



Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment

Purpose: As a public sector body, Dundalk Institute of Technology (the Institute) has a legal responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination, and protect the human rights of its employees, students, service users, and all individuals affected by its policies, practices and plans. This legal obligation is known as the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

This Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EQHRIA) document sets out a structured process for the Institute to use to evaluate how strategic plans, objectives, policies, practices or decisions affect equality, diversity and human rights, ensuring fair and inclusive outcomes for all individuals.

It contains two component parts:

1. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form
2. Human Rights Impact Assessment

Circulation: This document is available for all to review and will be published on the Institute's website

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Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Committee

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When should I complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

Completing an EIA is mandatory if you are undertaking a major update of an existing policy or plan or creating a new policy or plan. It is not necessary for minor and editorial updates.

For many policies it will be a straightforward process. For example, a policy on storing documents is unlikely to impact one group of people more than another. However, admissions or recruitment policies could potentially have positive and negative impacts on different groups.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

A systematic and evidence-based process which verifies that Institute policies, plans and practices are non-discriminatory, fair and inclusive in meeting the legitimate needs of the diverse groups that make up the Institute community.

The process will help identify any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) impacts (positive, neutral or negative) associated with new or updated policies, plans and practices, along with any potential discrimination or gaps in their development.

How to complete an EIA

- Read this document.
- Speak to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff members who will provide support and advice.
- Complete the EIA form below.
- Submit the EIA along with the new or updated policy / plan when you submit it for approval.

Why does it matter?

Public Sector Duty:

As a public sector body, the Institute is required to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of its employees, customers, service users, and everyone affected by its policies and plans. This is referred to as the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

Legislation:

The principle of equality is enshrined in international and national law. Equality and human rights impact assessments (EHRIs) are one of the measures recommended by IHREC in its guidance document Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (version 2, December 2024) as a way of implementing the statutory obligations of Section 42 by ensuring equality and human rights issues are identified and addressed in planning and decision-making processes. IHREC recommends that bodies subject to Section 42 follow a set of steps — setting the context, screening, information and consultation, assessing the impact, revise and review, and monitoring — and provides templates and further guidance at [Public Sector Duty | IHREC - English](#).

How do I know what the impact of a policy / plan might be?

It can be hard to know the impact of a policy or plan until it is implemented. The best ways to make an informed judgement are: (a) using or seeking evidence, and (b) consulting with stakeholders. The amount of work spent on this should be proportionate to the policy / plan. A bullying and harassment policy will likely require more extensive stakeholder engagement than a policy on asset disposals. The EDI office will support you with this process.

Evidence:

Gather qualitative and quantitative data relevant to your policy / plan. If you are writing a recruitment policy, it would be useful to know the overall make-up of the existing staff body so you can identify any under-represented groups. You can also look at best practice in the higher education sector. The HEA provides open access datasets at hea.ie/statistics.

Consultation:

Focus groups, meetings, surveys and workshops are some examples of how you can consult staff and students. Consultation should take place while the policy / plan can still change — not after decisions are made.