



HM Revenue and Customs
Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report

What will be the impact of HMRC's proposal to reshape its face to face Enquiry Centre service?

Paper copies of this report can be obtained in any HMRC Enquiry Centre.

For copies in alternative formats please contact Emily Nicholass on 01777712230 or email: enquirycentre.consultation@hmcr.gsi.gov.uk

CONTENTS

Section 1: Executive Summary	2
Section 2: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)	4
Section 3: Statutory Obligations of HMRC	5
Section 4: Reshaping HMRC Face to Face Enquiry Centres	6
Section 5: How the EQIA was carried out and Evidence Considered ..	7
Section 6: Equality Impacts	9

Appendix A: HM Revenue & Customs Glossary

Appendix B: External Organisations and Stakeholders Contacted

Appendix C: Mitigating Action

Appendix D: Summary of comments received and responses

Appendix E: Number and breakdown of responses

Appendix F: Action Plan

Section 1: Executive Summary

1.1 What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

EQIAs are one of the ways in which HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) ensures that it meets its statutory obligation to provide equality of opportunity. It is a process which enables us to consult on particular issues to assess their impact on our customers and on our staff.

1.2 The Scope of the consultation

Following a reduction in demand from customers for face to face advice on tax and tax credit matters in recent years we are in the process of developing and implementing new opening patterns across the HMRC Enquiry Centre network. We are also planning to redeploy the staff working in the Enquiry Centres on other customer service work on days when their normal Enquiry Centre is not open.

As part of this review we made our own assessment of the likely impact of the changes on a range of groups within our workforce and our customers, in terms of equality and diversity. We opened up our assessment to [public consultation](#) along with the actions we are undertaking to offset potential adverse impacts arising from it.

We have considered responses from staff, Trade Unions, internal representative groups, external representative groups and the general public together with data gathered during the implementation of the changed opening patterns on the first 58 Enquiry Centres selected for review.

1.3 Impacts Identified

In advance of publishing the consultation paper we had not identified any negative impacts or minimal impacts on staff in respect of racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, political opinion (Northern Ireland only) or language. None of the comments received during the consultation period indicated any major issues, but several suggestions for improvement were made and these are reflected in the remainder of this report.

For customers, we had not identified any negative impacts or minimal impacts in respect of marital status, sexual orientation, or political opinion (Northern Ireland only). The comments received during the consultation did not bring any issues to our attention in respect of these groups.

A summary of the responses received is at Appendix D in this document.

1.4 Action Plan

Prior to the consultation we identified a number of possible negative impacts from the changes and put into place actions to mitigate these impacts. Appendix C gives details.

Additional and improved mitigating action has now been identified as a result of the responses to the consultation. These form the action plan set out at Appendix F. The main areas we will be taking action on are in respect of:

- Communicating the changes
- Engaging with representative groups
- Reviewing our 1-to-1 discussion process between staff and managers
- Looking at some of our interactions with customers
- Collecting data and monitoring the impact of the changes on customers with reference to the different equality groups.

Section 2: HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC)

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) was formed on the 18 April 2005, following the merger of Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise Departments. Work is still continuing on our office restructuring programme.

We are here to ensure the correct tax is paid at the right time, whether this relates to payment of taxes received by the department or entitlement to benefits paid.

We collect and administer:

Direct taxes - paid by you or your business on money you earn or capital you gain.

- Capital Gains Tax.
- Corporation Tax.
- Income Tax.
- Inheritance Tax.
- National Insurance Contributions.

Indirect taxes - paid by you or your business on money spent on goods or services.

- Excise duties.
- Insurance Premium Tax.
- Petroleum Revenue Tax.
- Stamp Duty.
- Stamp Duty Land Tax.
- Stamp Duty Reserve Tax.
- VAT.

We **pay** and administer:

- Child Benefit
- Child Trust Fund
- Tax Credits.

We **protect** you by enforcing and administering:

- Border and frontier protection
- Environmental taxes
- National Minimum Wage enforcement
- Recovery of student loans.

Section 3: Statutory Obligations

Under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 all public bodies in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation.
- Between men and women generally.
- Between persons with a disability and persons without.
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

And to:

- Promote good relations between those of different religious belief and political opinion
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation in public life by disabled people

In addition in Great Britain under separate Race, Disability and Gender duties public authorities need to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between people of different racial groups, those that are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act and men and women generally.
- Eliminate discrimination that is between different racial groups, that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act and men and women generally (including transgender people).
- Promote good relations for people of different racial groups.
- Eliminate harassment which is related to disability or gender (including transgender people).

HMRC's approach to Equality Impact Assessments meets the statutory requirements set out above.

Section 4: Reshaping HMRC Face to Face Enquiry Centres

We started a review of our Enquiry Centre opening patterns because of a very significant reduction in demand from customers for face to face advice on tax and tax credits matters in recent years. Caller patterns over the period from 2006 to the current year have fallen by almost 40%. This reduction in demand has happened because our customers are increasingly turning to our online and telephony services as their preferred contact channels.

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) wants customers to use the contact channel that meets their needs at the lowest cost. Face to Face (the most expensive contact channel) should therefore be focused on those customers who need, rather than prefer, a face to face service.

We have looked at the numbers of customers visiting each Enquiry Centre location and the days and times customers access our services. Involving local staff and managers we have developed new opening patterns of Enquiry Centres that reflect local need.

On days when their normal Enquiry Centre is not open we will re-deploy staff on other customer service work. This may be by delivering face to face service advice from another of the Enquiry Centres in a geographical area, doing other customer service work such as customer correspondence, or trialling new ways of delivering face to face advice to customers who need this form of support.

Section 5: How the EQIA was carried out and Evidence Considered

On 11 September 2009 an announcement was made to HMRC staff to start planning for the change in Enquiry Centre opening patterns and consultation was begun with staff, Trade Union Side, Members of Parliament, Scottish Members of Parliament, Welsh Assembly members, Northern Ireland Assembly Members, Local Authorities and other organisations.

On 12 March 2010 an Equality Impact Assessment was published on HMRC's internal and external websites inviting staff and public comment on any equality impacts arising from the change in opening patterns.

The consultation took place over a 17 week period starting on 12 March 2010 and ending on 12 July 2010. The original consultation period of 12 weeks was extended to take into account the General Election period.

HMRC would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to send in their views and assure them that all contributions have been carefully considered.

In carrying out this EQIA, HMRC has taken into account a wide range of data and research findings including the following:

- Representative data from HMRC internal HR systems. Internally, we collect, monitor and evaluate equality data relating to employees in four specific areas: gender, race/ethnic origin, disability and sexual orientation. For Northern Ireland only we collect data on community background.
- External data used included;
 - Office for National Statistics Key Population and Vital Statistics – Gender
 - Office for National Statistics Census 2001 Data
 - Office for National Statistics Social Trends 40 – December 2009
 - Office for National Statistics, General Register Office for Scotland Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
- Responses received to staff consultation.
- Responses received from Internal Diversity Network Groups.
- Responses received to external stakeholder consultation.

- Responses received to the Equality Impact Assessment consultation paper.
- Evidence gathered from the post implementation review of new opening patterns in the first 58 locations.

Section 6: Equality Impacts

Prior to the public consultation we had identified the following equality impacts;

For customers, minimal impact on persons of different marital status, different sexual orientation and those with different political opinion (Northern Ireland (NI) customers only)

For staff, minimal impact on persons of different racial groups, those of different age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, political opinion (NI only) or language.

We anticipated possible adverse impacts on customers of different racial groups (linked to language), those with a disability, those of different gender (linked to dependants), those of different age, those with dependants, those of different religion or belief and those people who use a different language.

For staff we anticipated possible adverse impacts on disabled people, people of different gender and those with dependants.

This is a summary of the possible impacts identified. The mitigating action already put in place is detailed at appendix C. A Summary of comments received and our responses are at appendix D. Where additional mitigation is required or further consideration of an issue is necessary this is detailed in our Action Plan at appendix F.

6.1 People of Different Racial Groups

Although we do not anticipate that any rearrangement of working patterns will impact disproportionately on staff from a black minority ethnic background we have set up a 1-to-1 discussion process where we will speak to all affected staff to identify how the changes impact upon them.

Our statistics on customer use of our Enquiry centres are not broken down by ethnicity. We identified that any impact on persons of different racial group would be linked to language and have addressed possible issues arising in the language group.

The responses to our consultation identified no additional impacts on this equality group however the link to the language group was also made by a number of those responding.

6.2 Disabled and Non-disabled People

We identified the importance of identifying the individual impacts that the changes will have on disabled staff. In order to do this 1-to-1 discussions will take place between individual staff and their manager to identify appropriate mitigating actions including that all reasonable adjustments are considered and acted upon as appropriate.

Our information on customers using our Enquiry Centres is not broken down by disability however we identified the following impacts that the changes may have on disabled customers:

- If using public transport there needs to be adequate services on the proposed opening days of the Enquiry Centre
- There may be particular impacts for customers who are in hardship and require assistance with the disabled element of Working Tax or Child Tax Credit
- Communications notifying changes to opening patterns must be easily accessible by disabled customers

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on this equality group.

- Disabled and older people may not have the economic power to purchase computers and internet services and will continue to need face to face services.
- Disabled customers may prefer to visit on less busy days and the concentration of Enquiry Centre opening hours may make this difficult for them.
- Members of the deaf community may have problems accessing services online (and on the telephone)
- It is important to take account of people with multiple communication disabilities.
- The needs of people with mental health problems need to be addressed and may require alternative ways of engagement.
- Dyslexic customers could find it difficult to conduct their HMRC affairs over the telephone or internet and the reduction of opening hours or days could disadvantage them.
- Effective training needs to be provided to staff in order to raise awareness of the needs of a disabled person.
- Disabled staff may be unable to travel to work across locations.

6.3 Gender

We expect that any impacts arising will not be because of the gender of an individual but because they are part of one of the other diversity groups.

Our information on customers using our Enquiry Centres is not broken down by gender however we identified the following impacts that the changes may have on our customers:

- Women often undertake more low paid, part-time jobs, have multiple sources of income and are in temporary employment all of which can lead to interaction with HMRC in some form.
- A high percentage of Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit claimants are women.

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on this equality group.

- There may be a disproportionate need for female customers to contact HMRC face to face as women often earn less than men and often work part-time, so they are less likely to be able to afford access by telephone or have access to internet channels.

6.4 Transgender

We recognised that transgender employees may experience changes in support networks / facilities as a result of these changes. It is vital that impacts of the changes are identified on an individual basis. In order to do this 1-to-1 discussions have taken place between individual staff and their manager to identify appropriate mitigating actions.

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on this equality group:

- It will be important for management to advertise complete confidentiality in the 1-to-1 discussions to persuade some transgender people to come forward.
- Managers should complete the Transgender Diversity Awareness training to assist them in assessing individual needs fairly.
- Transgender customers could experience harassment in public places and the concentration of Enquiry Centre opening hours could increase the risk of adverse reactions to them.
- Face to face may not be the channel of choice for many transgender people for fear of insensitive treatment.

- Transgender customers in Enquiry Centres may benefit from staff being familiar with the Transgender Diversity Awareness training package.

6.5 Age

We expect the impact of the changes on employees of different ages to be minimal.

Our information on customers using our Enquiry Centres is not broken down by age. We know that HMRC customers are increasingly turning to online and telephony services as their preferred contact channels, however we recognise that some customers may experience difficulties in using these newer forms of contact. In particular issues may arise with some of our older customers.

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on this equality group.

- Older people are less likely to have access to computers and the internet.
- Often they (pensioners) have more than one source of income which can make their tax affairs more complex and they may still need a face to face service to get a clear explanation, which will be harder for them to access with reduced opening days or hours.
- Elderly customers are often unwilling or unable to communicate by phone or use the internet.
- There may be a potential impact on younger workers who are more likely to be at the lower end of the pay scales and more likely therefore to be dependant on public transport.
- There may be an impact on older workers who may be working reduced hours in the period before retirement.

6.6 Different Marital Status (including Civil Partnerships)

We do not anticipate that any rearrangement of working patterns will impact disproportionately on staff of different marital status.

We do not anticipate that the changes will have a disproportionate affect on our customers of different marital status.

No issues specific to people of different marital status were raised during this consultation.

6.7 Dependants

We recognise the link between gender issues and dependants as statistically women are much more likely than men to have dependants or caring responsibilities.

We identified that it is important that we identify the individual impacts that the changes will have on our staff with dependants. In order to do this 1-to-1 discussions will take place between individual staff and their manager to identify individual impacts on staff with dependants that may result from our changes. However we have identified the following impacts that may arise on staff with dependants as a result of the changes:

- Increased travelling times to the offices within a cluster or relocation may cause employees to incur additional care costs or require changes to working patterns to balance work/life commitments.
- In changing work activity, employees with dependants may be required to change working patterns or hours to suit business need.

For customers we have identified that there may be an impact on customers who are in hardship and require assistance with Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, the disabled element of Working Tax Credit or Child Benefit.

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on people with dependants:

- Many HMRC staff work part-time to combine work with caring responsibilities which may restrict their ability to work across sites.
- It will be important to consider the full range of flexible working arrangements to assist those who work part-time or those who have caring responsibilities working from a new location.
- The reduction in opening times of Enquiry Centres is likely to make it more difficult for the individual to attend and may cause delays in the process of claiming Tax Credits.

6.8 Different Sexual Orientation

We expect the impact of the changes on staff of different sexual orientation to be minimal however we have identified that employees of different sexual orientation may experience a change in support networks if changing team or relocating.

We do not have any information on the sexual orientation of customers. However we cannot foresee potential disproportionate impacts that will adversely affect customers due to their different sexual orientation.

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on staff in this diversity group:

- HMRC staff who are lesbian, gay or bisexual need an assurance of complete confidentiality during the 1-to1 process with their managers as they may not be 'out' in the workplace.

6.9 Different Religion or Belief

We expect the impact of the changes on staff of different religion or belief to be minimal however we have identified that employees of different religion or belief may experience a change in support networks and facilities if changing team or relocating.

HMRC holds no information on the religion or belief of customers. However we expect the impact of these changes on customers of different religion or belief to be minimal.

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on people of different religion or belief:

- Consideration needs to be given to the fact that expecting staff to work on specific days in specific locations may impact on those who wish to celebrate religious holidays and festivals, or whose religious observance does not take place at the weekend.
- Restrictions on specific opening days may disproportionately affect followers of particular religions whose religious observance may be the only day of opening.

6.10 Political Opinion (for Northern Ireland only)

We do not anticipate that the changes will impact disproportionately on staff of different political opinion.

We do not anticipate that the changes will have a disproportionate affect on our customers of different political opinion.

HMRC cannot identify any opportunity within this change to promote equality of opportunity for people of different political opinion.

No issues specific to people of different political opinion were raised during this consultation.

6.11 Different Languages

We do not anticipate that the change will impact disproportionately on staff who use different languages.

For customers who use a different language we have identified that they may not be able to understand the information provided on how to access our services.

The responses to our consultation identified the following which may be additional impacts on people who use different languages:

- Staff should be aware of HMRC's language policy so that help can be given via an interpreter if necessary.
- Members of the deaf community may have problems accessing services online due to the English based nature of the internet as British Sign Language is their first language and the services of interpreters are the only effective way to deal with complex tax matters.

6.12 Additional Comments

HMRC does not collect data on the equality groups of customers currently using our Enquiry Centres. We have identified a need to collect postcode data and diversity data from our customers. This will help us better to understand how well we are matching our services to customer need and what gaps we need to fill. It will also assist us in identifying any disproportionate impacts our changes may have on customers in the equality groups.

The responses to our consultation welcomed the intention to introduce a process to collect customer diversity data.

Appendix A: HMRC Glossary

Term	Definition
1 to 1	A process of talking individually to all staff affected by the change to identify how the change impacts on them.
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)	The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 requires an employer to make “reasonable adjustments” for people covered by the DDA. HMRC has a responsibility to make adjustments in the workplace of any jobholder. This applies to the physical features of premises occupied by the employer and to any provisions, criteria or practices made by or on behalf of the employer which cause a substantial disadvantage to a disabled person compared with a non-disabled person.
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment – EQIA is the process used to assess the potential adverse impacts on equality groups and identify ways to promote equality, fulfilling our commitments under the Public Duties and Northern Ireland Equality legislation.
Equality Groups	<p>The equality groups are the groups of people that are protected by equality legislation. In Great Britain they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race • Disability • Gender <p>As HMRC has a presence in Northern Ireland (NI) we also consider the equality groups covered by NI legislation in all of our EQIA work. The additional NI groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Marital status • Sexual orientation • Religion or belief • Political opinion (consider in relation to Northern Ireland only) • People with or without dependants.

Appendix A: HMRC Glossary Continued

Guidance	The term guidance can refer to our online EQIA guidance, other Human Resource (HR) guidance (such as DDA etc), supporting documents, helpsheets etc.
HR Business Partner Team	These teams are part of the individual Business Areas and provide a link between the Business and HR.
Northern Ireland Legislation	As HMRC has a presence in Northern Ireland we consider the equality groups covered by NI legislation.
Specialist Standards	Specialist Standards cover the provisions we make for customers with particular needs. Customers may need assistance because they have a hearing or sight impairment, literacy problems, a disability, or that English is not their first language. All Enquiry Centres have equipment to assist customers with particular needs.
Staff Diversity Networks	HMRC has a number of staff diversity networks that are frequently used for consultation on EQIA. Our staff networks provide a valuable insight into how HMRC's decisions affect its staff and quite often how these impacts can be mitigated.
Tax Credits	Tax credits are payments from the government. It can be claimed by people responsible for at least one child or young person who normally lives with them. People who work, but are on a low income, may qualify for Working Tax Credit.
Trade Unions	Within HMRC we have two Trade Unions. The Association of Revenue and Customs (ARC) that represent senior Civil Servants and Public and Commercial Services (PCS) which represents the majority of employees.

Appendix B: Stakeholder Contacts

Citizens Advice
CAB (NI)
Gingerbread
Child Poverty Action Group
CEMVO – Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations
Low Incomes Tax Reform Group
RNID – Royal National Institute for the Deaf
DWP
Action for Blind People
Help the Aged/Age Concern
Tax Advice for Older People
RNIB – Royal National Institute for the Blind
Tax Aid
DIAL Southend – disability group
Northern network of Gypsies and travellers
Mencap
Scottish Accessible Information Forum
Legal Services
National Union of Students
Stonewall
Credit Action
Advice Services Alliance (NI)
Advice Northern Ireland
Law Centre (NI)

Members of the Scottish Parliament for:

Paisley	Dumbarton
Hamilton	East Kilbride
Rothesay	Dunoon
Stirling	Falkirk
Coatbridge	Greenock
Motherwell	

Northern Ireland Assembly:

Newry – South Down MLAs
Banbridge – Upper Bann MLAs
Lisburn – Lagan Valley MLAs

Welsh Assembly

The minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery

Members of Parliament for the constituencies of:

Altrincham and Sale West	Argyll and Bute
Basingstoke	Berwick upon Tweed
Bishop Auckland	Bognor Regis and Littlehampton
Bridgwater	Bury St. Edmunds
Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire	Ceredigion

Appendix B: Stakeholder Contacts continued

Members of Parliament for the constituencies of:

City of Chester	Coatbridge, Chryston and Belshill
Dagenham	North Devon
West Dorset	West Dunbartonshire
East Kilbride, Strathaven & Lesmahagow	Falkirk
Falmouth and Cambourne	Gainsborough
Great Grimsby	Hertford and Stortford
Hitchin and Harpenden	Horsham
Keighley	Kingston and Surbiton
Lagan Valley	Lanark and Hamilton East
Lewes	Louth and Horncastle
Ludlow	Motherwell and Wishaw
Newark	Newbury
Newry & Armagh	Paisley and Renfrewshire South
Preseli Pembrokeshire	Reigate
Romford	Scarborough and Whitby
Skipton and Ripon	Somerton and Frome
Spelthorne	Staffordshire Moorlands
Stirling	South Suffolk
Mid Sussex	Tonbridge and Malling
Torridge and West Devon	Tunbridge Wells
Upper Bann	Wansbeck
Warwick and Leamington	Wells
Westmorland and Lonsdale	North Wiltshire
Worthing West	East Yorkshire

Local Authorities

Argyll & Bute Council	Babergh District Council
Banbridge District Council	Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
Bassetlaw District Council	West Berkshire Council
Bradford Metropolitan District Council	Carmarthenshire County Council
Ceredigion County Council	Chester City Council
Cornwall Council	Craven District Council
North Devon Council	West Dumbartonshire Council
Dorset County Council	Durham County Council
East Riding of Yorkshire Council	Falkirk Council
Inverclyde Council	Hertfordshire County Council
North Hertfordshire District Council	Horsham District Council
Kingston Borough Council	South Lakeland District Council
North Lanarkshire Council	South Lanarkshire Council
Lewes District Council	East Lindsey District Council
Lisburn City Council	West Lindsey District Council
London Borough of Barking & Dagenham	London Borough of Havering Council
Mendip District Council	Newry & Mourne District Council
Northumberland County Council	Pembrokeshire County Council
Reigate & Banstead Borough Council	Renfrewshire Council
Scarborough Borough Council	Sedgemoor District Council
South Shropshire District Council	St Edmondsbury Borough Council
Spelthorne Borough Council	Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

Appendix B: Stakeholder Contacts continued

Local Authorities

Stirling Council
West Sussex County Council
Torridge District Council
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Wells City Council
Worthing Borough Council

Mid Sussex District Council
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Warwick District Council
Wiltshire Council

Northern Ireland Stakeholder Contacts

Age Concern Northern Ireland
ACOVO
Barnados
British Deaf Association
Carafriend
Carers Northern Ireland
Children in Northern Ireland
Childrens Law Centre
Chinese Welfare Association
Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSo)
Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
Community Development and Health Network (NI)
Community Relations Council (CRC)
Derry Well Woman
Disability Action
Down's Syndrome Association
East Belfast Community Development Agency
Employers Forum on Disability
Equality Coalition
Equality Forum NI
Falls Community Council
Fermanagh Women's Network
FPA
Gay and Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland
Gingerbread Northern Ireland
Help the Aged, Northern Ireland
Indian Community Centre
Information Commissioner
Lesbian Line
Magherafelt Women's Group
MENCAP
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
Newry & Mourne Senior Citizens' Consortium
Newry & Mourne Women Ltd
Newtownabbey Senior Citizens Forum
NIGRA (Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association)
Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre
Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health
NIC-ICTU
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities

Appendix B: Stakeholder Contacts continued

Northern Ireland Stakeholder Contacts

Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation
Northern Ireland Womens European Platform NIWEP
NSPCC
North West Community Network
North West Forum of People with Disabilities
NUS USI
Office of First Minister and Deputy Minister
Omagh Women's Area Network
Parents and Professionals and Autism
Press for Change
Queer Space
Royal National Institute for the Blind NI
Royal National Institute for Deaf People NI
Rural Community Network
Save the Children
Sense NI
The Cedar Foundation
The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
The Rainbow Project
The Woman's Centre
Traveller Movement Northern Ireland
Unison
West Belfast Economic Forum
Women's Forum Northern Ireland
Women's Information Group
Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA)
Women's Support Network
Youth Council
Northern Ireland Equality Commission

We also asked our managers and staff to identify local organisations that needed to know about our new opening patterns and our longer term plans in our first 58 locations and make contact accordingly.

They were instructed that local stakeholders **must** include those in nearby towns (where they are present):

- The local Citizens Advice Bureau
- Large employers in the area
- The local Jobcentre Plus/ Social Security Office (Northern Ireland)
- Local Post Offices

Appendix B: Stakeholder Contacts continued

Other stakeholders they needed to **consider**:

- Independent advice sector
- Organisations that represent specific customer segments e.g. ethnic minorities, migrant workers, the elderly or the disabled
- Local Community Association, Help the Aged, Mencap or a Polish Support Group

1208 local stakeholders were contacted and their attention was drawn to the Equality Impact Assessment consultation underway.

Stakeholder Contacts – post implementation

Members of Parliament for the constituencies of:

Amber Valley	Arfon
Ashford	Ashton-under-Lyne
Aylesbury	Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock
Banbury	Banff and Buchan
Barrow and Furness	Bath
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk	Birkenhead
Blackpool North and Cleveleys	Boston and Skegness
Brecon and Radnorshire	Bridgend
Bromley and Chislehurst	Burnley
Burton	Bury North
Cambridge	Cannock Chase
Canterbury	Carlisle
Central Ayrshire	Chelmsford
Cheltenham	Chesterfield
Chichester	Chorley
Clacton	Clwyd West
Colchester	Darlington
Dewsbury	Dumfries and Galloway
Dundee West	Dunfermline and West Fife
Exeter	Fylde
Glenrothes	Grantham and Stamford
Great Yarmouth	Halifax
Harlow	Harrogate and Knaresborough
Hemel Hempstead	Hereford and South Herefordshire
Hexham	Huddersfield
Huntingdon	Hyndburn
Isle of Wight	Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath
Lancaster and Fleetwood	Macclesfield
Mansfield	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
Mid Norfolk	Mid Worcestershire
Montgomeryshire	Newark
Newport East	Newton Abbot
Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford	North Antrim
North Cornwall	North Shropshire
North Thanet	North West Hampshire
Nuneaton	Oldham West and Royton
Oxford East	Pendle

Stakeholder Contacts – post implementation

Members of Parliament for the constituencies of:

Penrith and The Border
Plymouth, Moor View
Reading East
Rochdale
Rutland and Melton
Shrewsbury and Atcham
South Antrim
South West Surrey
St Austell and Newquay
Stafford
Stockton South
Stroud
Thurrock
Torfaen
Vale of Clwyd
Walsall South
Weaver Vale
Welwyn Hatfield
Witham
Worcester

Perth and North Perthshire
Pontypridd
Redditch
Rugby
Scunthorpe
Skipton and Ripon
South Holland and The Deepings
St Albans
St Ives
Stockport
Stratford-on-Avon
Taunton Deane
Torbay
Truro and Falmouth
Wakefield
Watford
Wellingborough
Weston-Super-Mare
Woking
Yeovil

Local Authorities

Aberdeenshire Council
Antrim Borough Council
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Barrow Borough Council
Blackpool Council
Boston Borough Council
Breckland District Council
Bromley Council
Bury Council
Cambridge City Council
Canterbury Council
Chelmsford Borough Council
Cherwell District Council
Cheshire West & Chester Council
Chichester District Council
Colchester Borough Council
Dacorum Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Dundee City Council
East Staffordshire Borough Council
Exeter City Council
Fylde Borough Council
Gwynedd Council
Harrogate Borough Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
Isle of White Council
Lancaster City Council

Amber Valley Borough Council
Ashford Borough Council
Ballymena Borough Council
Bath & North East Somerset Council
Borough Council of Wellingborough
Braintree District Council
Bridgend Borough Council
Burnley Borough Council
Calderdale Council
Cannock Chase Council
Carlisle City Council
Cheltenham Borough Council
Cheshire East Council
Chesterfield Borough Council
Chorley Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Darlington Borough Council
Dumfries & Galloway Council
East Herts Council
Eden District Council
Fife Council
Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Harlow Council
Hertfordshire Council
Hyndburn Borough Council
Kirklees Council
Mansfield District Council

Stakeholder Contacts – post implementation

Local Authorities

Melton Borough Council	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Newark & Sherwood District Council	Newport Council
North Ayrshire Council	North East Lincolnshire Council
North Lincolnshire Council	North Somerset Council
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council	Oldham Council
Oxford City Council	Pendle Borough Council
Perth & Kinross Council	Plymouth City Council
Reading Borough Council	Redditch Borough Council
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Rugby Borough Council	Scottish Borders Council
South Ayrshire Council	South Holland District Council
South Kesteven District Council	South Somerset District Council
St Albans City & District Council	Stafford Borough Council
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Stratford-on-Avon Borough Council	Stroud District Council
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	Taunton Deane Borough Council
Teignbridge District Council	Tendring District Council
Test Valley Borough Council	Thanet District Council
Thurrock Borough Council	Torbay Council
Torfaen County Borough Council	Tynedale Council
Wakefield Council	Walsall Council
Watford Borough Council	Waverley Borough Council
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council	Wirral Council
Woking Borough Council	Worcester City Council
Wychavon District Council	

Appendix C: Mitigating Action

Equality Group	Mitigating Action	Status
Communication		
Race Language	Consideration given to ethnic make up of population to determine the most suitable method to communicate to customers	Ongoing
Disability Dependants Religion/belief	Posters Information on Enquiry Centre opening patterns, other services and products accessible to all HMRC customers and information on how to access services outside of the opening hours of a location ; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using an appropriate font and colour combination • provided to local intermediary organisations • in Wales provide information in both Welsh and English. available to display in other languages 	In Place
Race Disability Gender Transgender Dependants Religion/belief	Information on Enquiry Centre opening patterns, alternative means of contact, other services offered and products accessible to all HMRC customers provided on the internet	In Place
Race Language	Interpreter assistance available for customers who use different languages	In place
Race Language	Leaflets and forms available in a number of languages	In Place

Equality Group	Mitigating Action	Status
Processes and Services		
Disability	Home visits are available for customers unable to visit an Enquiry Centre for reasons of disability	In Place
Disability Gender Dependants Religion/belief	Process to handle customers that need help with Tax Credit emergency payments or Child Benefit payments	In Place
Disability Age	Continuity of provision of face to face service for customers who find it difficult to use other forms of contact with HMRC	Ongoing
Opening Pattern Selection		
Race Disability Gender Dependants Religion/belief	Suitable locations and opening patterns selected according to the customer usage patterns and local knowledge with a spread of opening patterns within a geographical area to allow for widest spread of days available to customers Local knowledge of NI staff used to ensure opening patterns do not adversely affect any particular community background disproportionately	Ongoing
Disability Dependants Religion/belief Transgender	Appointments for interviews made within published opening times at the convenience of the customer	Ongoing

Equality Group	Mitigating Action	Status
Employee Mitigation		
Race Disability Gender Transgender Age Dependants Sexual Orientation Religion/belief	1-to-1 process set up for staff to speak with managers to identify individual impacts and any appropriate mitigation.	Ongoing
Gender Dependants	Managers will consider reasonable options for staff with dependants to change working patterns, should this be required as a result of increased travelling.	Ongoing
Gender Dependants	HMRC provides childcare vouchers	In Place
Gender Dependants	Staff redeployed as a result of change will not be expected to relocate beyond Reasonable Daily Travel	In Place
Gender Dependants	Staff working flexibly over a number of locations will work under detached duty rules which enable them to claim reimbursement of additional travel costs and travel time.	In Place

Equality Group	Mitigating Action	Status
Monitoring		
All groups	We will monitor the change and ensure that there is not a disproportionate affect on people from any of the equality groups	See Action Plan at Appendix F

Appendix D: Summary of Comments and Responses

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
1.	Race Language	It would be helpful to distribute posters and notices through local community organisations operating in the relevant locations	Staff contact local community organisations detailing the changes and provide them with posters before a location changes opening patterns
2.	Race Language	Poster content should be tailored according to where it is to be displayed.	Posters are being provided in languages other than English according to the local need identified.
3.	Race Language	Customers with little or no understanding of English would have difficulty reading signs or posters displaying Enquiry Centre opening times.	Posters are being provided in languages other than English according to the local need identified.
4.	Race Language	Staff should be aware of HMRC's language policy so that help can be given via an interpreter if necessary.	Guidance specific to staff who deal with customers face to face includes instructions on how to provide help to customers for whom English is not their first language. The knowledge and understanding of this forms part of the audit check our managers do each year on our Specialist Standards.

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
5.	Disability Age	Disabled and older people and other low income families may not have the economic power to purchase computers and internet services and will continue to need Face to Face services.	HMRC recognises a need for support for some customers who will always need our help We have established an external stakeholder working group, including third sector representation, to help us do this.
6.	Disability	It may be harder for disabled customers to access our services and the concentration of opening hours may make it difficult for them.	Appointments are made during the opening hours of an Enquiry Centre at the convenience of the customer. There will be times of the day that are quieter than others. Home visits are available for disabled customers who cannot visit the Enquiry Centre
7.	Disability	If disabled customers are using public transport there needs to be an accessible service on the proposed opening days of Enquiry Centres and accessible routes to premises and location from accessible bus stops.	When selecting the opening patterns of an EC local managers and staff are asked to consider local issues and demand.
8.	Disability	Staff needing specialist equipment such as keyboards, chairs etc will need to have these facilities at each location that they are required to work.	Specialist equipment is identified during our 1-to-1 process and obtained via our normal health & safety processes.

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
9.	Disability	Appropriate accessible communications need to be put in place for people with disabilities.	<p>Guidance specific to staff who deal with customers face to face includes instructions on how to provide help to customers with particular needs, including customers who need information in alternative formats.</p> <p>The knowledge and understanding of this forms part of the audit check our managers do each year on our Specialist Standards.</p> <p>As part of our engagement with local community organisations we will insure our local staff communicate with any local organisations that represent people with disabilities and offer information on our opening hours and services in an appropriate format</p>
10.	Disability	We received comments from a number of contributors pointing out that customers with one or more communication difficulties, such as dyslexia, speech, hearing or sight impairments, and customers with mental health problems, may have problems accessing our services on the telephone or online.	<p>HMRC recognises a need for support for some customers who will always need our help</p> <p>We have established an external stakeholder working group, including third sector representation, to help us to look at this.</p>

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
11.	Disability	Effective training needs to be provided to staff in order to raise awareness of the needs of a disabled person.	<p>Guidance specific to staff who deal with customers face to face includes instructions on how to provide help to customers with disabilities.</p> <p>The knowledge and understanding of this forms part of the audit check our managers do each year on our Specialist Standards Diversity Awareness Training is now mandatory for all HMRC staff.</p>
12.	Disabled	Disabled staff may be unable to travel to work across sites.	<p>The needs of individual members of staff will be discussed with their manager in our 1-to-1 process and the impact of the changes on their personal circumstances will be identified and discussed. All reasonable adjustments identified will be put in place.</p> <p>We will fully meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in our arrangements with staff.</p>
13.	Transgender	Transgender customers could experience harassment in public places and the concentration of Enquiry Centre opening hours could increase the risk of adverse reactions to them.	<p>We will engage with our internal Transgender Network group to discuss the most appropriate way of engaging with this community and monitoring any adverse impacts our changes may have.</p>

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
14.	Transgender	It is difficult to predict what impact a relocation might have on transgender staff and it will be important for management to advertise complete confidentiality in the 1-to-1 discussions to persuade some transgender people to come forward. Managers should complete the Transgender Diversity Awareness Training to assist them in assessing individual needs fairly.	<p>We recognise the need for confidentiality in the 1-to-1 discussion process and that a member of staff may not be comfortable discussing their needs with their direct line manager. We will provide an alternative contact for 1-to-1 discussions for staff outside of their direct line management.</p> <p>Diversity Awareness Training is now mandatory for all HMRC staff.</p>
15.	Transgender	Face to face may not be the channel of choice for many transgender people for fear of insensitive treatment. Any publicity for reduced opening times should advertise appointment times, private interview rooms, confidentiality and the like for the benefit of all customers.	<p>We will engage with our internal Transgender Network group to discuss the most appropriate way of engaging with this community and monitoring any adverse impacts our changes may have.</p> <p>We do have private interview facilities available in many of our locations. We will arrange for this facility to be prominently advertised.</p>
16.	Transgender	Transgender customers in Enquiry Centres may benefit from Enquiry Centre staff being familiar with the Transgender Diversity Awareness training package.	Diversity Awareness Training is now mandatory for all HMRC staff.

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	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
17.	Gender	There may be a disproportionate need for female customers to contact HMRC face to face as women often earn less than men and often work part time, so they are less likely to be able to afford access by telephone or have access to internet channels.	Face to face service continues to be provided for customers who need it. The hours that service is available has been compressed. Appointments are available for customers who need help within the opening hours of an Enquiry Centre at the convenience of the customer. We will be monitoring the impact of the changed opening patterns on customers in order to establish whether there are any particular issues that need to be addressed.
18.	Age	Pensioners often have more than one source of income which can make their tax affairs more complex and they may still need a face to face service to get a clear explanation, which will be harder for them to access with reduced opening times.	Face to face service continues to be provided for customers who need it. We will be monitoring the impact of the changed opening patterns on customers in order to establish whether there are any particular issues that need to be addressed.
19.	Gender Dependants	There may be a disproportionate impact on female members of staff as they are more likely to have caring responsibilities and/or alternative working patterns and may not be able to work across sites.	The needs of individual members of staff will be discussed with their manager in our 1-to-1 process and the impact of the changes on their personal circumstances will be identified and discussed. Where individual impacts are identified during our 1-to-1 discussions managers will ensure that staff are aware of the range of flexible working arrangements available in HMRC.

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
20.	Age	Elderly customers are often unwilling or unable to communicate by phone or use the internet.	Face to face service continues to be provided for customers who need it. The hours that service is available has been compressed. Appointments are available for customers who need help within the opening hours of an Enquiry Centre at the convenience of the customer.
21.	Age	There may be a potential impact on younger workers who are more likely to be at the lower end of the pay scales and more likely therefore to be dependant on public transport. This also has an impact on older workers who may be working reduced hours in the period before retirement.	Staff working flexibly over a number of locations will work under detached duty rules which enable them to claim reimbursement of additional travel costs and travel time.
22.	Age	It will be important that all staff are made aware of the full range of flexible working arrangements.	Where individual impacts are identified during our 1-to-1 discussions managers will ensure that staff are aware of the range of flexible working arrangements available in HMRC.
23.	Dependants	Many HMRC staff work part time to combine work with caring responsibilities which may restrict their ability to work across sites.	Where individual impacts are identified during our 1-to-1 discussions managers will ensure that staff are aware of the range of flexible working arrangements available in HMRC.

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
24.	Dependants	It will be important to consider the full range of flexible working arrangements to assist those who work part time or those who have caring responsibilities working from a new location.	Where individual impacts are identified during our 1-to-1 discussions managers will ensure that staff are aware of the range of flexible working arrangements available in HMRC.
25.	Dependants	The reduction in opening times of Enquiry Centres is likely to make it more difficult for the individual to attend and it may cause delays in the process of claiming tax credits	The attendance at an Enquiry Centre is not necessary for the processing of a tax credit claim. However we recognise there are times when immediate assistance is required for tax credit customers who are in hardship. We have put in place a process for customers that need help with Tax Credit emergency payments which negates the need for them to visit an Enquiry Centre to apply for consideration of an emergency payment.
26.	Sexual Orientation	Respondents raised concerns that HMRC staff who are Lesbian, gay or bisexual need an assurance of complete confidentiality during the one-to-one process with their managers as they may not be 'out' in the workplace.	We recognise the need for confidentiality in 1-to-1 discussion process and that a member of staff may not be comfortable discussing their needs with their direct line manager. We will provide an alternative contact for 1-to-1 discussions for staff outside of their direct line management. Diversity Awareness Training is now mandatory for all HMRC staff.

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
27.	Religion /belief	Consideration needs to be given to the fact that expecting staff to work on specific days may impact on those who wish to celebrate religious holidays and festivals, or whose religious observance does not take place at the weekend.	Staff will not be expected to work on days other than those they currently work as part of this change.
28.	Religion /belief	Restrictions on specific opening days may disproportionately affect followers of particular religions whose religious observance may be the only day of opening.	When selecting the opening patterns of an EC local managers and staff are asked to consider local issues and demand. HMRC diversity awareness training is mandatory and all staff should be aware of the legislation that covers discrimination including that of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief.
29.	Non Specific	For customers it may be helpful to have roadshows or events to show how services can be accessed online.	We will engage with our online services team to pass on this suggestion.

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
30.	Non Specific	Many customers in some equality groups would like the support of a third party intermediary (family member, friend or voluntary sector advisor) when dealing with HMRC.	HMRC Customer Contact Directorate already encourages the use of a third party support for customers who do not have English as a first language. HMRC is currently looking at how we can assist third sector organisations in accessing our support services on behalf of customers.
31.	Non Specific	There is some desire for advice outside of HMRC premises and working in partnership with other central and local government bodies and the voluntary sector.	HMRC is in the process of relocating some Enquiry Centre services into Local Authorities and Job Centre Plus locations with a view to providing a more joined up service for the citizen. We will continue to seek opportunities to do this.
32.	Non Specific	The introduction of a process to collect customer diversity information will provide an invaluable database.	We will introduce a process to collect data on how the customers we see across our Enquiry Centre network are broken down by equality group to help us better understand how well we are matching our service to customer need.
33.	Non Specific	Changes to opening times and the need for appointments should be widely publicised.	We will promote the new hours through established networks, other representative bodies and local service providers

	Equality Group	Comments received to Equality Consultation	Actions and Responses
34.	Non Specific	HMRC should look in more detail at the use of email for dealing with enquiries.	<p>HMRC currently has very limited use of email for customers. We understand that eContact solutions can provide a very effective way of meeting customer need and improving business processes.</p> <p>The flexibility eContact solutions offer means that customer can contact us at a time which suits them, and can mean they don't have to post correspondence to us or call us. HMRC is actively looking at a variety of eContact solutions to meet customer needs.</p>
35.	Non Specific	Carry out a review to ensure that voluntary sector is funded to meet the demand unfulfilled by HMRC.	We have referred this issue to our Individual Customer Directorate who are HMRC liaison with the voluntary sector
36.	Non Specific	Opening days should be linked to seasonal variations.	We will monitor the demand levels across all of our locations to ensure adjustments are made in opening patterns that meets customer need.

	Equality Group	Comments received to External Stakeholder Consultation	Actions and Responses
37.	Age Race Dependants	Enquiry Centres deal mainly with the elderly, tax credit claimants and migrant workers. By reducing face-to-face interaction it will disadvantage the most vulnerable people in society.	<p>We recognise the continuing need for Face to face service customers who need it. We have established an external stakeholder working group, including third sector representation, to help us to look at this.</p> <p>Appointments are available for customers who need help within the opening hours of an Enquiry Centre at the convenience of the customer.</p> <p>We will be monitoring the impact of the changed opening patterns on customers in order to establish whether there are any particular issues that need to be addressed.</p>
38.	Age Disability Language	Using the telephone places a disproportionate financial burden on low income groups and there are many vulnerable customers who are effectively marginalised as they are less likely to use the telephone or online services: this includes the elderly, hearing impaired, disabled and those people whose first language is not English.	<p>We recognise the continuing need for service for customers who need it. We have established an external stakeholder working group, including third sector representation, to help us to look at this.</p> <p>We will be monitoring the impact of the changed opening patterns on customers in order to establish whether there are any particular issues that need to be addressed.</p>

	Equality Group	Comments received to External Stakeholder Consultation	Actions and Responses
39.	General	Are you able to explain, or give further details of, the types of 'new ways of working' you intend to develop and test? How do you hope to make more use of the voluntary sector?	We have started work on developing a new delivery model for Face to Face, focussing on the needs of customers who will always need our support. We have established an external stakeholder working group, including third sector representation, to help us do this.
40.	Dependants	Please look at later opening rather than early closing and bear in mind times that lone parents might be available as if picking children up/dropping off at school would need access to HMRC at alternative times.	Our opening patterns will reflect local demand and include both late opening and early closing in some locations.
41.	Dependants	I would strongly urge that particular consideration be given to those staff who may need to be redeployed but who have caring responsibilities.	Where individual impacts are identified during our 1-to-1 discussions managers will ensure that staff are aware of the range of HMRC staff policies which cover flexible working arrangements, reasonable daily travel, detached duty and childcare vouchers amongst others.

	Equality Group	Comments received to External Stakeholder Consultation	Actions and Responses
42.	General	When you are considering more limited opening patterns take into account the fact that not all clients will have access to internet or telephones: mobile phones in particular are expensive to use: ID theft is a very real threat and having to put verifying documents in the post is of concern. Being able to hand over such items direct, have them verified and returned immediately, is preferable.	HMRC requires very few documents to be physically verified. Where verification of a document is necessary appointments will still be available for customers within the opening hours of an Enquiry Centre at the convenience of the customer. We will be monitoring the impact of the changed opening patterns on customers in order to establish whether there are any particular issues that need to be addressed
43.	Age	A large number of elderly customers would find it impossible to use the internet.	We understand that some of our customers are less comfortable with some of the newer forms of communication. We recognise there are some customers who will always need help and we are focusing our attention of the provision of help to this group of people. We have established an external stakeholder working group, including third sector representation, to help us do this.
44.	Disability General	We hope that the changes will be well advertised and that sufficient provision will always be made for those people who, for many reasons (e.g. with hearing, literacy or mental health problems) need face-to-face support.	We will promote the new hours through established networks, other representative bodies and local service providers

	Equality Group	Comments received to External Stakeholder Consultation	Actions and Responses
45.	General	We are aware that many of your customers now happily deal with you by telephone or online but many CAB clients will have difficulties with accessing your service in these ways.	HMRC is currently looking at how we can assist third sector organisations in accessing our support services on behalf of customers.
46.	General	Many customers are low-income earners dependent upon tax credits who simply cannot afford to travel to other locations.	The attendance at an Enquiry Centre is not necessary for the processing of a tax credit claim. However we recognise there are times when immediate assistance is required for tax credit customers who are in hardship. We have put in place a process for customers that need help with Tax Credit emergency payments which negates the need for them to visit an Enquiry Centre to apply for consideration of an emergency payment.

	Equality Group	Comments received to External Stakeholder Consultation	Actions and Responses
47.	Race Language	A large migrant population is highly dependant on the Enquiry Centre facility. These people do not have English as their first language, are open to exploitation and simply do not have any choice over the days or hours that they work. They need a five days a week service.	Customers who do not have English as a first language can obtain assistance through our normal helplines who will engage an interpreter if required. Our helpline can also arrange for an appointment for the customer at an Enquiry Centre if the customer needs face to face support. We will be monitoring the impact of the changed opening patterns on customers in order to establish whether there are any particular issues that need to be addressed
48.	General	The reduction of opening hours will cause problems for some people, such as the elderly, people with disabilities and people whose first language isn't English. It is likely that more people could come to services provided by local authorities or voluntary organisations, which are already under pressure.	We understand that some of our customers are less comfortable with some of the newer forms of communication. We recognise there are some customers who will always need help and we are focusing our attention of the provision of help to this group of people. We have established an external stakeholder working group, including third sector representation, to help us do this.

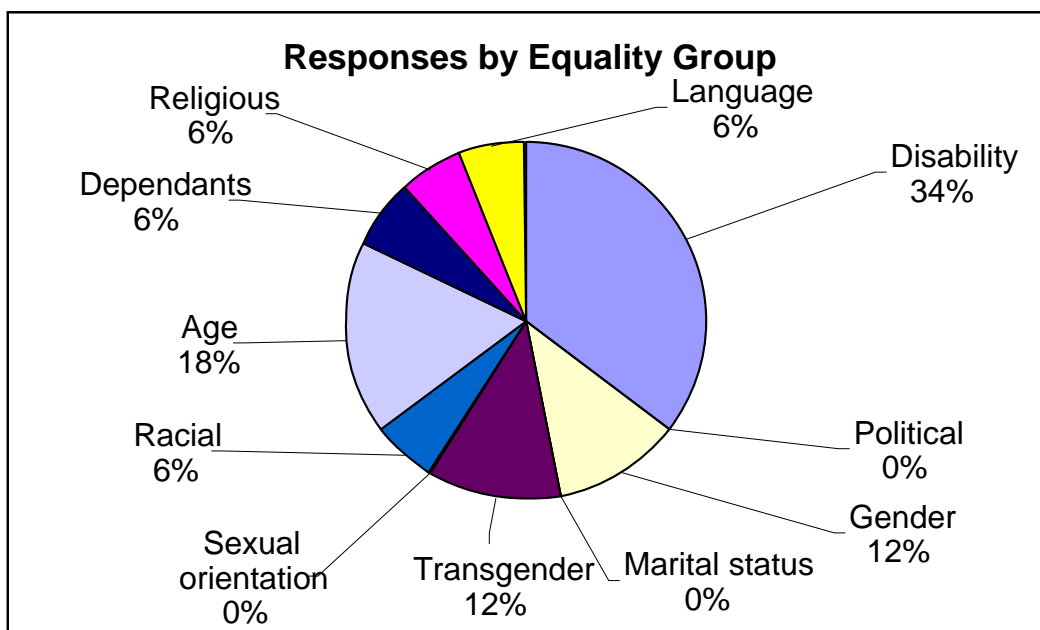
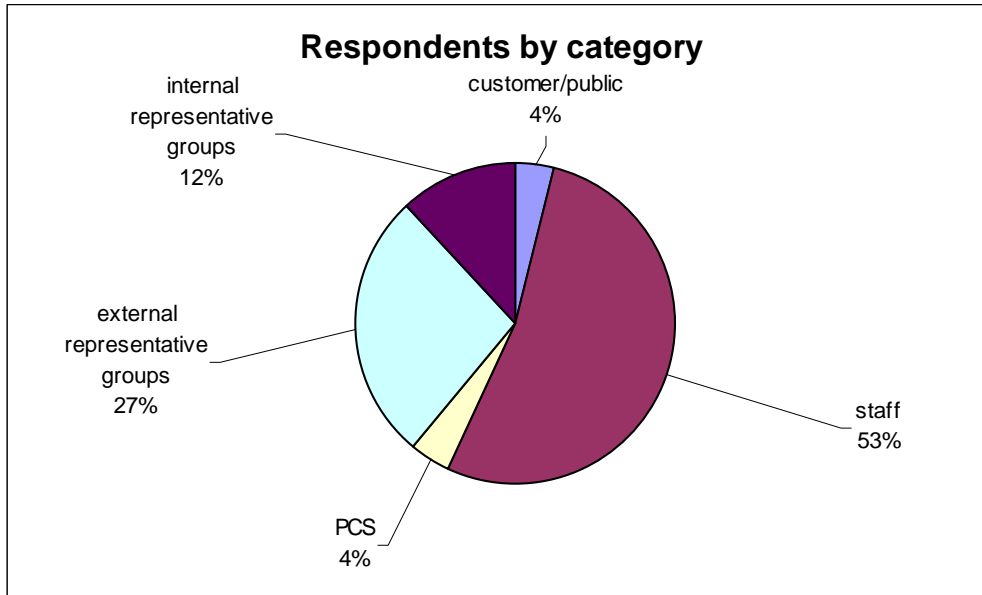
Appendix E: Number and breakdown of responses

There were 26 responses received to the Equality Impact Assessment consultation

A detailed response was received from the trade union, PCS, who represent the majority of HMRC staff working in the Enquiry Centre network. Detailed responses were also received from external groups representing equalities, gender, age and disability.

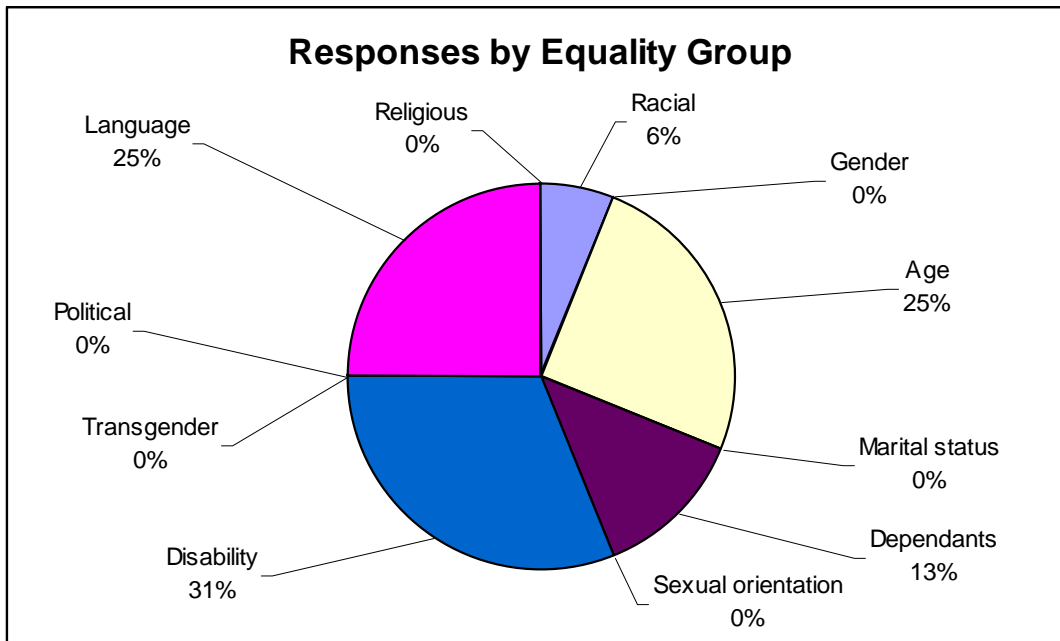
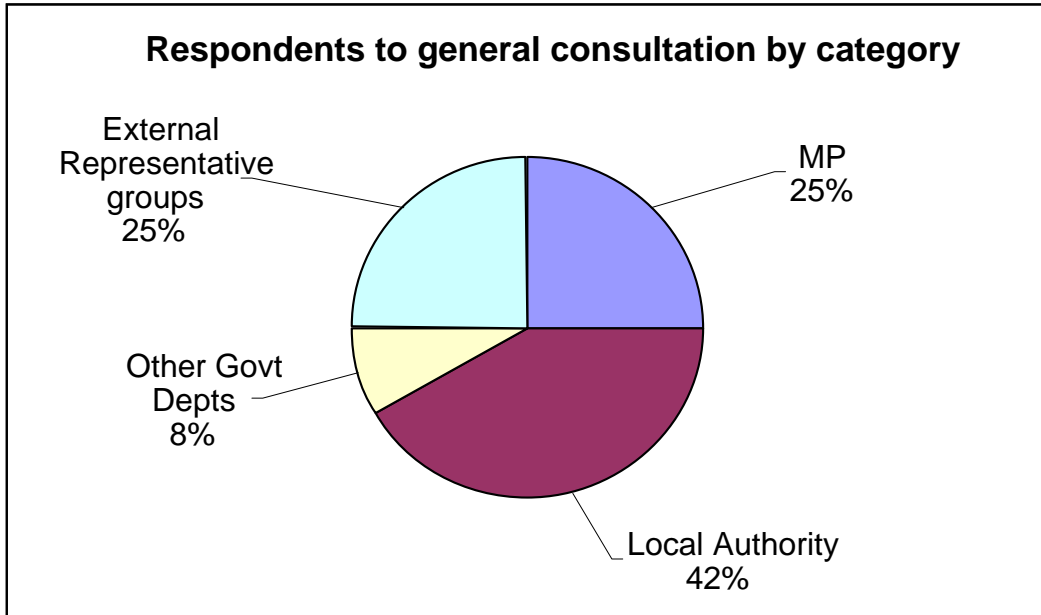
A significant proportion of responses (56%) related to impacts other than equality. The equality groups that generated the highest number of responses were the disability (34%), age (18%), gender (12%) and transgender (12%) groups.

Equality Impact Assessment Consultation Responses



General Consultation Responses

In addition to the responses to the Equality Impact Assessment some of the general consultation responses included feedback on the equality groups. The themes of these responses are reflected in this summary of this report.



Appendix F: Action Plan

Action	Date
Communicate	
We will, as part of our engagement with local community organisations ensure our local staff communicate with any local organisations that represent people with disabilities and offer information on our opening hours and services in appropriate format	Ongoing
We will introduce a longer implementation period for the changes to Enquiry Centres to allow better local engagement with third sector groups, local authorities and community organisations	August 2010
Engage	
We recognise the needs of people within all the equality groups and will engage externally with the representative third sector stakeholders to discuss the most appropriate way of providing support to members of the community.	Ongoing
We will engage with our internal Transgender Network group to discuss the most appropriate way of engaging with this community and monitoring any adverse impacts our changes may have.	Ongoing
Process (Internal)	
We recognise the need for confidentiality in 1-to-1 discussion process and that a member of staff may not be comfortable discussing their needs with their direct line manager. We will provide an alternative contact for 1-to-1 discussions for staff outside of their direct line management	August 2010
We will revise our guidance to managers to ensure that where individual impacts are identified during our 1-to-1 discussions managers will ensure that staff are aware of the range of flexible working arrangements available in HMRC.	August 2010

Process (External)	
We will ensure the availability of private interview facilities is prominently advertised in locations where this facility is available.	September 2010
We understand customers in some equality groups would like the support of a third party intermediary (family member, friend or voluntary sector advisor) when dealing with HMRC we will explore options for facilitating this.	Ongoing
Monitor	
We will introduce a process to collect data on how the customers we see across our Enquiry Centre network are broken down by equality group to help us better understand how well we are matching our service to customer need.	September 2010
We will monitor the demand levels across all of our locations to ensure adjustments are made in opening patterns that meets customer need.	Ongoing
We will continue to monitor the impact of changed opening patterns on our customers with reference to its impact on race, disability, gender, transgender, age, marital status, dependants, sexual orientation, religion or belief, political opinion (for Northern Ireland only) and language. We will analyse and use the results for improvement.	Ongoing
We will report on the progress of this action plan through the HMRC Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan which is published on our website annually and can be found at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/consultations/eqia.htm	Ongoing