# **Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments: supplementary guidance.**

## **When EqSEIAs are required:**

Completed EqSEIAs must be available for the following things:

* Policy – new and amended.
* Strategy.
* Changes to service design and the way services are delivered.
* Proposals affecting jobs (including changes to hours worked, staffing levels, and redundancy situations).

The completion of impact assessments should be seen as an iterative process, completed in parallel with the development of proposals. They should not be carried out retrospectively to justify recommendations already formulated.

The completed EqSEIA must accompany the proposal through the approval process. If an EqSEIA is not available, papers relating to the proposal will not be allowed to progress through the approval process.

**It is the responsibility of the responsible officer to ensure their EqSEIA (or equivalent suite of impact assessments, where these have been carried out as separate documents) is published on the council’s website at** [Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments | Argyll and Bute Council (argyll-bute.gov.uk)](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-council/plans-and-policy/equality-and-socio-economic-impact-assessments)**.**

## **When EqSEIAs may be required:**

EqSEIAs may be required for plans, depending on whether there is a separate policy or strategy document. If the plan details actions which have previously been agreed in a separate strategy document, an EqSEIA will not be required.

Specific types of plans for which EqSEIAs must be completed include the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan and the Local Development Plan.

If in doubt, an EqSEIA should be completed.

## **When EqSEIAs are not required:**

EqSEIAs are not required for reports relating to: procedures; processes; progress, performance, highlight or similar reports.

## **Sample statements for use in the implications section of reports:**

If officers believe an EqSEIA is not required, a note to this effect must be put in the implications section of any covering report.

To help with this, we have provided some simple statements which may be cut and pasted into the implications sections against the Equalities / Fairer Scotland Duty heading. See below.

There will be instances where officers will need to expand upon these statements, either to provide additional information relevant to the report, or because equalities implications apart from those relating to EqSEIAs need to be noted; for example, an EqSEIA is not be required for highlight or progress reports, but officers may have identified equality issues arising from work carried out which need to be mentioned.

Specific care needs to be taken with regard islands communities impacts. The council is required by law to report annually on both the number of ICIAs which have been completed and the number of justification statements completed explaining why ICIAs are not required.

As legal challenges can be made when there is no evidence to suggest consideration has been given to islands impacts, the completion of both impact assessments and justification statements as appropriate is required to protect the council against both legal and reputational risk.

| **Example statements for implications section of reports** | **Comments and caveats** |
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| An EqSEIA has been completed for the programme/project to which this proposal relates. As a result, an EqSEIA is not required for the detailed proposal to which this report relates. | The applicability of this statement will depend upon the level of detail provided in the previous EqSEIA. If it related to an agreement in principle (e.g. relating to potential budget saving) with no details of how the project will be implemented then an EqSEIA will be required at this stage. |
| As part of the scheduled policy review we have concluded no changes need to be made and we have checked the EqSEIA on file is still relevant. No new EqSEIA is required. | Some policies when reviewed require no changes to be made. In those cases, if an EqSEIA has previously been completed, another is not required.However, in instances where the policy is amended, a new or updated EqSEIA will be required. |
| An EqSEIA is not required for update, progress, or highlight reports. |  |
| An EqSEIA is not required for procedures. |  |
| An EqSEIA is not required for processes. |  |
| An EqSEIA is not required as we are implementing policies prescribed by Scottish Government, which has completed its own impact assessments. | Where Scottish Government gives directions about how activities should be implemented, an EqSEIA is not required. However, if the council is given the power to implement something and it is up to the council how to implement that power, an EqSEIA will be required. |
| An EqSEIA has been completed for this proposal. However, a detailed assessment of specific island impacts is not required as this proposal relates to mainland areas only. | With regard to islands: there may be cases where an EqSEIA is required, but the ICIA components are not. For example, if a proposal relates specifically to Helensburgh and Lomond, then consultation on islands (and the ICIA obligations) will not have to be carried out.Be cautious though; if a proposal benefits mainland areas and equivalent actions are not put in place for islands, you could be in breach of the legislation. |
| An EqSEIA has been completed. However, a detailed assessment of specific islands impacts is not required as this proposal applies equally to all areas within the local authority. |  |

More detailed guidance about EqSEIAs is available on the [council’s website](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/equality-and-fairness/equality-legislation-and-reporting) and on the [intranet](http://intranet.argyll-bute.gov.uk/equality-and-socio-economic-impact-assessment-eqseia).