



Jobcentre Plus Disability and Gender Equality Schemes and Race Equality Scheme Progress Report

jobcentreplus

Part of the Department for Work and Pensions

Contents

Foreword	5
Jobcentre Plus: our aims and objectives	6
Section 1: Committed to equality	7
Section 2: Improving our services	17
Progress reporting and reviewing	21
Annexes	
Annex 1: Assessment of our functions and policies	22
Annex 2: Disability equality action plan	30
Annex 3: Gender equality action plan	37
Annex 4: Race equality scheme action plan and progress report	42
Annex 5: Other diversity areas	59

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Jobcentre Plus equality schemes, which include our disability and gender schemes and our annual race equality scheme progress report.



Our diversity goals, introduced in 2000, 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.

In Jobcentre Plus we have already made significant progress towards achieving our diversity goals, but we know that we have much more to do. Our equality schemes and the associated action plans set out our vision for mainstreaming diversity and equality into every area of our business, specifically in the areas of economic and social impact, employer services, customer focus and employee engagement.

In developing our equality schemes we have drawn on our experience of taking forward our Race Equality Scheme. We will continue to build on our successes and lessons learned.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lesley Strathie'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long tail extending to the right.

Lesley Strathie
Chief Executive

Jobcentre Plus: our aims and objectives

Jobcentre Plus is an executive agency of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The aim of the Department is to promote opportunity and independence for all. Jobcentre Plus plays an important role in this: everything that we do is designed to deliver opportunities to work for customers who can work, and financial support for those who cannot.

The UK has a record number of people in work. By making our business a success, Jobcentre Plus will help more people into employment and also help to ensure that the benefits of employment are distributed more fairly across the population.

Working in partnership with key stakeholders, and by focusing our work on the most disadvantaged people in the labour market, Jobcentre Plus will play a pivotal role in helping to reduce labour market inequalities, revitalise communities, and break the cycles of deprivation that affect some individuals, groups and neighbourhoods – such as persistent low income, disengagement from the labour market and reduced life chances.

Section 1: Committed to equality

Where we are now

Jobcentre Plus has already achieved a great deal of success in mainstreaming race equality. We have provided an update on our achievements in the race equality action plan and progress report (Annex 4). We will continue to build on our successes as we introduce new diversity strands.

Working with customers

We offer a wide range of programmes and services tailored to meet the needs of our diverse customers. In the year to March 2006 we helped 861,295 people find work.

For people with a health condition or disability we have:

- introduced Pathways to Work pilots for Incapacity Benefit customers;
- continued to deliver New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work and other disability-related programmes;
- offered work preparation, training and access to job brokers; and
- offered access to specialist Jobcentre Plus advisers.

During this period we have helped 62,793 people with a health condition or disability find work.

For gender equality we have:

- continued to deliver New Deal for Lone Parents, which has resulted in over 108,004 lone parents finding work, of whom 95 per cent are female;
- continued to offer work-focused interviews for partners of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, to help reduce the number of workless households and eradicate child poverty;
- given Jobcentre Plus advisers and managers greater flexibility to meet individual customer and labour market needs; and
- helped parents access suitable childcare, including providing assistance in meeting related costs, where appropriate.

For race equality we have:

- helped over 170,000 ethnic minority customers find work through New Deal initiatives;
- piloted initiatives, including Ethnic Minority Outreach and the Ethnic Minority Flexible Fund, which aimed to assist ethnic minority customers to access our services and find work; and
- developed a leaflet, guidance and advice, in consultation with key stakeholders, to encourage refugees to access our services.

Case study

Our Hartlepool Action Team for Jobs were named central government team winners at the Public Servants of the Year Awards. This award recognised their achievements in helping disadvantaged customers find employment.

Working with partners

Jobcentre Plus has developed its partnership working to help meet the needs of diverse customers and communities.

We have:

- worked with the National Health Service and GPs to help customers on Incapacity Benefit consider employment opportunities, including accessing Pathways to Work;
- continued to develop productive partnerships with key organisations such as the Learning and Skills Council, and strengthened links with other government departments and agencies such as the Home Office and the Prison Service, to improve access to the labour market for those customers who face the greatest barriers to getting work; and
- contributed to the Child Support Agency's delivery of child support services, for example by helping lone parents receive child maintenance payments.

Working with employers

We need to meet the needs of the employers who use Jobcentre Plus and achieve successful employment outcomes for our customers. Services we currently provide include:

- support to employers to help them both create and retain a diverse workforce;
- work with employers to help them evaluate their progress towards creating a more diverse workforce; and
- help for employers who place vacancies with us to ensure that their vacancies do not discriminate against any particular group.

We undertook a survey between April and December 2005 which showed that 90.5 per cent of employers placing a vacancy with Jobcentre Plus were very or fairly satisfied with the service they received.

Case study

We worked with the Recruitment and Employment Confederation – the recruitment industry trade body – to develop a series of self-assessment techniques to help recruitment businesses to promote equality of opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds. The Confederation of British Industry recognised this work by presenting Jobcentre Plus and the Recruitment and Employment Federation with the Confederation of British Industry Social Initiative award.

Working with staff

Jobcentre Plus has the same diversity targets regarding the representation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled people as the overall Department for Work and Pensions. Further details on these targets can be found in the Human Resource (HR) section of the departmental equality schemes.

Details of progress within Jobcentre Plus against these targets are as follows:

Women

Grade*	Target to 2008	Achieved to June 2006
Senior Civil Service, PB2 and above	30%	28.6%
Senior Civil Service – all	38%	31.1%
Grade 6	45%	43.3%
Grade 7	45%	46.2%

Ethnic minorities

Grade*	Target to 2008	Achieved to June 2006
Senior Civil Service	5%	5.1%
Grade 6/7	4%	2.1%
Senior Executive Officer	4%	4.1%
Higher Executive Officer	5.5%	5.7%

Disabled people

Grade*	Target to 2008	Achieved to June 2006
Senior Civil Service	6%	2.6%
Grade 6/7 and Senior Executive Officer	4%	6.3%
Higher Executive Officer/Executive Officer	7%	7.5%
Administration Officer/Administration Assistant	6%	5.6%

*Civil Service grades cover a diverse range of roles in different posts and functions. Senior Civil Service grade roles are at deputy director, director or director general level; Grade 6 and 7 jobs can be described as senior management roles; SEO, HEO and EO roles are managerial grades; and AO and AA are administrative roles.

We have achieved good progress against half of our targets. We are actively working to target recruitment in areas where we think we can make a significant difference.

Equality legislation also commits Jobcentre Plus to monitor and report against recruitment, retention and progression practices in relation to diversity. Details of our achievements in these areas are published in our Annual Report and Accounts (www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk).

To help us meet our responsibilities under equality legislation we:

- obtain evidence and staff perceptions through our established staff network groups; and
- support the development and progression of diverse staff through learning and development activities, for example the use of positive action programmes.

Case study

Jobcentre Plus is piloting an initiative to ensure that staff who need a reasonable adjustment (a change to their working environment such as making text on a computer screen larger) under the Disability Discrimination Act get the most appropriate adjustment quickly. The pilot brings together, at one meeting, all our key contractors. For example, a typical meeting might include both our information technology supplier (for potential changes to computers and telephones) and our accommodation supplier (for potential changes to furniture, lighting or access to buildings). This ensures that everyone who needs to contribute to the reasonable adjustment understands their particular role so that the adjustment can be implemented more quickly.

Involvement and consultation

Our first step in developing our equality schemes and action plans (Annexes 2 and 3) was to review our functions and policies against equality legislation (Annex 1). This review helped us highlight where we need to take action to promote positive attitudes towards equality and encourage the participation of different groups of people in public life.

We then sought the involvement of our disabled customers in helping us identify the extent to which our policies, functions and services meet their needs. We asked them what areas they thought we should concentrate on improving over the next three years. This involvement exercise was central to ensuring that we identified those specific things that would most help our disabled customers. We:

- developed a questionnaire that sought the views of disabled customers on what they thought about how we communicate with them, how our staff treat them, what the physical access to our buildings was like and what they thought of the range of services we offer;
- shared results of our evaluation with other colleagues in the Department to help them understand how to improve customer services; and
- ensured that views were expressed freely by using venues familiar to the disabled people we spoke to, including a meeting held at a residential training college.

Case study

As part of the involvement exercise we attended Finchale Training College, Durham to gather information from students on what they thought our future plans should include to support the needs of disabled people. The college offers training and support for unemployed adults with a range of physical and mental health issues.

Case study

Over a two-day period, we asked all those customers attending an appointment with a Disability Employment Adviser at the Springburn Jobcentre Plus office if they would be willing to participate in a one-to-one interview. Those who agreed were asked what they currently thought of our services, what we could do better, and what our priority areas for the next three years should be.

Case study

In the involvement exercise we met 189 customers from Scotland, England and Wales in a number of one-to-one discussions and group meetings. Of the 189, 172 people identified themselves as disabled, 126 were male and 63 were female.

Although much of the feedback received was positive, customers identified a particular issue around how they were able to contact us, and how we contacted them. Some specific quotes include the following:

- “Very poor, particularly contact centres.”
- “Referred to a phone to sort out initial claim. Not ideal at all for someone with mental health issues. Would rather sort out face to face.”
- “Lack of information for people without computers.”

We have also:

- used the information that the Disability and Carers Service gathered from its customer involvement activities as many individuals will use both services;
- consulted our staff network groups for disability and gender on what Jobcentre Plus’s future business plans should include as priority; and
- taken into account the views expressed by both individual disabled customers and their representative organisations to the Minister for Disabled People when she addressed the DWP Disability Forum in May 2006.

When we analysed the results of our involvement and consultation exercises, we were clear that the areas our disabled customers wanted us to concentrate on were how they are able to contact us and how we contact them. We have included these areas in our action plans.

With our staff we have:

- involved our staff network groups who have articulated the views of our staff on how we are performing as an employer;
- analysed our annual staff survey to identify potential areas for improvement; and
- shared with the trade union the action we propose to take as a result of these involvement and consultation exercises.

Monitoring and evaluation

Jobcentre Plus currently gathers and monitors diversity information supplied by customers when accessing any programmes or services. We analyse this information to help us identify and target any groups that may need additional help, for example through marketing, outreach and specialist provision such as Pathways to Work.

To ensure that our services and policies are accessible, available and appropriate to meet the needs of our customers we:

- monitor the nature of all the complaints that our customers make through our formal complaints procedures, and through letters to the Chief Executive and departmental ministers, to identify trends; and
- commissioned research that will evaluate the impact of introducing telephony channels as the primary gateway to our services. The outcomes of this research will be available in April 2007.

Case study

We conduct an annual customer satisfaction survey to identify the extent to which our services meet the needs of our customers. The 2005 survey indicated that 87 per cent of people with an activity/work-limiting disability were either very or fairly satisfied with services provided. The survey also looked at overall satisfaction by gender and showed that 84 per cent of male and 87 per cent of female customers were either very or fairly satisfied.

Case study

In 2005 we conducted a survey of a sample of our ethnic minority customers, as part of the overall Jobcentre Plus national customer satisfaction survey to investigate customer satisfaction, quality of service and customer complaints. The survey found that all ethnic minority customers were less aware of our Customer Charter, which sets out the level of customer service they should expect. The survey also found that customers from all ethnic minority groups were more likely than white customers to feel that our services had improved over the previous year.

For staff, the Department undertook a consultation on its HR policies, which highlighted no specific areas of concern for Jobcentre Plus. However, to ensure that we continue to involve and consult our staff we:

- annually seek the views of staff through the staff survey; and
- monitor outcomes from the performance and development system to assess whether any groups of staff are disadvantaged by the system.

As a result of the evaluation information already obtained we have:

- introduced a process to encourage discussion of the staff survey results and identify what we need to do at individual, team and management levels to address the concerns raised;
- introduced new leadership competencies to help address the lack of confidence in senior managers highlighted by the 2005 survey results; and
- consulted staff on their views on the performance and development system as part of a wider departmental consultation exercise. Jobcentre Plus staff network groups have been specifically asked for views.

For employers we:

- conduct an annual survey to assess how far employer customers are satisfied with our services.

Extent to which our policies, functions and services meet the needs of disabled people

Through the extensive involvement of disabled people and the consultation, monitoring and evaluation exercises described above, we have concluded that, although there is much that we can be proud of, there is still much for Jobcentre Plus to do.

Jobcentre Plus has already taken steps to mainstream diversity and equality into business practices and over the next three years will continue to:

- mainstream diversity equality across all areas of our business;
- ensure that services, support and advice are appropriate, accessible and available;
- increase the number of people who are supported in moving closer to work;
- ensure that provision of programmes is appropriate, accessible and effective;
- work effectively in partnership with external stakeholders;
- support employers in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, including ensuring that employer vacancies advertised through Jobcentre Plus are not unlawfully discriminatory; and
- ensure that contract management activity supports equality legislation.

The action plans at Annexes 2 and 3 set out in more detail what we intend to do in the next three years.

Section 2: Improving our services

Where we want to be in three years' time

For customers, our monitoring, consultation and involvement exercises have helped us identify the areas we need to address over the next three years. These are to:

- ensure that services, specifically telephony through contact centres, do not disadvantage some groups of customers;
- ensure that our IT systems are sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of those customers who require written information in alternative formats;
- encourage participation and involvement of our customers at local and national levels;
- promote a positive attitude towards equality; and
- ensure that all customers receive the benefits they are entitled to and help as many of our customers as possible to find work.

Jobcentre Plus is a large and varied organisation with 71,000 staff, over 800 customer offices, 77 benefit delivery centres and 33 contact centres, but it is continuing to operate against a background of reducing employee levels and funding. It is crucial that every part of the organisation accepts ownership, responsibility, and accountability for the diversity agenda. To do this, all areas of the business will be issued with a challenge – the 'Diversity Challenge'. The Diversity Challenge will help each part of Jobcentre Plus to baseline where they are against legislative requirements and introduce standards on how to ensure that the service they deliver to customers is accessible, available and appropriate. For example, a manager of a Jobcentre would need to consider what steps can be put in place to ensure that the information on a Jobpoint is equally accessible to someone who has dyslexia as it is to someone who does not have dyslexia.

For our staff, our consultation exercises have shown that we need over the next three years to:

- continue to analyse staff survey results and put in place measures to achieve positive changes;
- ensure that reasonable adjustments for staff are undertaken quickly and effectively;
- ensure that our staff network groups are empowered to make a real contribution to our business;
- develop an informative and comprehensive diversity and equality internal website to offer information and promote diversity; and
- ensure that our diversity and equality training is delivered to all our staff in effective ways.

For employers we will continue to:

- support employer customers' efforts to achieve and realise the benefits of employing a diverse workforce; and
- ensure that vacancies placed with us are not unlawfully discriminatory.

The detail of how we plan to do this over the next three years is at Annexes 2, 3 and 4. We believe that, by taking these actions, we will promote equality of opportunity in the areas of disability, gender and race.

Consultation and involvement

The nationwide customer involvement exercise that we plan to undertake in December 2007 will also help us gather views from customers about what should be included in future equality schemes.

To encourage the participation and involvement of our customers at a local, as well as at a national, level, we will revise our guidance on involvement and consultation. We will monitor compliance with this guidance on a regular basis.

We will also continue to monitor feedback obtained through:

- our attendance at relevant external diversity forums; and
- staff network groups.

Monitoring and evaluation

Jobcentre Plus will continue to gather, monitor and analyse diversity information supplied by customers and staff, and ensure that we adhere to the departmental monitoring strategy.

Specifically, for customers we will also:

- undertake a second involvement exercise towards the end of 2007, to evaluate how far we have come in improving the accessibility and availability of our services;
- analyse the results of our customer satisfaction survey, undertaken every two years, and, where appropriate, take action on the recommendations; and
- take appropriate action on the findings of the research that will evaluate the impact of introducing telephony channels as the primary gateway to our services.

For our staff we will:

- monitor and analyse feedback through the annual staff survey; and
- monitor and analyse the staff appraisal system (performance and development system) results for disability, gender and ethnic minority staff outcomes.

Impact assessments

The Department for Work and Pensions has developed processes to ensure that we impact-assess change, and this is detailed in its equality schemes.

In 2005 we ran workshops for Jobcentre Plus staff to provide guidance on the requirement to undertake race impact assessments, including the need to publish results. We will reinforce guidance for staff on how and when to conduct impact assessments through the development of a diversity impact assessment tool and a diversity challenge, which will be launched in the spring of 2007.

The new tool will also ensure that, where appropriate, involvement and consultation take place with customers, their representatives and Jobcentre Plus staff at national, regional and local levels regarding proposed changes.

Procurement

Jobcentre Plus has made significant progress in incorporating the requirements of equality legislation into procurement and contract management activity. Our new New Deal contracts, which began to deliver customer services in the summer of 2006, include clauses that require successful providers to monitor and report to us on the ethnicity and gender of their employees, and on the number of employees who are disabled.

Pay statement

The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to ensuring that its reward policies are fair and are applied fairly, and that they provide employees with equal pay for work of equal value. Further information on how we intend to meet this commitment is included in the HR section of the Department for Work and Pensions equality schemes.



Progress reporting and reviewing

Reporting progress

We will assess and report annually on the progress we are making on our equality schemes. As part of this process we will continue to involve customers, employers, stakeholders and staff, and use information that we obtain through monitoring and evaluation to inform future plans.

Further information

If you would like any additional information on Jobcentre Plus services or require this document in an alternative format please contact us at the address below, or contact your nearest Jobcentre Plus office. 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

Jobcentre Plus invites and welcomes comments on its equality scheme and we can be contacted as follows:

By post: Jobcentre Plus
 Diversity Team
 Level 1
 Rockingham House
 123 West Street
 Sheffield
 S1 4ER

By e-mail: Diversity-Team@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk

Annex 1:

Assessment of our functions and policies

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
1. Helping disadvantaged people into work as a route out of poverty	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, Condition Management Programmes and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and the provision of written and other material in accessible formats.	High	High	High	Within the next ten years the characteristics of our customers will change considerably; by 2011 only 20% of the workforce will be male, under 45, white and non-disabled. Jobcentre Plus is therefore working to ensure that it has in place accessible and appropriate programmes, services and support to meet the needs of customers, including refugees.
	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 or changes to our programmes and services for the future.	High	High	High	

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
2. To provide financial support as security for people of working age while they are out of work	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.	Low	Low	Low	Entitlement to benefits is in the main determined by standard qualifying conditions, often governed by statutory rulings. Therefore the impact on diversity is neutral because the rules apply across the board. However, Jobcentre Plus does ensure that key information about entitlements is provided in a range of formats to meet the needs of customers, and work to ensure that this continues will be included as part of the activity relating to function 1. We will, however, be looking at processes relating to discretionary payments such as Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants in relation to diversity equality.
	Payment of discretionary benefits, ensuring availability to all who need them in times of crisis, including the Social Fund (for example Crisis Loans).	High	High	Low	
	Gathering information on behalf of the Child Support Agency.	Low	Low	High	
	Working in partnership with colleagues in the Disability and Carers Service to help disabled customers claim Disability Living Allowance.	Low	Low	Low	
	Providing a smooth handover to local authorities for Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims.	Low	High	Low	

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
3. To address inequalities of opportunity	Encouraging employers to offer employment to applicants, including people from ethnic minority groups and disabled people.	High	High	High	Statistics on employment reflect inequalities in levels of employment: for example, the latest estimate of the ethnic minority employment rate is 59.3% which is 15.7 percentage points below the overall employment rate; similarly, for disabled people the employment rate is 46.8% which is over 28 percentage points below the overall employment rate. There is also continuing evidence to show that women still do not have parity in the labour market (source of figures: Labour Force Survey, summer 2005). Activities that we already have in place to address some of these inequalities include Ethnic Minority Outreach, specialist employment advisers and Pathways to Work.
	Working with employers and others to ensure that vacancies are not discriminatory – whether unintentionally or not.	Medium	Medium	Medium	
	Offering advice and support aimed at improving employers' recruitment practices, so that they will encourage more people from diverse groups to apply.	High	High	High	
	Increasing the pool of vacancies that could be filled by our customers – and in doing so helping employers to fill their vacancies.	High	High	High	
	Helping customers to be ready and able to find sustainable employment.	High	High	Medium	

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
	Managing the processes that require jobseekers actively to seek work.	Low	Low	Low	
	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.	High	High	High	
	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.	High	High	High	
4. To address failure in the labour market	Identifying and supporting our customers to access training that improves their employment prospects and matches the needs of local employers.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Jobcentre Plus is committed to reducing the employment gap for people from diverse groups and helping customers to overcome inequalities in the labour market. We are ensuring that we play our part by making services accessible and appropriate to our customers' needs – including working to meet the needs of our employers.
	Matching customers with suitable vacancies, taking into consideration diverse needs.	Low	Low	Low	

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
	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.	Medium	Medium	Medium	
5. Procurement	Providing expert advice to Jobcentre Plus staff to help them buy in, deliver and manage programmes and support services for customers.	High	High	High	Jobcentre Plus supports people who are most disadvantaged within the labour market and, because many of our services and programmes are delivered in partnership with others, we will actively encourage and ensure that our partners take account of diversity and equality in the way that they deliver services on our behalf.
	Undertaking financial management, governance, risk management and control of Jobcentre Plus budgets.	Low	Low	Low	

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
6. Development of partnership working	<p>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 Disability and Carers Service; and • key organisations such as local authorities, the Learning and Skills Council, other government departments and the voluntary sector. 	Medium	Medium	Medium	<p>We are reviewing the way Jobcentre Plus works with partners, e.g. to consider whether there is any evidence that we lack a consistent approach across the organisation. As part of this we will be looking to see that we not only meet legislative requirements but also that activities contribute towards mainstreaming diversity within all our programmes and services.</p>
	Working in partnership with local and regional neighbourhood regeneration organisations.	Medium	Medium	Medium	
	Continuing to develop and maintain good working relationships with local and national ethnic minority community organisations, organisations 'of' and 'for' disabled people, and the Disability Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality.	Medium	Medium	Medium	

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
7. Human resources	<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 that diversity is reflected in all our HR functions. 	Medium	Medium	Medium	<p>Jobcentre Plus already has in place activities and processes aimed at increasing diversity among its people and raising their awareness of diversity equality responsibilities. We are conscious that more needs to be done: we are therefore actively monitoring and reviewing these activities to assess their effectiveness.</p>

Functions	Related policies	Priority			Reason for rating
		Race	Disability	Gender	
8. Customer focus	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.	High	High	Medium	Jobcentre Plus is striving to ensure access and appropriateness of programmes and services. We want to build on existing activities, both formal and informal, and expand our consultation exercises to seek views from, and engage with, a wide range of customers including disabled people.

Annex 2:

Disability equality action plan

This plan reflects the actions identified through our involvement activity with customers. In addition to this work we will still continue to progress issues highlighted in the assessment of our functions and policies included at Annex 1.

Disability equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Ensure that services, specifically telephony through contact centres, do not disadvantage customers.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – To provide financial support as security for people of working age while they are out of work.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the impact of introducing telephony channels as the primary gateway to our services. Staff, customers and representatives from user groups will be involved in this work; • where our services are deficient, take remedial action and publicise on our website what action we are taking; • undertake a publicity campaign to publicise alternative methods of contacting Jobcentre Plus; and • monitor the success of this through our diversity challenge and analysis of customer feedback. 	<p>Autumn 2006 to March 2007</p> <p>June 2007 to October 2007</p> <p>Launch spring 2007 and review 2008</p>	<p>To ensure that customers who cannot access our services, or find it difficult to do so, have equal access and are not disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer's Directorate and External Relations and Communications Directorate</p>

Disability equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Ensure that our IT systems are sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of those customers who require written information in alternative formats.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Customer focus.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • act on feedback from disabled customers and implement solutions, where appropriate; • undertake a stocktake and assessment of flexibility for all our IT systems that interface with customers, for example Jobpoints that provide an interactive vacancy search facility which may not be fully accessible to customers with visual impairments; • seek an IT solution and, where that is not possible, develop alternative interim solutions; and • disseminate guidance on the alternative solutions throughout the organisation and monitor progress through our diversity challenge. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>January 2007</p> <p>From January 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To ensure that IT systems meet the needs of our customers.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Business Design Directorate</p>

Disability equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Work with and support employers in realising the benefits of employing a diverse workforce, including disabled people.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – To address inequalities of opportunity.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with employers to examine and provide support on recruitment and retention policies; and • survey employers to establish recruitment needs, including diversity issues. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>To ensure that more of our diverse customers are supported to move into the labour market.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Chief Operating Officer's Directorate</p>
<p>Work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed with us are not discriminatory.</p> <p>Associated functions from Annex 1 – To address inequalities of opportunity and Helping disadvantaged people into work as a route out of poverty.</p>	<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; and • issue guidance to support staff working with employers to ensure delivery of a high level of customer service. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>As appropriate</p>	<p>To ensure that vacancies we advertise are not unlawfully discriminatory.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate</p>

Disability equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Improve our customers' experience of the accessibility, availability and appropriateness of our services.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – To address failure in the labour market and Development of partnership working.</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 DWP accessibility standards for customers; and • consider recommendations, following the results of our customer satisfaction survey, and report against them. 	<p>Next national involvement exercise December 2007</p> <p>Next customer satisfaction survey 2007</p>	<p>To help us work towards ensuring that all our activities are accessible, appropriate and available for all our customers.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Business Design Directorate</p>
<p>Promote a positive attitude towards disability equality.</p> <p>Associated functions from Annex 1 – Procurement and To address inequalities of opportunity.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that all new policies and processes are impact-assessed; and • monitor the effectiveness of changes made to our procurement activity. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To work towards mainstreaming diversity into everyday activity.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate</p>

Disability equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Encourage participation and involvement of our customers at local and national levels.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – To address inequalities of opportunity.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and disseminate guidance and advice to staff on involvement and consultation, including how to respond to feedback and publish results of activity; • ensure that this guidance is adopted and implemented by all parts of the business through the launch and review of our diversity challenge; and • reinforce the importance of involvement/consultation activity as part of the impact assessment process to ensure that processes and policies do not adversely affect our customers or staff. 	<p>Spring 2007</p> <p>Launch of diversity challenge spring 2007 and start review January 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To ensure that we have in place effective and robust mechanisms for involvement and consultation using customer feedback.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Business Design Directorate and Chief Operating Officer's Directorate</p>

Disability equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Ensure that our diversity and equality training is effectively delivered to all our staff.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce mandatory training on disability equality responsibilities for Jobcentre Plus staff; and continue to evaluate and make improvements to all diversity and equality products. 	<p>December 2006 to April 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To ensure that staff are confident in meeting the needs of diverse customers.</p>	<p>DWP and Jobcentre Plus HR Directorates</p>
<p>Ensure that reasonable adjustments for staff are undertaken quickly and effectively.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pilot, on behalf of DWP, activity that explores options for improving the provision of reasonable adjustments for staff; and report on the numbers of staff identifying and receiving support through reasonable adjustments. 	<p>Pilots taking place which will report spring 2007</p> <p>On a quarterly basis</p>	<p>To ensure that improvements to the reasonable adjustment process are in place.</p>	<p>DWP and Jobcentre Plus HR Directorates</p>
<p>Continue to analyse staff survey results and put measures in place to achieve positive changes.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse the Jobcentre Plus annual people survey by disability. The disability staff network group will lead and flag issues for progression to the appropriate policy team. 	<p>Annually</p>	<p>To ensure that issues for disabled staff are identified and considered.</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus HR Directorate and disability staff network group</p>

Disability equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Ensure that our staff network groups are empowered to make a real contribution to our business.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify good practice based on a stocktake of staff network groups at regional and district levels, and make recommendations for change; and • review the outcomes and recommendations. 	<p>Quarterly</p> <p>July 2007</p>	<p>To ensure that we have in place staff network groups which can make a positive contribution to our business.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Chief Operating Officer's Directorate</p>
<p>Develop an informative and comprehensive diversity and equality internal website.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review content of pages and identify changes required and agree the content with the staff network groups. 	<p>February 2007</p>	<p>To ensure that staff have easy access to the most up-to-date and comprehensive information on diversity and equality.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate</p>
<p>Jobcentre Plus will review its assessment of all functions and policies.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review our original assessment. 	<p>December 2009</p>	<p>We will identify whether our action plan requires amendment.</p>	<p>All Directorates</p>

Annex 3:

Gender equality action plan

This plan reflects the actions identified through our involvement activity with customers. In addition to this work we will still continue to progress issues highlighted in the assessment of our functions and policies included at Annex 1.

Gender equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Work with and support employers in realising the benefits of employing a diverse workforce.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – To address inequalities of opportunity.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with employers to examine and provide support on recruitment and retention policies; and survey employers to establish recruitment needs, including diversity issues. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>To ensure that more of our diverse customers are supported to move into the labour market.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Chief Operating Officer's Directorate</p>
<p>Work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed with us are not discriminatory.</p> <p>Associated functions from Annex 1 – To address inequalities of opportunity and Helping disadvantaged people into work as a route out of poverty.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed with us are not unlawfully discriminatory, providing guidance and advice as appropriate; and issue guidance to support staff working with employers to ensure delivery of a high level of customer service. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>As appropriate</p>	<p>To ensure that vacancies we advertise are not unlawfully discriminatory.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate</p>

Gender equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Improve our customers' experience of the accessibility, availability and appropriateness of our services.</p> <p>Associated functions from Annex 1 – To address failure in the labour market and Development of partnership working.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve and consult with all customers and representative groups; • where appropriate, take action as soon as possible to implement recommendations to enhance or improve our services; and • consider recommendations following the results of our customer satisfaction survey, and report against them. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Next national involvement exercise December 2007</p> <p>Next customer satisfaction survey 2007</p>	<p>To help us work towards ensuring that all our activities are accessible, appropriate and available for all our customers.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Business Design Directorate</p>
<p>Promote and mainstream gender equality into all areas of Welfare Reform policy development and implementation.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with colleagues throughout DWP to develop and implement new policies to ensure that they meet the requirements of the duty, for example the Employment Support Allowance. 	<p>Initial meeting October 2006, with implementation by 2008</p>	<p>To work towards mainstreaming diversity into everyday activity.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Business Design Directorate</p>

Gender equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Promote a positive attitude towards gender equality.</p> <p>Associated functions from Annex 1 – Procurement and To address inequalities of opportunity.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that all new policies and processes are impact-assessed; and monitor the effectiveness of changes made to our procurement activity. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To work towards mainstreaming diversity into everyday activity.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate</p>
<p>Encourage the participation and involvement of our customers at local as well as at a national level.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – To address inequalities of opportunity.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop and disseminate guidance and advice to staff on involvement and consultation, including how to respond to feedback and publish results of activity; ensure that these standards are adopted and implemented by all parts of the business through the launch and review of our diversity challenge; and reinforce the importance of consultation activity as part of the impact assessment process to ensure that processes and policies do not adversely affect our customers or staff. 	<p>Spring 2007</p> <p>Launch of diversity challenge spring 2007 and start review January 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To ensure that we have in place effective and robust mechanisms for involvement and consultation using customers' feedback.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Business Design Directorate and Chief Operating Officer's Directorate</p>

Gender equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Ensure that our diversity and equality training is effectively delivered to all our staff.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce mandatory training on gender equality responsibilities; and • continue to evaluate and make improvements to all diversity and equality products. 	<p>December 2006 to April 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To ensure that staff are confident in meeting the needs of diverse customers.</p>	<p>DWP and Jobcentre Plus HR Directorates</p>
<p>Continue to analyse staff survey results and put in place measures to achieve positive changes.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse the Jobcentre Plus annual people survey by gender. Gender staff network group will lead and flag issues for progression to the appropriate policy team. 	<p>Annually</p>	<p>To ensure that issues for male and female staff are identified and addressed.</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus HR Directorate and gender network group</p>
<p>Ensure that our staff network groups are empowered to make a real contribution to our business.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify good practice based on a stocktake of staff network groups at regional and district levels and make recommendations for change. 	<p>July 2007</p>	<p>To ensure that we have in place staff network groups that can make a positive contribution to the business.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate and Chief Operating Officer's Directorate</p>

Gender equality action plan description	Steps to achieve	To be achieved by (date)	Intended outcome	Responsible
<p>Develop an informative and comprehensive diversity and equality internal website.</p> <p>Associated function from Annex 1 – Human resources.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review content of pages, identify changes required and agree the content with the staff network groups. 	<p>February 2007</p>	<p>To ensure that staff have easy access to the most up-to-date and comprehensive information on diversity and equality.</p>	<p>External Relations and Communications Directorate</p>
<p>Jobcentre Plus will review its assessment of functions and policies.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review our original assessment. 	<p>December 2009</p>	<p>We will identify whether our action plan requires amendments.</p>	<p>All Directorates</p>

Annex 4:

Race equality scheme action plan and progress report

Jobcentre Plus has continued to make significant progress in mainstreaming race equality. For example, we have:

- helped over 170,000 ethnic minority customers find work through New Deal initiatives;
- looked at new ways to deliver services through pilot activity;
- led on developments across DWP for procurement and contract management activity; and
- continued to work with employers to increase ethnic minority representation in the labour market.

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
Employer diversity managers will work with and support employers in creating and retaining a diverse workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobcentre Plus will work with employers to examine and provide support on recruitment and retention policies. • We will promote the benefits of a diverse workforce to employers. • We aim to increase the number of vacancies placed with and filled by Jobcentre Plus. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus has implemented an organisational review in 2006. In that context, the role of employer diversity manager has been incorporated into mainstream operational activity. All employer-facing activity now takes account of race and wider diversity equality considerations.</p> <p>Our national sales team is responding to the strong business case for diversity by reviewing its strategy for working with employers. The team has set up a diversity project group.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Specialist employment advisers will (pilot to March 2006) contribute to community cohesion and social inclusion by improving the employment opportunities for ethnic minority communities by encouraging, facilitating and implementing change in the employment arena.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist employment advisers will provide outreach in areas of high ethnic minority population to encourage these communities to access Jobcentre Plus services. • Working alongside employer diversity managers, specialist employment advisers will work with employers to promote the benefits of employing a diverse workforce. 	<p>Pilot reviewed March 2006</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Pilots have now ended and an evaluation of their activity was published in July 2006. Overall, the seven pilots contributed to 1,370 job outcomes and have shown the benefits of enhanced relations with employers. As part of the pilots, a number of bespoke products to support the business case for diversity have been created. Those, along with other good practice, will be disseminated throughout the organisation to support the mainstreaming of diversity.</p>
<p>Fair Cities is a pilot currently being developed in three areas by the National Employment Panel. The pilot aims to connect people from disadvantaged ethnic minority communities with employer demand for job-ready candidates and skills, increasing employment opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We aim to increase the number of disadvantaged ethnic minority customers who gain steady work and new careers. • We aim to meet employer demand for job-ready candidates. • We will encourage fair and effective employer recruitment and promotion practices. • We aim to increase the responsiveness of the employment and skills system to business and ethnic minority needs. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Fair Cities is operating in three areas: Brent, Bradford and Birmingham. Local board members have now been appointed to steer activities in each location. The pilots are due to end in March 2008.</p> <p>At the end of June 2005, 155 job entries had been achieved.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
Support the 272 local authority wards that have three times the national average ethnic minority population and 1.5 times the national unemployment rate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will take into consideration recommendations made by the Ethnic Minority Business Focus Group. • We will promote best practice in delivering services to ethnic minority customers. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Jobcentre Plus has exceeded anticipated job outcomes in the 272 wards by more than 25% in each of the last two years. We continue to set stretching targets for these areas.
Jobcentre Plus will work with employers accessing our services to place vacancies to ensure that they are not discriminatory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with employers to ensure that vacancies placed are not unlawfully discriminatory, providing guidance and advice as appropriate. • We will issue guidance to support staff working with employers to ensure delivery of a high level of customer service. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved June 2005</p>	In the last 12 months we have successfully dealt with 657 race equality cases.
The Ethnic Minority Flexible Fund will be piloted until March 2006, in areas of high ethnic minority population, coupled with higher than average levels of unemployment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobcentre Plus districts with high ethnic minority populations will be encouraged to pilot and introduce local innovative ideas to move ethnic minority customers closer to and into the labour market. 	Pilot completed March 2006	Over the two years of the pilot, over 2,500 people moved into employment as a result of the Flexible Fund. A further 4,000 benefited from measures which helped them move closer to the labour market. Jobcentre Plus is creating a database of best practice to help inform future decisions for allocating flexible funding streams.

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
Ethnic Minority Outreach will be delivered in areas of high ethnic minority population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers from areas of high ethnic minority population will be encouraged and supported to access Jobcentre Plus services, ensuring that they can move closer to the labour market. 	Ongoing	Ethnic Minority Outreach ended in September 2006. Over its lifetime, it helped over 10,000 people into work – over 4,700 people in 2005–06 alone. Funding from Ethnic Minority Outreach and lessons learned from it are being used to develop future flexible funding programmes.

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will monitor and review the way we deliver information and access to services, including interpreter services and production of written material.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The newly reported DWP communication standards on translation of leaflets will be used to inform which languages written material will be produced in, and how this will be done. • Jobcentre Plus will implement recommendations identified in the internal review of interpreter services to ensure that the needs of customers and representatives from ethnic minority communities are met, while delivering value for money. • We will investigate the development of a language marker for appropriate IT systems to identify customers with ongoing language support requirements. (See the Work and Pensions Select Committee Report <i>Delivery of Services to Ethnic Minority Clients</i>, published on 6 April 2005.) 	<p>Implemented March 2006</p> <p>Implemented November 2006</p> <p>Completed March 2006</p>	<p>We continue to ensure that ethnic minority customers' support requirements are met, to enable them to access our services. Many of our publications and leaflets are now available on the DWP website, already translated into other languages.</p> <p>We have participated in a cross-government review looking at the delivery of telephone interpreting services, to ensure that the needs of our customers are met.</p> <p>A feasibility study into the development of a language marker on our customer service IT systems has been undertaken; implementation will be taken forward when other business changes are implemented.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>The Jobcentre Plus Customer Charter will be reviewed to ensure equality for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the current Customer Charter will be carried out to develop agreed standards that reflect the needs of all our customers. • We will consult with key stakeholders, staff and customers to ensure that the views and needs of all groups are reflected in any changes. 	<p>October 2005</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>We introduced new Jobcentre Plus service standards for customers in April 2006. The standards focus on the importance of meeting the needs of individual customers. Progress towards meeting these standards will be reviewed through analysis of customer feedback and complaints.</p> <p>We are also working with DWP on the development of accessibility standards for customer service, which are intended to be adopted across all the businesses as soon as is possible. We will also take into account findings from our telephony project referred to in our disability action plan.</p>
<p>Jobcentre Plus will evaluate services delivered to ethnic minority customer via results obtained through customer surveys and customer feedback.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobcentre Plus will consult with customers and representative groups from ethnic minorities. • Where appropriate, action will be taken to implement recommendations to enhance or improve our services. • Following the results of the customer satisfaction survey, we will consider the recommendations and report against them. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2006</p>	<p>This work is ongoing. Results from the customer satisfaction survey are now available, as well as the findings of an additional booster survey undertaken specifically to look at the views of ethnic minority customers. We will be addressing the findings and recommendations contained in these reports throughout 2007.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will assess all proposed policies, functions and changes for race impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure that race impact assessments are undertaken when changes are identified to service delivery and our staff. • We will consult with customers, representative groups and staff. • We will evaluate and, if appropriate to the business needs, implement any changes identified. • We will publish the results of our impact assessments. • We will continue to provide staff with training workshops during 2005 to ensure that they effectively utilise the race impact assessment tool. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed December 2005</p>	<p>In 2005 we ran workshops for Jobcentre Plus staff to provide guidance on the requirement to undertake race impact assessments, including the need to publish results.</p> <p>We will reinforce guidance for staff on how and when to impact-assess. This will be reinforced through the development of a diversity impact assessment tool and a diversity challenge, to be launched in early 2007.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout the operational year 2005–06 all regions will publish details of race impact assessments carried out, as well as reporting (quarterly) the number completed through our business planning process. 	2005 to 2006	
<p>Jobcentre Plus will mainstream race equality into all areas of service delivery in frontline services, building on the race equality scheme challenge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will consult and work with customers and representative groups from ethnic minority communities to improve access to services. Jobcentre Plus will monitor progress in meeting the responsibilities under the duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. All proposed changes will be impact-assessed against race equality. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>From July 2005 onwards</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>We continue to collect feedback on services from customers and their representative groups through consultation activity. We are incorporating race equality and wider diversity considerations into our everyday business through the introduction of diversity-focused business planning objectives, the completion of our race equality scheme challenge and action to reflect new equality legislation in our procurement processes.</p> <p>We continue to undertake and publish race impact assessments, which have been integrated into our strategic change management processes. From September 2005 to August 2006 we published 59 race impact assessments.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will review and develop the way in which it monitors and develops systems for gathering ethnicity data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance will be issued to help staff analyse information following amendments to IT systems. • We will monitor IT systems/collation methods and seek continuous improvement. • We will review processes for gathering ethnicity data for customers accessing habitual residence testing and social fund discretionary decisions. • We will monitor ongoing and episodic contact, usage and satisfaction or complaints via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – customer and staff surveys and feedback; – consultation; – HR policies and programmes; – race impact assessments reported through our business planning process; and – continuation of our race equality scheme challenge frameworks. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DWP colleagues have now taken the lead for this area of work in order to ensure that there is consistency across the Department in the collection and monitoring of data.</p> <p>The process has now been reviewed and data on the ethnicity of customers who make a Social Fund claim will be available for analysis in December 2006.</p> <p>We continue to monitor contact with ethnic minority customers through the channels identified.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will mainstream race equality into all areas of our national tier business via a race equality scheme challenge framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop a new framework to raise staff awareness at the national tier of the Jobcentre Plus duty with regard to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This will allow us to baseline all areas of business. 	<p>Completed October 2006</p>	<p>The launch of a race equality scheme framework to national tier colleagues was delayed because Jobcentre Plus was implementing comprehensive changes to its organisational structure from late 2005 onwards. A new framework, which incorporates race, disability and gender, will be launched in spring 2007.</p>
<p>To ensure that our procurement policies and functions do not discriminate on grounds of race, we will review them and implement changes where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure that race equality is part of our provider pre-qualification accreditation system. • We will change our invitation to tender to include a statement on race equality. • We will change provider terms and conditions to incorporate race equality. • We will maintain equality via a Jobcentre Plus quality monitoring strategy. 	<p>Completed October 2005</p> <p>Completed July 2005</p> <p>Completed September 2005</p> <p>Completed July 2005</p>	<p>We now have a provider accreditation system in place, and all changes to our invitation to tender and terms and conditions have been completed and are included in our recently awarded New Deal contracts.</p> <p>Work will continue to ensure that contract management activity reflects legislative responsibilities across all diversity strands.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will work in partnership with external stakeholders to meet the needs of ethnic minority communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting guidance will be introduced to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted to encourage partnership working with ethnic minority representatives, groups and communities. • We will forge joint agreements with other government departments to agree lead responsibilities. • We will work proactively with other organisations to deliver services to ethnic minority customers, ensuring that staff have access to and receive appropriate training and support. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>In the context of our organisational design review, we have taken the opportunity to examine our relationship with partners. We will develop and implement a stakeholder management strategy that fully incorporates our duty to promote diversity.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will review and develop learning products to ensure that staff are fully equipped to advise and support customers from ethnic minority communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are developing Jobcentre Plus products to support our people in delivering the race equality agenda. The proposed products are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a revised induction programme with improved coverage of diversity and equality; – open learning material on employment legislation and customer groups; and – facilitated learning titled ‘Managing Diversity in the Workforce’ and ‘Valuing Diversity’. • In developing these products, we will consult with stakeholders within the business, including the race network groups. 	<p>Products developed and rolled out in 2005</p>	<p>Products have been developed and rolled out and will be reviewed and evaluated regularly in line with legislative developments.</p> <p>We will ensure that all products are easily accessible to all staff from our enhanced internal website on diversity and equality, which is due to be launched in February 2007.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These products, together with the diversity toolkit, will form a route of learning in race equality, cultural awareness and diversity to enable staff and their managers to identify diversity and equality learning requirements. • We shall continue to evaluate and make improvements to all diversity and equality products, taking into account the findings from the evaluation of the diversity toolkit. 		

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will make a positive contribution to the achievement of DWP 2005–08 targets and will increase the representation rates of ethnic minority staff at higher grades.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure the use of Cabinet Office, DWP and Jobcentre Plus development and positive action schemes. • As we move forward through a major re-organisation, we will ensure that we monitor staffing data, which will feed into race impact assessments. • We will assess options in the event of adverse or differential impact being identified in a race impact assessment. • With DWP, we will review progress against targets and options for action. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>We continue to work towards the achievement of our targets, which have been incorporated into DWP's 10-Point Plan. In this context we will be working closely with colleagues at DWP.</p> <p>We will also look at the progress of staff from the wider diversity strands.</p> <p>We carried out a race impact assessment and published the assessment internally as part of our organisational design review.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will contribute to the review of DWP staff policies and procedures to ensure fairness with respect and promotion of race equality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will alert DWP to emerging issues and actively contribute to the review of policies. • We will input into the development of a new DWP IT system to produce better staffing and monitoring statistics. • We will produce action plans for Jobcentre Plus as appropriate, dependent on the outcomes of the review process. • We will review the relevant Jobcentre Plus monitoring statistics. 	<p>Achieved May 2006</p> <p>2005 to 2006</p> <p>As required</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus has actively contributed to the review of DWP staff policies and we will continue to work closely with the Department, updating policies as appropriate.</p>
<p>Jobcentre Plus will monitor the views of ethnic minority staff through the DWP annual people survey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jobcentre Plus annual people survey will be segmented by race. The race staff network group will lead and flag issues for progression to the appropriate policy team. 	<p>Annually</p>	<p>We continue to gather and monitor the views of ethnic minority staff through our survey results.</p> <p>In addition, we expect our recently launched 'Start, Stop, Change' initiative to help identify individuals' concerns.</p> <p>Our race staff network group also analyses the staff survey results to consider whether colleagues from ethnic minority groups are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Currently there are no different areas of concern for staff from ethnic minority groups.</p>

Race equality scheme description	Steps to achieve	Timescales	Update (December 2006)
<p>Jobcentre Plus will support the development of staff from ethnic minority groups to prepare them for work at higher grades.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will ensure that Cabinet Office, DWP and Jobcentre Plus positive action schemes and other development schemes are promoted in Jobcentre Plus. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Jobcentre Plus competency-based coaching and mentoring programme in the London area continues to provide positive results. In the north west region, Jobcentre Plus has also developed a two-year programme – Accessing Ability – that ensures that staff from ethnic minority groups can compete for jobs/ opportunities/promotions on equal terms with other applicants.</p> <p>Evaluation shows that there was an increase in self-belief, competences and skills perceived by participants and confirmed by their line managers.</p>
<p>Jobcentre Plus will review its functions and policies.</p>		<p>2009</p>	<p>We reviewed our functions and policies in December 2006. A further review will fall due 2009.</p>

Annex 5:

Other diversity areas

It is estimated that only 20 per cent of the working age population will be white, male, non-disabled and aged under 45 by 2011. If Jobcentre Plus is to contribute towards the Government's aspiration of increasing the percentage of people in work from the current 75 per cent to 80 per cent, then we need to ensure that our services are responsive to the needs of the 80 per cent of the working age population who will be disabled, over the age of 45, female or from an ethnic minority. Ensuring that we understand and are responsive to the diverse needs of our customers is, therefore, essential to an effective service delivery strategy.

Achievements and progress

Age

- Jobcentre Plus ensures that a range of programmes are available to customers regardless of age, but we also offer a range of services specifically designed for people of different ages, who may have different needs, for example the New Deal for jobless people aged 50+.
- We have worked with DWP colleagues to conduct an audit of programmes and services to ensure that they meet the requirements of the age legislation that came into effect on 1 October 2006.
- As a member of The Age and Employment Network (TAEN), we support and encourage older people to continue working and to adapt their capabilities to changing labour market requirements.
- Our staff network groups will consider age-related issues in relation to the annual staff survey and performance and development system.
- It has been our policy for some years that we will not accept vacancies from employers who discriminate on the grounds of age. We have reviewed and amended guidance for displaying employer vacancies in relation to age discrimination to ensure that this policy can be applied effectively.

Sexual orientation

- DWP established a project team on civil partnerships. Jobcentre Plus is working actively with this project to ensure that both staff and customers are aware of and understand the requirements of the Civil Partnerships Act.
- *Smoothing the Path*, a sexuality guide developed by Jobcentre Plus in Wales, is available to all Jobcentre Plus staff to increase their knowledge and awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

- Our staff network group will consider sexual orientation-related issues in relation to the annual staff survey and performance and development system.
- We have publicised the DWP 'Getting It Right' DVD, which promotes positive attitudes to sexuality throughout Jobcentre Plus.
- We contributed to DWP's achievement of improving its position in Stonewall's workplace equality index from 51st to 3rd in one year.

Faith and belief

- The 'Faith in the Communities' toolkit developed by the London region is widely used by all Jobcentre Plus staff to increase their knowledge and understanding when engaging with customers and communities.
- Jobcentre Plus has worked with faith leaders and communities to deliver outreach facilities in places of worship and at religious festivals and events.



Further copies of this publication in either English or Welsh and in other formats, including Braille, audio and Easy Read, can be obtained by:

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The logo for Jobcentre Plus, featuring the text "jobcentreplus" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The word "job" is in white, "centre" is in yellow, and "plus" is in white. The logo is set against a solid green rectangular background.