

Guidance for Equality Impact Assessments

What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based approach designed to help the Babraham Institute ensure that our policies are fair and do not present barriers to participation or unfairly disadvantage any groups.

The EIA will cover the nine protected characteristics as recognised in the Equality Act (2010): age, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, disability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Additionally, other groups can be considered where relevant.

An EIA is a risk assessment of inequality and discrimination, and assists in finding out whether different groups of people are, or could be, disadvantaged by a policy. It involves examining new or existing policies and their impact on different groups. The aim is to:

- Understand the potential effects of the policy by assessing the impacts on different groups both external and internal
- Identify any adverse impacts and actions to remove or mitigate them
- Ensure decisions are transparent and based on evidence with clear reasoning

The EIA process forms part of the normal policy making process and assessments take place before the policy goes to BEC. Once published, EIAs will be available on the intranet in order to be accessible to everyone in the Institute so bear the public audience in mind when you are writing. EIAs will be reviewed and updated whenever a policy is reviewed and updated, whether this is part of the annual policy review process or at other times.

The process for conducting an Equality Impact Assessment

Completing an EIA is like undertaking a risk assessment. It involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy will be on a wide range of people. You are looking for bias that can occur when there significant differences in how different groups of people are impacted by the policy. An EIA is best done with the involvement of staff in the area of work and consultation of representatives of potentially impacted groups or relevant specialist organisations.

Initial Equality Impact Assessment

All new and existing policies need an Initial Equality Impact Assessment (IEIA). This should be done by the policy owner, someone they nominate, or, during this review period, the assigned member of the Policy Review Working Group (PRWG). For new policies, the IEIA should be submitted at the same time as the policy. During the review period, existing policies will be prioritised for assessment.

For each protected characteristic and any other possibly relevant ones, e.g. non-native English speakers or people with caring responsibilities, determine whether there is potential for differential impact and give evidence and reasoning. Identifying potential impacts and making a recommendation will be based on evidence but there is still a measure of personal judgement. This is one reason IEIAs are reviewed and why it is crucial to provide evidence. If you believe there is any differential impact, recommend the policy undergo a full assessment.

Once the IEIA is completed, it will contain one of these recommendations:

- Full EIA required
- Full EIA not required

Examples of differential impact:

- a) A policy uses a lot of jargon which could be hard for non-native English speakers or people with learning disabilities to comprehend.
- b) A policy on PPE doesn't take into account the circumstances of people with specific religious requirements, e.g. headscarves or facial hair.
- c) A policy requires UK qualifications which could disadvantage people from other countries.
- d) A policy on absence management fails to take into account the fact that disability, pregnancy, or undergoing gender transition could result in legitimate need for additional absences.
- e) A policy requires individuals to be able to come in at short notice which could have a negative impact on people with caring responsibilities, limited access to transport, or religious requirements or medical treatments that prevent working on/at certain days or times.

IEIA review

A two person panel consisting of a member of the HR team and the equality4success manager will review the information and recommendation provided and decide if a Full Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) will be performed. If changes can easily be made to the policy that eradicate discriminatory impacts a FEIA may not be deemed necessary.

Full Equality Impact Assessment

If it is determined that a policy requires a FEIA, this needs to be submitted and approved before the policy can progress further in the approval process. The FEIA can be performed by any of the same individuals who perform IEIAs, e.g. policy owners, someone they nominate, or members of the PRWG. A FEIA contains the same sort of information as an IEIA but in more detail and identifies actions to be taken to mitigate differential impacts.

FEIA review

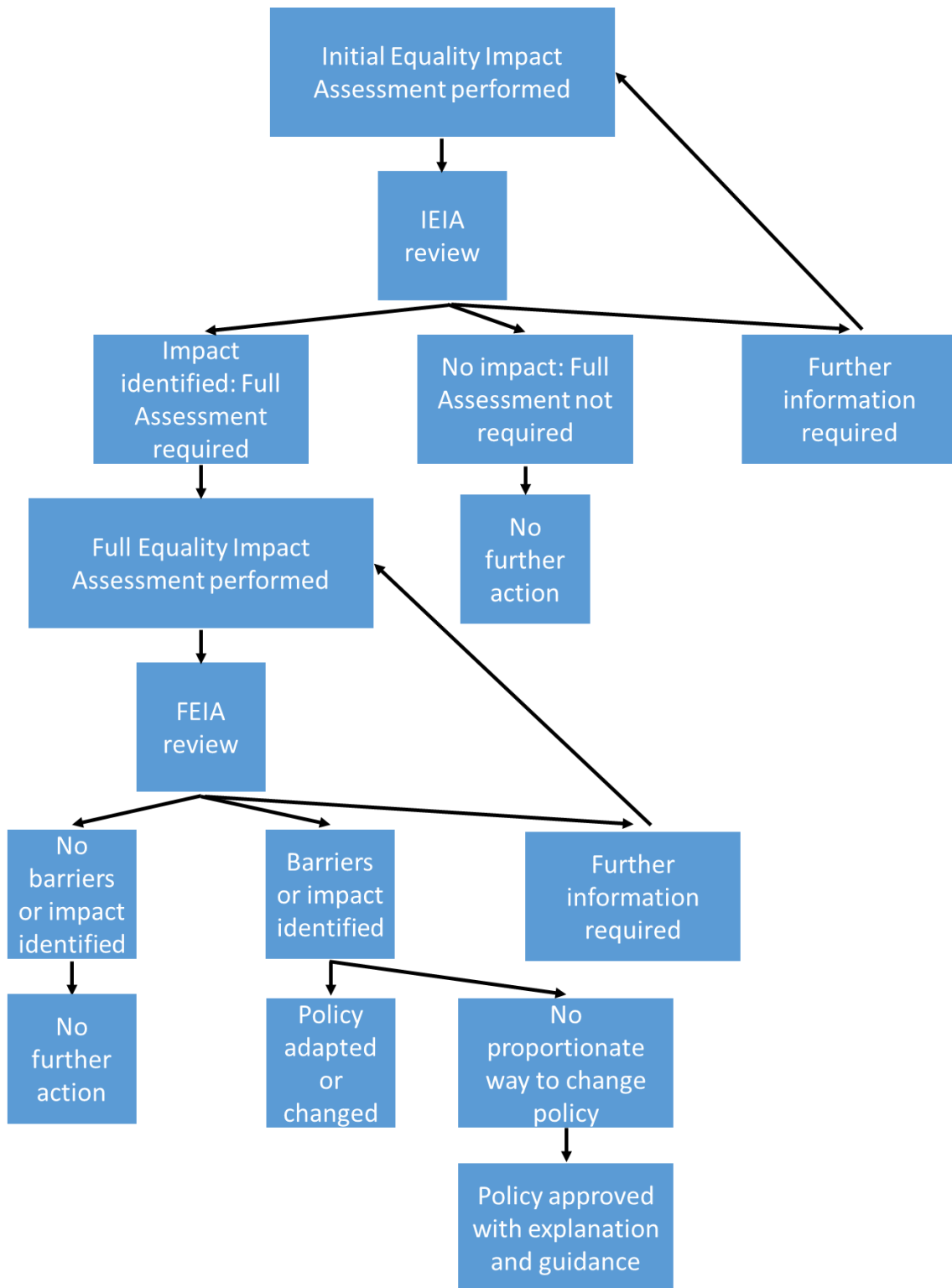
A three person panel consisting of a member of HR, the equality4success manager, and a third relevant person, e.g. a PRWG member, equality4success team member, or additional HR staff member, will meet to review the FEIA.

If barriers or impact are identified, the FEIA review panel will confer with the policy owner about changes that can be implemented to the policy. Once the FEIA review panel and policy owner are happy with any changes to the policy, it can proceed through the approval process. In some cases changes cannot be made practically or are not needed, i.e. if the policy has a positive impact on certain groups. In that case, the policy can proceed through the approval process but needs to include an explanation.

Once the FEIA is completed, it will contain one of these decisions:

- No barriers or impact identified; policy can proceed through approval process
- Barriers or impact identified; changes have been made to mitigate effects
- Barriers or impact identified; however, no proportionate changes can be identified

These decision will be by their nature somewhat subjective but the EIA process is designed to make them as evidence-based, consistent and transparent as possible. It is essential to provide evidence and reasoning for the outcome.



GLOSSARY

To be added. Will be the same as the definitions in the Equality and Diversity policy.