

Annex 1: Assessment of functions and policies

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes High, Medium or Low						
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
To design a future Disability and Carers Service with a new architecture; improve and modernise our services for customers	Location strategy	ABC	ABCDE	AB	H	H	H	It impacts on our customers: stage 1 assessments done – stage 2 to be completed.
To design a future Disability and Carers Service with a new architecture; improve and modernise our services for customers	Organisational design	ABC	ABCDE	AB	H	H	H	It impacts on our customers: stage 1 assessments done – stage 2 draft completed.
To treat customers and others with respect and provide an accessible, accurate and efficient service	Our customer promise	ABC	ABCDE	AB	H	H	H	Our customer promise sets out the standard of service we aspire to provide. It impacts across our entire customer base. The emphasis in the statements contained within the promise is on the fact that we will treat all customers as individuals.

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
	Our customer promise design principles	ABC	ABCDE	AB	H	H	H	This supports the customer promise and defines the standard of future service provision we aspire to provide to meet the unique needs of our customers. It highlights where we need to provide additional support to customers whose needs are over and above that of the core services available. For example, some customers will require communications in alternative formats.

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
To provide ongoing consultation with the ministerially approved groups who represent customers with a wide range of impairments, allowing them to comment on and shape the way in which improvements to our service delivery are made	Disability and Carers Service Advisory Forum	A	ABCDE	A	L	H	L	It provides the preliminary mechanism for early face-to-face consultation and two-way communication and interaction between the Disability and Carers Service and customer representatives at an early stage in the development of our change initiatives, and for those organisations to consult with us on these initiatives. This group represents a wide range of customers who have specific impairments or needs. This forum does not explicitly represent race and gender, but consideration is given to all issues of equality.

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes High, Medium or Low						
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
Disability Contact and Processing Unit staff working on additional telephone sections to assist the helpline	To provide an accessible service to our customers		AD		L	H	L	We need to ensure that staff are provided with the opportunity to perform all duties of their role, and that staff with reasonable adjustments are not required to perform duties that could provide a detriment.
Carer's Allowance	All internal and administrative policies and procedures	B	CDE	B	H	H	H	We need to ensure that the Department's policies on equality and diversity are always given high priority when Carer's Allowance Unit policies and procedures are developed.

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes High, Medium or Low						
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
To make consistently accurate and correct decisions on claims to our benefits	In consultation with Adjudication and Constitutional Issues and Benefit Policy Division, to accurately and clearly reflect legislative and policy changes to the guidance issued to decision makers The introduction of improved guidance for decision makers, to improve decision making from the outset	AB	CD	A	H	H	H	The standard of decision making in the Disability and Carers Service affects every customer. Work is ongoing to test the concept of customer case management – an end-to-end approach to handling the Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance claims process – which includes the provision of comprehensive medical guidance for decision makers.

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
								Accreditation of Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance decision makers is in the early planning stages. This is a means of improving the programme of learning and development for decision makers, enhancing individuals' skills and formally recognising decision makers' competency through a process of certification by an external academic body.
To ensure that our appeals process delivers an efficient service	The Decision Makers Guide and Code of Appeals Procedures are owned by Adjudication and Constitutional Issues. These are supported by information in our Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance Decision Makers Procedural Guide	AB	CD	A	H	H	H	Through the Modernising Appeals Joint Steering Committee, we are working with the Tribunal Service to improve the service to our customers and reduce the overturn rate at appeal tribunals.

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
<p>Putting our customers first</p> <p>To provide an excellent service that is accurate, accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of our customers</p>	<p>Our vision and mission statements in the Disability and Carers Service business plan 2005/06</p> <p>Objectives 4 and 5 of the Department for Work and Pensions 2002 Public Service Agreement</p> <p>DDA 2005</p> <p>Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000</p> <p>The Disability and Carers Service Accessibility Guide is currently being updated to provide staff with improved guidance on how to obtain goods and services in alternative formats</p>	ABC	ABCDE	AB	H	H	M	<p>Given our customer base, we need to ensure that the Agency complies with the requirements of DDA 2005 and that our services are as accessible as possible.</p> <p>We need to identify and break down the barriers to take-up of our benefits by harder-to-reach groups.</p> <p>There is a legal obligation under the DDA for government organisations to be proactive in this field.</p>

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
	<p>The Disability and Carers Service outreach strategy is being developed with the aim of appointing full-time outreach officers across the business who will work with suitable third-party intermediaries to target the harder-to-reach groups, with the emphasis on ethnic minority communities, children and carers. Corporate guidelines are to be developed for the incoming outreach officers</p>							

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
Listening to and learning from what our customers tell us	<p>The Disability and Carers Service 2005 customer service survey (MORI)</p> <p>The Disability and Carers Service complaints handling procedures – the Department for Work and Pensions executive team agreed in January 2005 that an independent case examiner process should be introduced across the Department.</p> <p>Revised guidance and procedures to support the independent case examiner process were introduced for our staff in October 2005</p>	ABC	ABCD	AB	H	H	M	<p>The 2005 customer service survey (MORI) was commissioned to gather important, independent information about the service we provide. Information from the survey will be used to shape future service delivery. Information from the 2005 survey will be used as a baseline to assess how we are performing against the different elements of the customer promise and will also pick up on issues and trends identified in the 2004 survey and measure how we have progressed against these.</p> <p>Feedback from customer complaints and from the independent case examiner will be used to improve our service delivery.</p>

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
<p>Working with partners</p> <p>To work closely with our partners to provide our shared customers with the best possible service</p>	<p>Our vision and mission statements in the Disability and Carers Service business plan 2005/06</p> <p>DDA 2005</p> <p>Partnership agreements with The Pension Service, Jobcentre Plus, Child Support Agency and Debt Management. A partnership agreement with The Appeals Service is currently in draft</p> <p>The partnership agreements set out an understanding between the Disability and Carers Service and our partner of the levels of service and standards required of each other</p>	ABC	ABCD	AB	M	M	M	<p>We need to be able to monitor through the partnership agreements that the level of service our shared customers receive from partners is consistent.</p> <p>We will be working closely with our partners, looking at ways we can work proactively to improve the accessibility of our services.</p>

Functions	Related policies	Relevance to general duty			Priority			Reason for rating
		Refer to key on p. 55 for codes			High, Medium or Low			
		Race	Disability	Gender	Race	Disability	Gender	
	<p>The partnership agreements aim to ensure that customers are dealt with by both organisations in an efficient and effective manner</p> <p>The partnership agreements are all reviewed on a regular basis and staff guidance is updated and cascaded as required</p>							

Key to codes:

Race general duty

The race general duty asks: Does the policy pay due regard to:

- A Eliminating racial discrimination
- B Promoting equal opportunities
- C Promoting good race relations

Disability general duty

The disability general duty will ask: Does the policy pay due regard to:

- A Eliminating unlawful disability discrimination
- B Eliminating unlawful harassment of disabled people
- C Promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people
- D Taking steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities
- E Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled persons and encouraging participation in public life

Gender general duty

The gender general duty will ask: Does the policy pay due regard to:

- A Eliminating unlawful gender discrimination
- B Promoting equality of opportunity between women and men