



Equality Impact Assessment

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

Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2013/14

B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable):

- Proposed change to an existing policy/practice
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice

Changes proposed following the annual degree regulations review

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Ailsa Taylor**

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, Academic Services, on behalf of the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC). EqIA to be carried out before seeking a Court resolution and prior to the start of 2013/14.

F. Sign-off

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

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

Date: **6 May 2013**

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 degree regulations are revised annually by CSPC. The 2012/13 regulations are currently in force and will be replaced by the 2013/14 regulations on 1 August.

The regulations aim to deal consistently with all groups of students, regardless of their degree programme, School or College.

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

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
- race (including ethnicity and nationality)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership¹

The regulations apply to all postgraduate students but do not have specific impacts on or requirements for any of the protected characteristics.

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 CSPC receive reports on student progression and award data, some of which relates to the protected characteristics groups. CSPC is reviewing its use of student 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

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.

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, issues of consistency of student treatment underpin the degree regulations.

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

This is largely not applicable. Different modes of study (full time/part-time) are available to students. Interruptions of study are available to students when there is good reason to approve this. An example of a good reason would be the need for maternity or paternity leave.

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 different modes of study can meet the needs of particular groups and encourage their participation. The degree regulations cross-refer to the assessment regulations, which allow for reasonable adjustments and 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?

Not in relation to the degree regulations, other than the issues mentioned above.

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.

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

No.

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.

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 degree 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 wide-spread representation, including from the 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, e.g. Academic Registry.

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 change required to the proposed new degree regulations to take into account any equality issues. Such issues were considered when the degree regulations were significantly restructured in 2011/12. See Section G above for analysis.

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 degree regulations.

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

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**

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

Date: **6 May 2013**