

Equality Impact Assessment

Title of the policy/report /strategy/service	Employment Reference Policy
Date	28 th April 2016
Lead Officer	Elaine Griffin – HR Business Partner
Who else is involved in undertaking this assessment?	Claire Perry – HR Business Partner

Step 1 – Overview of policy/function being assessed

A. Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (specify aims and objectives)
The purpose of the Employment Reference Policy is to ensure appropriate checks are carried out prior to confirming a candidate in post, recognising that candidates' past experience and performance is the best indicator of their future performance in a similar role. It also ensures that appropriate checks are carried out from a safeguarding perspective. The policy sets out the circumstances under which references should be requested, how many and who would be considered a suitable referee. It also sets out procedures in respect of the provision of references.
B. What specific groups are the policy designed to affect/impact?
The policy impacts on external candidates who have been issued a conditional offer of employment with Harborough District Council (HDC). It also applies to existing and ex-employees of HDC who are applying for posts elsewhere.
C. Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy?
Unison, Human Resources (HR), Service Managers

Step 2 – What we already know and where there are gaps

A. List any existing information/data you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender, transgender etc.
<p>Data/information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultation ▪ Previous Equality Impact Assessments ▪ Demographic information ▪ Anecdotal and other evidence
No equality data is collected specifically regarding staff for whom references are written and requested. By virtue of the fact that references are requested in all recruitment campaigns, data is available regarding those individuals for whom references are requested. However, no equality data is available in relation to the outcome of reference requests.
B. What does this information / data tell you about diverse group? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (please list)
No equality data is available in relation to the outcome of reference requests or the writing of references. It is exceptionally rare for an offer of employment to be withdrawn on the basis of references and any data is unlikely to be statistically significant.

Step 3 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

A. In light of the answers you have given in step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why.
Human Resources (HR) will liaise with the Equality and Diversity Officer to determine whether there is merit in monitoring equality data relating to references.

Step 4 – Assessing the impacts

	In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the groups specified and provide an explanation for your decision. (please refer to the general duties on the front page)
A. Age	The policy is neutral. Age does not impact on the outcome of the referencing process. Dates employed are requested / provided, however the standard reference form used by the Council does not include reference to the applicant's age.
B. Disability (physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health)	Disability does not directly impact on the outcome of the referencing process. Attendance information is requested and, subject to further investigation and the Council's duties relating to disability, excessive absence could result in an offer of employment being withdrawn. According to some research, those with disabilities are more likely to have higher absence levels than their counterparts. Therefore, there may be a negative impact on people with disabilities.
C. Gender / Sex	The policy is neutral. Gender does not impact on the outcome of the referencing process.
D. Religious Belief	The policy is neutral. Religion or belief does not impact on the outcome of the referencing process.
E. Racial Group	The policy is neutral. Ethnic origin does not impact on the outcome of the referencing process.
F. Sexual Orientation	The policy is neutral. Sexual orientation does not impact on the outcome of the referencing process.
G. Transgender	The policy is neutral. Transgender status does not impact on the outcome of the referencing process.
H. Other protected groups (pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership)	The policy is neutral. Protected characteristics do not impact on the outcome of the referencing process. Maternity related absence is not included in absence figures requested.
I. Other socially excluded groups (low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, socio-economic, etc)	No employee data is kept regarding socio-economic status of employees / candidates but as HDC's commitment to equality is observed during the referencing process all candidates / employees / ex-employees are treated fairly and consistently.
J. All	The HR department consider that the policy is easy to follow and fair to those individuals who are subject to it. Followed correctly, the policy should not treat any individual less favourably than another.

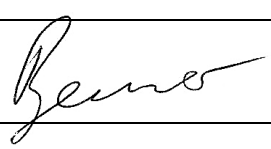
Step 5 – Action Plan

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan: <i>The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan</i>			
Question Number (Ref)	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date
3	HR will liaise with the Equality & Diversity (E&D) Officer regarding monitoring reference / E&D data	Elaine Griffin	31 st March 2017

Step 6 – Who needs to know the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed

	Who needs to know (Please tick)	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees	✓	The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and the policy will be published on the intranet.
Service users	✓	The EIA will be published on the internet.
Partners and stakeholders	✓	The EIA will be published on the internet.
Others inc. candidates	✓	The EIA will be published on the internet.
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?	✓	Hard copies of the EIA and policy will be available from the Human Resources Department.

Step 7 – Conclusion (to be completed and signed by the Service Manager)

Please delete as appropriate
I agree with this assessment / action plan
If disagree, state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales:
Signed (Service Manager): 
Date: 5th May 2016

Please send completed & signed assessment to the Equality and Diversity Officer.