



One minute guide

Equality Impact Assessment

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What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool that helps us to place equality, diversity, cohesion and integration at the heart of everything we do and make sure our strategies, policies, services and functions do what they are intended to do and for everybody.

Carrying out an EIA involves assessing the likely (or actual) effects of policies on people in respect of protected equality characteristics including age, disability, race and sexual orientation—please see overleaf for further detail and the full list of protected characteristics. This includes looking for opportunities to promote equality that may have previously been missed or could be better used, as well as negative or adverse impacts that can be removed or mitigated where possible. If any negative or adverse impacts amount to unlawful discrimination, they must be removed.

Why do we have them?

As a local authority, we are required by the [Equality Act 2010](#) to comply with the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#). This means that we need to carry out an equality analysis of our services and any proposals for change. We need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, services and functions, both current and proposed, give proper consideration and **due regard** to the needs of diverse groups in order to:

- eliminate discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity and access; and
- foster good relations between different groups in the community.

The Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to a number of equality considerations when exercising their functions. EIAs should be carried out prior to implementing a policy, with a view to identifying its potential impact on equality. They are not required by law, but are a way of facilitating and evidencing compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

What do we do in Leeds?

In Leeds, the due regard process used by the council has been developed to ensure we can evidence how our key decisions consider equality and improve outcomes for citizens of Leeds. 'Every year Children and Families Directorate should be able to evidence that equality issues have been considered in 100% of major decisions'.

To meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty, council officers must first complete an equality screening form to decide if a full EIA form needs to be completed when they are seeking a major decision to be made by the council. In the full EIA form, they must set out:

- How relevance to equality has been determined and how due regard was given;
- What key equality related information / data has been taken into account;
- Any key findings:
 - potential positive and/or negative impacts on different equality characteristics
 - potential impact on relationships between different groups; and
- Any key actions / mitigating factors

When should equality screening or EIA be completed?

Within Leeds City Council, equality screening or EIA should be completed during the initial stages of developing new strategies, policies, functions or services, prior to starting a procurement exercise and before decisions are made.

The full range of what are now known as 'protected equality characteristics' need to be considered and addressed. These are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Examples of when you should consider equality, diversity, cohesion and integration include:

- any proposals to introduce or add to a service;
- any proposals to remove, reduce or alter a service;
- any new policies or changes to policies;
- any proposals to adopt policy priorities, strategies and plans;
- services or practices that have not previously considered equality and diversity;
- changes to staffing structure where groups of employees are likely to be negatively affected; and
- any proposals in relation to procured or commissioned services.

Other agencies may also carry out equality impact assessments and practitioners should follow their agency procedure and guidance in doing this.

For more information

More guidance can be found on the [Equality And Diversity Impact Assessments page](#).