

Equality and Human Rights Commission assessment of DWP through Jobcentre Plus

The Equality and Human Rights Commission published a report on 8 July 2009 following its assessment of the extent to which the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) through Jobcentre Plus is meeting the public sector equality duties, with a particular focus on equality impact assessments.

The Commission's report recognises the progress we have made in developing our diversity and equality agenda over recent years, including areas of good practice. The Commission also identifies areas where improvements are needed to strengthen our compliance and has made a number of helpful recommendations that will provide a framework for our improvement activity in the coming year.

Diversity and equality is central to the work of DWP and we are committed to driving through improvements to our practices. Each year we strive to learn more about the needs of our diverse customers and staff and to understand better how to make our services accessible and appropriate to all who use them.

We are already working throughout DWP to address the issues raised in the Commission's report. We welcome this work as an important opportunity to further develop our equality and diversity agenda. We have published an initial statement (page 2) in response to the Commission's report. This explains how we plan to address their recommendations.

Initial statement

Jobcentre Plus and the wider Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have developed a draft improvement plan in response to the Commission's report. The report assessed our compliance with equality legislation, with a particular focus on equality impact assessments (publication date 8 July 2009).

» [Equality and Human Rights Commission assessment of DWP through Jobcentre Plus](#) (EHRC website)

Addressing the Commission's recommendations will require action in Jobcentre Plus and in DWP.

Diversity and equality are at the heart of our business. Each year we strive to learn more about the needs of our diverse customers and staff and how to make our services accessible and appropriate for all who use them.

The EHRC report raises important issues and we are committed to addressing these over the next 12 months. We welcome this work as a major opportunity to further develop our equality and diversity practice. Our dialogue with the Commission has enhanced our understanding of both the equality duties, and its expectations of public authorities. Its recommendations provide us with a practical framework in which to improve our existing compliance and build on the good practice identified in the report.

We have shared a draft of our improvement plan with the Commission and have agreed with that we will work to finalise this by 6 August 2009.