

Legal issues

This information sheet is designed to provide a brief introduction to the legal issues you may encounter when planning and running a project. Some of this legislation may vary within countries of the UK.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995

The DDA Act aims to end the discrimination which many disabled people face. This gives disabled people rights in employment, access to goods, facilities and services and education.

Web link

www.disability.gov.uk

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

This act is the main piece of health and safety legislation in the UK. It sets out the general duties that employers have towards employees and members of the public and employees have to themselves and each other.

Web link

www.hse.gov.uk

Employment issues

There are a large amount of employment legal issues. The DTI website provides information on employment relations such as legislation, trade unions, redundancy and employment contracts. The Department for Work and Pensions can provide specific links to Jobcentre Plus for recruitment advice and the Pension Service for information on state and private pensions.

Web links

www.dti.gov.uk/er/regs.htm

www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/website.asp

Volunteer management

Voluntary England and the CSV publish information and give training and advice on managing volunteers.

Web links

www.volunteering.org.uk

www.csv.org.uk

Child, young people and vulnerable adults protection

Various legal requirements are in place to give protection. The Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) helps employers identify candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, for example where there is contact with children, disabled or older people. It achieves this through its disclosure (police check) service.

Web links

www.crb.gov.uk

www.crb.gov.uk/downloads/childprotect.pdf

www.youthlink.co.uk/childprotection

www.youthlink.co.uk/childprotection

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/07/58/24/04075824.pdf

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Tendering

If you will be buying goods or services as part of your project, you may need to go through a tendering process, particularly for large contracts. A tender is normally an offer in writing to carry out work or supply goods at a fixed price. Submitting these is common for businesses supplying goods or services to other businesses or the public sector.

Public sector bodies, in particular, have specific tendering processes.

Web link

www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.s=sl&topicId=1073900012

Insurance

There are many insurances available to protect your organisation, yourself and people involved in your projects. It is essential to have adequate insurance cover. You should seek professional advice, for example from the British Insurance Brokers' Association website.

Web link

www.biba.org.uk/consumer/findbroker.asp

Value Added Tax (VAT)

VAT is 'a tax on the final consumption of certain goods and services'. If you have any queries on VAT we suggest you contact HM Revenue and Customs or talk to an accountant.

Web link

customs.hmrc.gov.uk

The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI)

If you are a public authority the FOI Act requires you to provide the public with certain information if they request it. The act sets out the type of information that must be provided, what is excluded and the timescales for dealing with requests.

The DPA gives individuals certain rights regarding information held about them and it places obligations on those who process this data. Personal information covers both facts and opinions about the individuals.

Web link

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/

Copyright and licences

You should consider copyright issues when creating original work in certain fields, for example literature, music, film and drama. There is no official register for copyright: it comes into effect immediately, as soon as something that can be protected is created and 'fixed' in some way, for example, on film or paper. There is a Government portal on intellectual property (IP), which has more information about copyright and useful links.

Web link

www.intellectual-property.gov.uk/

Legal issues

There is a huge array of licences and permits needed depending on the nature of an organisation and its activities. Business Link provides a useful licence and permit checklist.

Web link

www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdot/action/filter

Equality and diversity

You need to consider equality and diversity within your project. There are two agencies in the UK at the forefront of equality and diversity. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) is the leading agency to eliminate sex discrimination and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) aims for a 'just and integrated society, where diversity is valued'.

Web link

www.eoc.org.uk