

**ANNEX**

# Next Generation HR

Civil Service Learning

13 April 2011

# Equality Impact Assessment for Next Generation HR: Civil Service Learning

## Introduction

Next Generation HR (NGHR) has carried out an equality impact assessment on Civil Service Learning within Civil Service HR, assessing the proposal in line with the current public sector equality duties.

This process will help to ensure that:

- NGHR's strategies, policies and services are free from discrimination;
- NGHR complies with current equality legislation;
- due regard is given to equality in decision making and subsequent processes; and,
- opportunities for promoting equality are identified.

## Scope of this assessment

The existing public sector equality duties require Civil Service departments to show due regard when developing new policies or processes to the impact of the proposals on race, disability and gender (including gender reassignment).

This assessment looks at the available evidence to determine the extent to which the effect of the proposed change differs between persons sharing a protected characteristic and persons who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 simplifies and strengthens the existing framework of anti-discrimination legislation. This equality impact assessment will show how NGHR has demonstrated it has paid due regard when developing new services or processes to protection against discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion and belief (the protected characteristics).

## Brief outline of Next Generation HR

Next Generation HR is a cross-departmental change programme designed to enable savings to be achieved in a way which ensures Civil Service HR is effective as well as efficient in the future.

Next Generation HR's aim is for Civil Service employees to receive a revised service offering, by delivering some elements of HR that are currently duplicated in every department, once for all Civil Servants. The programme is also looking at standardising other services provided by HR that will remain within departments.

The three Shared Expert Services that will go live from April 2011 are; Civil Service Resourcing, Civil Service Employee Policy and Civil Service Learning. Departments, senior leaders and individual civil servants will receive benefits through receiving a

better and more consistent service at a significant cost reduction from their HR function.

Each of the Shared Expert Services will be 'hosted' by a department. This means that the Expert Service will be mainly based in buildings and use systems owned by the host department. Staff, who decide to apply for one of the posts in the Shared Expert Services and are successful, will move to the host department's terms and conditions, including pay. The host departments are as follows:

- **Civil Service Employee Policy:** Department for Work and Pensions
- **Civil Service Resourcing:** Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- **Civil Service Learning:** Home Office

Based on a range of factors (covered in a separate impact assessment), the Shared Expert Services will be based in the following locations:

- **Civil Service Employee Policy** – London, Leeds and initially Sheffield.
- **Civil Service Resourcing** – Leeds, with a small team in London. There will also initially be small satellite operational delivery teams in Newcastle, Manchester and Bristol / South Wales.
- **Civil Service Learning** – London.

This equality impact assessment focuses on the Civil Service Learning. Other equality impact assessments will focus on the other two Shared Expert Services within the new Civil Service HR model: Civil Service Resourcing and Civil Service Employee Policy. A further equality impact assessment focuses on the location and selection.

## **Brief outline of Civil Service Learning**

Over the past 12 months there have been significant moves to bring a greater focus to learning and development across the Civil Service. Despite this, there remains an inconsistent approach to the delivery of learning and development, with over 100 individual functions supporting learning and development across government, setting their own strategies and sourcing their own solutions. For instance, in the financial year 2010/11, there were over 450 different courses offered in people management and 294 on leadership across the Civil Service. With such a huge number of products, both staff and departmental management find it hard to assess quality and value for money.

Civil Service Learning will manage the transition of the current arrangements for generic learning and development to a new central model. Civil Service Learning will reduce duplication in provision and provide a sharper focus of learning and development on business priorities. Civil Service Learning will begin the process of sourcing generic learning and development on behalf of departments during the new financial year 2011/12 as a transitional year, with all products and services coming on line for April 2012.

### **Who is affected?**

The Common Curriculum which is being developed by Civil Service Learning covers only generic learning and development. This curriculum will be available to civil servants working in departments participating in Next Generation HR, currently (as of Quarter 4 of the 2010/11 financial year) over 480,000 individuals.

All Executive Agencies will be under the governance of their parent department for the purposes of this project.

The Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly are not currently in the scope of this project, though they may have some discretion about how much of the project's recommendation they chose to implement.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is out of scope of this project, as are non-departmental public bodies.

Customers will be provided with products in the following areas:

- The Civil Service Way - an induction package tailored for different levels of the service, and building upon the current Core Learning Programme, delivered by the National School of Government.
- Management and leadership development packages, which will include leadership, coaching and mentoring programmes where relevant.
- Core skills training in everyday skills such as Information Technology, communications and customer service.
- Specialist development in areas such as first aid or Freedom of Information training
- Mandatory programmes on topics such as data security, equality and diversity etc.

Civil service Learning will not provide business-specific or technical learning and development, such as how to administer a particular new benefit or Information Technology system in a department. This will remain the responsibility of the relevant department, which will retain some learning and development resource to deliver this as appropriate.

Learning and development which supports the development of profession-specific technical skills, for example audit skills for a finance professional or constitutional law specialism for a lawyer, continue to be the responsibility of the relevant Head of Profession.

External Suppliers will be procured and commissioned to design, develop and deliver the learning and development, training, e-learning and other materials for departments and agencies. The requirement to tender will expect to specify the Civil Service's equality impact assessment needs from external suppliers.

### **Who benefits?**

The main benefits are:

- (a) Reduced Cost: learning and development will be consolidated and delivered in the most cost efficient way possible. The resulting savings will make a

major contribution to the efficiency savings under the Next Generation HR programme.

- (b) Improved Business Outcomes – generic learning and development will be focused on areas of business priorities, and will be consistent across departments. There will be a new Common Curriculum, informed by a better strategic understanding of skills gaps across the service and smarter use of technology which will provide training to large numbers of staff at minimum cost per head.
- (c) Improved Responsiveness – through development of an on-line learning portal and learning and management systems, the provision of learning and development to the Civil Service will be more streamlined and we will significantly increase our ability to operate at capacity.
- (d) Focus on Quality – by bringing together the best of learning methods and content currently available and ensuring they align with new ways of working, civil servants will benefit from a genuine change in the culture of how the Civil Service learns. Our learning will be driven by our business priorities and have direct practical application for the individual and their team.
- (e) A more professional learning and development function – which delivers a key strand of Civil Service capability and is valued by our business leaders, HR stakeholders, line managers and employees.

### **Who will be affected?**

All Civil Servants who are part of a department signed up to Next Generation HR will use Civil Service Learning. Civil Service Learning will therefore affect over 480,000 individuals.

### **Consultation and involvement**

Next Generation HR is a cross-government programme that will affect many stakeholders, both within HR and the wider Civil Service. As a result, various stakeholder groups have been engaged with by the programme.

#### **'Internal' stakeholders within HR**

The programme has endeavoured to engage with many individuals within Civil Service HR, both to inform and to request challenge around the proposals of the new model. As some changes made by the programme could impact directly on the roles of people within HR this has been taken very seriously and a wide range of groups have been involved. People working within Civil Service HR will also deliver the new model, so it has been essential to get their support and input for proposed changes.

The HR Management Team are the decision makers for the programme. Led by the Head of the Civil Service HR Profession, members have been regularly updated and asked to take decisions around Next Generation HR. Members of this group have also been involved as sponsors/leads for areas of the programme. The leads for the three Shared Expert Service areas are: -

**Civil Service Employee Policy:** DWP HR Director General  
**Civil Service Resourcing:** HMRC HR Director General  
**Civil Service Learning:** Home Office HR Director General

Other senior HR leaders across government have been involved in the programme, as well as regularly informed on the latest developments. Examples of this have been Accelerated Implementation Events, where HR leaders took an active role in the design of the new Civil Service HR model, regular conference call updates with the Head of Profession and a set of 'road shows' designed to both inform and receive challenge from those attending.

Other examples of senior involvement with the programme include the Business Implementation Group (a group of implementation managers from the seven largest departments), HR Consortium (HR directors from smaller departments) and the Approvals Board (5 HR directors from smaller departments looking specifically at selection strategy of the programme).

People working in Civil Service HR have access to regular updates on the programme through monthly newsletters and core presentations communicated via their HR leaders. Individuals also have the opportunity to email the Programme Office directly to a dedicated email address with any questions, queries or comments they have. The programme also has a dedicated site on Civil Pages (a Civil Service intranet site), available to all civil servants, which is regularly updated with information on the programme.

The Diversity and Equality team for the Department for Work and Pensions have been part of this process through quality-assurance and general guidance around the design and implementation of the equality impact assessments.

Civil Service Learning has a number of departmental stakeholder groups which have helped to inform decisions on the project. A steering group made up of senior leaders involved in learning and development is the main decision-making group for the project. A larger stakeholder group has been used to inform and consult with a wider group of departmental representatives.

### **Non-HR groups**

As Next Generation HR will potentially affect all civil servants as 'customers' of HR, a wide number of different groups have been engaged around the programme.

At a senior (management) level, the programme has been presented at Permanent Secretaries Management Group and Civil Service Steering Board meetings. These groups, consisting of the most senior civil servants across all departments, have given their support to the programme, along with their commitment to support HR Directors in the development of their departmental transition plans.

Senior managers within the Finance profession have also been engaged around the programme, as they are the professional area that will have the most interaction with the new HR model outside of HR.

The Trade Union Side (TUS), made up of the Public and Commercial Services Union, the FDA and Prospect unions have met with the programme on a roughly monthly basis since the summer of 2010. The programme views the TUS as an integral part of engagement and consultation and has ensured that any decisions have been passed on to this group as soon as possible for comment and challenge if necessary. More recently, diversity representatives from the TUS have been involved with this piece of work and it has been agreed that we will look to work together from April onwards regarding the monitoring and evaluation of Next Generation HR.

The programme has met with staff network groups representing a range of diversity groups. These groups have been asked to provide broad feedback on the services provided by the Shared Expert Services. They have also been sent the locations decisions and invited to comment on aspects of this. The interaction and qualitative feedback from these groups has been invaluable for informing the programme around its plans and we would like to acknowledge the effort put in by all of these groups.

Civil Service groups that have been engaged are: Civil Service Disability Advisory Group (Disability), Civil Service Race Equality Network (Race) and a:gender (representative of Transgender staff).

Departmental groups have also been engaged, where cross Civil Service groups do not exist, namely: DWP Staff Networks for Age, Gender and Transgender, Sexual Orientation and Work/Life Balance. Home Office Islamic, Sikh, Christian and Hindu Staff Networks.

## **Data**

Information around Civil Service HR has been obtained through the Office for National Statistics to inform some programme decisions as well as this impact assessment.

The programme has also commissioned data collections from across Civil Service HR departments to give an 'as is' picture of the HR function across departments.

Although it is never possible to rely solely on data alone (which is why stakeholder groups have been engaged for qualitative input), we believe that the quantitative data we hold is sound and can be used to form assumptions with some confidence.

The combination of this quantitative data, as well as qualitative data from feedback and discussions with all our stakeholders has been invaluable throughout the design and implementation of the programme.

## **Impact of Civil Service Learning**

### **General note**

This equality impact assessment focuses on the impacts of Civil Service Learning.

Further equality impact assessments focus on the impacts of Civil Service Employee Policy, Civil Service Resourcing and the location and selection strategy.

This is a 'living' document and will be updated as key milestones have been reached. A version control will be kept and previous versions of this assessment will be held.

Information on the impact of the services provided by the other Shared Expert Services, will be included in the equality impact assessment for the Civil Service Resourcing and Civil Service Employee Policy.

For information on the impact on departmental HR, please refer to the relevant equality impact assessment for each department's HR change programme.

## **Disability**

Data shows that currently within departments the proportion of staff with a known disability that access learning and development is generally lower than the proportion of disabled staff in the department. Some qualitative feedback received has suggested that some individuals are put off by, or not even able to access some learning due to a lack of accessibility.

As mitigation and a positive impact, all e-learning products will be designed to the latest accessibility standards, ensuring that features include the ability to adjust text sizes, alternative texts for images, the use of cascading style sheets, access keys, transcript for video content. The portal supporting e-learning will be designed to AA (or AAA where appropriate) standards and support assistive software, such as JAWS, DRAGON and DOLPHIN SUPERNOVA. The Civil Service Disability Advisory Group has raised some issues around accessibility for certain disabled groups, which have been addressed within the Civil Service Learning project team in order to avoid expensive retro-fitting costs of e-learning at a later date.

In order to avoid travel and accessibility problems for people with a disability, Civil Service Learning will ensure that all government estate listed for use across government is accessible for all. It will also look to deliver classroom-based training in locations that are as convenient as possible, both for deliverers and students. This will include, for example, access to hearing loops in buildings and space for support workers to be accommodated in the classroom. Suppliers of external learning and development will be required to select locations that also meet these needs.

There is ongoing consideration of providing a Braille version of some products, which is to be decided in the coming months.

The proportion of disabled staff using Civil Service Learning will be monitored and consultation will be ongoing with staff networks representing disability, such as the Civil Service Disability Advisory Group.

As with all other groups within this assessment, the monitoring and evaluation stage will continue to look at this group to see if any impacts arise once Civil Service Learning begins to deliver its service.

## **Race**

Radically changing the way we deliver learning and development gives the Civil Service an opportunity to promote good relations between people of all racial backgrounds and fully integrate diversity messages throughout its learning and development material. It also gives us the opportunity to influence the behaviour of the supply chain through the tendering process.

As with all other groups within this assessment, the monitoring and evaluation stage will continue to look at this group to see if any impacts arise once Civil Service Learning begins to deliver its service.

## **Gender and Gender Reassignment:**

In most departments, there are more part time women than men, and this can lead to lack of access to courses if there is no flexibility in the start and finish time of courses.

As a lot of future learning will be delivered through e-learning, there is more potential to mitigate the lack of flexibility in start and finish time of courses. Wherever possible, more flexible start and end times for courses will be sought for classroom-based learning to give as much chance and choice to all employees.

Civil Service Learning will also look to deliver classroom-based training in locations that are as convenient as possible, both for deliverers and students, to reduce travel time.

As with all other groups within this assessment, the monitoring and evaluation stage will continue to look at this group to see if any impacts arise once Civil Service Learning begins to deliver its service.

## **Age**

At the time of writing this version of the Equality Impact Assessment, no specific impacts have been identified for this group within Civil Service Learning.

As with all other groups within this assessment, the monitoring and evaluation stage will continue to look at this group to see if any impacts arise once Civil Service Learning begins to deliver its service.

## **Religion or belief**

Prayer rooms will be made available wherever possible in all government estate where classroom-based learning will take place.

As with all other groups within this assessment, the monitoring and evaluation stage will continue to look at this group to see if any impacts arise once Civil Service Learning begins to deliver its service.

## **Sexual Orientation**

At the time of writing this version of the Equality Impact Assessment, no specific impacts have been identified for this group within Civil Service Learning.

As with all other groups within this assessment, the monitoring and evaluation stage will continue to look at this group to see if any impacts arise once Civil Service Learning begins to deliver its service.

## **Carers**

A lot of carers are likely to work part-time or flexibly to support their commitments, which can mean that rigid and early start or late finish times of courses act as a barrier to these individuals.

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Civil Service Learning will also look to deliver classroom-based training in locations that are as convenient as possible, both for deliverers and students.

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## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The Shared Expert Services will go live in April 2011. The programme plans to review the impact of Civil Service Learning, as well as the impact of the other Shared Expert Services in conjunction with data collections made by the Office for National Statistics.

A data 'snapshot' of Civil Service HR will be taken on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 and a request will be made for another to be made six months later to assess any impact in numbers compared to diversity groups. As mentioned above, this data will help to inform decisions alongside input from stakeholders such as Trade Unions and staff network groups, such as those we have worked with up to now.

We therefore hope that the monitoring and evaluation of Civil Service Learning will involve engagement with the Office for National Statistics as well as with Trade Unions, DWP Diversity team and staff network groups to provide information on the impact of the programme on both HR and non-HR staff.

## **Next steps**

The intended timescales for this Equality Impact Assessment are:

**Week beginning 21 March 2011:** Equality Impact Assessment sent to TUS diversity representatives and DWP Diversity team for comment

**Week beginning 11 April 2011:** TUS comments added to the Equality Impact Assessment and shared with CSL Director for sign off. Equality Impact Assessment uploaded to Civil Pages and shared with departments to inform their own assessments.

**April 2011 onwards:** Evaluation and monitoring to begin, with input from TUS colleagues, DWP Diversity team and staff network groups.