

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) GUIDANCE



LSHTM uses equality impact assessments (EIA) as a means through which to examine and analyse the decisions we make to determine what the impact (positive, negative, or neutral) will be on different groups and individuals.

An EIA provides a [framework](#) for staff to consider how a new policy or process might impact staff/students who identify as having one of the characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010.

Further, in line with LSHTM's commitment beyond the Equality Act, EIA also enables consideration beyond the Equality Act, for example, of how those with caring responsibilities, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, those who live and work outside the UK and the broader wellbeing of the LSHTM community might be affected by a policy or process.

For any support or guidance during this process email [equality@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:equality@lshtm.ac.uk)

## Why do I need to complete an equality impact assessment?

From a legal perspective, LSHTM has specific duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This includes, where differences in outcome or experiences have been identified, looking at ways to minimise these differences and ensure all groups have a similarly positive experience - i.e. removing or minimising **negative impacts** of decision-making, design and delivery of services, policy, procedure, and practice.

The EIA process, therefore, should provide assurance to the LSHTM community and those with governance responsibilities (i.e. including Council) that our decision-making includes consideration for potential adverse impacts and that decisions do not discriminate or disadvantage groups (including consideration of protected characteristics).

Equality Impact Assessments also provide opportunities to proactively involve stakeholders and avenues for consultation and are also an opportunity to promote access and participation or to improve outcomes, to identify **positive or neutral impacts**.

## When do I need to do an equality impact assessment?

Every staff member at LSHTM has a responsibility to embed equity, diversity and inclusion into their work. Equality impact assessments should be an active part of the **planning process for all significant development and review of policies, activities, services and decision-making** happening at LSHTM that impacts on staff, students and visitors. EIAs are

needed for specific activities e.g. related to employment, procurement and operational activities, as well as broader areas of work e.g. education and research.

The process involves careful consideration and potential consultation with various groups, so it is advised that an adequate amount of time is allowed to ensure the equality impact assessment has a meaningful impact on your decision making. The process should be **included from the beginning of a new piece of work alongside other standard processes** such as budget planning, risk assessments and health and safety checks – the EIA is a **continuous process** that should inform and contribute to the evolution of your own work.

We anticipate sharing example completed EIAs as case studies to provide further guidance on when an EIA should be completed.

For education programme changes, we would anticipate that equality considerations are included within programme reviews and (re)validation processes.

### **How do I do equality impact assessment?**

Below is a guide to the stages of an equality impact assessment process. You should refer to this guidance as you complete your Equality Impact Assessment form to ensure that the potential impact of your work on each group is given full consideration.

1. Once you have identified that an EIA is needed, **you should contact the EDI team [Link to [equality@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:equality@lshtm.ac.uk)] who will identify an EIA Facilitator to support your work.**
2. **Identify who should be involved in the assessment and engage with them.** This work should be led by those who are responsible for the service, policy, procedure etc, but your EIA Facilitator will be able to offer advice and signposting. Having a team of two or three people to drive the assessment can ensure an inclusive approach. At this point, it is important to consider how you will continually assess the impact your work will have on the various categories as the project develops.

You should also identify which groups of staff and/or students are affected by the policy, procedure, service, activity, etc that you will be assessing. Use the Appendix of the [Equality impact assessment form](#) to capture your initial findings and guide your evidence gathering and consultation.

**Have a conversation with your EIA Facilitator and those from your team who are involved in the new work.** An outline of how to go about the following steps, including where you might gather evidence from and how to go about consulting with staff and students, is available on the [EIA intranet page](#).

**As an assessment team, you should:**

- a. **Gather evidence** and information to enable you to make a judgement regarding whether the change you are proposing to make will have an adverse, positive or neutral impact on different groups.
  - b. **Consult with** relevant groups to help you understand the experience of different people and the potential impacts of the change you are making for those groups. This is particularly important where there is a lack of data. Remember that staff and student responses should be kept confidential.
  - c. **Review and evaluate** your findings. Identify the positive, negative and neutral impacts that your work will have on each group listed. You should consider diversity within groups, particularly where they may be grouped together such as minority ethnic, disabled and LGBTQ+ staff and students. Also consider intersectionality, for example different experiences for female staff and students who are white or minoritised. Equally, there may be situations where no change has been noted.
3. **Review your policy/process with your findings in mind and consider whether any amendments are necessary.** Document the impacts that you have identified on the EIA template form. Section 3 of the template provides the opportunity to summarise the impacts you work might have on the LSHTM community and any mitigation taken to tackle these impacts. The consideration of negative impacts should be handled as follows:
- a. **If you identified no negative impacts for any groups:** If your assessment finds no negative impacts for any groups, you can record this on the EIA template and present the work/policy for approval without change. However, you should always consider if more could be done to positively promote equality.

***For example:** During revision of the maternity and adoption policy and procedure it was identified that there is no equivalent of Maternity Allowance for people who are adopting and do not qualify for statutory adoption pay. Implementing the policy as revised would not have caused a negative impact for people adopting, however the opportunity to compensate for an inequity in government policy was spotted and therefore an equivalent provision has been proposed.*

- b. **If you identified any negative impacts for any groups:** You should examine what steps you can take to mitigate these impacts by addressing the inequalities or removing any barriers that you have identified. This may involve amending the policy or process, or including additional measures to address the issues identified. Further consultation with relevant staff/student groups may be useful here to better understand what actions would address the impact in a meaningful way. Cost and feasibility should also be considered when considering both impact and mitigation.

***For example:** The development of the hybrid working framework involved identifying the need for onsite presence for staff in different roles. A small number of staff groups can only carry out their work when they are onsite. It was recognised during*

*development of the framework that, while the requirement could not change, the negative impact of these staff groups having less flexibility could be partially mitigated with the introduction of benefits for those groups. The framework now provides for additional wellbeing days for these staff.*

- c. **If you identified negative impacts that you believe cannot be avoided:** You should consider whether there is a legitimate reason for moving forward with the work despite the impact identified. Taking a course of action that disadvantages or has a negative impact on a group of people could constitute discrimination. You must consider whether this impact is a “proportionate means” of meeting a “legitimate aim”.

***For Example:** A lack of flexible working options may impact those with caring responsibilities. However, in some specific service delivery roles with fixed opening hours, there may be a legitimate justification for this adverse impact on the grounds that the service needs to be delivered.*

You should discuss any negative impacts that you believe cannot be avoided with the EDI team before proceeding to record it. **If your evidence and analysis indicate actual or potential discrimination you will need to revisit the work.**

4. **Share your completed EIA form with your EIA Facilitator**, who will share your work with other EIA Facilitators from across the school for comment. This feedback will be written into section 6 of the EIA form.
5. Once you have received this feedback, you should **submit your policy/process to the relevant committee/Executive team**. Your EIA form should be included as part of the submission with any key issues/mitigations/residual impacts highlighted on the cover sheet.
6. **Share your completed EIA separately with the EDI team [Link to [equality@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:equality@lshtm.ac.uk)], who will then publish the EIA on the intranet.**
7. **Monitoring and evaluating impact** must continue after implementation. Ideally this should be done a year after implementation/ in line with the Governance policy review schedule to ensure no adverse impact is occurring that cannot be justified.

Staff are expected to continue to promote and progress equity, diversity and inclusion as a continual process to ensure impact and change. Once this equality impact assessment has been completed, the policy/process owner should ensure that any actions identified in Section 3 of the form are completed.