

BSO Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Governance Framework

1. Introduction

As a service delivery organisation and as a good employer, the Business Services Organisation (BSO) is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all those who access and are impacted by our services and for our people who we employ.

To this end, BSO wish to ensure there are robust processes in place to place equality, diversity and inclusion at the centre of all decision making whether about our services or about matters impacting our people. This Framework seeks to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is mainstreamed within the normal day to day business of BSO.

2. Purpose

This Framework sets out the core governance arrangements in relation to the equality function in the Business Services Organisation.

The purpose of the Framework is:

- To provide assurance to the Board and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) that the organisation is compliant with its statutory requirements as a public body;
- To ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is being properly considered in all organisational decision making;
- To ensure robust and routine reporting of all equality, diversity and inclusion activity supported by a clear evidence base.

The Framework establishes clear lines of accountability with specified roles for BSO Board, the Business Development Committee, ELT, Directors, the BSO Equality Forum, and the BSO Equality Unit.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board will

- **hold Executive Leadership Team to account** on non-compliance with the equality and disability duties

- consider and approve Equality and Disability Action Plans
- consider and approve annual reports on compliance and good practice from the Equality Unit (statutory Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission on implementation of the equality and disability duties)
- consider and approve statutory employment equality reporting to the Equality Commission (the annual monitoring return to the Equality Commission and Article 55 return)
- consider quarterly reports on compliance and good practice recommended by the Business Development Committee
- appoint an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion from the Business Development Committee who will provide quarterly updates to the Board on compliance and good practice
- provide strategic direction on compliance and good practice.

The Business Development Committee will:

- consider and recommend quarterly reports on compliance and good practice (as above) to the Board.

The Executive Leadership Team will:

- **give assurance to Board** and the Business Development Committee on BSO compliance with the equality and disability duties
- hold individual Directors to account on all equality, diversity and inclusion matters ensuring it is central to key organisational decision making
- consider and approve the Annual Equality Screening and EQIA Programme
- consider and approve Equality and Disability Action Plans
- consider quarterly reports on compliance and good practice from the Equality Unit (as above)
- Consider and approve annual monitoring returns and Article 55 reports to the Equality Commission
- mandate the Equality Forum.

BSO Directors will:

- **give assurance to Executive Leadership Team** on compliance with the equality and disability duties within their Directorate

- ensure that evidence of compliance is produced within their Directorate, corporate logs are maintained, and information on good practice is shared with the BSO Equality Unit for each service area
- hold Assistant Directors, Heads of Service and Programme Directors to account on equality, diversity and inclusion issues and engagement (in relation to any papers, decisions, and discussions)
- develop, deliver and monitor the Annual Equality Screening and EQIA Programme within their Directorate
- develop, deliver and monitor Equality and Disability Action Plans within their Directorate
- consider quarterly reports on compliance and good practice within their Directorate
- ensure their Directorates promote a positive working environment where equality, diversity and inclusion is actively promoted
- nominate one senior representative for each service area within their Directorate as Members to the BSO Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum, namely, Assistant Directors, Heads of Service, and Programme Directors, and ensure their regular attendance
- ensure that information emanating from the BSO Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum is fully shared within the Directorate and that those representing the Directorate on the BSO Equality Forum are fully briefed and de-briefed to ensure effective and meaningful representation.

The BSO Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum will:

Bring together Assistant Directors, Heads of Service, and Programme Directors. The BSO Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum will:

- drive the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda across the BSO
- **consider quarterly reports on compliance and good practice from all service areas**
- **provide a platform to reflect on and share knowledge and learning across the organisation**

- **undertake key equality, diversity and inclusion activities** as mandated by ELT, together with key internal and external equality stakeholders
- **enable delivery of the equality and disability action plans**

The Equality Unit will:

- provide **expert advice, oversight, and monitoring role** in relation to compliance and good practice
- produces quarterly reports on compliance and good practice
- provides recommendations on the implementation of equality and disability duties to ELT and Board
- supports and advises individual service areas and staff on mainstreaming and all equality activities
- convenes, facilitates and provides the secretariat for the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Forum.

HR will:

- monitor the composition of the workforce from an equality, diversity and inclusion perspective
- produce reports regarding annual monitoring and Article 55 responsibilities
- will support the delivery of the equality and disability action plans
- will share regional work within BSO with regards equality, diversity and inclusion.

4. Reporting Arrangements and Evidence

Quarterly reports on compliance and good practice will be produced by the BSO Equality Unit and submitted to the BSO Business Development Committee. In relation to overall compliance monitoring, the reports will place particular emphasis on:

- equality screening and EQIA activity
- progress on delivery of Equality and Disability Action Plans
- mandatory training (Equality Screening training and, where applicable, EQIA training)
- statutory employment equality (under Anti-Discrimination Legislation).

The reports will be evidence-based, drawing on information and documents produced and provided by each service area and, in relation to statutory employment equality, by Human Resources.

All service areas will be required to

- maintain the BSO Corporate Log of equality screening and EQIA activity (reflecting the information in their Annual Equality Screening and EQIA Programme¹)
- publish Equality Screening templates and EQIA reports (with support from the BSO Equality Unit).

The BSO Equality Unit will produce statutory quarterly Equality Screening reports, based on published Equality Screening templates.

5. Review

This Framework will be reviewed together with the key stakeholders outlined above within three years of its introduction.

¹ This is developed by each service area as part of the annual business planning cycle for the coming year and maintained throughout the year.