact on equality- No major change required to proposal	
<p>iii. Potential equality impacts identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Take 'mitigating action' to change the original policy/proposal, remove barriers or better advance equality- Set out clear actions in the action plan in section 4.	
<p>iv. Major equality impacts identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The adverse effects are not justified, cannot be mitigated or show unlawful discrimination- You must stop and remove the policy [you should consult with Legal Services]- Ensure decision makers understand the equality impact	

4. Prioritised Action Plan²⁴

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned Include actions relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mitigation measures • getting further research • getting further data/consultation 	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Lead officer and timeframe
NB: These actions must now be transferred to service or business plans and monitored/reviewed to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.				

This EqIA has been signed off by:

Lead Equality Impact Assessment officer: _____ **Date:** _____
Head of Service or Business Manager: _____ **Date:** _____
Review date: _____

Guidance end-notes

¹ The following principles explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act when considering the effect of existing and new policies/practices/services on equality. They must all be met or the EqIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering proposals and **before** a final decision is taken
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that anyone who provides services on our behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty – it continues after proposals are implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

² Our duties in the Equality Act 2010

HCC has a legal duty under this Act to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with 'protected characteristics' (see end notes 11-20 for details of the nine-protected characteristics). This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. **If you are creating an 'arms-length' company**, seek advice from the Equality Team or Legal.

We use this template to do this and evidence our consideration. **You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:**

- **Avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact:** if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately.
- **Promote equality of opportunity:** by
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by equality groups
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of equality groups
 - Encouraging equality groups to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't:** e.g. by promoting understanding.

³ EqIAs should always be proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The size of the likely impact – e.g. the numbers of people affected and their vulnerability

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposal(s) on a protected group (e.g. disabled people) and the more vulnerable the group is, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be. Unless they contain sensitive personal/employee data – EqIAs are public documents. They are published with Cabinet and Panel papers and public consultations and are available on request.

⁴ **Who completes the EqIA:** The person who is making the decision or advising the decision-maker about a policy. It is better to do this as a team, with people involved who understand the implementation of the policy.

⁵ **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing.

⁶ **Focus of EqIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time. Also explain if there is a particular focus to your equality analysis:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function? How does it fit with other services?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? e.g. what do you want to provide, what will change/improve?
- Which aspects are most important to equality and should be the focus of your attention?
- You should state all teams/organisations involved in implementing, carrying out or delivering the policy, practice or service
- What are the **reason(s)** for the proposal or change (financial, service, legal etc)? The Act requires us to make these clear.

⁷ **Data & Information:** Your EqIA needs to be informed by data. You should consider the following:

- What data relevant to the impact on protected groups is available?
(is there an existing EqIA?, local service data, national data, community data, similar proposal in another local authority).
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (e.g. further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you know from service/local data about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each characteristic in turn.
- What might any local demographic changes or trends mean for the service or function? Also consider national data if appropriate
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any group(s)?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people or groups in the community?

⁸ **What have people told you about the service, function, area?**

- Use service user feedback, complaints, audits, and/or the results of specific consultation/engagement
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- Remember, you must engage/consult appropriately and in an inclusive way with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.
- You can read HCC's Consultation and Engagement toolkits for full advice on this
- For practical tips and advice on consulting with people from protected groups, see this 'How-to' guide

⁹ **Impact:** Your EqIA must consider fully and properly **actual and potential impacts** against each protected characteristic:

- The equality duty does not stop changes, but means we must fully consider and address the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be accurate and transparent, but also realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific where you can so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects.
- Questions to ask when assessing whether and how the proposals impact on service users, staff and the wider community:
 - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - Does the project relate to an area with known inequalities (where national evidence or previous research is available)?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims?
 - Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan **must** be modified.
 - Does it relate to an area where equality objectives have been set by HCC in our [Equality Strategy](#)?

¹⁰ **Consider actions relating to the following:**

- That specifically address the impacts you've identified and show how they will remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts
- Explain clearly what any mitigating measures are, and the extent to which you think they will reduce / remove the adverse effect
- Will you need to communicate or provide services in different ways for different groups in order to create a "level playing field"?
- State how you can maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- If you do not have sufficient equality information, state how you can fill the gaps.

¹¹ **Age:** People of all ages, but consider in particular children and young people, older people and carers, looked after children and young people leaving care. Also consider working age people.

¹² **Disability:** When looking at disability, consideration should be given to people with different types of impairments: physical (including mobility), learning, aural or sensory (including hearing and vision impairment), visible and non-visible impairment. Consideration should also be given to: people with HIV, people with mental health needs and people with drug and alcohol problems. People with conditions such as diabetes and cancer and some other health conditions also have protection under the Equality Act 2010.

¹³ **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does **not** need to be under medical supervision to be protected. Consider transgender people, transsexual people and transvestites.

¹⁴ **Pregnancy and Maternity:** When looking at pregnancy and maternity, give consideration to pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, part-time workers, women with caring responsibilities, women who are lone parents and parents on low incomes, women on maternity leave and Keeping in Touch days.

¹⁵ **Race/Ethnicity:** Apart from the common ethnic groups, consideration should also be given to Gypsy, Roma and Irish Travellers communities, people of other nationalities outside Britain who reside here, refugees and asylum seekers and speakers of other languages.

¹⁶ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. As a minimum you should consider the most common religious groups (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jews, Sikh, Buddhist) and people with no religion or philosophical belief(s).

¹⁷ **Sex/Gender:** Consider girls and women, boys and men, married people, civil partners, part-time workers, carers (both of children with disabilities and older cares), parents (mothers and fathers), in particular lone parents and parents on low incomes.

¹⁸ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.

¹⁹ **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** consider married people and civil partners – e.g. do same sex couple in a civil partnership have the same rights and benefits as married people?

²⁰ **Carers:** From April 2015, carers (people who provide unpaid care to a friend or relative) have been entitled to an assessment of their own needs in the same way as those they care for. Although not a 'protected characteristic' HCC Diversity Board has agreed that the impact of proposals on carers should also be considered.

²¹ **Other relevant groups:** You should consider the impact on our service users in other related areas, such as health and wellbeing, crime and disorder (e.g. people experiencing domestic abuse), community relations and socio-economic status (e.g. homelessness or low incomes). If the proposal is likely to have an impact on service users in these areas, HCC Public Health and the County Community Safety Unit may be able to help. Also consider whether your policy

or decision will impact current or former Armed Forces personnel living and working in Hertfordshire. The Council is committed to the Hertfordshire Community Covenant, a commitment from public and private organisations in the county to support the active and retired Armed Forces community.

²² **Equality of opportunity and good relations:** summarise anything that will have a potential positive impact over and above the work of your project – e.g. engaging with the community may help raise awareness and community understanding of the needs of certain groups.

²³ **Conclusion**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Also explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Make it clear if a change is needed to the proposal itself. Is further engagement, research or monitoring needed?
- Make it clear if, as a result of the analysis, the policy/proposal should be stopped.

²⁴ **Action Planning:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give ‘due regard’ to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.