



Equality Impact Assessment

A. Policy or Practice (name or brief description):

**Taught Assessment Regulations 2014/15
Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2014/15**

B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable):

Changes proposed following the annual assessment regulations review.

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Ailsa Taylor and Susan Hunter**

Job title: **Academic Policy Officer**

School/service/unit: **Academic Services**

D. Screening Analysis

1. Does the policy or practice affect primary or high level functions of the University?
Yes
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)?
Yes
3. Is the policy or practice one on which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA?
Yes

E. Screening outcome

Equality Impact Assessment required: **Yes**

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) carried out by Ailsa Taylor and Susan Hunter (Academic Services) on behalf of the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC). EqIA to be carried out prior to the start of 2014/15.

F. Sign-off

Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): **Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer
Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer**

Accepted by (name): **Sara Welham, Head of Governance Team, Academic Services**

Date: **6 June 2014**

G. Equality Impact Assessment

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 assessment regulations are revised annually by CSPC. The 2013/14 regulations are currently in force and will be replaced by the 2014/15 regulations on 15 September 2014.

The regulations have been Equality Impact Assessed because they apply to all students in the University.

The regulations were last Equality Impact Assessed in May 2013 following the annual review of the regulations. Since then minor revisions to the regulations have been made for clarification purposes.

2. To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant? Policies/practices applying to substantial groups of students or staff will be relevant to all equality groups, which should be noted. However, also indicate any equality groups for which the policy/practice is particularly relevant, and why.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are (delete any that are not relevant):

- Age
- Disability: **Reasonable adjustment covered in regulations 18 (taught) and 9 (research); Special Circumstances covered in regulation 39 (taught)**
- race (including ethnicity and nationality): **Plagiarism aspects – advice elsewhere, links given in the guidance; Language ability – proof reading reference provides a source of potential advice in regulations 27 (taught) and 18 (research)**
- religion or belief: **Scheduling of exams regulation 22.2 (taught)**
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity: **Special Circumstances Committee regulation 39 (taught)**
- marriage or civil partnership¹

The regulations are relevant to all protected characteristics. The regulations highlighted above illustrate where measures are put in place to prevent possible negative impacts on particular groups and to promote opportunities to eliminate discrimination.

3. What evidence is available about the needs of relevant equality 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.

The Equality and Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee (EDMARC) and

¹ Note: only the duty to eliminate discrimination applies to marriage and civil partnership. There is no need to have regard to advancing equality or opportunity or fostering good relations in this respect.

CSPC receive reports on student progression and award data, some of which relates to the protected characteristics groups. CSPC is reviewing its use of data and is participating in a cross-Senate committees' working group on this.

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.

This is being considered by the cross-Senate committees' Use of Student Data working group.

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

No, consistency of student treatment underpins the assessment regulations.

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

Yes, see examples mentioned above.

6. Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity²? Will it help to:
- remove or minimise disadvantage
 - meet the needs of different equality groups
 - encourage increased participation of particular groups
 - take account of disabled people's impairments?

By providing consistency the regulations treat different groups equally, which will help to remove or minimise disadvantage. The provision of Special Circumstances Committees, reasonable adjustments, and the scope within exam arrangements can meet the needs of particular groups and encourage their participation. The assessment regulations are checked with the Student Disability Service.

7. Is there an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations between people in any protected group and those who are not³? Will it help to tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding?

No

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

Yes, see the examples listed above: these are taken into account in the assessment regulations.

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

There is no evidence of this. The uptake of specific degrees and awards by particular groups is being considered by the cross-Senate committees' Use of Student Data working group.

² This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

³ This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership.

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

No

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? Is the communication of the policy/practice accessible to all groups?

No barriers are created. The regulations will be made available in different formats if necessary.

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

CSPC has widespread representation, including from Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA), to gain input into the development of policies and regulation and their review and monitoring. Relevant regulations are checked with the Student Disability Service and those with responsibility for the provision of particular services, who have insight into the needs of particular groups, for example College Office and Student Administration.

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.

No further points.

H. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

No changes are required to the proposed new assessment regulations to take into account any equality issues. Such issues were considered when the regulations were significantly restructured in 2011/12.

I Action and Monitoring

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

No further action needed.

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

The outcome of the Use of Student Data working group will be considered by CSPC for future versions of the regulations.

3. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed? **2015**

J. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **Yes**

K. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): **Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer
Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer**

Accepted by (name): **Sara Welham, Head of Governance Team, Academic Services**

Date: **6 June 2014**

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk