

**DCU**

Ollscoil Chathair  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City University

**SECTION 42 OF THE IRISH HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY COMMISSION  
ACT 2014**

**PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS DUTY (THE DUTY)**

**Reporting Obligations**

The Office of the Chief Operations Officer has responsibility for ensuring corporate compliance. Adherence to Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 is one element of such compliance. The Office of the Chief Operations Officer, may review your Department/Unit/Campus Company/Work Area/Operational Area to ensure corporate compliance under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

All public bodies in Ireland have a responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users, and everyone affected by their policies and plans. This is a legal obligation called the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. It is contained in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (the Commission) has an assistance and monitoring role in relation to the statutory obligation under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

***What are the reporting obligations of a public body under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty?***

Section 42(2) of this Act requires public bodies to undertake a three-step process of self-assessment and reporting. A public body must set out an **Assessment** in its strategic plan (DCU Strategy 2023 – 2028 Transformation for an Unscripted Future) (Strategic Pillar “Value and Develop Our Staff Community” Pillar No 3 “Inclusion”) of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose, and the policies, plans and actions proposed, or in place, to **Address** these issues. This must be done while having regard to its size and the resources available to it. A public body must then **Report** on progress against these actions in its annual report (or equivalent).

The Office of the Chief Operations Officer (OCCO) requests that you complete this Questionnaire please and return it in hard copy to OCCO by the agreed deadline of Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

## Implementation of the Duty

The Irish Human Rights Commission has recommended that, in implementing the Duty, organisations should keep a focus on the groups set out below, covered by the nine protected grounds under equality legislation:

- Gender (including gender identity and gender expressions)
- Civil status
- Family status (including lone parents and carers)
- Age
- Disability (defined broadly in the legislation to include medical conditions, mental health and invisible disabilities)
- Sexual Orientation
- Race (encompassing race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion
- Membership of the Traveller community: and at risk of poverty and social exclusion, in effect a socio-economic status ground.

DCU is required to implement the Duty across all functional areas. The 10 core functional areas identified as an integral element of the consultation phase of the Duty are:

1. Teaching and Learning
2. Employment
3. Corporate Governance
4. Research and Innovation
5. Access and Community Outreach
6. Placement
7. Support for Student Wellbeing
8. Provision of Student Accommodation
9. DCU Students
10. Recreational and Visitor Services

## Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues

This assessment of equality and human rights issues is a required step as part of the statutory obligations of DCU as a public body under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

This assessment is evidence based and involves consultation with the core functional areas identified above. The values framework is used in setting out the assessment, presenting the key equality and human rights issues aligned to the values of: Respect, Agency, Inclusion, Participation and Social Justice. In reality, all five areas are interlinked and can even overlap.

**The Questionnaire asks the Manager/Director of the 10 core functional areas, to set out the measures in place to deliver the values framework and to identify gaps and to elaborate on actions required to address such gaps.**

## Links to assist with the completion of this Questionnaire

<https://www.dcu.ie/hr/edi-equality-diversity-inclusion>

## Assessment Criteria No 1 – Respect

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 describes **RESPECT** as including such ideals as *dignity, human worth, and care, involving fair treatment, a safe environment and valuing people.*

Drawing on your knowledge and the experience of working with the people to whom your Department/Unit/Campus Company provides services and the experiences and knowledge of co-workers, can you please elaborate on the measures taken within your operational area to prevent:

- Discrimination in accessing and participating in employment and services.
- Systematic institutionalisation of negative treatment based on identity, ableism, ageism, racism, sexism, sectarianism, homophobia, transphobia.
- Identity based violence, abuse, and harassment across the identified groups
- Hostile working and learning environments and culture.

**Core Functional Area – Teaching & Learning – Outline the measures in place to deliver the Values Framework.**

**Identify any Gaps in the delivery of the Values Framework as part of this Assessment.**

**List the Actions required to address the identified Gaps:**

**Set out a realistic Timeline to address the identified Gaps:**

**Assessment Criteria No 2 – Agency**

In the context of Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (IHREC), *Agency refers to autonomy, choice, and self-determination, involving availability of and access to a range of options.*

Drawing on the knowledge and the experience of working with the people to whom your Department/Unit/Campus Company provides services and the experiences and the knowledge of co-workers, can you please elaborate on the measures taken within your operational area to ensure that equality and human rights issues addressed in your operational area include:

- Real and accessible options to allow for an adequate range of choices, for staff and students across the identified groups.
- Any instances of where an individual experienced a lack of Agency due to inadequate resources, legal status or inadequate supports for staff and students.
- Lack of access to appropriate and accessible information and support to enable informed choices for staff and students

**Core Functional Area - Teaching & Learning – Outline the measures in place to deliver the Values Framework:**

**Identify any Gaps in the delivery of the Values Framework as part of this Assessment:**

**List the Actions required to address identified Gaps:**

**Set out a realistic Timeline to address the identified Gaps:**

**Assessment Criteria No 3 – Inclusion**

In the context of Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (IHREC), *Inclusion is about valuing diversity, ensuring flexibility, achieving a sense of belonging and being person centred, involving universal design and recognition for and flexibility in addressing specific needs.*

Can you please elaborate on how your Department/Unit/Campus Company/ work area addresses the requirement to foster and encourage **Inclusion** in your operational area?

Can you demonstrate how your operational area provides reasonable accommodation for diversity, including how do you address specific needs, encourage access to and participation in education, training, and employment across the identified groups ?

- How does your team enhance visibility for diversity and encourage a culture of visibility for diversity within the University across the identified groups?
- Does your team acknowledge and respond to intersectionality across the identified groups?
- How would you assess the understanding and/or capacity of your team regarding equality and human rights issues, including understanding and responding to diversity?
- Are you aware of any social isolation and social exclusion across the identified groups that your team would have dealings with?

**Core Functional Area – Teaching & Learning – Outline the measures in place to deliver the Values Framework:**

**Identify any Gaps in the delivery of the Values Framework as part of this Assessment:**

**List the Actions required to address the identified Gaps:**

**Set out a realistic Timeline to address the identified Gaps:**

**Assessment Criteria No 4 – Participation**

In Section 42 of the IHREC Act 2014, *Participation encompasses voice and accountability, involving empowerment, listening, and ensuring that an individual is heard and that they have influence and a meaningful say in decision making.*

Can you please describe how your operational area promotes the values of **Participation**, incorporating the following themes set out below:

- Access to decision making structures and systems and levels of influence on decision making for staff and students of the identified groups.
- Levels of staff and student diversity
- Existence of feedback structures to those in management positions of the identified groups
- Participation in research and research methodologies of the identified groups
- Empowerment of staff and students of the identified groups

**Core Functional Area – Teaching & Learning – Outline the measures in place to deliver the Values Framework:**

**Identify any Gaps in the delivery of the Values Framework as part of this Assessment:**

**List the Actions required to address the identified Gaps:**

**Set out a realistic Timeline to address the identified Gaps:**

**Assessment Criteria No 5 – Social Justice**

Social Justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities. Section 42 of IHREC Act 2014 states that *Social Justice is about resources and capabilities to flourish, involving action to enable achievement of outcomes.*

Can you please describe how in your Operational Area, you address Social Justice in terms of the following themes:

- Poverty and material deprivation
- Unequal outcomes across the identified groups
- Poor education outcomes and or/low skills status of the identified groups
- Barriers to employment
- Lack of in-work progression
- Digital inequality
- Soft barriers to participation
- Unequal health statutes
- Self-harm and suicide
- Availability of and access to mental health supports

**Core Functional Area – Teaching & Learning – Outline the measures in place to deliver the Values Framework:**

**Identify any Gaps in the delivery of the Values Framework as part of this Assessment.**

**List the Actions required to address the identified Gaps:**

**Set out a realistic Timeline to address the identified Gaps:**