



Equality Impact Assessment

A. Policy or Practice (name or brief description): Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy
B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposed new policy/practice
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: Name: Ailsa Taylor Job title: Academic Policy Officer School/service/unit: Academic Registry
D. Screening Analysis <ol style="list-style-type: none">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. <p>If the answer to any of these questions is 'Yes', an EqIA should be carried out on the proposed/revised policy or practice at an early stage and in any event before it is finalised.</p>
E. Screening outcome Equality Impact Assessment required: Yes. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) carried out by Ailsa Taylor and Stuart Fitzpatrick (Academic Registry) on behalf of the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC).
F. Sign-off Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Registry and Stuart Fitzpatrick, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Registry.

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

Date: **13 June 2013.**

If EqIA is not being carried out, delete the remainder of this form and send the completed form to 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.

Initial/partial EqIA: in some circumstances - particularly for new policies/practices – there may be limited information on which to base EqIA. In these cases, the EqIA should be carried out to the extent possible and should identify arrangements for monitoring/investigation of equality impact and for fuller EqIA in future.

Wholly positive impact: Some policies/practices may be viewed as having only positive equality impact. For these, consideration should still be given to ensure that no adverse impact is overlooked and to ensure that full advantage is taken of the positive impact, e.g. through effective communication. However, the effort involved in carrying out EqIA should not be excessive.

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?

New policy. The policy deals directly with matters relating to and concerning pregnancy and maternity, a protected characteristic under the Equality Act.

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

The Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) has approved the new Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy.

1. 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):

- **sex**
- **sexual orientation**
- **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 may 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).

2. 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.

Information from similar policies within the University of Edinburgh (Maternity Policy (Staff), Paternity Leave and Pay (Staff), and similar policies from other HE institutions (The University of Glasgow, The University of Dundee) and information gathered from Research Councils UK.

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.

The policy was designed to be as comprehensive yet as flexible as possible, and was approved by the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC). It will be reviewed in Academic Year 2016/17.

3. 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.**
4. Are reasonable adjustments built in where they may be needed? **Yes.**
5. Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity¹? Will it help to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantage - **Yes, the University of Edinburgh is committed to providing adjustments to students to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in their studies due to pregnancy or adoption of a child.**
 - meet the needs of different equality groups - **all in terms of maternity.**
 - encourage increased participation of particular groups - **there is scope for the potential to increase participation of other particular groups but this policy mainly relates to the protected characteristics of sex, sexual orientation and**

¹ This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

pregnancy and maternity.

- take account of disabled people's impairments? - **Where risk assessments are carried out, this would provide a mechanism to ensure that any impairments are taken into account.**
6. Is there an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations between people in any protected group and those who are not²? Will it help to tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding? - **Yes, the policy is intended to foster good relations and flexible working relationships between pregnant/new mothers, expectant/new fathers and Personal Tutors, Postgraduate Directors, Research Supervisors or other relevant staff nominated by the School.**
 7. 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? **No.**
 8. 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)? **No.**
 9. Is any equality group excluded from participating in or accessing the service or functions? If so, why? **No.**

However, the policy only applies to any student who becomes pregnant during her studies, any student who is to become a father during his studies, any student who is the partner of a student who is pregnant (including a same sex partner), and any student becoming a parent through adoption of a child.

10. 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.**
11. How are relevant equality groups or communities involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice? **Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) were involved in the development of the policy, and will be consulted upon any future review. Each of the three Colleges are represented on the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CPSC), which approved the policy.**
12. 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.

It is considered to be important that those involved in application of the policy on behalf of the University of Edinburgh apply the flexibility afforded to them in the policy in order to ensure pregnancy and any issues which may arise during it are the main priority. The University of Edinburgh aims to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of the mother and child is at no point compromised.

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. This requires considering taking action to address any issues identified, such as removing or mitigating any negative impacts, where possible, and exploiting any potential for positive impact. Clearly any unlawful discrimination must be

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

eliminated.

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.

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust. There is no evidence of potentially unlawful discrimination and all reasonable opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations have been taken, subject to continuing monitoring and review.

See Section G.

I Action and Monitoring

1. Specify the actions required to implement the findings of this EqIA. **Not Applicable**
2. State how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above). **The policy will be reviewed by CSPC in academic year 2016/17, or earlier should the need arise.**
3. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed? **2016/17.**

J. Publication of EqIA

EqIAs are published on the Equality and Diversity 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**

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)): **Ailsa Taylor and Stuart Fitzpatrick, Academic Policy Officers, Academic Registry**

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

Date: **13 June 2013**

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