

Equality Impact Assessment - Guidance Summary

We have updated our guidance and template for the Equality Impact Assessment process (EQIA). From October 2025, please use these new documents.

Why do we have updated/new documentation?

The updated documents are to ensure that we have a robust and consistent process for carrying out EQIAs.

Where can I access the new documents?

The updated guidance and EQIA template will be added to the staff intranet in the Document Hub in the Equality Impact Assessment Tile, and eventually to an Equalities Tile which will be created within the People Service Tile on the staff portal. You can also request them directly from the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer.

What is the purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment?

When you have a proposal or change that involves or effects people in the college community whether they are staff, students, service users, visitors, partners, contractors and so on, you are expected to conduct an EQIA to demonstrate that you have considered the impacts on people's protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010.

Moreover, the EQIA helps the college to communicate with the public about our compliance with the General Duty of the Public Sector Equality Duty in all our functions and activities. These duties are to;

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Do I have to consider all protected characteristics in the EQIA, even though I do not think they are all relevant to my proposal?

Yes. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. We also give consideration to other groups/individuals who may be impacted by the proposal or change.

The purpose of an EQIA is to demonstrate to people who have any of the protected characteristics that the College has considered their needs, how the proposal or change might impact them, and the steps the College will take to minimise or mitigate any negative impacts identified. It would not be inclusion if we show the public that we only consider some groups and not others.

If you are not sure what the potential impacts are, please consult people of those protected characteristics before completing the EQIA template.

When should I complete the EQIA?

The EQIA process should start at the same time as when you are preparing your proposal or change. An EQIA, similar to a risk assessment, helps you to develop a proposal or change that is inclusive of everyone. It would be more cost effective for the college if potential barriers are removed at the start rather than making substantial adjustments after the proposal or change is implemented. The EQIA should form part of your proposal or change when submitting to the decision-making body.

How detailed does an EQIA have to be?

The requirement to assess impact applies to new or revised policies, practices, and changes as well as to existing. However, this does not mean that everything requires a detailed assessment of impact. It is not a justification for avoiding an EQIA, rather for tailoring the approach to focus resources on the most relevant and significant issues. The extent to which policies/practices/changes should be subject to assessment will depend on questions of relevance and proportionality. You will also need to assess the impact of the way a policy/practice/change is implemented, even when it has originally been developed externally – for example if a national strategy has been introduced. This will help you ensure that you understand the implications of the policy for your own organisation, services, and community.

Do people care about whether we complete an EQIA?

Yes, especially those who are affected by the decisions. They could challenge the College's decision because of any of the following reasons:

- Failing to conduct an EQIA.
- Failing to conduct an adequate EQIA (e.g. incomplete or lack of consultation).
- Failing to consider the impacts on a particular protected characteristic.
- Failing to implement the mitigation actions as stated in the EQIA.

Conducting EQIAs is a legal requirement.

Is there someone else at the college who can complete the EQIA for me?

No one knows your proposal or changes better than you; you are therefore the best person to complete the EQIA. However, you can put together a group of people who can help you to consider the possible impacts of the proposal or change, and the affect it will have on different protected characteristics. The guidance advises that the EQIA process should include a range of perspectives.

Where can I get further information or assistance about conducting an EQIA?

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Officer can help either to work with you or your team through the process. Do not forget to send a completed EQIA form to the EDI Officer who needs to review it, and they can let you know whether the EQIA has been conducted adequately. You can contact the EDI Officer at hbroatch@borderscollege.ac.uk