

What is impact assessment?

Impact assessment is a systematic way of finding out whether a policy affects all racial groups equally. Authorities can use it to take account of different needs and experiences, and to:

- Achieve better results generally.
- Identify actual and potential inequalities, and
- respond as necessary to these inequalities.

Why is impact assessment necessary?

- All Public Authorities have a duty to set out their arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact that their proposed policies could have on the promotion of race equality.
- Impact assessment is a systematic way of meeting this duty.
- All Public Authorities may not be aware that their policies and services are affecting different groups in different ways. An impact assessment will make them better informed.

What to carry out on impact assessment

- Impact assessment should begin as soon as a relevant new policy is being considered. It should be an integral part of policy making.
- A full impact assessment may not be necessary in every case.
- An **initial assessment** or screening would be helpful when developing a new policy or considering changes to a policy. The assessment could be based on existing knowledge, data, and best estimates of the scope of the issue and the people it will affect.
- A **partial impact assessment** will build on the initial assessment, outline risks and benefits, and include advice from experts and interested groups.
- A **full impact assessment** will include the results of external consultation, a final recommendation, and arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the assessment.

What is needed for an impact assessment

- Documentation about the policy or proposed policy, including aims, objectives, and possible alternatives.
- The race equality scheme, outlining the authority's aims and values.
- Some knowledge and information about race issues.
- Previous impact assessments on similar policies or services.

To complete an impact assessment, you may also need:

- The results of consultation with interested parties, service-users, and the wider community.
- Specially commissioned data on the impact of the policy.

Key stages if impact assessment.

1. Setting clear policy aims and objectives.
 - What is the purpose of the policy?

- Who will benefit from it?
 - How will they benefit from it?
 - How does the policy fit in with the authority's wider objectives?
2. Collecting existing ethnic data:
 - Surveys
 - Statistical databases
 - Consultation results
 - In-depth interviews
 - Academic publications
 - Specially commissioned research, if necessary.
 3. Using the data to decide whether the policy is likely to affect different racial groups, directly or indirectly, in different ways.
 - Consider whether disparities between groups amount to adverse impact on some groups, or unlawful discrimination.
 4. Considering changes to the policy to prevent any adverse impact or unlawful discrimination, while still delivering the aims of the policy.
 - Consider alternative policies that might promote race equality better.
 5. Consulting interested parties, service users, and members of the public on the preferred policy.
 - Use formal and informal community-based approaches, such as consultation meetings, focus groups, citizens' juries, or survey questionnaires.
 - Repeat step 4, depending on the results of the consultation.
 6. Taking account of all assessments and consultations before making a final decision on the policy.
 - Explain clearly how the policy was decided, and what its effects and benefits are likely to be.
 7. Making arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the policy and its impact.
 8. Publishing the results of the impact assessment, consultation and monitoring.
 - The findings should be readily accessible and written in plain language.
 - The impact assessment should be proportionate to the importance of the policy and reported in full.

Although the legislation only insists that impact assessments are carried out on policies and functions in relation to Race. Many organisations have taken the approach that impact assessment should be carried out on all of the 6 strands of Diversity, Race, Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Religion & Beliefs and Age. This document looks at an impact assessment from the Race perspective; however the same process is to be followed for the other 5 strands.

Initial Equality Impact Assessment Pro-Forma

Directorate		Officer responsible for the assessment	Sally Renwick		
Service	Communications				
Name of Policy to be assessed	Review of Polling Stations	Date of Assessment	29.11.11	Is this a new or existing policy?	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy.	To provide and administer a review of polling stations to comply with legislation and meet the needs of community and Authority.				
2. Are there any associated objectives of the policy? Please explain.	Ensure the Authority has sufficient and suitable polling stations.				
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	Community - right to vote Authority - complying with legislation				
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy?	Fair and equitable access to polling stations for voters and election staff.				
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Social, economic, environmental factors.				
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	Councillors Public Authority	7. Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?	The Returning Officer – (CEX)		
8. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on racial groups?	Y	N ✓	Please explain Process is statute driven.		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?					
9. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to gender?	Y	N ✓	No evidence to show otherwise.		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?					
10. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to disability?	Y ✓	N	Access to Polling Stations		

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Information provided to Polling Station staff to inform them to assist and make reasonable adjustment where necessary. A review of station sites in progress.		
11. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?	Y	N ✓	No evidence
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
12. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to their age?	Y	N ✓	No evidence
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
13. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to their religious belief?	Y	N ✓	Places of worship are used, but not complaints have been received concerning this.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
14. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them having dependants/ caring responsibilities?	Y	N ✓	No evidence.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
15. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them having an offending past?	Y	N ✓	No Evidence
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
16. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them being trans-gendered or transsexual?	Y	N ✓	No evidence

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
17. Could the differential impact identified in 8 – 16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy?	Y	N ✓	Please explain. No.
18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? or any other reason?	Y	N	Please explain for each equality heading (questions 8 – 16) on a separate piece of paper N/A
19. Should the policy proceed to a partial impact assessment?	Y	N ✓	
20. If Yes, is there enough evidence to proceed to a full EIA?	Y	N	
21. Date on which Partial or Full assessment to be completed by.	Y	N	
Signed (Completing Officer):			
Date:			
Signed (Head of Section):			
Date:.....			

P: Personnel/Rep/Impact Assessment