

Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening - Relevance to Equality Duties

The EIA should be used to identify likely impacts on:

- disability
- race
- sex
- gender reassignment
- age
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- caring responsibilities (usually only for HR polices and change management processes such as back offices)

1. Name of the proposed new or changed legislation, policy, strategy, project or service being assessed.

Public Bodies Bill, Schedule 1 - Abolition of the Courts Boards

2. Individual Officer(s) & unit responsible for completing the Equality Impact Assessment.

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3. What is the main aim or purpose of the proposed new or changed legislation, policy, strategy, project or service and what are the intended outcomes?

Aims/objectives	Outcomes
<p>The Government's reforms of public bodies will increase accountability, remove duplication and streamline the public bodies landscape. The Public Bodies Bill provides the legislative basis for reform but does not itself enact any changes. These will be made through secondary legislation. Amongst other bodies, the Bill will enable the Lord Chancellor to abolish the Courts Boards. The aim of this is to remove an advisory board whose existence cannot be justified in the current financial climate and whose functions can be performed in other ways by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS).</p>	<p>Increased ministerial accountability relating to functions carried out on behalf of the state; elimination of duplication and reduced waste; fewer public bodies and reduced costs. Abolishing the Courts Boards will enable HMCTS to focus on front line services and enable local managers to explore and implement ways of connecting with their local communities, taking into account local circumstances and diverse needs.</p>

4. What existing sources of information will you use to help you identify the likely equality impacts on different groups of people?

Consultation documents, comments from Courts Boards' members on the proposed abolition.

5. Are there gaps in information that make it difficult or impossible to form an opinion on how your proposals might affect different groups of people. If so what are the gaps in the information and how and when do you plan to collect additional information?

No - the service that the Courts Boards provide in ensuring that the views of the local community are taken into account will be met in other ways. The department considers that there will be minimal impact on the Courts Boards members, who are public appointees and not employees. Their terms of appointment will end upon the abolition of the Courts Boards as will their membership remuneration. They are aware of the proposed abolition of the Courts Boards.

The impact on the staff who manage the process will also be minimal as this forms only a very small part of their overall workload.

HMCTS will ensure that it will assess the effect of any future policy changes in this area on people with protected characteristics by considering the completion of Equality Impact Assessments in relation to those changes.