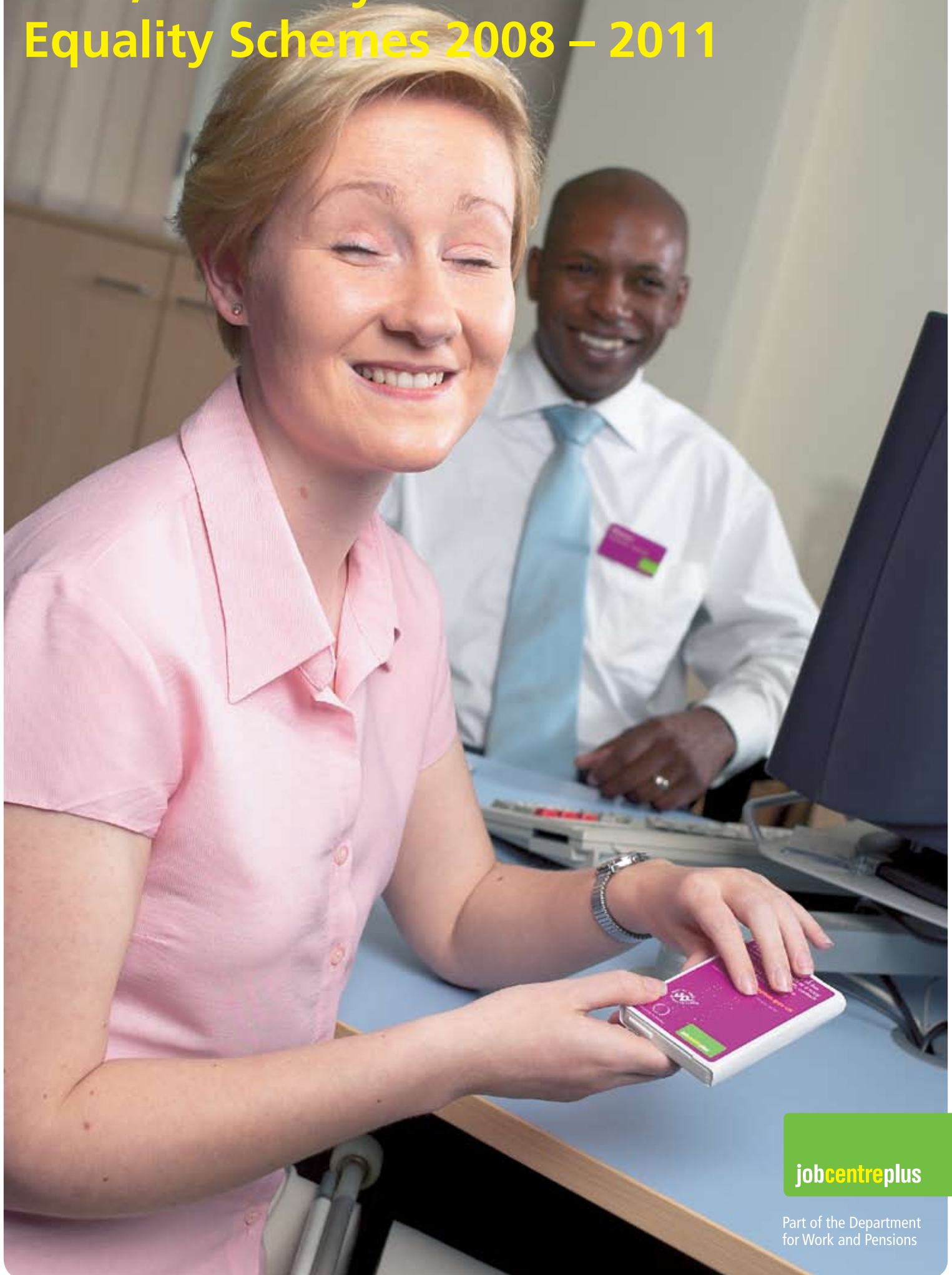


Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes 2008 – 2011



jobcentreplus

Part of the Department
for Work and Pensions

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Foreword



I am delighted to introduce our new Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. These Schemes detail what we intend to do in these very important areas over the next three years.

I am personally passionate about equality and diversity, and I believe that Jobcentre Plus has an excellent record of achievement in this area. Figures so far available to us show that since April 2007 we have helped the following people get jobs:

- 89,844 lone parents
- 111,486 people with a disability or a health condition, and
- 171,930 ethnic minority customers.

We cannot afford to be complacent. We need to strive constantly to meet the diversity objectives that were set in 2000. These objectives are:

- to build a workforce that reflects and is part of the wider community;
- to be an employer of choice in a diverse marketplace;
- to enable all staff to contribute to our business objectives and to maximise their potential to do that; and
- to provide an excellent service to all Jobcentre Plus customers that reflects their particular needs and embraces diversity.

Jobcentre Plus has come a long way since we first published an Equality Scheme in 2002, especially in our efforts to mainstream diversity and equality into everything we do. We will continue to build on the success we have had and the lessons that developing Equality Schemes have helped us to learn.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lesley Strathie', written in a cursive style.

Lesley Strathie
Chief Executive

Our Strategic Approach

Background

We are an executive agency of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Jobcentre Plus plays a major role in helping people through its core objective “Work for those who can: support for those who cannot”.

Publication of Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes in 2008

In our equality schemes annual progress reports published in November 2007, we explained that we had decided to review all our equality schemes in 2008 for the following reasons:

- to meet the legislative requirement to review our race equality scheme by May 2008
- to take on board comments on our first disability and gender equality schemes
- to move towards our objective of mainstreaming and aligning with the usual April-March planning cycle, and the Spending Review cycle used across government; and
- to move towards a single equality scheme.

This will help to embed diversity and equality into the way we do business. As this review is significantly earlier than required for disability and gender, we discussed this decision with the Disability Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission before they became part of The Equality and Human Rights Commission in October 2007. They supported the proposal to carry out the third year review early with a ‘light touch’ review of our disability and gender equality schemes, at the same time as we review our race equality scheme.

Before our next schemes are published in 2011, we will explore how we can publish both our Equality Schemes and Business Plan as one document. We believe that this will further embed diversity and equality into our operation.

Links between our Equality Schemes, the Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs) and our 2008/2009 Business Plan

Much of what we want to achieve in our Equality Schemes is supported by DWP’s Departmental Strategic Objectives and our current Business Plan.

Our priorities for our staff are contained in the DWP Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes.

Our priorities for our customers in our Equality Schemes are to:

- contribute to the number of disabled people, lone parents and people from ethnic minorities who are in work; and
- continue to work to ensure that our services are accessible and appropriate for all the diverse customers that we serve.

Two of the Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs) that support these two priorities are:

- to reduce the number of children living in poverty, and
- to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

The priorities in our 2008/2009 Business Plan include:

- introducing the new Employment and Support Allowance for customers claiming benefits for a sickness or disability;
- supporting lone parents to find work; and
- introducing a new Working Neighbourhoods Fund to focus targeted support to help customers in areas of high unemployment, typically customers from ethnic minority communities, through pooled funding with Local Authorities.

Update of previous Equality Schemes

We last published an update on our Disability, Gender and Race Equality Schemes in November 2007. Most of the actions detailed there are carried over into our new Action Plans. Progress since then has included:

- responding to the report we commissioned from ECOTEC Research entitled “Use of Jobcentre Plus Telephony and Face to Face First Contact Services by Customers with Specific Communication Barriers” by developing a comprehensive action plan to address its findings;
- increasing the number of employers who are participating in our Local Employment Partnerships from over 200 in November 2007 to over 500 in February 2008;
- completing a national customer involvement exercise;
- publishing our Customer Satisfaction Survey. This showed that there was no demographic factor, such as gender, ethnicity or disability, which tended to drive customers’ dissatisfaction with our services;

Jobcentre Plus

- all our outlets successfully completing a Diversity Challenge Action Plan by December 2007;
- reducing the time that our staff wait for adaptations to be made to their workplace;
- successfully re-launching our Staff Diversity Network Groups;
- publishing a further 30 Disability, Gender and Race Impact Assessments (Diversity Impact Assessments);
- reviewing our current functions and policies;
- launching an informative and comprehensive diversity and equality internal website; and
- continuing to support the 272 Local Authority Wards that have 3 times the national average ethnic minority population and 1.5 times the national unemployment rate.

Case Study

Jobcentre Plus Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire joined forces with NHS Lanarkshire following the launch of Pathways to Work in the district. As part of this initiative GPs and other health professionals advise patients about all the services available and may refer them for help from Jobcentre Plus specialists. As a direct result, there has been a dramatic improvement in helping more people move from Incapacity Benefit into work. For Example, over 3 years the number of customers on Incapacity Benefit has reduced by 12.5 per cent.

Case Study

Building on a suggestion from our Disability Staff Diversity Network Group we have been piloting a Diversity Passport. The Passport is aimed at improving communications of individuals' diversity and caring issues. The form is designed to capture any diversity information that has an impact on an individual's day-to-day working life which they consider their line manager needs to know. The pilot started in January 2008 and ran for three months. Evaluation of feedback from participants is underway and the future for this initiative is being considered.

Involvement and Consultation

Customers

Specifically to help us develop these three equality schemes, we met 205 customers across Scotland, England and Wales. We asked them what they thought we should do over the next three years to make their experience of being a Jobcentre Plus customer better.

The people we spoke to were in the 18-65 age groups and included 121 that described themselves as disabled. There were 123 male, 81 female and 1 person who preferred not to say. 150 people described themselves as white and 50 described themselves as coming from an ethnic minority community. 5 customers preferred not to say.

Much of the feedback received was positive. No issues were raised specifically connected to customers' gender or ethnicity. One issue that was raised connected to customers' disability was that, although we advertised that we have text phones and hearing loops, they did not always work. As a result of this feedback, all our customer outlets will be required to test their text phones and hearing loops on a regular basis.

We believe that it makes good business sense to continually monitor what our customers feel about the services we deliver, and how we can improve them. Doing this on an ongoing basis helps us to highlight where we need to take action to promote positive attitudes towards equality. And also encourages the participation of different groups of people in public life.

Throughout the last year, we have:

- conducted a customer satisfaction survey, and
- continued to meet each month with groups such as Citizens Advice, One Parent Families, RNID and RNIB etc.

This ongoing consultation showed us that we still need to do more work in ensuring that all our services are accessible to all our diverse customers. Our attached Action Plans set out in detail what we intend to do to improve the accessibility of our services.

We participated in the DWP Equality Schemes Customer Involvement Workshop. Along with other businesses within DWP, we met representatives with interests in race, disability and gender. Representation was from individuals and organisations that work with our customers. They told us that it was important for us to continue to ask our customers how we can improve our services. We will continue to do this in the ways we set out in our Action Plans.

The representatives and individuals at the Workshop also stressed the need for our staff to understand equality. In response to this, our Action Plans detail the work we will be doing on improving the learning and development on equality that is available for our staff.

Staff

With our staff we have:

- involved our Staff Diversity Network Groups who have articulated the views of our staff on how we are performing as an employer;
- analysed our staff survey to identify potential areas for improvement; and
- shared with the trade unions the actions we intend to take as a result of these involvement and consultation exercises.

Case Study

As a direct result of activity to empower our Staff Diversity Network Groups to make a real contribution to the business we now have in place effective and enthusiastic groups working at district, regional and national level. The first national forum bringing together our Board champions for different elements of diversity and the chairs of these refreshed groups was held in February at a meeting chaired by our Chief Executive, Lesley Strathie.

An example of the work that they do is their publishing, on our intranet site, of information on Black History Month.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Customers

We collect a great deal of diversity information about our customers. Our experience of publishing our Equality Schemes has made us realise that we could use the information we gather in a much more effective and systematic way. To help us do that, we are commissioning a review to:

- catalogue all the diversity information that we collect;
- identify and prioritise issues;
- suggest key high-level indicators for us to use for benchmarking purposes;

- develop a database compiling key diversity and equality data in a single accessible format; and
- list any gaps in data.

Staff

We monitor, analyse and evaluate a range of information on our staff to meet the specific requirements of the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act. This supports our aim of ensuring that our staff from under-represented groups receive equal outcomes and are able to fulfil their potential. Our employment data are reported in the Department for Work and Pensions Equality Schemes in the chapter on Corporate Human Resources.

Closing the Gender Pay Gap

Customers

We:

- through our Local Employment Partnerships, work with, and support, employers in realising the benefits of employing a diverse workforce;
- work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed with us do not discriminate on the grounds of gender and that they meet minimum wage requirements;
- offer support to help lone parents return to work;
- continue to offer lone parents support for a further 26 weeks once they are in work;
- plan, in the coming year, to offer lone parents career progression advice;
- pay lone parents an 'in work credit' on top of their earnings for their first 52 weeks in employment; and
- support DWP in developing strategies to promote the many benefits of working, for example wellbeing and health.

Equal Pay Review

Staff

We undertake regular equal pay audits to review our pay policies and their application. Our pay statement is included in the Department for Work and Pensions Equality Schemes in the chapter on Corporate Human Resources.

Impact Assessments

We follow Departmental processes to ensure that we impact assess proposals and change for race, disability and gender.

- We have published a further 30 Diversity Impact Assessments.
- A detailed action plan including timescales for carrying out diversity impact assessments is included in Annex 2.

Review of our Functions and Policies

Our first step in developing these Equality Schemes and Action Plans was to review our functions and policies against equality legislation. They remain largely the same since the last review, in December 2006. The only changes are that, since then, responsibility for procurement of labour market programmes has moved to the DWP's Commercial Directorate and the lead on communications and marketing has moved into the DWP's Communication Directorate and so are no longer part of our functions. Annex 1 shows the functions and policies we have reviewed and Annex 2 shows our detailed timescale for diversity impact assessing them.

The extent to which our functions, policies' and services meet the needs of disabled people

Through the involvement of individual disabled customers and our consultation, monitoring and evaluation – all of which is detailed above – we have concluded that, though there is much that we can be proud of, there is still much for us to do.

The Action Plan at Annex 4 sets out in detail what we intend to do over the next three years.

Reporting Arrangements

We will publish annually the progress we are making on our Equality Schemes. As part of that process we will continue to involve customers, stakeholders and staff.

Further information

If you would like any additional information on Jobcentre Plus services or want this document in an alternative format please contact us at the address below. Alternatively information is available on our website www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Additional information regarding DWP, particularly the Department's HR policies and its latest Equality Schemes, is available at www.dwp.gov.uk

Contact Details

We welcome comments on our Equality Schemes and you can contact us as follows:

By post: Jobcentre Plus
 Diversity Team
 Steel City House
 West Street
 Sheffield
 S1 2GQ

By telephone: 0114 294 3019

Typetalk calls welcome

By email:

Annex 1 – Our Functions and Policies

Functions	Policies	Priority
<p>1. Helping disadvantaged people into work as a route out of poverty</p>	<p>The development and delivery of programmes, services, support and advice that is accessible and appropriate for our customers. These include work focused interviews, all the New Deals and Condition Management Programmes, and the provision of written and other material in accessible formats.</p>	<p>High – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
	<p>Maintaining and improving our in-house IT systems so that they record diversity data on all our customers, including ethnicity. This will assist analysis and inform improvements for changes to our programmes and services for the future</p>	<p>High – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
<p>2. To provide financial support as security for people of working age while they are out of work</p>	<p>Ensuring that customers know about, and receive accurately and on time, the benefits to which they are entitled.</p> <p>Safeguarding the benefits system on behalf of taxpayers, working to reduce fraud and error.</p>	<p>Low – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
	<p>Payment of discretionary benefits ensuring availability to all who need them in times of crisis, including the Social Fund (for example Crisis Loans).</p>	<p>High – for Race and Disability</p> <p>Low – for Gender</p>

Functions	Policies	Priority
2. To provide financial support as security for people of working age while they are out of work (continued)	Gathering information on behalf of the Child Support Agency	Low – for Race and Disability High – for Gender
	Working in partnership with colleagues in the Pensions, Disability and Carers Service to help disabled customers claim Disability Living Allowance	Low – for Race, Disability and Gender
	Providing a smooth handover to Local Authorities for Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims.	Low – for Race and Gender High – for Disability
3. To address inequalities of opportunity	Encouraging employers to offer employment to applicants including people from ethnic minority groups and disabled people.	High – for Race, Disability and Gender
	Working with employers and others to ensure that vacancies are not discriminatory – whether unintentionally or not.	Medium – for Race, Disability and Gender
	Offering advice and support aimed at improving employers' recruitment practices, so that they will encourage more people from diverse groups to apply	High – for Race, Disability and Gender
	Increasing the pool of vacancies that could be filled by our diverse customers – and in doing so helping employers to fill their vacancies	High – for Race, Disability and Gender

Functions	Policies	Priority
<p>3. To address inequalities of opportunity (continued)</p>	<p>Helping customers to be ready and able to find sustainable employment.</p>	<p>High – for Race and Disability Medium – for Gender</p>
	<p>Managing the processes that require jobseekers actively to seek work</p>	<p>Low – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
	<p>Helping people to access relevant training and support seeking to ensure that mainstream services are as flexible and as accessible as possible to promote inclusivity.</p>	<p>High – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
	<p>Considering statistics and analysing the take up of provision by customers ensuring that all diverse groups are benefiting equally from the support that is available.</p>	<p>High – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
<p>4. To address market failure in the labour market</p>	<p>Identifying and supporting our customers to access training that improves their employment prospects and matches the needs of local employers.</p>	<p>Medium – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
	<p>Matching customers with suitable vacancies taking into consideration diverse needs.</p>	<p>Low – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
	<p>Helping our customers find jobs through a range of accessible channels including the telephone, textphone and the internet, adapting as necessary to meet customers’ needs.</p>	<p>Medium – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>

Functions	Policies	Priority
5. Development of Partnership working	Maintaining and continuously improving partnership working with others, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other agencies and parts of the Department such as the Pensions, Disability and Carers Service; and • key organisations including local authorities, the Learning and Skills Councils, other government departments and the voluntary sector. 	Medium – for Race, Disability and Gender
	Working in partnership with local and regional neighbourhood regeneration organisations.	Medium – for Race, Disability and Gender
	Continuing to develop and maintain good working relationships with local and national ethnic minority community organisations, organisations “of” and “for” disabled people and The Equality and Human Rights Commission.	Medium – for Race, Disability and Gender

Functions	Policies	Priority
<p>6. Human Resources</p>	<p>Ensuring that our people are best placed to meet business needs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focusing on providing the key skills and development needed to support individuals in their current roles, and enhancing learning and development to support new or changing job roles and ways of working; • continuing to build our leadership capability, equipping our managers to lead, manage and develop their people; • driving up performance through our performance management systems; and • continuing to look at ways to ensure diversity is reflected in all our Human Resources functions. 	<p>Medium – for Race, Disability and Gender</p>
<p>7. Customer Focus</p>	<p>To offer personal and informed support for customers who need it most. Ensuring that we work efficiently, and in ways that are easy to access by our customers, such as telephone, textphone and internet services, adapting as necessary to meet customers’ needs.</p>	<p>High – for Race and Disability</p> <p>Medium – for Gender</p>

Annex 2 – Our Plan to Diversity Impact Assess Current Functions and Policies

Policies in Priority Order	Dates from/to
1. The development and delivery of programmes, services, support and advice that is accessible and appropriate for our customers. These include work focused interviews, all the New Deals and Condition Management Programmes and the provision of written and other material in accessible formats.	Feb – April 08
2. Maintaining and improving our in-house IT systems so that they record diversity data on all our customers, including ethnicity. This will assist analysis and inform improvements for changes to our programmes and services for the future.	April – May 08
3. Encouraging employers to offer employment to diverse applicants including people from ethnic minority groups and disabled people.	Completed
4. Offering advice and support aimed at improving employers' recruitment practices, so that they will encourage more people from diverse groups to apply.	May – June 08
5. Increasing the pool of vacancies that could be filled by our diverse customers – and in doing so helping employers to fill their vacancies.	Completed
6. Helping people to access relevant training and support seeking to ensure that mainstream services are as flexible and as accessible as possible to promote inclusivity.	June – July 08
7. Considering statistics and analysing the take up of provision by customers ensuring that all diverse groups are benefiting equally from the support that is available.	July – Aug 08
8. Helping customers to be ready and able to find sustainable employment.	Aug – Sep 08
9. To offer personal and informed support for customers who need it most. Ensuring that we work efficiently, and in ways that are easy to access by our customers, such as telephone, textphone and internet services, adapting as necessary to meet customers' needs.	Sep – Oct 08
10. Payment of discretionary benefits ensuring availability to all who need them in times of crisis, including the Social Fund (for example Crisis Loans).	Oct – Nov 08

Policies in Priority Order	Dates from/to
11. Working with employers and others to ensure that vacancies are not discriminatory – whether unintentionally or not.	Nov – Dec 08
12. Identifying and supporting our customers to access training that improves their employment prospects and matches the needs of local employers.	Jan – Feb 09
13. Helping our customers find jobs through a range of accessible channels including the telephone, textphone and the internet, adapting as necessary to meet customers' needs.	Feb – March 09
<p>14. Maintaining and continuously improving partnership working with others, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other agencies and parts of the Department such as the Pensions, Disability and Carers Service; and • key organisations including local authorities, the Learning and Skills Councils, other government departments and the voluntary sector. 	March – April 09
15. Working in partnership with local and regional neighbourhood regeneration organisations.	April – May 09
16. Continuing to develop and maintain good working relationships with local and national ethnic minority community organisations, organisations “of” and “for” disabled people and The Equality and Human Rights Commission.	May – June 09
<p>17. Ensuring that our people are best placed to meet business needs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focusing on providing the key skills and development needed to support individuals in their current roles, and enhancing learning and development to support new or changing job roles and ways of working; • continuing to build our leadership capability, equipping our managers to lead, manage and develop their people; • driving up performance through our performance management systems; and • continuing to look at ways to ensure diversity is reflected in all our Human Resources functions. 	June – July 09
18. Gathering information on behalf of the Child Support Agency.	July – Aug 09

Policies in Priority Order	Dates from/to
19. Providing a smooth handover to Local Authorities for Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims.	Aug – Sept 09
20. Ensuring that customers know about, and receive accurately and on time, the benefits to which they are entitled. Safeguarding the benefits system on behalf of taxpayers, working to reduce fraud and error.	Sept – Oct 09
21. Working in partnership with colleagues in the Pensions, Disability and Carers Service to help disabled customers claim Disability Living Allowance.	Oct – Nov 09
22. Managing the processes that require jobseekers actively to seek work.	Nov – Dec 09
23. Matching customers with suitable vacancies taking into consideration diverse needs.	Dec – Jan 10
24. Undertaking financial management, governance, risk management and control of Jobcentre Plus budgets.	Jan – Feb 10

Annex 3 – Jobcentre Plus Race Equality Action Plan 2008-2011

Race Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
1. Contribute to increasing the employment rate of people from ethnic minorities	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support DWP and Communities and Local Government (CLG) colleagues to introduce the new Working Neighbourhood Fund, which will focus support and encourage enterprise in areas with high unemployment, many of which include a disproportionate number of people from ethnic minorities 	2008 to 2011	Fewer ethnic minority people out of work

Race Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
2. Work with and support employers in realising the benefits of employing a diverse workforce	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with employers to examine and provide support on recruitment and retention policies • through our Local Employment Partnerships, help 250,000 people who are disadvantaged in the labour market into work • survey employers to establish recruitment needs, including diversity issues 	Ongoing By 2010 To be published late Spring 2008	More of our diverse customers are supported to move into the labour market
3. Work with employers accessing our services to place vacancies to ensure they are not discriminatory	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed are not unlawfully discriminatory, providing guidance and advice as appropriate 	Ongoing	To ensure that vacancies we advertise are not unlawfully discriminatory

Race Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
4. Jobcentre Plus will support and deliver services to Refugees	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) to respond to their Refugee Integration Strategy and other policies that may impact on Refugee employment and access to Jobcentre Plus services • work closely with BIA at national and local levels, to support their Refugee Integration and Employment Service (RIES) initiative which is being rolled out nationally between April and October 2008 • we will also support the BIA Gateway Protection Programme and Case Resolution exercise • continue to maintain and promote the principles of our Refugee Operational Framework, including the internal web page, which provides advice and guidance on all aspects of service delivery to Refugees; reviewing as appropriate based on feedback from customers and staff 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ensure that we have in place consistent standards of support that meet the needs and expectations of our Refugee customers. Helping them overcome barriers and progress into employment</p>

Race Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
5. Improve our customers' experience of the accessibility, availability and appropriateness of our services	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve and consult with customers and representative groups of all ethnicities • where appropriate take action as soon as possible to implement recommendations to enhance or improve our services • consider recommendations, following the results of our customer satisfaction survey, and report against them 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	To help us work towards ensuring all our activities are accessible, appropriate and available for all our customers
6. Monitor plans developed to meet the Diversity Challenge	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review all plans developed in response to the <u>Diversity Challenge</u>. (The Challenge was issued throughout Jobcentre Plus in May 2007) • identify good practice developed and implemented in response to the Challenge. Publicise and share this with colleagues across the Department 	<p>By July 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	That staff are supported to focus on diversity and equality responsibilities. And, make improvements to services and products

Race Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
7. Jobcentre Plus will diversity impact assess all functions, policies and changes	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure diversity impact assessments are undertaken when changes are identified to service delivery and our people diversity impact assess all current functions and policies, ensuring that the assessments cover opportunities to maximise the promotion of good relations between people of different ethnicities 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>A detailed action plan is at Annex 2</p>	To work towards mainstreaming diversity into everyday activity
8. Provide the opportunity for staff to develop links with our customers through working with voluntary and community based organisations	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide staff with the opportunity to volunteer in community based activity at local, regional and national level. In total 3,000 staff days will be freed up for this activity over the coming year. Activity will be focused on developing links with our priority customers 	300 days activity to be completed by July 2008	Jobcentre Plus staff have a better understanding of our customers' lives, and the issues and barriers they face

Race Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
<p>9. Ensure that our diversity and equality training is effectively delivered to all our staff</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-launch our foundation training which is designed for all staff within Jobcentre Plus, with a particular emphasis on those providing customer service • support the development and delivery of new services to our priority customers • review and evaluate the effectiveness of training using feedback from customers and staff. 	<p>Spring 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Staff are confident in meeting the needs of diverse customers</p>

Race Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
10. Continue to analyse staff survey results and put in place measures to achieve positive changes	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse the Jobcentre Plus annual people survey by ethnicity. The Staff Diversity Network Group responsible for race, religion and belief will lead and flag issues for progression to the appropriate team 	Annually	Issues from ethnic minority groups are identified and addressed
11. Ensure that our Staff Diversity Network Groups are empowered to make a real contribution to our business	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> undertake a review of the Groups to ensure that they are operating effectively 	July 2008	We have in place Staff Diversity Network Groups that can make a positive contribution to the business
12. Jobcentre Plus will review its assessment of functions and policies	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review our current assessment 	April 2011	We will identify whether our action plan requires amendments

Annex 4 – Jobcentre Plus Disability Equality Action Plan 2008-2011

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
1. Increase the help that we give to disabled people in getting them into work	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce the Employment and Support Allowance • introduce mandatory Pathways to Work interviews and the new Work Capability Assessment for existing Incapacity Benefit customers who are under the age of 25 • remove Housing Benefit learning restrictions for short-term Incapacity Benefit customers, to allow them to study full time • introduce skills screening for Employment and Support Allowance customers soon after the start of their claim and, where appropriate, a mandatory Skills Health Check at a later point in their claim 	<p>October 2008</p> <p>2009</p> <p>2009</p> <p>2009</p>	<p>More disabled customers are helped into work</p>

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
2. Ensure telephony services do not disadvantage customers	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop marketing material giving customers an overview of what they can expect from us and how to access our services • act on recommendations from the commissioned report (ECOTEC), and reports from the Social Security Advisory Committee and Citizens Advice Bureau • review telephony charges. Pilot changes to our operating model and implement • improve telephone access to Crisis Loans for vulnerable customers • develop a process for identifying customers who find it difficult to use our telephone services and provide alternatives • ensure that Contact Centre staff receive disability training specific to a call centre environment 	<p>April 2008</p> <p>2008-2009</p> <p>2008-2010</p> <p>2008-2009</p> <p>July 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To ensure that customers who find it difficult to access our services because of their disability are not disadvantaged</p> <p>continued on next page</p>

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
2. (continuation) Ensure telephony services do not disadvantage customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commission a survey on how customers feel about the first contact that they have with us • where appropriate, act on the recommendations of that survey 	<p>Report to be published late Spring 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	(See above)
3. Ensure all our processes are sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of our disabled customers	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • act on feedback from disabled customers and their representatives and implement solutions where appropriate • work with DWP to develop a set of processes to meet the needs of customers with specific communications barriers (previously called minimum customer accessibility standards) • commission a review to help us use the diversity data that we collect in a more systematic way 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Report back Summer of 2008</p>	Ensure our processes meet the needs of our customers

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
<p>6. Improve our customers' experience of the accessibility, availability and appropriateness of our services</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve and consult with disabled customers and representative groups • where appropriate take action as soon as possible to implement recommendations to enhance or improve our services, adhering to the Departmental standards to meet the needs of customers with specific communications needs • consider recommendations, following the results of our customer satisfaction survey, and report against them • work with Departmental colleagues to act on the formal public consultation 'Helping people achieve their full potential: Improving Specialist Disability Employment Services'. The consultation focuses on how we support disabled customers in a more personalised, flexible and easier to use way. The consultation period ran until 10 March 2008 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>From April 2008</p>	<p>To help us work towards ensuring all our activities are accessible, appropriate and available for all our customers</p>

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
7. Promote a positive attitude towards disability equality	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure all new policies and processes are diversity impact assessed, and that all assessments cover opportunities to maximise the promotion of a positive attitude towards disability equality diversity impact assess all current functions and policies, ensuring that the assessments cover opportunities to maximise the promotion of a positive attitude towards disability equality 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>A detailed action plan is included at Annex 2</p>	To work towards mainstreaming diversity into everyday activity
8. Provide the opportunity for staff to develop links with our customers through working with voluntary and community based organisations	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide Staff with the opportunity to volunteer in community based activity at local, regional and national level. In total 3000 staff days will be freed up for this activity over the coming year. Activity to be focused on developing links with our priority customers 	300 days activity to be completed by July 2008	Jobcentre Plus staff have a better understanding of the lives', issues and barriers facing our customers

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
<p>9. Encourage participation and involvement of our customers</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with Departmental colleagues to set up the DWP Equality Schemes Customer Involvement Workshops • continue to participate in the DWP Annual Forum which brings together up to 250 representatives of national, regional and local organisations, that work with our customers • engage with Equality 2025 • continue to work with our Customer Representative Groups Forum, which includes representation from disability rights organisations • where appropriate, act on the feedback that we receive 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>As appropriate</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To have in place effective and robust mechanisms for involvement and consultation using customer feedback</p>

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
10. Ensure, where available, equipment used to provide accessibility is operational	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a result of feedback from the customer involvement exercise, require all our customer outlets to test their text phones and hearing loops on a regular basis 	Ongoing	To work towards ensuring all our services are accessible, appropriate and available to all our customers
11. Work with and support employers in realising the benefits of employing a diverse workforce	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with employers to examine and provide support on recruitment and retention policies • through our Local Employment Partnerships, help 250,000 people who are disadvantaged in the labour market into work • survey employers to establish recruitment needs, including diversity issues 	Ongoing By 2010 To be published late Spring 2008	More of our diverse customers are supported to move into the labour market

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
12. Ensure that our diversity and equality training is effectively delivered to all our staff	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-launch our foundation training which is designed for all staff within Jobcentre Plus, with a particular emphasis on those providing customer service • support the development and delivery of new services to our priority customers • review and evaluate the effectiveness of training using feedback from customers and staff 	Spring 2008 Ongoing Ongoing	To focus staff training on customer service and support staff to work confidently with our diverse customers
13. Ensure that adaptations to the workplace for staff are undertaken quickly and effectively	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report to the Permanent Secretary on the numbers of staff identifying the need for, and receiving, support through reasonable adjustments 	Ongoing on a quarterly basis	To make improvements to the reasonable adjustment process

Disability Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcome
14. Continue to analyse staff survey results and put measures in place to achieve positive changes	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse the Jobcentre Plus annual people survey by disability. The Staff Disability Network Group will lead and flag issues for progression to the appropriate policy team 	Annually	To be able to identify and consider issues for disabled staff
15. Ensure that our Staff Diversity Network Groups are empowered to make a real contribution to our business	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> undertake a review of the Groups to ensure that they are operating effectively 	July 2008	We have in place Staff Diversity Network Groups that can make a positive contribution to the business
16. Jobcentre Plus will review its assessment of functions and policies	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review our current assessment 	April 2011	To identify whether our action plan requires amendment

Annex 5 – Jobcentre Plus Gender Equality Action Plan 2008-2011

Gender Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
1. Increase the support that we give to parents to help them into work	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce quarterly Work Focused Interviews for lone parents in the last year before their child reaches the age where they are no longer entitled to Income Support • extend work trials for up to 6 weeks for those taking part in New Deal for Lone Parents • introduce skills screening for all new lone parent Income Support claimants as part of their Work Focused Interview, and encourage attendance at a full Skills Health Check • bring all Lone Parents with a child over 7 years old into New Deal for Lone Parents 	<p>October 2008</p> <p>Late 2008</p> <p>2009</p> <p>2010</p>	<p>To increase the number of parents in work</p> <p>continued on next page</p>

Gender Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
1. (continuation) Increase the support that we give to parents to help them into work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a Childcare Partnership Manager in place in every district. Their role will be to progress the childcare agenda for Jobcentre Plus with local authorities and other partners • deliver training to Personal Advisers to help them signpost parent customers to formal childcare, to help them find work 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>From March 2008</p>	(See above)
2. Work with and support employers in realising the benefits of employing a diverse workforce	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with employers to examine and provide support on recruitment and retention policies • through our Local Employment Partnerships, help 250,000 people who are disadvantaged, including parents, in the labour market into work 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>By 2010</p>	<p>More of our diverse customers are supported to move into the labour market</p> <p style="text-align: right;">continued on next page</p>

Gender Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
2. (continuation) Work with and support employers in realising the benefits of employing a diverse workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> survey employers to establish recruitment needs, including diversity issues 	Report to be published late Spring 2008	(See above)
3. Work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed with us are not discriminatory	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed are not unlawfully discriminatory, providing guidance and advice as appropriate 	Ongoing	To ensure that vacancies we advertise are not unlawfully discriminatory
4. Improve our customers' experience of the accessibility, availability and appropriateness of our services	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> involve and consult with customers and representative groups, such as the Child Poverty Action Group where appropriate take action, as soon as possible, to implement their recommendations to enhance or improve our services 	<p>Ongoing on a monthly basis</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To help us work towards ensuring all our activities are accessible, appropriate and available for all our customers</p> <p style="text-align: right;">continued on next page</p>

Gender Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
4. (continuation) Improve our customers' experience of the accessibility, availability and appropriateness of our services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider recommendations, following the results of our customer satisfaction survey and report against them commission a review to help us use the diversity data that we collect in a more systematic way 	Ongoing Summer 2008	(See above)
5. Monitor plans developed to meet the Diversity Challenge	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review all plans developed in response to the <u>Diversity Challenge</u>. (The Challenge was issued throughout Jobcentre Plus in May 2007) identify good practice developed and implemented in response to the Challenge. Publicise and share this with colleagues across the Department 	By July 2008 Ongoing	That staff are supported to focus on diversity and equality responsibilities. And, make improvements to services and products

Gender Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
6. Promote a positive attitude towards Gender equality	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure all new policies and processes are diversity impact assessed and that all assessments cover opportunities to maximise the promotion of a positive attitude towards gender equality diversity impact assess all current functions and policies, ensuring that the assessments cover opportunities to maximise the promotion of a positive attitude towards gender 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>A detailed timetable is at Annex 2</p>	To work towards mainstreaming diversity into everyday activity

Gender Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
9. Ensure that our diversity and equality training is effectively delivered to all our staff	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-launch our foundation training which is designed for all staff within Jobcentre Plus, with a particular emphasis on those providing customer service • support the development and delivery of new services to our priority customers • review and evaluate the effectiveness of training using feedback from customers and staff 	Spring 2008 Ongoing Ongoing	Staff are confident in meeting the needs of diverse customers
10. Continue to analyse staff survey results and put in place measures to achieve positive changes	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse the Jobcentre Plus annual staff survey by gender. Staff Diversity Network Group responsible for gender issues will lead and flag issues for progression to the appropriate policy team 	Annually	Issues for male and female staff are identified and addressed

Gender Equality Action Plan Description	Steps to Achieve	To be Achieved By (Date)	Intended Outcomes
11. Ensure that our Staff Diversity Network Groups are empowered to make a real contribution to our business	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake a review of the Groups to ensure that they are operating effectively 	July 2008	We have in place Staff Diversity Network Groups that can make a positive contribution to the business
12. Jobcentre Plus will review its assessment of functions and policies	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review our current assessment 	March 2011	To identify whether our action plan requires amendments

Annex 6 – Other Diversity Areas

Achievements and Progress

Age

- Jobcentre Plus continues to ensure that its services are available to customers regardless of age, and routinely includes age equality considerations as part of Diversity Impact Assessments.
- In addition we offer services specifically designed for people of different ages, who may have different needs, for example New Deal 50+.
- As a member of The Age and Employment Network (TAEN) we support and encourage older people to continue working, and to adapt their skills to changing labour market conditions.
- We have in place a strong Staff Diversity Network Group which focuses on age equality issues for both staff and customers.
- It is our policy not to accept vacancies from employers who discriminate on the grounds of age. We have recently revised and reissued guidance to staff to help them identify vacancies that may be discriminating on the grounds of age.
- Guidance available to staff includes links to Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, and questions and answers. This provides background to the impact of age legislation and covers key issues about the regulations.

Sexual Orientation

- We have in place a strong Staff Diversity Network Group which focuses on sexual orientation equality issues for both staff and customers.
- We contributed to the Department's achievement of reaching 74th place in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index 2008 with 76%. This is 3% up on 2007.
- Staff continue to use the DWP produced DVD "Getting it Right", which promotes positive attitudes to sexuality throughout the Department.
- Guidance available to staff includes links to legislation and an explanation of what it means for the Department and Jobcentre Plus.

Religion or Belief

- Issues on equality in relation to Religion and Belief are considered by our Staff Diversity Network Group responsible for race, religion and belief.
- Staff have access to the Department's Diversity Toolkit, which is an online resource that provides information, advice and guidance on diversity and equality issues.
- Jobcentre Plus recently circulated the 'Diversiton' Diversity Calendar 2008 to help raise awareness of key dates for customers and staff.

Further copies of this publication and in other formats, such as Braille, audio and other languages, can be obtained by:
Email: adelphi.diversityandequality@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 0114 259 7820

Textphone: 0114 259 6308

Fax: 0114 259 6147

All DWP Equality Schemes are available at:

www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/equalityschemes

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