

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - Screening Guidance

This guidance will help you complete the EIA screening process. Additional support is available from the [Access to Services Team](#). To meet legislative requirements, any reports being submitted to Corporate Management Team, Committees, Cabinet or Council must have a screening (and EIA report if required) completed on their subject matter.

### What is the screening process?

Screening is the process we use to decide which of the Council's initiatives are relevant to equality, and which require a full EIA report.

**Important:** the EIA process is concerned with the effects of *changes* resulting from the initiative – and not necessarily with the overall process/service provision involved.

Not all initiatives are relevant, e.g. some technical procedures or internal policies may have no bearing on equality.

### What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An EIA is a systematic way of examining whether a new or existing function, service, policy, procedure, strategy, plan or project affects any person or group of persons disproportionately.

**NB: An EIA must also be completed when proposing a budget reduction or closure / relocation of service.**

Please note – throughout this guide we will refer to functions, services, policies, procedures, strategies, plans and projects as 'initiatives'.

### When should an EIA be completed?

A screening must be completed as early as possible in any process / project, e.g., when:

- developing a new initiative
- changing an initiative moderately or significantly (including a service relocation or change of environment)
- planning to reduce or close a service (including as a result of budget changes)

We have existing legislative duties – please refer to staffnet for more details

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/equalityanddiversity>

### The screening process

The screening form is designed to make the process as easy as possible. The form asks just 8 questions to help decide whether your initiative is relevant to equality. Answers are scored to determine whether the initiative is high, medium or low in terms of impact – this will determine whether an EIA is undertaken and when.

**NB:** *Double-click on any box on the form for a menu to input a cross*

### Section 1 - Question 1 a/b

Tell us what the initiative is, i.e. a service, policy, procedure, project, strategy or plan and give its name and a brief description of it.

Please remember to provide enough detail – in order for someone in a different department to understand the work you are doing. Avoid using any jargon!

### Question 2 a

Think about which option the initiative relates to most closely, e.g.:

- Is it a policy or plan for delivering a service to the public ('H' score)?
- Is it a back-office function, serving customers but without direct contact ('M' score)?
- Is it an internal procedure for staff to follow, i.e. no contact with or impact on how services are delivered to the public ('L' score)?

### Question 2 b

Why do people use this initiative (if it is something that can be 'used')? You can check more than one box here.

E.g.:

- Is it something that people access on the basis of need, maybe a Social Services function?
- Is it a leisure service/entertainment venue that people choose to use?
- Is it something that is automatically provided to all, like Council Tax?
- Is it an internal service that is only provided to staff, like a staff magazine?

### Question 3

**You do not need to categorically know the answer to this question.** Using your own knowledge and experience, think about what impact there could be on the different characteristics.

E.g. If you are looking at a service for the public it will more than likely impact on everyone, so think about:

- Accessibility – not just physical access, remember:
  - Language
  - Delivery methods (e.g. on-line, telephone, location, etc.)
  - Staff involvement, availability of assistance
- Availability and accessibility of information
- Customer service
- Cultural sensitivity
- Fairness

Please refer to our [handy guides](#) for more information.

### Remember to fully consider each group, e.g.

- There may be specific issues affecting older people, e.g. consider how the initiative may affect citizens with dementia, or who rely on public transport. What action can be taken to minimise adverse impact?
- Consider whether the initiative has any impact – direct or indirect; positive or negative – on children or young people. We have signed up to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and all initiatives must consider the best interests of children and young people.
- Cultural considerations may restrict people of a particular faith or race from participating on a particular day of the week or during a period of observance.
- For disability, remember that this doesn't just mean wheelchair users – it could include someone who is deaf, visually impaired or has a learning disability or mental health issue.
- For carers, this includes anyone providing unpaid and informal care. Some examples follow, but please note that there are many other caring scenarios:
  - A child caring for a disabled parent

- An older person caring for a friend who has a mental health issue
- A young adult caring for a sibling with substance misuse difficulties
- An adult caring for an older relative who is elderly, frail or living with dementia.
- For community cohesion, remember that this is not solely a race or religion issue – it's much wider than that (for more information
- For poverty & social exclusion, remember issues around cost and the impact on limited incomes are significant but consideration also needs to be given to service accessibility and barriers to participation

Equality legislation protects EVERYONE in society from discrimination so consider everyone who may access or receive a service or be affected by any changes in its operation. Some examples could include asylum seekers, refugees, gypsies and travellers.

If you are unsure of any of the issues, contact the [Access to Services Team](#)

#### **Definitions of impacts:**

- High impact = the group is likely to be heavily affected by the initiative (either positively or negatively)
- Medium impact = the initiative is likely to affect the group in some way.
- Low impact = the group is likely to be affected by the initiative in a small way.
- Don't know = the potential impact of the initiative is not known.

#### **Question 4**

##### **What engagement / consultation / co-productive approaches will you undertake?**

Consultation and engagement is a legal requirement within EIAs so you will need to consider what activity is appropriate. Specific consultation with children is also part of the UNCRC. Co-production with service users maybe the most appropriate way to design an initiative. Further guidance is provided at [www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/eia](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/eia) should you need to complete a full EIA report.

Some initiatives (e.g. financial or internal administration) may not require engagement – but this should be stated here.

#### **Question 5 a/b**

**How well known is the initiative?** - What kind of risk could it pose to the Council's reputation? Think about what the repercussions could be if the initiative 'failed'.

#### **Question 6**

##### **Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service? –**

This will allow consideration of wider effects of the initiative which may need consideration either alongside or integrated into this initiative.

#### **Question 7**

**NB:** When scoring the screening, **Q3** counts as a single mark (H / M / L) based on the highest potential impact recorded. So if you rate potential impacts as 11 x **L**; 3 x **M**; 1 x **H** – this counts as **H**.

Calculate your score to decide whether or not your initiative requires an EIA.

If so, continue to Section 2, which completes the process.

If not, continue to question 8.

#### **Question 8**

Please provide a **full** explanation of why and how you have reached this decision – this is required for audit purposes and the regulators.

Your explanation **must** address all of the relevant protected groups, including the different age groupings and Welsh language.

**Then:**

1. Email your completed form to the AtS Team ([accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk)).  
To assess the screening, AtS need to see any relevant reports/papers  
– not just the screening
2. Discuss and make any necessary amendments.
3. Send your final form to the Team, together with email approval from your Head of Service.

**Please remember that we do not accept paper copies of any EIA forms anymore!**