



## Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Template

This form is intended to help you decide whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is needed and, if it is, to carry out the assessment of impact.

Assessing equality impact is a useful way of improving policy development and service delivery, making sure that we consider the needs of our students, employees and the wider community we serve, identify potential steps to advance equality and foster good relations, and do not discriminate unlawfully.

EqIA is part of the University's public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the associated Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The Equality Act specifies the following 'protected characteristics': age, disability, race (including ethnicity and nationality), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage or civil partnership. This form uses 'equality group' to mean persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.

The University has a general equality duty to have due regard to the **needs** to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Under the Scottish Regulations, the University has a specific duty – subject to relevance and proportionality - to assess the impact of applying proposed new or revised policies and practices against the needs above. 'Policy and practice' should be interpreted widely to include the full range of the Universities policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services – essentially everything we do.

The form includes some administrative details about the policy/practice, a screening analysis to indicate whether full EqIA is required, and then a number of questions to enable full EqIA. All policies and practices that are being developed or reviewed should be screened and, where indicated, subject to full EqIA.

This form is designed to lead you through the process of EqIA through asking pertinent questions and the provision of examples. Answers should be recorded after each question or set of questions and the form can be expanded as required. Answers may be as long or short as is necessary and relevant, bearing in mind that the effort involved in EqIA should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy or practice to equality.

Once completed, this form will be the record of the screening and, where applicable, the EqIA of the policy or practice. All full EqIAs are published.

It is recommended that you undertake our online training on Equality and Diversity and EqIA before you carry out EqIA. This can be found at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/equality-diversity/training-resources/e-diversity-training>

A. Policy or Practice (name or brief description): Timetabling Policy
B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: <p>Name: Scott Rosie</p> <p>Job title: Registry Assistant Director - Timetabling</p> <p>School/service/unit: Academic Registry</p>
D. Screening Analysis <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the policy or practice affect primary or high level functions of the University?</li> <li>2. Is the policy or practice relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' set out in the introduction above)?</li> <li>3. Is the policy or practice one on which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA?</li> </ol> <p><b>All of the above</b></p>
E. Screening outcome <p>If the answer to any of questions in section D above is 'Yes', an Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out on the proposed/revised policy or practice at an early stage and in any event before it is finalised.</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessment required: Yes/</p> <p>Record any notes about the screening process or outcome here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If EqIA is required, note when/at what stage(s) and by whom EqIA will be carried out.</li> <li>• If EqIA is not required, note any plans for review, monitoring or other action (including the communication of any favourable equality impact).</li> </ul>
F. Sign-off <p>Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)):  Scott Rosie – Registry Assistant Director – Timetabling  Maggie Marr</p> <p>Accepted by (name):  [This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named in 3 above. If not, specify job-title/role.]</p> <p>Date:</p>

If EqIA is not being carried out, delete the remainder of this form and send the completed form to [equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk](mailto:equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk).

## G. Equality Impact Assessment

Before assessing the policy/practice, ensure that you have a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy or practice, the context, the intended beneficiaries and the results aimed for.

In answering the questions below:

- Bear in mind that the extent of EqIA should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy/practice to equality. It may not be practicable or necessary to answer every question or address every potential scenario.
- Focus mainly on aspects of the policy/practice that are most relevant to the question, to ensure most attention is given to the most important areas.
- Relate answers to consideration of the available evidence and address any gaps or disparities revealed, where feasible without disproportionate effort. For new policies, assess potential impact.
- Describe any action identified to address any issues highlighted.
- Where there is potential for adverse impact, but the policy/practice will still be applied, indicate the rationale for that decision.

1. Overview. Indicate the current status of the policy/practice or the stage of development/review. Also note any general comments here regarding the relevance and significance of the policy/practice to equality. Which aspects of the policy/practice are particularly relevant (which should be the main focus for EqIA). On what aspects of equality does the policy/practice particularly impact?

**The Shared Academic Timetabling Policy and Guidance document was initially ratified by the Curriculum & Student Progression Committee in Jan 12. The policy was drafted to support key policy outcomes from the Shared Academic Timetabling (SAT) project, for implementation during the 12/13 academic year.**

**The policy generally relates to the positive impact the new approach to timetabling can bring to the student experience, but also contains a section “Equality and Diversity” which needs significant review and enhancement to align the policy with EIA requirements**

2. To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant? The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are (delete as applicable)
  - Disability
  - race (including ethnicity and nationality)
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - pregnancy and maternity

In answering the questions below consider each of these equality groups. As part of this, consider diversity within, as well as between groups (e.g. different disabilities, different racial groups). Consider the implications of combinations of protected characteristics e.g. issues of relevance to women will vary once race, religion and age are taken into consideration. Also consider the impact on those with caring/family responsibilities (which tends to impact more on women).

3. What evidence is available about the needs of relevant groups? E.g. information/feedback from equality groups or other stakeholders, involvement or research with equality groups or individuals, equality monitoring data, service monitoring data, information for other similar policies/practices, staff surveys, research reports, demographic information, audit, inspection or management reports and recommendations.

**Of the groups identified, Disability is the most clearly definable as there is a greater likelihood a student will declare this for inclusion against their student record. The availability of this data can inform the timetabling process in respect to room allocation. Other identified groups may or may not become relevant through the timetabling process, and is not necessarily information recorded by the University, so are not included as part of the initial timetabling process. However, through initial White Paper consultation, there exists a distinct reference to family-friendly policies as part of timetabling.**

Where are the gaps in evidence? If there is insufficient information to properly assess the policy, how will this be addressed? If information cannot be gathered now, consider building monitoring into the plans for implementation/review of the policy/practice. Note: The resources put into collecting evidence should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy/practice to equality.

**There has been a gap in making appropriate use of disability information to inform the timetabling process. Key adjustments to timetable allocations have generally been handled retrospectively. Individual student data will be included in the timetabling process for the first time for 13/14, which will include registered disability information to aid timetable planning**

**Individual student data for timetabling will not include information relating to other identified 'protected characteristics' so can only be addressed as they are declared in relation to timetabling. However, the SAT Timetabling Policy will be updated to include specific reference to all potentially relevant protected characteristic groups.**

4. Might the application of this policy/practice lead to discrimination, harassment or victimisation? Might it result in less favourable treatment for particular groups or give rise to indirect discrimination?

**The policy might lead to discrimination insofar that it doesn't make specific reference to all identified groups and the steps identified to address their particular needs – although this is unlikely in reality. Timetabling is a highly-devolved process so there will be a need to ensure the policy is kept visible to all Schools**

5. Are reasonable adjustments built in where they may be needed?

**Timetabling will need to be more proactive in establishing feedback mechanisms and more clearly-defining those already mentioned in the policy document.**

6. Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>1</sup>? Will it help to:

- remove or minimise disadvantage
- meet the needs of different groups
- encourage increased participation of particular groups
- take account of disabled people's impairments?

**The policy/practice makes a clear contribution to the first and fourth bullet points. A**

**more flexible approach to timetabling (facilitated by the new timetabling system) will help to create timetables that can best meet student needs; and the recent updated survey of disabled access capabilities to all centrally-managed teaching space, coupled with better use of student data, enables Timetabling to make a positive impact in this category**

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<sup>1</sup> This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

7. Is there an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations between people in any protected group and those who are not<sup>2</sup>? Will it help to tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding?

**The policy can help to address specific concerns within protected groups by showing timetabling can be an inclusive process that takes many factors and requirements into account – although it's difficult to gauge whether this would foster relations between protected and non-protected groups**

8. Is there evidence (or an expectation) that people from different protected groups have different needs or experiences in relation to the policy/practice? If so, what are they?

**There is clear evidence that students with particular disabilities have specific needs from the timetabling process that would differ from others (already addressed in previous sections) There is also an expectation that certain other protected groups will, on occasion, look to flexibility in timetabling to support their status. The policy will be updated to explicitly reflect these expectations**

9. Is there evidence (or an expectation) of higher or lower uptake by any protected group(s)? If so, give details of the differences and the reasons for these (if known)?

**No current evidence on level of uptake – although timetabling requirements for certain types of disability are dealt with as a requirement, rather than through uptake.**

10. Is any protected group excluded from participating in or accessing the service or functions? If so, why?

**All taught students automatically participate in the timetabling process**

11. Does the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups? For example, because of the time when the service is delivered or because of restricted income?

**Timetabling creates no barriers in this respect**

12. How are relevant equality groups or communities involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?

**There is a wide range of contributors to the SAT Policy & Guidance, covering both the academic and professional support service communities. The Student Disability Service plays an important role in helping to ensure the policy addresses key requirements for disabled access provision.**

13. Are there any other points to note regarding the potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations? If so, note these here.

**None at present**

## **H. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome**

There is a legal obligation to take account of the results of the EqIA in the development of a new or revised policy or practice. Having considered the answers in section G, select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed. Delete the options that do not apply.

<sup>2</sup> This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership.

Option 2: Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality, and/or to foster good relations. This may involve removing or changing the aspect of the policy/practice that creates any negative or unwanted impact. It may also involve introducing additional measures to reduce or mitigate any potential negative impact.

State the steps to be taken to adjust the policy or where these are specified in section G.

- **The existing SAT policy will be updated to make more explicit reference to EIA requirements in respect to protected groups**
- **A more proactive approach to feedback mechanisms: including an opportunity for students/staff to leave online feedback regarding quality/suitability of teaching space; and looking for ways to use course feedback to identify any timetabling-related issues**

## **I Action and Monitoring**

1. Specify the actions required to implement the findings of this EqIA.

- **The existing SAT policy will be updated to make more explicit reference to EIA requirements in respect to protected groups. A review is in progress with the intention of submission (by 15/04/13) for approval, subject to initial approval by SAT Project Board on 12/04/13, by the University's Curriculum & Student Progression Committee on its scheduled meeting date of 25/04/13**
- **A more proactive approach to feedback mechanisms: including an opportunity for students/staff to leave online feedback regarding quality/suitability of teaching space; and looking for ways to use course feedback to identify any timetabling-related issues**
  - **In agreement with the Disability Office, a message will be placed on the new 'Bookable Rooms' website emphasising the requirement for Schools to ensure PEEP-based arrangements are in place for assisted evacuation from buildings.**

2. State how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).

- **Through the introduction of an online feedback mechanism via the Timetabling Unit's 'Bookable Rooms' website to assess feedback relating to the provision of teaching space. This will be delivered by September 2013. This feedback mechanism will be advertised to all relevant student and staff groups (e.g. EUSA representatives, Course Organisers and Personal Tutors) on an annual basis, at the start of each academic year, as well as providing visible links from existing websites, where appropriate. Feedback on the quality of teaching space provision will be regularly reviewed by the University's Learning & Teaching Space Advisory Group (LTSAG) as part of informing longer-term strategies for the provision and maintenance of teaching space.**
- **Through the introduction of an online feedback mechanism via the Timetabling Policy webpage to enable students and staff to comment on issues relating to the policy and its practical interpretations. This will be delivered by September 2013. This feedback mechanism will be advertised to all relevant student and staff groups (e.g. EUSA representatives, Course Organisers and Personal Tutors) on an annual basis, at the start of each academic year, as well as providing visible links from existing websites, where appropriate.**

- **Quarterly reviews of feedback received will be held and used to inform ongoing improvements and developments to policies and processes.**

3. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?

**2014**

#### **J. Publication of EqIA**

The University HR Services publishes EqIAs on its Equality website. There is a statutory requirement to publish EqIAs within a reasonable period. However, in some circumstances there may be valid reasons to limit what is published or to delay publication.

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes/ with a revision to follow in line with updated SAT Policy and Guidance If No – please specify when it may be published or indicate restrictions that apply.

#### **J. Sign-off**

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)):

Scott Rosie – Registry Assistant Director - Timetabling

Accepted by (name): Scott Rosie

[This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named in C above. If not, specify job-title/role.]

Date:19/03/13

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to .