

INTRODUCTORY GUIDANCE TO EQUALITY SCREENING AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

What is it? Equality screening and impact assessment helps us consider the effect of our policies and practices¹ on different people. It helps us minimise negative impact and potential discrimination and promote opportunities to advance equality, inclusion and good relations between different groups of people.

There are two main elements to equality screening and impact assessment. Firstly a set of equality screening questions are reviewed. These questions help determine whether the policy is relevant to equality and whether it needs to go through an equality impact assessment. The second element, if required, is the equality impact assessment meeting. This is where a panel of people review the proposed policy, particularly thinking about its impact on different groups of people, trying to identify and counter any potential negative impact and promote any opportunities to enhance equality. The panel suggests actions for the policy owner to adopt.

Why do we do it? The process helps us improve our policies and build equality into our work. Equality screening and impact assessment helps us consider the potential impact of what we do on different groups who are susceptible to unjustified discrimination, some of whom are legally protected against this, whether by UK or other law. It helps us demonstrate that we have proactively considered equality when developing our policies.

When should we do it? Assessing the impact on equality should start early in the policy development process, or at the early stage of a review. Assessing the impact on equality should be ongoing rather than a one-off exercise, because circumstances change over time, so equality considerations should be taken into account both as the policy is developed and also as it is implemented. The guidance here is to help assess the impact on equality before the policy is implemented.

It takes some time to properly set up an equality impact assessment meeting if one is needed, so the equality screening questions should be considered as early as possible once the policy is drafted. If an equality impact assessment is required it will take a little time to identify a chair, a note-taker, a diverse panel and to set up the meeting arrangements. In addition once the meeting has taken place there are likely to be actions to be implemented before the policy is launched. All this needs to be considered when determining the best time to address equality screening and impact assessment.

When we are implementing a policy that has been developed elsewhere, for example by a government department, or by a partner organisation we also need to assess the impact on equality. Although responsibility for the policy itself rests with the organisation that developed it, we may have choices in how it is implemented that can help eliminate potential discrimination and promote equality, inclusion and good relations.

How do we do it? Consider the purpose of the policy, the context in which it will operate, who it should benefit and what results are intended from it. Reflect on its potential impact on people with different equality categories and think about which aspects of the policy, if any,

¹ Consistent with its broad definition in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act and other equality legislation, this guidance uses the term ‘policy’ as a shorthand for policies, practices, activities and significant decisions about how we work and carry out our functions.

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are most relevant to equality. Answer the equality screening questions to determine whether an equality impact assessment meeting is necessary.

Identify someone to chair the equality impact assessment panel meeting, if one is necessary, and someone to take the notes. The chair and note-taker play a crucial role and specific guidance has been developed to support them ([guidance for Chairs](#); [guidance for Note-takers](#)). A diverse panel should be approached, including a range of colleagues from different teams/departments/countries/regions as appropriate, some of whom should be directly involved in or impacted by the policy. Panel members should be sent the part-completed ESIA form and the policy documents, giving them at least a full week to read them and prepare for the meeting.

We particularly focus on the following equality categories (many of which are protected by equality legislation in the UK and beyond): age, dependant responsibilities (with or without), disability, gender including transgender, marital status/civil partnership, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Invariably there are other areas to consider including full-time/part-time working, geographical location, tribe/caste/clan or language, dependent on the country. We also review what is being proposed against the organisation's values (creativity, integrity, mutuality, professionalism and valuing people).

After the meeting the action points identified by the panel are reviewed by the policy owner and implemented as appropriate. The policy owner confirms implementation of the action points (and outlines a justification for any action points that won't be taken forward) and then signs off and sends the completed form to ESIA@britishcouncil.org.

Northern Ireland

There is particular legislation in Northern Ireland which requires a more detailed process of equality screening and impact assessment for policies that are deemed to have high relevance to equality. This includes external consultation with relevant contacts and organisations. Given this, there is a need to confirm whether the proposed policy affects anyone in Northern Ireland. **If it does, all parts of the form need to be completed and the guidance at Annex A must be read and followed.**

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EQUALITY SCREENING

POLICY² DETAILS – Please complete

Title of policy	Desk Booking Management System
Name of policy owner	Anurag Sharma
Intended implementation date	31 May 2019

BACKGROUND - Provide brief background information about the policy, or change to it. Include rationale, intended beneficiaries and expected outcomes. (Use as much space as you wish, the text box below will expand as you enter information).

This tool will democratise sitting arrangement where an employee needs to book the workstation through this tool. It gives equal opportunity to staff to choose workstation as per their preference. So none of the workstation is dedicated to any specific staff. With this new system, we are looking at:

- Standardised approach for desk booking
- Effective management of the desk booking system

IS AN EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?

To determine this, please answer the following by ticking yes, no or not sure:

Question	Yes	No	Not sure
Is the policy potentially significant in terms of its anticipated impact on employees, or customers/clients/audiences, or the wider community?	Yes		
Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how programmes/services/functions are delivered?	Yes		
Might the policy affect people in particular equality categories in a different way?		No	
Are the potential equality impacts unknown?			Not Sure
Does the policy have the possibility to support or detract from our efforts to promote the inclusion of people from under-represented groups?			Not Sure

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Will the policy have an impact on anyone in Northern Ireland?			
Total responses Yes/No/Not sure	2	1	2

DECIDING IF AN EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT IS NECESSARY

If all the answers to the questions above are 'no' then an equality impact assessment is not needed.

Please move to the 'Record of decision' section below.

If there are any 'yes' responses then an equality impact assessment is necessary.

Please move to the 'Record of decision' section below.

If there are no 'yes' responses but there are any 'not sure' responses then please discuss next steps further with the Regional Diversity Lead or with the Diversity Unit, who will help you decide if an equality impact assessment is necessary. Examples of situations where it is not necessary to carry out an equality impact assessment include:

- Producing a team newsletter
- Changing the time of a meeting
- Planning an internal event

In these instances relevant equality issues should still be considered, but there is no need to carry out an equality impact assessment.

RECORD OF DECISION

I confirm an equality impact assessment is required / is not required (*delete as relevant*).

Policy Owner: Anurag Sharma (Name) Head- Admin & Facilities (Role)

Date: 13 May 2019

Note 1: *If an equality impact assessment **is required**, please complete questions 1-3 in the following section and send this part-completed form to the panel along with any relevant background documentation about the policy at least one full week prior to the EIA meeting. This should include the draft policy and any supporting data or relevant papers.*

Note 2: *If an equality impact assessment **is not required**, please send this screening section of the form to ESIA@britishcouncil.org.*

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PART A: *This section is to be completed before the EIA panel meeting and sent at least one week in advance to the panel along with the policy and other relevant documents.*

TITLE OF POLICY:	<i>Desk Booking Management System</i>
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(Take as much space as required under each heading below)

- 1. Please summarise the purpose of the policy, the context in which it will operate, who it should benefit and what results are intended from it.**

Purpose of the tool is to democratise the sitting arrangement where staff gets an opportunity to book any workstation as per his choice subjected to its availability.

- 2. Please explain any aspects of the policy you've been able to identify that are relevant to equality. This will contribute to the equality-focused discussion the panel will have.**

Staff has an opportunity to access and log on this tool in order to book seating location of his or her choice.
Are workstations friendly to accommodate physical disability?

- 3. Please outline any equality-related supporting data that should be considered. This could include consultation with Trades Union Side or staff associations, equality monitoring data, responses from staff surveys or client feedback exercises, external demographic and benchmarking data or other relevant internal or external material.**

Implementing team has captured the requirement from delivery key stakeholders and understand the specific requirement if any like dual monitor requirement, desktop requirement; accordingly, these changes are made, if possible otherwise few special seats are blocked from system and not allowed to book by any other staff.

Also, desk booking system is an application which runs like other application, it can be accessed by any staff based on GTI machine features.

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Regarding implementing this process for disabled employees, the process needs to be reviewed and considered on accessibility grounds.

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PART B: *This section captures the notes of the Equality Impact Assessment panel meeting.*

TITLE OF POLICY³:	Desk Booking Management System
DATE OF EIA PANEL MEETING:	13 May 2019

1. Please list the names, roles/business areas and geographical location of the panel members. If contributions have been received in writing by people who could not attend please list their details too and note 'input in writing' by their name.

Neha Puri	Senior Manager - HR, Human Resources	Noida	Chair
Babita Jain	Manager- CI, General, Management	Noida	Attendee
Amit Sharma	Asst. Manager, Admin	Noida	Attendee
Gagandeep Singh	Financial Controller	Noida	Policy Owner
Arun Ramachandran	Sr. Manager, Finance Delivery	Noida	Attendee
Asmita Gaba	Sr. Manager, Finance	Noida	Attendee
Annie Parashar	Sr. Manager, Finance	Noida	Notes Taker
Piyanka Mishra	Manager, HR, General Management	Noida	Notes Taker

2. Summarise the main points made in the discussion, noting which documents were reviewed. Note any points relating to clarity/quality assurance as well as points relating to equality issues.

In the current scenario, the desk booking system will be implemented across all the departments in the organistaion. This is a new practice to be introduced in the system as there is no current procedure of booking the desks. Some salient features identified with this new process:

Features:

- Different shift timings have been catered to in the desk booking system.
- A computer is required as of now to book and log in. A confirmation message will be sent to user on their phone upon booking.
- Partial time slots will be available for booking
- Seating bays may be segregated for laptop and desk top users.

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- Release time for the desk if unused after booking is 1 Hour
- Pilot for finance may be started in May'19.
- An app will be developed in future to provide more accessibility and flexibility to users.

Actions for staff:

- The desks will have to be booked daily.
- If someone wants to book for a week then each day will have to be booked individually still.
- A desk can be booked maximum for 12 hours.

Actions for the process owners:

- Some seats may have to be fixed due to business requirement just like in IS. For finance these will be teams providing service to one region Regions/ team specific demarcation for booking the systems due to specific software requirement in Finance
 - Dual screen for AP team
 - System specific software
- Seat booking system required for Visitors/ consultants working along with the teams
- Head phones are required for Skype calls, etc.
- Docking devices, screen and keyboard for laptop users.

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3. **Capturing information about the protected groups/characteristics** - Based on the notes of the discussion (section above), record here any potential for negative impact identified and any opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and good relations.

Equality categories (with prompts to guide full consideration)	Potential for negative impact	Opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations between different groups
Different ages (older, middle-aged, young adult, teenage, children; authority generation; vulnerable adults)	NA	NA
Different dependant responsibilities (childcare, eldercare, care for disabled and/or extended family)	NA	NA
Disabled people (physical, sensory, learning, hidden, mental health, HIV/AIDS, other)	Yes	Access friendly booking system, sound feature to be added for visual impairment. Access audit for the areas are completed which confirms that desks are friendly for physical disability.
Different ethnic and cultural groups (majority and minority, including Roma people, people from different tribes/castes/clans)	NA	NA
Different genders (men, women, transgender, intersex, other)	NA	NA
Different marital status (single, married, civil partnership, other)	NA	NA
Different political views or community backgrounds (particularly relevant to Northern Ireland)	NA	NA
Pregnancy, maternity, paternity and adoption (before/during/after)	NA	NA

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Equality categories (with prompts to guide full consideration)	Potential for negative impact	Opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations between different groups
Different or no religious or philosophical beliefs (majority/ minority/ none)	NA	NA
Different sexual orientations (gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual)	NA	NA
Additional equality grounds (such as full-time/part-time working, language, geographical location, other ⁴)	NA	Option to book per hour required for part time workers/reduced working hour staff category
British Council values (valuing people, creativity, integrity, mutuality, professionalism)	NA	NA

4. Agreed actions - Insert additional rows for more action points and number these.

Action identified by Panel	Agreed by Policy Owner (Yes/No)	Justification if not agreed	Date to be implemented	Confirmation of implementation
1. Colour coding/distinction between laptop/desktop user on the tool	Yes		27 May 2019	

5. Sign off by policy owner

I confirm that the policy has been amended as identified in the **Agreed actions** table above.

If the policy has an impact on people or functions in Northern Ireland, I confirm Annex A has also been completed.

Anurag Sharma (Name) Head-Admin & Facilities (Role) 13 May 2019_____ (Date)

⁴ Any other categories people share that might impact on how the policy affects them.

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6. Record keeping

The Policy Owner (or their agent) must email the completed ESIA form to ESIA@britishcouncil.org.

POLICIES WITH AN IMPACT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In accordance with the Guide for Public Authorities, policies which have a MAJOR impact on equality will share some of the following factors:

- they are deemed to be significant in terms of strategic importance;
- the potential equality impacts are unknown;
- the potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or experienced disproportionately by groups who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- the policy is likely to be challenged by a judicial review;
- the policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Policies which have a MINOR impact on equality will share some of the following factors:

- they are not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential differential impact is judged to be negligible;
- aspects of the policy are potentially unlawfully discriminatory but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making the changes identified in the action points at Section 4;
- any differential equality impact is intentional because the policy has been designed specifically to promote equality for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- by amending the policy there are opportunities to better promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations.

Policies which have NO impact on equality will share some of the following factors:

- they have no relevance to equality, inclusion or good relations;
- they are purely technical in nature and have no bearing in terms of the impact on equality, inclusion or good relations for people in different equality groups.

For policies impacting on people or functions in Northern Ireland, you must identify whether any of the issues identified by the EIA panel in the table at Section 3 are likely to have a MAJOR, MINOR or NO impact on equality. This consideration must be given to all the items listed in the table at section 3 whether they have potential for negative impact or the opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and good relations.

Equality categories	Negative/Positive impact on equality, inclusion or good relations	
	MINOR	MAJOR
Age		
Dependants		
Disability		
Ethnicity		
Gender		
Marital status		
Political opinion		
Religious belief		
Sexual orientation		

If the answer to the above questions is NO, no further action is needed.

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If MINOR impact is identified and the actions listed at Section 4 will address this, no further action is needed. Where the actions listed at Section 4 will not sufficiently address the impact, additional measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations should be considered. If mitigating measures and/or an alternative approach cannot be taken then the policy should be subject to full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) aligned to Northern Ireland's equality legislation.

If a MAJOR impact is identified in any of the answers above then the policy should be subject to full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) aligned to Northern Ireland's equality legislation.

For guidance on completing full EQIA aligned to Northern Ireland's equality legislation, see <http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf>.

A member of the Diversity Unit should be involved in any EQIAs that take place.

RECORD OF DECISION AND SIGN OFF BY POLICY OWNER: *(please delete 2 of the following statements)*

I confirm that a full EQIA is needed and that I will refer to the Guide for Public Authorities and the Diversity Unit for support in carrying this out.

or

I confirm that a full EQIA is not needed, providing all the Agreed actions at Section 4 and/or other noted mitigating actions are carried out.

Note other mitigating actions that are not listed at Section 4 here _____

or

I confirm that a full EQIA is not needed and no further action needs to be taken.

Signed by:

_____ (Name) _____ (Role)

_____ (Date)

RECORD KEEPING

The Policy Owner (or their agent) must email the completed ESIA form to ESIA@britishcouncil.org.