

MPA Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma

Statutory responsibility for Equality Impact Assessment

The MPA is required, under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, to assess each proposed and policies for relevance to the Act. This Performa is designed to assist with this process.

Definition of a Policy

The Home Office and the CRE have defined a policy as ‘any practice or written document which sets out a course of action, guiding principles or procedure which is adopted and implemented by the Authority. This includes and decision taken or recommendations made at meetings which may lead to action to implement’. Within the HO and CRE definition, we will therefore need to impact assess those decisions taken or recommendations other than formal written policies. This will require each Unit or Policy Lead taking responsibility for identifying the policies, decisions and recommendations and carrying out the initial assessment to identify whether a full impact assessment needs to be carried out. The process for this is outlined below.

When should an EIA be carried out?

The EIA should be an integral part of policy/decision/ recommendation-making and should therefore begin as soon as a **relevant new or proposed policy/decision or recommendation** has been agreed. This will be the responsibility of each Unit or Policy Lead.

Stage 1 – Initial screening for Equality Impact Assessment

At this stage, the following questions needs to be considered:

Name of Policy: Teleworking process				
			Yes	No
1	Is there evidence or reason to believe that there is likely to be higher or lower impact on different groups as a result of this proposed or new policy?	H	L	
2	Is there evidence or other reason to believe that different groups have different needs and experiences that this policy is likely to address in meeting the General or Specific Duty of the Act?	Yes		No
3	Does the policy propose changes or alterations to a policy that has been known to impact differently on various Racial or Equality Groups?	Yes		No
4	Has prior consultation take place with organisations, groups or individuals, which indicate a problem that the policy is likely to address?	Yes		No
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On completion, this form should be forwarded, electronically, to Cynthia Coleman in the Race and Diversity Unit

Date Stage 1 form forwarded to Race and Diversity Unit: _____

Name of Lead Officer responsible for the EIA: _____

External Quality Assurance

Date External Quality Assurance completed: _____

Sign-Off and Publication

Assessment signed off by Clerk _____ Date _____

Date forwarded to Comms for publication: _____

Publication date: _____ (To be agreed with Communications Unit)

Monitoring and Review

Date for reviewing policy: _____ (to be agreed with R&D Unit)

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Stage 2 – FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A full EIA will be needed if the initial assessment has identified the potential for impact. It is suggested that the assessment should be carried out by at least three people and that at least one should be from the CDO Unit, to give any expert advice on the RES process. The completed assessments will be quality assured by a small team to include the SMT, Head of CDO Unit representative from Internal Audit (objective assessment) and Unit responsible for the assessment.

Name of Policy Impact Assessor: Yvonne Peart

Department/Section: HR

Date Impact Assessment completed: 11 March 2004

Date of policy being reviewed: 16 March 2004

Name of Policy: Home working /hot desking policy

Policy, Aims and Purpose**1. What is the aim and purpose of the policy?**

The home working / hot desking policy is part of the MPA's alternative working patterns policy. It applies to those workers who spend part of their time working away from the office. It is intended to be explicit about opportunities that, with the exception of Partnership Support Officers, have not been explicit.

2. Who are the main stakeholders of the Policy or proposed policy? (e.g., MPA, MPS, GLA, HR, Internal Audit etc)

All MPA, HR, MPS employers and employees.

3. Who is the policy or proposed policy intended to benefit?

The arrangement for peripatetic staff would support Partnership Support Officers and Community Consultation Coordinators as they work substantially away from the office.

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It would also support the Authority's work life balance issues as employees want flexibility to balance their lives and do their job effectively and could request permission to work from home occasionally or for a specific period. This policy is designed to provide consistency and fairness across the Authority in dealing with requests and implementing arrangements to work from home on an occasional/ad-hoc basis whilst demonstrating awareness of the need to balance parenting and work commitments

Flexible working arrangements would enable the Authority to provide better services. The Authority would also benefit the MPA as space would not be kept permanently allocated for staff spend who spend a lot of time out of the office and therefore costs are reduced.

4. How will the policy or proposed policy be implemented and who will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing it? Please be specific.

Peripatetic staff work substantially away from the office and are expected to apply the hotdesking procedures when working in the office. This arrangement would support the MPA space considerations. A designated desk is assigned to peripatetic staff. The designated desks/chairs are shared, on a rota basis, by two or more people. This arrangement ensures that each individual always uses the same desk/chair (this is important to some people in terms of maintaining a sense of identity and security). On occasions when insufficient hotdesks are available peripatetic staff may use any other vacant desk.

It was not possible to indicate from the policy what equipment if any would be provided to support peripatetic staff when they are working offsite or at home. Similarly, it was not possible to indicate what risks assessments would be carried out of their home or offsite locations. It was not explicitly stated if homeworking is part of the job requirement. These issues need to be explicitly stated as there are different levels of risk with each arrangement.

Homeworking

All employees, with the exception of those employed on a casual basis, are entitled to submit a request to work from home. All home working agreements must be recorded in

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writing. It was not possible to indicate from the policy what limits are associated with Ad-hoc/occasional, taking into account working time regulations. The policy did not clearly state when homeworking for a specified period of time could be agreed and the limitations. The Authority has various responsibilities towards ensuring the safe working place for homeworkers/peripatetic staff this includes identifying hazards of the work, assessing the risks involved and putting measures in place to avoid or control the risks. The policy does not say who is responsible for carrying out risks assessments.

A homeworking agreement has yet to be established (though this is in hand) and would need to specify when it should be used. The homeworking agreement would need to give consideration to the following:

Lay down monitoring arrangements for attendance and output of work

Make arrangements for "keeping in touch" including visits to the office, attendance at team meetings, inclusion in circulation of office memos, magazines, job adverts and other publicity material.

Establish processes, agreed with the employee, for performance appraisal.

Ensure career development and prospects are maintained.

Monitor Health and Safety arrangements

Arrangements for sickness and absence monitoring

Accident monitoring

Confidentiality of information must be safeguarded and this will be the responsibility of both the manager and employee.

Staff should be mindful of their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1988

The procedures would be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are working

5. How does this policy or proposed policy inform and contribute to the overall statutory functions and objectives of the MPA?

The process directly supports the Authority's desire to "recruit, retain and promote our own workforce to reflect the diverse communities of London," to support our alternative working patterns policy and to support the Authority's partnership working with key stakeholders.

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6. How will this policy inform or influence the MPA governance of the MPS?

The process will provide another opportunity for the MPA to demonstrate to the MPS and other GLA functional bodies other aspects of alternative working patterns. The MPA will encourage the MPS to encourage a similar approach in reviewing their Working Away From The Office policy

7. Please give any other comments you wish to make about this policy or proposed policy.

Home-base working on a ad-hoc basis has been in operation at the MPA for some time and seems to have been successful. The move to the adoption of a homeworking and hotdesking policy was partly driven by space considerations and the employment of staff that work substantially away from the office and the requirement to comply with Health and Safety regulations. Through the introduction of the homeworking /hotdesking policy the Authority hope to achieve significant savings and increased staff and customer satisfaction.

Assessing for Impact**8. Is there evidence or reason to believe that some groups could be differently affected by this policy/function (e.g. higher levels of arrests, lower rate of participation)? If so which? If so, what is it? (Please refer to any research, findings, statistics, etc where appropriate and attach it to this Performa)**

a. Would people be differently affected by nature of their age (children, young people, older people etc)? (Please explain)

Yes. The employer would need to consider the impacts of new communications technology on employee interaction and inclusion. Consideration would need to be given to older employees and training provided to enable them to make the most of today's communications technology. Young people (school leavers etc) may also need their skills upgraded.

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b. Would **people with disabilities** be differently by the policy? (Please explain)

Yes. The employer will need to be aware of needs of employees with disabilities and provide training to enable them to make the most of today's communications services. Their risk assessment would need to consider what training is required to ensure competency in safety matters.

c. Would people of different **faith and or religious** beliefs be differently affected by the policy? (Please explain)

No. This policy will promote equality, as people of different religious beliefs will have the same rights of access to the homeworking/ hotdesking policy. In agreement with the line manager the proposed policy should allow for individuals to make a requests to work from home that would also enable them to accommodate a specific religious commitment.

d. Would people who are **lesbians, gay, bisexual or transgender** be differently affected by the policy? (Please explain)

No. All staff will be eligible to make a request to work from home regardless of sexual orientation and therefore this group will not be differently affected on by this policy.

e. Would **women** be differently affected by the policy? (Please explain)

Yes. Women could find that they are trying to fit in work and family at home without child care provision. Pregnant women may be at particular risk from some work activities, for example prolonged sitting. Good communication links would need to be in place in case of medical emergencies, and pregnant women have a higher risk from anxiety and depression. Risk assessments for new and expectant mothers should always take account of the additional risks.

f. Would people of different **race** be differently affected by the policy (please explain)

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No. This policy would enable those employees that have imperatives associated with their culture to use the homeworking/hot desking policy to meet their specific needs.

Please be aware that discrimination may be compounded and is therefore likely to have more adverse impact on some discriminated than others.

9. Is there differential impact on particular racial groups in respect of qualitative or quantitative data? (Please specify with supporting research and data evidence where appropriate)

No. This policy has not yet been implemented and therefore there is no internal data in respect of qualitative and quantitative data. However A survey for the Health and Safety Executive found hot-desking to be no more stressful for workers than traditional work space arrangements. Hot-desking employees were also found to be more alert than others.

10. Is the differential impact an adverse one, and for which groups? (Please list any research or data evidence to support assessment in reference to the listed equalities groups in section 8)

No. The implementation of this policy would promote equality of opportunity. However, it is important that the proposed amendments are put in place to ensure that the policy is directional in order that it is implemented to the same standard across the Authority.

11. Would the policy or proposed policy result in indirect discriminatory against any group? (Please specify)

Yes. The proposed policy in its current form could result in indirect discriminatory against all groups, as it is not explicit about who, what, when and how to apply the policy. This could allow for it to be interpreted differently by the different units within the MPA and leave the MPA open to allegations of having unfair employment practices.

12. If the policy is indirectly discriminatory, is it justifiable under the Act? (Please give detailed reason for answer)

No. The policy being indirectly discriminatory is not intentional.

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13. What amendments could be made to the policy to eliminate discrimination, if any has been identified? (Please list the proposed amendments)

That a clear distinction should be drawn between those that work from home occasionally and those that work from home for a specified period. Staff working from home on an ad-hoc/occasional basis would usually be required to have a lower level risk assessment.

The following should be either included in the policy or covered by separate guidance for employee and the line manager and also clearly state who is the responsible person for each area.

Health and Safety

- The policy should be explicit on the requirement to record/report accidents.
- Who is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment.
- Specify if a risk assessment would be carried out of the offsite locations of peripatetic staff and also specify who would be responsible for doing the risk assessment. Do risk assessments need to take into account issues of lone working.
- Specify the procedure for risks assessments. When it is required and what level of risk assessment needs to be applied i.e. is a home visit required or would a basic questionnaire as an initial assessment be sufficient.
- Specify that the employee is required to take reasonable steps to ensure their home work area is safe.
- Specify limits on the number of occasions each month that an employee can work from home on an ad-hoc/occasional basis taking into account working time regulations
- Use a homeworking agreement proforma to specify the hours of work, regular patterns of work for employees that are working from home for a specified period of time.

Equipment and Insurance

- Specify when/ when not equipment will be provided for use in the home.
- Specify if peripatetic staff would be provided with the necessary equipment to support their offsite obligations.
- The employer and employee responsibilities with regard to the use of equipment in the home.
- Specify when employees home insurance may be affected by homeworking and the employees responsibility for clearing the arrangement with their insurance

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company/mortgage company and taking out an appropriate policy to cover any additional risks.

-The Authority may require confirmation that the employee has the appropriate insurance cover before they commence working from home.

-Specify if equipment used at home is covered by the Authority insurance.

Expenses

-Specify for what, if and when the Authority will meet additional costs i.e. official telephone calls, cost of any additional insurance, heating/lighting costs. The policy should state what cost will and will not be met.

Confidentiality and Security

-Specify clearly the employee responsibility for ensuring the security of the papers and equipment and that basic levels of security are in place e.g. locked windows, doors etc.

- Specify responsibilities regarding Data Protection

Terms and Conditions

-Specify when and how both ad-hoc/occasional homeworking and homeworking for a specific period can be applied.

-A homeworking agreement proforma be introduced and specify when completion of this proforma would be required.

-The homeworking agreement should explicitly state the work to be done, hours of work, regular patterns of work, who granted permission, contact, reporting sickness, attending meetings etc.

-Specify any decision to work from home will be made in light of the operational requirements of the office, Head of HR and the needs of other people in the Office. The primary objective of implementing arrangements to work from home is to meet operational needs.

- Specify there might be circumstances where the arrangements also provide flexibility to the employee to deal with personal or domestic issues

-Both managers and employees should be aware that the legal and contractual obligations and responsibilities associated with employment apply when someone is working from home. All staff working from home benefit from the same rights, guaranteed by applicable legislation and collective agreements, as comparable to workers at the employer's premises.

Working from home is voluntary and no one is obliged to work from home.

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It should also state that this policy is not intended to address the legislation of April 2003 'right to request flexible work', which will be addressed in a separate part of the MPA Alternative Working Arrangements policy. There may be scope to include the legislation of April 2003 'right to request flexible work' in the this policy as many of the same considerations apply.

14. In what way does the proposed amendment promote the General Duty of the Act? (Please specify)

Eliminate unlawful discrimination

The amendments will ensure that the policy is implemented to the same standard throughout the Authority. It would be available to all staff provided that the job is suitable to this arrangement. Employees working flexibly will not be treated less favourably in relation to access to training or promotional opportunities

Promote equal opportunities

It promotes equal opportunities by providing staff with the opportunity to work from home in order to meet a personal/domestic commitment and it also maximises the opportunities to recruit, retain and motivate staff by making available a range of flexible forms of working.

Promote good relations between people from different racial groups

Staff from different racial groups will be supported by the amendments as they would have the opportunity to use the policy meet specific cultural imperatives.

15. a) What are the consequences for the affected groups, and for the Authority, for adopting a policy that is assessed as being discriminatory?

This policy along with the proposed amendments should ensure that the complies with the CRE Code of Practice on employment and is designed to make the best use of available talent and improve our reputation as a good employer. Not to do so would be to fail to support the MPA's statutory responsibilities and key priorities.

b) How will the MPA communicate its decision to the Community or communities if there is differential impact (s)? Which communities will the outcome be communicated to and how?

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The finalised policy would be circulated to all existing staff. The MPA staff adverts state flexible working is available.

16. In coming to the above decision, with whom have you consulted/ and or what information was gathered?

In the development of this policy consultations took place with PCS, SMT and Head of Partnerships and Policing. Further consultations with staff within the newly established email consultation process took place and the information gathered is detailed below. Due to the recent failure of the external email facility it was not possible to extend the consultation process to MPA members and external participants within the email forum before the review scheduled on 16 March 04. This wider consultation will commence on 16 March 04 and the results fed into this assessment at a later date.

Written comments from members of staff:

Young people/those new to work after a long period may have additional needs in terms of developing appropriate working practices.

New procedure should be put in place with immediate effect (following appropriate consultation)

HR should also report progress on the implementation of policies/processes and monitoring information on a monthly basis to SMT at the HR focus meeting (i.e. how many staff using flexible working arrangements/highlight any issues of concern).

The policy should also outline the manager's responsibility to maintain regular contact with the teleworker, particularly in relation to communicating changes/new staff, training/secondment opportunities etc.

17. What arrangements have been/will be made for publishing the results of this EIA?

On the website

18. What are the costs of implementing each proposed option?

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N/A

19. What are the measures you would expect others to use to assess the success of this policy in meeting the General Duty of the Act? (Please Specify)

The level of usage by staff and feedback from the representative union. In addition, other processes, e.g. exit polling, will also identify how successful teleworking has been.

20. Please outline the arrangements that have been / will be made for monitoring the policy including the Committee or internal structure (e.g. SMT/CDO) that quality assures the outcomes of the monitoring arrangements and success measures?

The Head of Human Resources has responsibility to ensure compliance with employment monitoring requirements.

The MPA Equal Opportunities and Diversity Board will receive half yearly reports on the overall progress of the implementation of MPA policies and processes. It is in the terms of reference of this Committee to ensure that the MPA meets its statutory responsibilities under all relevant anti-discrimination legislation.

Monitoring will be carried out to ensure that teleworkers are prevented from being isolated from the rest of the MPA staff and to ensure that such staff are kept informed of all relevant MPA arrangements and activities, e.g. training courses, development opportunities, staff meetings etc

The completed Stage 2 proforma must be forwarded, electronically, to Cynthia Coleman in the Race and Diversity Unit.

Date Stage 2 proforma forwarded to Race and Diversity Unit:

External Quality Assurance

Date External Quality Assurance completed: 16 March 2004

Sign-Off and Committee notification

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Assessment signed off by Clerk: Cherene Croft Date: 19.10.04

Date to be submitted to the EODB: 29 June 2004

Publication

Publication date: November 2004 (to be agreed with Communications Unit)

Monitoring and Review

Date for reviewing policy: March 2005 (to be agreed with R&D Unit)

For further information and assistance please contact:

Julia Smith Ext: 57226

Cynthia Coleman Ext 57233

Karina Horsham-Maynard Ext 57227