FREE RESOURCE | GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

# Gender impact assessments: a practical guide

*Who was this built for, and who has to work around it?*

## Doing, recording, reporting *Where the effort should go*

**Doing**

**The real thinking.** Who is it built for, who is not using it, and what will we change? The Act does not prescribe how.

**Recording**

**Your local template or app.** Keep it proportionate to the decision.

**Reporting**

**The narrow questions in your progress report:** what the assessment was, its status, the actions taken (or why none were), and how intersectionality was considered.

**Remember: the progress report shows that something happened, not whether anything improved. Do this work to make real improvements to gender equality, not just to complete a form.**

## GIAs made simple

1. **Name who it is built for, and who has to work around it.**
2. **Look honestly at who is served, and who is not. Ask who is not using it, and why.**
3. **Change the design to remove the barriers. The change can be small.**
4. **Record what you decided, and why.**

EXAMPLE **A council's community grants round**

**1 Built for**

The round closes in the middle of the school holidays. It is built for applicants without caring responsibilities, who can prioritise this work.

**2 Who is missing out**

Parents and primary carers, who are more likely to be women and often take leave over the school holidays.

**3 The change**

Move the closing date out of the school holidays. This thinking also prompted a check for other dates that might stop people applying, such as days of cultural or religious significance.

**4 What we recorded**

Moved the deadline so parents and primary carers, mostly women, can apply, and checked the timeline against days of significance.

## Questions worth asking

- Who is the default user? Who will find this easy, and who might find it difficult?
- Do we know who is using this service, and why? What does the evidence tell us about who is not using it?
- Does a barrier sit in something simple: hours, waiting times, the channel or a form?
- Who owns this decision, and who is the right person to talk to?
- Can we actually change the decision? If not, why not? Record the reason, for example that it is outside the organisation's control.

## Common pitfalls to avoid

- Spending the time on the form, the reporting or the Act, rather than the thinking.
- Defaulting to a physical fix like a ramp, when the barrier is in a policy or service.
- Doing the assessment at the end to justify a decision already made.
- Training human resources, instead of the people who design public-facing work.
- Thinking the problem is too big to fix. Small changes matter too.