

EQUALITY ACT 2010

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the structure of the Act

13. The Act consists of 16 Parts and 28 Schedules. The general arrangement of the Act is as follows:

<i>PART</i>	<i>SUMMARY</i>
Part 1	Imposes a duty on certain public bodies to have due regard to socio-economic considerations in making strategic decisions.
Part 2 including Schedule 1	<p>Establishes the key concepts on which the Act is based including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characteristics which are protected (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation); • the definitions of direct discrimination (including because of a combination of two relevant protected characteristics), discrimination arising from disability, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. <p>These key concepts are then applied in the subsequent Parts of the Act.</p>
Part 3 including Schedules 2 and 3	Makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person when providing a service (which includes the provision of goods or facilities) or when exercising a public function.
Part 4 including Schedules 4 and 5	Makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person when disposing of (for example, by selling or letting) or managing premises.
Part 5 including Schedules 6, 7, 8 and 9	Makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person at work or in employment services. Also contains provisions relating to equal pay between men and women; pregnancy and maternity pay; provisions making it unlawful for an employment contract to prevent an employee disclosing his or her pay; and a power to require private sector employers to publish gender pay gap (the size of the difference between men and women's pay expressed as a percentage) information about differences in pay between men and women. It also contains provisions restricting the circumstances in which potential employees can be asked questions about disability or health.
Part 6 including Schedules 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14	Makes it unlawful for education bodies to discriminate against, harass or victimise a school pupil or student or applicant for a place.

*These notes refer to the Equality Act 2010 (c.15)
which received Royal Assent on 8 April 2010*

PART	SUMMARY
Part 7 including Schedules 15 and 16	Makes it unlawful for associations (for example, private clubs and political organisations) to discriminate against, harass or victimise members, associates or guests and contains a power to require political parties to publish information about the diversity of their candidates.
Part 8	Prohibits other forms of conduct, including discriminating against or harassing of an ex-employee or ex-pupil, for example: instructing a third party to discriminate against another; or helping someone discriminate against another. Also determines the liability of employers and principals in relation to the conduct of their employees or agents.
Part 9 including Schedule 17	Deals with enforcement of the Act's provisions, through the civil courts (in relation to services and public functions; premises; education; and associations) and the employment tribunals (in relation to work and related areas, and equal pay).
Part 10	Makes terms in contracts, collective agreements or rules of undertakings unenforceable or void if they result in unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
Part 11 including Schedules 18 and 19	Establishes a general duty on public authorities to have due regard, when carrying out their functions, to the need: to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations. Also contains provisions which enable an employer or service provider or other organisation to take positive action to overcome or minimise a disadvantage arising from people possessing particular protected characteristics.
Part 12 including Schedule 20	Requires taxis, other private hire vehicles, public service vehicles (such as buses) and rail vehicles to be accessible to disabled people and to allow them to travel in reasonable comfort.
Part 13 including Schedule 21	Deals with consent to make reasonable adjustments to premises and improvements to let dwelling houses.
Part 14 including Schedules 22 and 23	Establishes exceptions to the prohibitions in the earlier parts of the Act in relation to a range of conduct, including action required by an enactment; protection of women; educational appointments; national security; the provision of benefits by charities and sporting competitions.
Part 15	Repeals or replaces rules of family property law which discriminated between husbands and wives.
Part 16 including Schedules 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28	Contains a power for a Minister of the Crown to harmonise certain provisions in the Act with changes required to comply with EU obligations. It contains general provisions on application to the Crown, subordinate legislation, interpretation, commencement and extent. It also contains amendments to the Civil Partnership Act 2004 to allow civil partnership registrations to take place on religious premises that are approved for that purpose.