

# TEST OF RELEVANCE: EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

The screening process of using the Test of Relevance template aims to assist in determining whether a full Equality Analysis (EA) is required.

## Introduction

**The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is set out in the Equality Act 2010 (s.149). This requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to:**

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- 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 and those who do not

The characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation

What is due regard?	How to demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It involves considering the aims of the duty in a way that is proportionate to the issue at hand</li> <li>• Ensuring that real consideration is given to the aims and the impact of policies with rigor and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision</li> <li>• Due regard should be given before and during policy formation and when a decision is taken, including cross cutting ones as the impact can be cumulative.</li> </ul> <p>The general equality duty does not specify how public authorities should analyse the effect of their business activities on different groups of people. However, case law has established that equality analysis is an important way public authorities can demonstrate that they are meeting the requirements.</p> <p>Even in cases where it is considered that there are no implications of proposed policy and decision making on the PSED it is good practice to record the reasons why and to include these in reports to committees where decisions are being taken.</p> <p>It is also good practice to consider the duty in relation to current policies, services, and procedures, even if there is no plan to change them.</p>	<p>Case law has established the following principles apply to the PSED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Knowledge</b> – the need to be aware of the requirements of the Equality Duty with a conscious approach and state of mind.</li> <li>• <b>Sufficient Information</b> – must be made available to the decision maker</li> <li>• <b>Timeliness</b> – the Duty must be complied with before and at the time that a particular policy is under consideration or decision is taken not after it has been taken.</li> <li>• <b>Real consideration</b> – consideration must form an integral part of the decision-making process. It is not a matter of box-ticking; it must be exercised in substance, with rigor and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.</li> <li>• <b>Sufficient information</b> – the decision maker must consider what information he or she has and what further information may be needed in order to give proper consideration to the Equality Duty</li> <li>• <b>No delegation</b> - public bodies are responsible for ensuring that any third parties which exercise functions on their behalf are capable of complying with the Equality Duty, are required to comply with it, and that they do so in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.</li> <li>• <b>Review</b> – the duty is continuing to apply when a policy is developed and decided upon, but also when it is implemented and reviewed.</li> </ul> <p><b>However, there is no requirement to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce an equality analysis or an equality impact assessment</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indiscriminately collect diversity data where equalities issues are not significant</li> <li>• Publish lengthy documents to show compliance</li> <li>• Treat everyone the same. Rather, it requires public bodies to think about people's different needs and how these can be met</li> <li>• Make services homogeneous or try to remove or ignore differences between people.</li> </ul> <p><b>The key points about demonstrating compliance with the duty are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate sufficient evidence to determine whether changes being considered will have a potential impact on different groups</li> <li>• Ensure decision makers are aware of the analysis that has been undertaken and what conclusions have been reached on the possible implications</li> <li>• Keep adequate records of the full decision-making process</li> </ul>

## Test of Relevance screening

The Test of Relevance screening is a short exercise that involves looking at the overall proposal and deciding if it is relevant to the PSED.

**Note: If the proposal is of a significant nature and it is apparent from the outset that a full equality analysis will be required, then it is not necessary to complete the Test of Relevance screening template and the full equality analysis and be completed.**

The questions in the Test of Relevance Screening Template help decide if the proposal is equality relevant and whether a detailed equality analysis is required. The key question is whether the proposal is likely to be relevant to any of the protected characteristics.

## What to do

In general, the following questions all feed into whether an equality analysis is required:

- How many people is the proposal likely to affect?
- How significant is its impact?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?

At this initial screening stage, the point is to try to assess obvious negative or positive impact.

If a negative/adverse impact has been identified (actual or potential) during completion of the screening tool, a full equality analysis must be undertaken.

Quite often, the answer may not be so obvious, and service-user or provider information will need to be considered to make a preliminary judgment. For example, in considering licensing arrangements, the location of the premises in question and the demographics of the area could affect whether section 149 considerations come into play.

There is no one size fits all approach, but the screening process is designed to help fully consider the circumstances.

On completion of the Test of Relevance screening, officers should:

- Ensure they have fully completed, and the Director has signed off the Test of Relevance Screening Template.
- Store the screening template safely so that it can be retrieved if for example, Members request to see it, or there is a freedom of information request or there is a legal challenge.
- If the outcome of the Test of Relevance Screening identifies no or minimal impact refer to it in the Implications section of the report and include reference to it in Background Papers when reporting to Committee or other decision-making process.

If no negative / adverse impacts arise from the proposal it is not necessary to undertake a full equality analysis.

1. Proposal / Project Title: Revised Housing Allocations Scheme				
2. Brief summary (include main aims, proposed outcomes, recommendations / decisions sought): The revised Housing Allocations Scheme sets out how applications for housing will be awarded priority and the allocation and letting of social housing within the borough, The scheme has now been reviewed and stakeholder consultation has taken place. The finalised document is being presented to committee for approval in January 2024.				
3. Considering the equality aims (eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations), indicate whether there may be a positive impact, negative (adverse) impact or no impact for each equality group or any other non-protected groups arising from the proposal:				
Protected Characteristic (Equality Group) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Briefly explain your answer. Consider evidence, data, and any consultation.
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Currently only those who have been in care are awarded priority. Those who have not been in care may be awarded priority through a homeless prevention route. However, unless there is a suitable guarantor, they cannot legally hold a tenancy until they are 18. The revised scheme is redressing this and saying that they will be considered with a suitable guarantor whether they have been in care or not.
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is a medical priority in the current scheme. There is no real transparency in how it is awarded. The revised scheme shows distinction between those who cannot manage now and those where there is a progressive condition or quality of life could be much improved.
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy and Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sex (i.e., gender)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. Are there any other groups not protected by the Public Sector Equality Duty that are adversely affected by the proposal? There are a range of groups that may suffer disadvantage who are not explicitly protected under the Equality Act 2010 such as young people that are not in employment, education, or training (NEET), rough sleepers and the homeless, ex-offenders and care leavers. <b>No</b>				

**5. There are no negative/adverse impact(s). Please briefly explain and provide evidence to support this decision:** The demographic profiles of applicants and residents of the borough are attached. Both present the demographics of those with protected characteristics, on the Housing Register and within the borough. These have been considered when completing the relevancy test.



Applicants profile  
(Bromley).pdf



Borough  
Demographic Profile .

**6. Are there positive impacts of the proposal on any equality groups? Please briefly explain how these are in line with the equality aims:**

Please see age and disability above. Both have positive impacts. Demographic profiles for both applicants and residents of the borough have been considered when reviewing this impact.

**7. As a result of this screening, is a full EA necessary? (Please check appropriate box using )**

Yes

No

**Briefly explain your answer:** There are no negative/adverse impacts on an individual. With respect to age and disability there is a positive impact.

**8. Name of Lead Officer:** Michelle Bowler

**Job title:** Head of Housing Schemes

**Date of completion:** 28/12/2023