

## HDC Initial Equality Impact Assessment Form EIA1 (Updated January 2008)

<b>Service Area/Section</b>	HUMAN RESOURCES	<b>Persons undertaking the assessment</b> (please also state name of contact officer)	Christine Geschke Lauri Butcher
<b>Name of policy or function to be assessed</b>	<b>Employee References</b>	<b>Date of assessment</b>	<b>March 2008</b>
			New or existing policy  Existing  <b>No policy currently. HR working on new draft policy.</b>
1. Briefly describe the aims, objective or purpose of the policy, or service function.	<p><b>References provide the opportunity for prospective employers to obtain information about potential employees and make an assessment of their suitability for the post in question. The principle aims of a reference are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to confirm the accuracy of statements made in the application, and;</li> <li>• To give the referee's opinion as to the candidates suitability for the post and potential for the future.</li> </ul>		
2. Are there any associated objectives of the policy/function? How do these objectives meet or hinder other policies, values, or objectives of HDC?	<p><b>Information obtained from references should be used in conjunction with other relevant information to provide as full a picture of the candidate's attributes as possible. References should be used as part of the recruitment process and should not be solely relied upon to assess the individual for suitability for employment.</b></p>		
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	<p><b>Prospective employers, including HDC, will benefit as they may ask for information about employees to be confirmed before the person starts work. Offers of employment may be withdrawn if unsatisfactory references are received. Staff will also benefit as without references they may find it difficult to get other work.</b></p>		
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/function and for whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide a good practice approach to providing and securing employment references thus offering practical advice and guidance to those who are charged with the responsibility.</li> </ul>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have a consistent approach in giving references to protect the council from claims for damages from employees (which could also included claims of discrimination) and from employers.</li> </ul>	
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the intended outcomes?		<p><b>Without guidance and control managers may give references based on assumptions rather than objective information thus leading to misinformation or at worst false statements that causes the employee loss.</b></p> <p><b>With regard to incoming references if these are not checked carefully and followed up where necessary this may lead to unsatisfactory and/or unfair appointments being made.</b></p>	
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to this policy?	Human Resources , managers, staff Unions	7. Who implements the policy/function and is responsible for the policy?	Human Resources
8. Is there an identified potential for the policy/function to have a differential impact on racial groups?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</li> </ul>		There is a possibility that managers may write references based on feelings and assumptions rather than on facts. They are in a position to influence an employee's future employment. Where there are no internal controls, references could include stereotypical views which could include racial discrimination.	
9. Is there an identified potential for the policy/function to have a differential impact due to gender?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</li> </ul>		There is a possibility that managers may write references based on feelings and assumptions rather than on facts. They are in a position to influence an employee's future employment. Where there are no internal controls, references could include stereotypical views which could include sexual discrimination.	
10. Is there an identified potential for the policy/function to have a differential impact due to disability?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have</li> </ul>		There is a possibility that managers may write references based on feelings	

for this?			and assumptions rather than on facts. They are in a position to influence an employee's future employment. Where there are no internal controls, references could include stereotypical views which could amount to discrimination on the grounds of disability The new reference policy will include advice about commenting on an employee's disability and require managers to agree any comments about mentioning a disability with the employee including them in the reference.
11. Is there an identified potential for the policy/function to have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</li> </ul>			There is a possibility that managers may write references based on feelings and assumptions rather than on facts. They are in a position to influence an employee's future employment. Where there are no internal controls, references could include stereotypical views which could amount to discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.
12. Is there an identified potential for the policy/function to have a differential impact due to age?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</li> </ul>			There is a possibility that managers may write references based on feelings and assumptions rather than on facts. They are in a position to influence an employee's future employment. Where there are no internal controls, references could include stereotypical views which could include discrimination on the grounds of age.

13. Is there an identified potential for the policy/function to have a differential impact due to religious belief?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</li> </ul>			There is a possibility that managers may write references based on feelings and assumptions rather than on facts. They are in a position to influence an employee's future employment. Where there are no internal controls, references could include stereotypical views which could amount to discrimination on the grounds of religious belief.
14. Is there an identified potential for the policy/function to have a differential impact on any other groups of people?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	Yes all staff including carers and part time staff.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</li> </ul>			<b>All staff may require references at some stage. All new staff are required to provide satisfactory references.</b>
15. Could any differential impact identified in points 9-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N</b>	There is a possibility that managers may write references based on feelings and assumptions rather than on facts. They are in a position to influence an employee's future employment. Where there are no internal controls, references could include stereotypical views which could include mistaken views about the commitment of carers and part time staff.
16. Can any adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one or more groups or any other reason?	<b>Y</b>	<b>No</b>	
17. Should the policy proceed to a <b>full</b> impact assessment?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Not at this stage- see below.
18. If no, are there any recommended changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?	A draft Good Practice Policy and Procedure is being developed which provides guidance for managers on the giving and receipt of references. This includes giving the overall responsibility for references to Human Resources. No references will be sent out without having been checked by HR. This will mean that any		

	<p>potentially discriminatory comments will be challenged.  Special mention is also made in the policy of how to deal with disability related issues in that this must relate to the employees ability to do the job and the employees consent must be obtained first.</p>
<p>Additional notes/guidance (Policy Officer)</p>	

Signed (Completing officer) ...Christine Geschke ..... Date 20<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Signed (Equality officer) ..... Date \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Signed (Head of Service) ..... Date \_\_/\_\_/\_\_