

# Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

## What are Equality Impact Assessments?

- An EIA is about service improvement. It is a kind of risk assessment focused on fairness, access and inclusion.
- It is a way of considering a policy, service or process in terms of how it might impact differently on different groups protected in law (the [Equality Act 2010](#)).
- We use EIAs to find and remove barriers in services which might stop people knowing about the service, using it, and getting the best from it.
- EIAs also help us to open services up to new groups and make services better.
- They also help us get services right first time, saving money and time.

## What does this mean for me?

- You may be asked to lead on or take part in an EIA
- You may already be working on actions identified from an EIA
- Information you collect in equalities monitoring and consultation will be used in EIAs
- EIAs also assess potential impacts on staff when there are changes to a service.

### Case study

Type of tenancy

	You should get independent legal advice if you are not sure if you should sign the agreement.
	What type of tenancy do you have? All new tenants have an Introductory Tenancy. It will last for one year. After one year it will become a Secure Tenancy unless...
	The council has applied to the court for possession. Applied for possession means the council has asked the court to return your property to the council as you have broken the rules of your tenancy.
+ 6	Or your Introductory Tenancy has been extended by six months.
	If you have already been a tenant for a year you will have a Secure Tenancy given to you under The Housing Act 1985. There is more about tenancy types in the tenant handbook.
	Whenever you see this sign please check for information in the tenant handbook.
	You have the right to be consulted about future changes to our housing policy or practices. You have the right to see your housing records.

An assessment of the council's Tenancy Agreement found that it was quite complicated for some of our more vulnerable tenants – for example those with learning difficulties/disabilities.

The Housing Team worked with colleagues in Housing Options and with Speak Out (local advocacy project in the city for adults with learning disabilities). They developed an Easy Read guidance version. Easy Read uses pictures with text, simple language wherever possible. It also explains the meaning of 'jargon' words.

The result was that service users find it a useful tool to guide them through the complexities of the tenancy agreement. Also staff feel more confident when explaining the agreement to tenants with learning difficulties.

## How do I complete an EIA?

1. **Be clear what you are assessing:** Is it the whole service? Projects within a service? A group of related policies?
2. **Collect data and consultation and consider what it tells you:** Are there differences between the ways different groups use the service? Does everyone benefit from the service equally? Do you have a wide variety of staff or volunteers?



3. **Identify actual and possible impacts on all groups protected in law:** How might the changes affect different service-users or staff in different ways? Are there gaps in your knowledge or data? How will you fill them?
4. **Action plan to increase access and opportunities:** How could you reduce negative impacts and remove barriers? How can you increase access to your service for all groups and make the service better? Who else could help with this?
5. **Monitor and evaluate progress:** What's improving as a result of your actions? What isn't working - how could you make it work? What new issues are emerging? You must review your EIA regularly and use it as part of your service review.

## Top Tips – how to plan your EIA

**Start planning early:** link the EIA to a service review if possible, and allow time for consultation. Tell the Communities & Equality team that you are doing an EIA.

**Remember to be proportionate:** that is, focus on the parts of the service that have most impact on people. Also consider which groups are most likely to face the biggest impacts. Focus your efforts on these areas.

**Ask for support:** work with other people and contact the Communities and Equality Team. They can help you get started, give information and advice, and feedback on your EIA as it develops.

**Look at other examples:** there are good examples across the council which will help you. Start by looking at other EIAs in your directorate.

**Work with a team:** one person should lead on the EIA, but other people can provide information and check your findings. They can offer a range of views and quality-check.

**Plan consultation and communication:** this takes time but the views of the staff and service-users involved in the service are critical to shaping the EIA.

## Where can I go for help?

There is a template to structure your EIA. This includes guidance and information on the Equality Act. [The template is available on the Wave](#) or from the Team.

The Communities and Equality Team keep a record of all the EIAs done and planned across the council – the EIA Timetable. We report on this regularly to senior managers and the Executive leadership Team (ELT).

We also:

- provide training on doing EIAs,
- can offer support or ideas on EIAs you are working on, and
- publish completed EIAs online.

### Communities and Equality Team:

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**NB: Clair is the lead officer for the EIA timetable**

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See also the team's [EIA page on the Wave](#), in the 'Supporting You' section.