

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

Evidence based equality analysis – can include documents, quotes, and web links for photos and videos

Policy / procedure / function / project / decision: ANALYSIS FOR THE REGISTRATION SERVICE

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

Aims of the policy / procedure / function / project: The Registration Service is a customer focused service conducting ceremonies, registering births and deaths, and issues copy certificates. Furthermore, the scope of services offered includes:

- Nationality Checking Service (British citizenship application)
- Citizenship ceremonies
- Marriages
- Civil partnerships
- Naming ceremonies
- Renewal of vows
- Keeping registration entries from 1837
- Civil funerals
- Licensing Approved Premises (venues legally registered for marriages and civil partnerships)

Lead officer: Keith Flanigan and Jodie Carstairs

Stakeholders: Members of the public, Home Office, elected members, General Register Office, Identity and Passport Service, Countess of Chester Hospital, Funeral Directors, Crematorium and Cemetery Services, Representatives of HM the Queen (citizenship ceremonies), Approved Premises Licensees.

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about **outcomes**.

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination.

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas overleaf, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Target group / area	Neutral	Positive	Negative
<p>Race and Ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)</p>		<p>Culture and Lifestyle - British citizenship ceremonies welcome new citizens into the community and celebrate cultural differences and integration. A video was created in September 2010 to help show new citizens and their guests what happens during a ceremony, to help them prepare and know what to expect on the day.</p>	<p>Language - LOW - All documentation available in plain English - Strap line offering translation / interpretation included - Some documentation available in other languages already (based on demand) - Duty to provide language arrangements for people not being able to speak/understand English entering marriages / civil partnerships - ID requirements for marriages are accommodating the most common obstacles people from the Travelling community are likely to encounter - Regular staff in-house customer care training, including E&D awareness training.</p> <p>Culture and Lifestyle – MEDIUM - ID requirements for marriages are accommodating the most common obstacles people from the Travelling community are likely to encounter.</p>

<p>Disability <i>(as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</i></p>		<p>Physical Access - The Registration service operates from a number of offices across CWaC in order to be as accessible to customers as possible.</p>	<p>Physical Access - LOW - The main buildings and venues have been reviewed by the Access Officer and a <u>report has been produced.</u> - All approved premises (for civil ceremonies) have to meet basic accessibility criteria. - Accessibility issue may arise, however, when customers' provide venues of their own choice. - Opening times are published on a website, but evening and Saturday appointments are available upon requests - Most information and some application forms available from the website - The general 0300 telephone number published for registration services enquiries - Questions concerning accessibility requirements are asked in advance for the purpose of the citizenship ceremonies - Domiciliary visits are offered to housebound customers.</p> <p>Sensory Impairments - LOW - Accessibility strap line offering alternative formats features on all public documents - Sign language interpreters can be arranged for marriage/civil partnership ceremonies if required.</p> <p>Learning disability /mental health issues – LOW - The Registration Office works closely with the social services when situation demands it (e.g. doubts concerning clients' capacity to understand) – one of Registration statutory duties - Assistance is available to fill-in documentation and forms (which also helps customers with literacy problems).</p>
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Gender/Gender Reassignment			Parents with Children - LOW - Some application forms include a question if an applicant is married/single parent – justified reason - Different treatment of minors under the citizenship rules. Transgender- LOW - Provision of advise to the Transgender community concerning registrations (mainly reliant on the national guidance) - <u>Investigate transgender awareness training.</u>
Religion and Belief		Culture and customs - The service is secular so it is available to everyone - Different requirements are considered and accommodated as far as the legal framework permits - Civil funerals are offered - Non-religious venues for ceremonies - Affirmation as well as oath offered at citizenship ceremonies.	
Sexual Orientation <i>(including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)</i>		Civil Partnership ceremonies - The registration service provides a brochure specifically for civil partnerships, as well as a separate section of advice and guidance in the Ceremonies Guide. As part of the Inspection process for Approved Premises, registrars stress the importance of not discriminating against gay couples.	
Age <i>(children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only)</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A

<i>as overriding consideration should be given to needs).</i>			
Rural communities		Approved premises for marriages are located throughout the Borough often in rural hotels and other venues.	Accessibility - LOW A number of offices and outstations; webpage; opening hours; wealth of info available from the website / phone in order to prepare in advance (deal with everything in a single visit); home visits (health circumstances being a qualifying factor rather than location).
Areas of deprivation			Fees – LOW - A number of registration services attract fees. Some are statutory, the majority are set by the Council - Concessionary arrangement not commonly available.
Human Rights		The Human Rights Act is applicable when delivering Registration services (Right to marry, Right to respect for private and family life; Freedom of thought, conscience and religion; Prohibition of discrimination).	
Health and Wellbeing (<i>consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services</i>)	na	Marriage is commonly recognised as reducing childhood poverty, mental ill health and increasing average life expectancy by 10 years.	N/A
Procurement/Partnership (<i>if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance</i>)		N/A	N/A

Evidence (see guidance note for details of what to include here):

Customer Feedback

Four surveys are carried out each year. Attached is an overall comparison of all results.

Equality Access Audit 2010

Full report by Graham Garnett (TBC if in electronic format)

Citizenship Ceremony Video

This can be viewed at: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/registration - under the link to British citizenship.

Action plan:

Target groups/areas in the negative section are shown as low or medium impact because it was decided that we have appropriate mitigating factors in place.

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Investigate Transgender Training	Consult with gay, lesbian & transgender community	2	Gender appropriate arrangements in place	Keith Flanigan	11/01/13

Sign off	
Lead Officers: Keith Flanigan and Jodie Carstairs	
Approved by Head of Service:	
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date: 26.3.2012	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in 1 year, medium impact - review in 2 years, low impact in 3 years)	Due to review giving overall outcome of low negative impact, future assessment date is January 2015

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website