

LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Equality Impact Assessment (EIAs)

Policies, projects, services, functions & strategies

An easy guide for staff who need to complete Equality
Impact Assessment



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1 - Introduction

Welcome to the revised Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Guide. In just a number of easy steps you will have your EIA completed.

2 - What's the guide all about?

The guide links with the EIA assessment form so that each section of the guide explains how to complete each section of the form. We've used an example of a Regeneration and Planning Service - Local Plan Development to show you how you might do an EIA. The guide is designed to make the process and outcomes meaningful for you and others involved.

3 - Our Commitment

The council, in line with the Equality Act (2010), will:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (groups) and those who do not.

Protected groups:

- Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- The impact on rural communities and people on low incomes must also to be considered.

4 - What is an EIA?

Equality impact assessments are a tool for ensuring that the six equality strands, and social economic factors are fully considered when drawing up or reviewing policies or proposals which affect the delivery of services. EIA's also apply to Council's functions and the employment practice of the authority. They should help you:

- Determine how the Council's work will impact or affect different communities, especially those groups or communities who experience inequality, discrimination, social economic exclusion or disadvantage.
- Measure whether our work will have a negative, neutral, or positive effect on different communities.
- Make decisions about current and future services and practice based on these assessments.
- Develop ways of checking the effects of new or changing policies or proposals if they are introduced.

The aim of an EIA is to:

- Allow you to have more contact with the diverse groups in our community.
- Change the way you think about your work and the decisions you make.
- Help you to think more about the needs of various groups so that equality is at the heart of everything you do.

5 - Why do EIAs?

We need to carry out EIA's because there is a legal requirement to do so in relation to race, disability equality. First and foremost an EIA should be a tool to allow you to find out whether your work has a negative impact on different groups. It should be completed before the policy, project, service, function or strategy has been set up. If changes are needed it's easier to make these sooner rather than later. The council's corporate Ethos makes it clear that in our

stewardship role the council has a responsibility for 'ensuring the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the local area' and that in terms of social justice that 'the values of local government are founded on equality and meeting community needs'.

We are also carrying them out because they:

- Are helpful in identifying improvements to services.
- Help avoid continuing or adopting harmful policies or procedures.
- Help us to make better decisions.
- Will help us to identify how we can make our services more accessible and appropriate.
- Will help the Council to become a better employer and meet its ambitions in relation to a diverse workforce.
- Can help us to check whether there is anything we can do to support work on community cohesion and social economic inclusion.
- They support our equality objective and action plan.
- They are a tool to eliminate institutional discrimination.



6 - When do I need to do an EIA?

Caselaw **'stresses the need to carry out an equality impact assessment before formulating new or changed policies, services, project, strategies and functions'** or as part of an ongoing 3 year programme.

You don't need to complete an EIA for:

- Information updates where no decisions are required
- Financial update unless it is relating to cutting budgets for a service that will have an impact on the equality strands

You will need to complete an EIA for:

- Changes to existing or new services
- Changes to existing or new policies
- Projects
- Strategies
- Functions

Making sure that EIAs are in place before setting them up could save you time, problems and even money in the future.

7 - How do I carry out an equality impact assessment?

Equality duty requires that consideration of equalities should be an integral part of the council's decision-making. Equality analysis has to be carried out on all proposed new or changed projects, services, functions, policies or strategies. However, an Equality Impact Assessment is not always required, read on for more details.

Step 1.2 - Collecting your information

Q3. Using existing data (if available) and thinking about each group below, does, or could, the policy, service, function, project or strategy have a negative impact on the groups below?

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marital status and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief, including non-belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Other forms of disadvantage such as rural deprivation and isolation
- Any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Some things you could look at:

- Lancaster City Council 'Getting to Know our Communities' data (found on the council website)
- Census statistics
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) research and estimates
- Lancashire Council Council's Lancaster District Profile
- Media outlets and other sources
- Other Equality Impact Analysis
- Have your Say – including Lancaster City Council consultations

Step 1.3 - Is there a need to consult?

Top Tip: Don't forget to use the Consultation Guidance and our Corporate Consultee list.

Q4. Who have you consulted with? If you haven't consulted yet please list who you are going to consult with? Please give examples of how you have or are going to consult with specific groups of communities.

Please give examples of how you have or are going to consult with specific groups of communities, e.g. surveys, events.

Make sure you:

- Provide enough information about the proposals to the consultees so that they can give you informed feedback.
- Make sure that the way you ask for views is open, inclusive and accessible for everyone.
- Use methods appropriate for the policy or service being looked at.
- Make sure that anyone who may be affected by, or with an interest in the policy are asked for their views.
- Use a wide variety of community based and practical approaches.
- Use previous consultations and improve on them if you can.

Step 1.4 - Assessing the Impact

Q5. Using the existing data and the assessment in question 3 what does it tell you, is there an impact on some groups in the community?



Step 1.5 - What are the differences?

Q6. If you are either directly or indirectly discriminating, how are you going to change this or mitigate the negative impact?

Q7. Do you need any more information/evidence eg. statistic, consultation. If so how do you plan to address this?

Top Tip: Think about each equality group and try to see from their perspective, ask the equality groups.

Step 1.6 - Make a recommendation based on steps 1.1 - 1.5

Q8. If you are in a position to make a recommendation to change or introduce the policy, service, function, project or strategy, clearly show how it was decided on.

Q9. If you are not in a position to go ahead, what actions are you going to take?

Q10. How do you plan to monitor the impact and effectiveness of this change or decision?

Clearly show:

- How your policy, service, function, project or strategy was decided on and what will be its main effects and benefits?
- Make sure that you record how these decisions were made.
- Set up a way of regularly monitoring your policy, service, function, project or strategy that includes collecting and reviewing equality information.
- Carry out a review and feed this into the annual review.

Future monitoring:

Q15. How do you plan to monitor the impact and effectiveness of this change or decision?

It is important to:

- Set up a way of regularly monitoring your policy, service, function, project or strategy that includes collecting and reviewing equality information.
- Carry out a review and feed this into the annual review cycle.
- Carry out any amendments to your policy, project or service as a result of the monitoring.





Step 1.7

Publish your results

- Attach your EIA to your committee report.
- Your results will be published on the Lancaster City Council website.

Top Tip: Make sure the language you use is jargon free

Further help can be found by contacting Gillian Dobson or Jennifer Milligan, Consultation Officers.