

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This document fulfils the ICO's requirements to conduct Equality Impact Assessments, as a requirement to have due regard under the Equality Act 2010, S75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the public sector equality duty. This document helps you to assess the equality relevance of a policy or procedure on one or more groups of people with protected characteristics. Guidance is also available for Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs), along with a glossary of issues to consider. The purpose of an EqIA is to ensure that equality issues are identified and mitigated. The guidance and 'issues to consider' documents are intended to assist with this, but they are not a substitute for consultation with people with lived experience of any of the protected characteristics. Therefore, you should, wherever appropriate, consult with the relevant EDI staff networks or other colleagues to discuss potential impacts.

You must read the [guidance](#) and [glossary of issues to consider](#) before completing the document.

Completed EqIAs will be published [on the ICO's website](#).

Summary

Prepared by: FD

What is the title of this piece of work? People Survey

Briefly describe the overall purpose of this work.

The primary reason for undertaking a people survey is to measure the levels of engagement of colleagues across the ICO. It will also enable us to measure how our people currently perceive and experience our culture, and will enable us to clearly identify those areas where we can make further improvements to facilitate the creation of a

high performance culture.

Initial screening questions

Q1. Does this work relate to an ICO policy, procedure, working practice or anything broadly similar? This includes both current policies and new policies under development.

Please answer - No.

*If you answer **No** to this question, you may not need to complete a EqIA.*

Q2. Is this work about the explanation of the laws which the ICO regulates, or about decisions to use or not use any of our regulatory powers (eg monetary penalties, enforcement notices, information notices etc)?

Please answer - No.

*If you answer **No** to this question, you may not need to complete a EqIA.*

If you answered no to both Q1 and Q2, it is best practice to rationalise why there are no negative impacts to each protected characteristic in the table below.

Impact on people with protected characteristics

Q3. For each of the protected characteristics, you should consider whether there are any **positive impacts** for people with each characteristic and set those out in the table below. If you think there are any **negative impacts**, set those out in the table below **and** explain how you will fully mitigate those impacts. It is best practice to include three mitigations per negative impact. Sign off can only be done with a minimum of two mitigations. If you think there is no impact, please explain why you think that is the case.

Protected characteristic	Is there likely to be a specific impact on people with this characteristic?	List the mitigations proposed for each impact, stating whether the impact will be reduced or removed. Please state proposed timescale for mitigations.
Religion or belief	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Positive impact – ensure we are taking into account the views of a diverse group of people to ensure they are representative. Increasing the data we hold on the demographics of the organisation.</p> <p>Negative impact – the survey is anonymous and therefore smaller representative groups/individuals could be identifiable.</p>	<p>We will work with the EDI Steering group to ensure that language used in the questions asked is inclusive. We will ensure that there is an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.</p> <p>Anonymity thresholds will be applied so that colleagues cannot be identified from their responses.</p>
Race, nationality or cultural background	Yes	We will work with the EDI Steering group to ensure that language used in the questions asked is inclusive. We will ensure that there is

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	<p>Positive impact – ensure we are taking into account the views of a diverse group of people to ensure they are representative. Increasing the data we hold on the demographics of the organisation.</p> <p>Negative impact – the survey is anonymous and therefore smaller representative groups/individuals could be identifiable.</p>	<p>an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.</p> <p>Anonymity thresholds will be applied so that colleagues cannot be identified from their responses.</p>
Disabled people	<p>Yes</p> <p>Positive impact – ensure we are taking into account the views of a diverse group of people to ensure they are representative. Increasing the data we hold on the demographics of the organisation.</p> <p>Negative impact – the survey is anonymous and therefore smaller representative groups/individuals could be identifiable. Potential that the survey is incompatible with some or certain assistive technologies. That colleagues on long term absence would not be able to participate in the survey.</p>	<p>As part of the procurement exercise to appoint the provider, we have sought assurances from our provider that the survey platform is accessible to ensure that all colleagues can complete it. Accessibility testing of the platform will take place prior to the survey being launched with a 3rd party organisation and colleagues with known accessibility requirements.</p> <p>Colleagues who are currently absent from work will be invited to participate in the survey.</p> <p>There will be the ability for colleagues to complete the survey in stages so as to avoid having to complete it in one sitting.</p>

Protected characteristic	Is there likely to be a specific impact on people with this characteristic?	List the mitigations proposed for each impact, stating whether the impact will be reduced or removed. Please state proposed timescale for mitigations.
Sexual orientation	<p>Yes</p> <p>Positive impact – ensure we are taking into account the views of a diverse group of people to ensure they are representative. Increasing the data we hold on the demographics of the organisation.</p> <p>Negative impact – the survey is anonymous and therefore smaller representative groups/individuals could be identifiable.</p>	<p>We will work with the EDI Steering group to ensure that language used in the questions asked is inclusive. We will ensure that there is an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.</p> <p>Anonymity thresholds will be applied so that colleagues cannot be identified from their responses.</p>
Sex (see note 1)	No	We will ensure that there is an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.
Age	No	We will ensure that there is an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.
Gender reassignment (see note 2)	<p>Yes</p> <p>Positive impact – ensure we are taking into account the views of a diverse group of people to ensure they are representative.</p>	We will work with the EDI Steering group to ensure that language used in the questions asked is inclusive. We will ensure that there is an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.

Protected characteristic	Is there likely to be a specific impact on people with this characteristic?	List the mitigations proposed for each impact, stating whether the impact will be reduced or removed. Please state proposed timescale for mitigations.
	<p>Increasing the data we hold on the demographics of the organisation.</p> <p>Negative impact – the survey is anonymous and therefore smaller representative groups/individuals could be identifiable.</p>	<p>Anonymity thresholds will be applied so that colleagues cannot be identified from their responses.</p> <p>We are investigating whether the question on gender reassignment that we plan to ask in the survey can be reported at an organisational level and not at a local team level to protect the identity of individuals.</p>
Marital status	No	We will ensure that there is an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Yes</p> <p>Negative impact – that colleagues who are currently absent from work are not provided with the opportunity to participate in the survey.</p>	Colleagues who are currently absent from work will be invited to participate in the survey.
Political opinions	No	No impact.
People with dependants	Yes	We will ensure that the survey is not launched or covers a period where typically

Protected characteristic	Is there likely to be a specific impact on people with this characteristic?	List the mitigations proposed for each impact, stating whether the impact will be reduced or removed. Please state proposed timescale for mitigations.
	Negative impact – the survey being launched during school holidays.	colleagues take leave to cover school holidays. The survey will be open for 2-3 weeks (yet to be agreed) but this will allow for sufficient completion time.
People without dependants	No	No impact
Socio-economic groups or social classes (see note 3)	<p>Yes</p> <p>Positive impact – ensure we are taking into account the views of a diverse group of people to ensure they are representative. Increasing the data we hold on the demographics of the organisation.</p> <p>Negative impact – the survey is anonymous and therefore smaller representative groups/individuals could be identifiable.</p>	We will work with the EDI Steering group to ensure that language used in the questions asked is inclusive. We will ensure that there is an option for colleagues to respond by saying 'Prefer not to say'.
Multiple protected characteristics (see note 4)	<p>Yes</p> <p>Positive impact – ensure we are taking into account the views of a diverse group of people to ensure they are representative. Increasing the data we hold on the demographics of the organisation.</p>	See notes for protected characteristics above.

Protected characteristic	Is there likely to be a specific impact on people with this characteristic?	List the mitigations proposed for each impact, stating whether the impact will be reduced or removed. Please state proposed timescale for mitigations.
	Negative impact – the survey is anonymous and therefore smaller representative groups/individuals could be identifiable.	

Note 1: you may also wish to consider gender while considering sex, although gender is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act or s75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Note 2: you may wish to consider the impact on transgender people while considering the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. This includes if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process.

Note 3: Socio-economic group or social class is not a protected characteristic, but we would still like to ensure that we consider the impact of our work in this area.

Note 4: Multiple protected characteristics is an opportunity to consider whether there are issues which affect people with most or all of the protected characteristics, or where there may be different impacts of the same issue on different characteristics (eg the same issue has a positive impact on people with one protected characteristic but a negative impact on people with another protected characteristic).

Q4. The ICO has a number of legal obligations in relation to the provision of Welsh language services. Is this work being delivered in Wales, or to the people of Wales, and if so will there be a need to consider the impact on the Welsh language?

Please answer – All colleagues will be invited to participate in the survey. It will be delivered in English but colleagues in Wales will be able to change the language to complete in Welsh if they so wish.

*If you answer **Yes or Don't Know** to this question or would like further information, please contact the Welsh Regional office to discuss next steps via wales@ico.org.uk .*

Q5. In interests of best practice, you should consider whether this work may have a negative impact on or contravene any Human Rights. Click this link to find an overview of each of the human rights and further details about each. The Human Rights Act itself is available at this link. Please confirm that you have considered this and set out any actions you will take to mitigate any impacts.

Answer: There is no impact on Human Rights.

Contributing towards the ICO's equality objectives

Q6. How does this work contribute towards the ICO's equality objectives? Please explain contributions, state ways contribution could be increased, or state 'no contribution'.

Objective	Contribution to objective
<p>Objective 1: We will represent the communities and societies we serve We believe that diverse teams make better decisions, boost creativity and innovation, enable greater professional growth and increase our understanding of</p>	<p>The measures outlined in our High Performance Strategy and EDI Action plan necessitate the completion of an all employee survey. Understanding employee engagement better, in accordance with our ICO25 objectives, will enable us to understand how</p>

Objective	Contribution to objective
<p>the communities we regulate. As a workforce, we are the most effective and have the greatest impact when we are representative and consider different perspectives.</p>	<p>we're currently performing against our strategic objectives and commitments. This will then enable us to take action where we identify opportunities for action or improvement.</p>
<p>Objective 2: Our culture will be inclusive We're at our best when we support and look out for one another, and when we trust and empower each other to be ourselves. That applies whether it's within the workplace or in the work that we do.</p> <p>We have measures in place to support our diverse workforce, such as reasonable adjustments. However, we will do more to remove the barriers that are preventing people from developing and progressing.</p>	<p>The measures outlined in our High Performance Strategy and EDI Action plan necessitate the completion of an all employee survey. Understanding employee engagement better, in accordance with our ICO25 objectives, will enable us to understand how we're currently performing against our strategic objectives and commitments. This will then enable us to take action where we identify opportunities for action or improvement.</p> <p>Specific EDI questions will be asked which will allow us to better understand the diversity of the ICO given that we are seeking to increase employee disclosure rates. The output of the survey will influence our future work and support the actions of the EDI action plan and our inclusive value in ICO25.</p>
<p>Objective 3: We will better understand the needs of everyone to deliver services that are accessible to all We target our regulatory interventions on the areas of greatest harm and to make a real difference to people's lives. Technological innovation by businesses means the landscape we regulate is constantly transforming. We know we're at our best when we understand the needs of all our customers, including those who experience vulnerability and communities of unmet</p>	<p>We have ensured that our partner has met our accessibility standards as part of the procurement process to allow all colleagues to participate fully in the survey.</p>

Objective	Contribution to objective
need.	

Monitoring and evaluation

Q7. What arrangements are in place, or will be put in place, to monitor and evaluate the impact of the work on equality?

Answer: The survey results will be shared with EDI Steering Group and will support the delivery of the EDI action plan. The impact of the work will be dependent on completion rates.

Q8. How long will these arrangements be in place?

Answer: 6-12 months

Q9. When do you intend to review this EqIA? This should usually be done upon any change that is made to the original piece of work that this EqIA is for.

Answer: Ongoing review with updates included with any changes.

Publication

Q10. As stated above and in the guidance, we intend to publish all completed EqIAs on the ICO's website. Please provide detail of any necessary redactions and the intended publication date.

You should also review the wording to ensure that it is as clear as possible for any staff or public to read.

Answer: January 2024.

Governance and sign-off

The person who completes this document must be content that all potential equality issues have been identified and considered, that appropriate monitoring will be in place and the publication issues have been considered.

Please tick here to confirm that you have consulted with other colleagues and those it would largely impact where appropriate.

Please state here who has completed the EqIA:

<i>Signed by:</i> Fiona Douglas <i>Date:</i> 23 November 2023
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Approved by line manager:

<i>Signed by:</i> Vikki West <i>Date:</i> 19 December 2023

You **must** send your completed form to corporategovernance@ico.org.uk for storage and publication.

The EDI Board provides overall assurance that the EqIA process is operating effectively, but it is not for them to review or approve EqIAs.

If you have identified any negative impacts to any protected characteristics that you cannot fully mitigate, please contact Inclusion and Wellbeing for advice via inclusionandwellbeingteam@ico.org.uk.

Section 75 The Northern Ireland Act

To meet the NI section 75 consultation requirement, we must incorporate the following into our EqIA process. Please read through the below and implement as appropriate whilst completing your EqIA

1. We will externally publish a list of all EqIA screenings we complete. We should publish these quarterly. The spreadsheet will be 'housed' on the ICO website [Equality and diversity | ICO](#) (these will include **all** EqIA screenings we complete)
2. Where an EqIA screen results in the need for a full EqIA on a policy, procedure or change that relates directly to the ICO carrying out its external statutory functions; we will consult with key stakeholders at the earliest opportunity for 12 weeks. By law we must consult with the Northern Ireland stakeholder list, but good practice would be to include other relevant stakeholders from across the UK. The author/approval manager will be best places to determine who these should be.
3. We have clarified that if we don't receive a response from these stakeholders to a consultation, that is fine. We record no response and move on with the policy, procedure or change.
4. We have clarified that we do not need to consult under s75 for policies that only impact our staff. Whilst its good practice to consult with staff, TU etc about changes that impact employees, ways of working etc, this type of internal change would not engage s75. We should of course complete an EqIA at the earliest opportunity, it's just that the s75 consultation requirement is unlikely to be engaged.
5. We have agreed that it would be for the manager who approves the EqIA to determine if a s75 consultation is needed. The Inclusion and Wellbeing team can provide support, but the author and manager will know their business area and will be best placed to assess if a new/change to a policy impacts external customer and stakeholders as part of our statutory function and should therefore be consulted on.
6. We have agreed that it should be for the author/approving manager to send the EqIA screening form or full EQIA form to corporate governance.

EqIA version control (to be updated by the person completing the EqIA)

Version number	1.0
Status	Final

Relevant or related policies	Equality Impact Assessment Guidance
Author/owner	Fiona Douglas
Approved by	Vikki West
Date of sign off	19 December 2023
Review date	19 June 2024

Version	Changes made	Date	Made by

Template version control (to be updated by the person updating the EqIA template)

Version number	2.4
Status	Not approved
Relevant or related policies	Equality Impact Assessment Guidance
Author/owner	EDI Board (EqIA sub group)
Approved by	Suzanne Gordon
Date of sign off	10 February 2023
Review date	February 2024

Version	Changes made	Date	Made by
0.1	Created new document.	June 2021	Chris Braithwaite
0.2	Amendment of title to EqIA and minor amendments	July 2021	Chris Braithwaite
0.2a	Amended to put protected characteristics and objectives into a table as an option to consider	July 2021	Chris Braithwaite
0.3	Added wording in relation to publishing the EqIA	August 2021	Chris Braithwaite
1.0	Links added and approved	September 2021	Chris Braithwaite

2.0	Reviewed form and process	8 August 2022	DOC, AT, JT, RS (IWT)
2.1	DOC added in sections and review of content	28 August	DOC
2.2	Amended changes after collaboration and feedback from the EDI Steering Group	30 August 2022	IWT
2.3	Updated to include best practice consideration of the Human Rights act	26 January 2023	Chris Braithwaite
2.4	Updated to include EDI objectives	6 September 2023	Roshini Mylvaganam