

<b>Section</b>	5	Fairness at Work
<b>Title</b>	5.2	Equal Opportunities
<b>Document</b>	5.2.2	Equality Impact Assessments

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## Introduction

1. The Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider how their activities as employers affect people who share different protected characteristics. The specific duties require public bodies with 150 or more employees to publish information to show they did this.
2. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This will entail understanding the potential effects of the school's activities on different people but there is no prescribed process for doing this for each occasion. Keeping a simple record of how decisions are reached will help the school show how they considered the Equality Duty.
3. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not a requirement of the equality duty; it is a tool that can be used for identifying the potential impact of the Academy's policies and working methods on its staff and anyone who comes into contact with the school. An EIA could be useful if the Academy is considering structural change or has identified an issue with equality, say after a grievance which has inequality at its core.
4. Carrying out EIAs makes the Academy think carefully about the impact of the work they undertake on pupils, local people and members of staff. This should lead to actions that will promote equality for all, and ensure that the policies and procedures, and the methods of working, are fulfilling the requirements of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation.
5. By carrying out EIAs, it is hoped that the Academy will get better involvement and a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality across the staff groups.
6. The focus should be on service improvement and not just mitigating adverse impact. The EIA can be seen as an opportunity to deliver better outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

## Procedure

7. The degree of complexity of the EIA will be driven by the complexity of the change or review.
8. The process can be very simple for routine changes and decisions or carried out in more structured stages for bigger policy/structural changes with the managers and staff in the area associated with the change involved, to the level of understanding what the process is and what the outcome is likely to be.
9. If a complex structured EIA is required, a team may be put together to carry it out. This should ideally include the manager responsible for the activity, plus a staff member and a 'stakeholder or user' who will be affected by the activity and, possibly, an expert in the field of the activity. For a simple EIA the manager or person considering the change would make sure they recorded their thought processes when reaching the decision to show that the decision was reached fairly with regard to the protected characteristics.

### Is an EIA necessary?

10. This stage will determine whether or not it is necessary to carry out a full EIA for this area of activity.
11. You may find it useful to hold an 'introductory session' with appropriate staff so that everyone feels at a similar level of knowledge at the start of the process.
12. The main questions are:
  - What are you trying to achieve in this activity?
  - Who, in the main, will benefit?
  - Does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?
  - Does the activity make a positive contribution to equalities?
13. Proportionality is an important element of the screening process. You will need to decide if any negative or positive impact on equality is likely to be significant, and for which groups of people.

### What should it cover?

14. It is important to identify and understand who the proposed activity is intended to benefit. This is especially important if particular groups are being targeted. It is necessary to consider whether there are other beneficiaries, in addition to those considered to be the main ones, who should also be taken into account. A suggested form is at Appendix 1.

### Gathering Information

15. The school will already have a large quantity of qualitative data gathered, and this should initially be used and then backed up by new research, if needed. Data likely to be already in the possession of the school will be:
  - any previous EIA.
  - service monitoring reports.
  - previous research and customer satisfaction surveys.
  - staff surveys, opinions and information from trade unions.
  - complaints and comments, both internal and from the community.
  - press coverage of the school.
  - outcomes/recommendations from staff consultation groups.
  - the knowledge, technical advice, expertise and experience of the people assisting in the completion of the EIAs.
  - national and local statistics.
  - information from formal audits.
  - census data.
  - academic, qualitative and quantitative research.
  - demographics.
16. New research should always include consultation with staff groups, particularly the staff affected by the proposed activity.

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17. New research should concentrate on the main objectives and the final goals. It should look for practical outcomes, focusing on identifying gaps in the current provision. If it is not possible to get this information easily or immediately, this should be highlighted in the final action plan.
18. The information gathered in these early stages will help decide whether there is potential for the policy, strategy, procedure or function to result in a less favourable outcome for any particular group, or unlawful discrimination of any kind.
19. The stakeholders, both internally and externally, should end up being satisfied that the process has been sufficiently rigorous but remains in proportion to the importance of the proposed activity/policy.

### **Results of the EIA**

20. The real value of completing an EIA comes from the actions that will take place and the positive changes that will emerge through conducting the assessment. Hopefully if the focus is put on outcomes and tangible improvements, and clear examples are used, it will result in resources and services being targeted where they should be, and where they most efficiently support the school's priorities.
21. A report should be produced with an action plan that includes actions that will remove, or alleviate, the potential for the activity to unlawfully discriminate, or impact less favourably on one or more groups. It should only include the main actions or activities likely to have the greatest impact.
22. The action plan should include references to any additional monitoring or research that was identified in the information gathering part of the process. It should also include references to any information that is still required, or was not retrievable at the point of assessment. This will be needed in subsequent reviews, or in order to complete actions.
23. An action plan will probably have several events, but an action plan that runs to six pages or more is unlikely to be providing sufficient focus for most activities. Actions that are identified should be targeted to be resolved the first year.
24. The report and action plan should be distributed to all interested groups, including staff, the community and other users of the school's services.
25. The action plan should be reviewed regularly over the year for progress against the timescale. This may be done using the same review process as is used for the school service review and the review of risk assessment.

### **Related Documents**

Equality and Diversity Policy and Discrimination at Work

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

Who will be consulted as part of this review? \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Activity/policy</b>	<b>Which group may be impacted?</b>	<b>What might be the impact?</b> Indicate positive and negative impacts using (+ve) or (-ve)	<b>How will we minimise/eradicate the negative impact?</b>

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Next date for review \_\_\_\_\_