

EQHRIA

Equality & Human Rights
Impact Assessment



Equality and
Human Rights
Commission

Scotland

Introduction & Benefits to EQHRIA



Introduction to EQHRIA

“COSLA welcomes the SHRC and EHRC’s efforts to work with local authorities to support them to develop integrated equality and human rights assessments. We recognise that integrated assessments can contribute to the development of a human rights-based approach across the public sector, which can have positive outcomes for individuals and communities across Scotland. We hope that learning from the pilots and the new website will provide a useful starting point for policy makers seeking to develop good practice in this area.”

Equality and human rights impact assessments (EQHRIAs) are an important mechanism for enabling equality and human rights considerations to be embedded into the policies, practices, procedures and priorities of public bodies in Scotland.

Assessing impact can help public authorities to **achieve better outcomes** by taking account of the rights of individuals whose interests may otherwise be overlooked and **improve performance** by making sure that action taken is **effective and efficient**. It also means developing better policies and practices, based on evidence, and being **transparent and accountable to stakeholders**. EQHRIAs can encourage individuals and communities to participate in decision making processes, giving them ownership of decisions and **transforming institutional cultures and decision making**.

The Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Scotland recognise that some public authorities are choosing to address both the equality and human rights implications of proposed, new or revised policies or practices when they assess impact.

We wish to support public authorities in this integrated approach to impact assessment, and have developed the following:

- An explanation of the added value of the human rights dimension.
- The 10 Good Practice Building Blocks for Assessing Impact.
- Information about two pilot EQHRIAs in Renfrewshire and Fife Councils.
- Basic background training materials.
- Links to other resources.

David Martin, Chief Executive,
Renfrewshire Council



See film at www.scottishhumanrights.com/eqhria/

Professor Alan Miller, Chair,
Scottish Human Rights Commission



See film at www.scottishhumanrights.com/eqhria/

Introduction to EQHRIA

This work has been supported by a steering group of members including, the Scottish Government, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People, the Scottish Councils Equality Network, Police Scotland, the Scottish Prison Service, Audit Scotland, Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) and others.



Scottish
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Benefits of EQHRIA

Business Case

As an organisation embarks upon embedding the Good Practice Building Blocks it is helpful to recognise and acknowledge the rationale of an equality and human rights approach.

Organisations may wish to adopt and promote these principles, or a version of these principles, as a statement of their commitment.

It is recognised that integrating equality and human rights into governance, policy and decision making structures will help to:

- **Achieve better outcomes for people.** Equality and human rights are core to achieving national and local performance outcomes which aim to improve the quality of life and opportunities for all people across Scotland.
- **Improve performance.** The consideration of human rights and equality issues will assist in improving performance in delivering high quality public services as efficiently, effectively and economically as possible as they will ensure they are responsive to people's circumstances at the point of delivery.
- **Demonstrate accessibility and accountability.** Where equality and human rights are assessed, based on evidence and the meaningful involvement of communities, stronger relationships will be built and it will be easier to demonstrate fairness, transparency, accessibility and accountability thereby enhancing public ownership and legitimacy in policy and decision making.
- **Ensure compliance with the law.** Proactively taking account of human rights and equality in the exercise of your functions will provide you with assurances rather than assumptions that actions are fair, not arbitrary, and that they comply with the law, preventing violations before they require redress and added expense.

Alastair Pringle, Director,
Equality and Human Rights
Commission Scotland



See film at www.scottishhumanrights.com/eqhria/

Acknowledgements

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Steering Group

The Commissions would also like to thank all of the participants in the project steering group for their invaluable input and guidance including, the Scottish Government, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People, the Scottish Councils Equality Network, Police Scotland, the Scottish Prison Service, Audit Scotland and Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO).

Support from our partners

Scottish Councils Equality Network

"The Scottish Councils Equality Network (SCEN) commends the commission on the work it has done through the EQHRIA project to help all public bodies, both strengthen and improve, existing impact assessment processes. The new website provides excellent practical guidance and training that show the real benefits to be had from embedding a human rights based approach in what we do."

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)

"It is essential that the decisions we make take into account the fundamental human rights of the diversity of people we are there to serve. That the principles of equality, dignity, participation, empowerment and accountability are central to everything we do. The integration of human rights and equality into impact assessment is a positive and important step to support organisations to achieve this"

NHS Health Scotland

"We welcome the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment project and we were pleased to be able to share current practice in this area through our role on the Steering Group. NHS Health Scotland has been using an integrated approach to equality, health inequality and human rights impact assessment since 2011, called 'Health Inequalities Impact Assessment'. We believe that the additional resources this project has generated will be a helpful for planners and policymakers, working at national and local level. NHS Health Scotland will continue to commit staff resources to supporting the development of impact assessment practice across the public sector."

Police Scotland

"Police Scotland regards both Equality and Human Rights as central to all that we do, and we view with great interest the ongoing work of the SHRC and EHRC to develop integrated approaches to equality and human rights impact assessment."

Acknowledgements

Scottish Prison Service

“The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) supports the integrated approach to addressing both the equality and human rights implications of proposed, new or revised policies or practices when assessing impact for all our staff, people in our custody and stakeholders.

The work of the EQHRIA project is of great benefit and value for public authorities starting or already working on an integrated approach to human rights and equality. The extensive website resources are welcomed and will enable sharing the learning so that all public authorities have access to the benefits of using this approach.”

Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People

“I wholeheartedly welcome this initiative. I firmly believe that EQHRIAs will prove to be an important mechanism for bringing the human rights of children and young people from the margins to the centre of decision-making. It will ensure that, instead of being forgotten, these rights are taken account of within the policies, practices and procedures of public bodies in Scotland.”

Contact Us

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