



# Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Initial Screening Form - Form1

This form is intended to help you carry out an EIA screening in compliance with the Equality Act  
*(Throughout this form the word 'policy' will be used to cover/mean written policies, procedures, guidance strategies, services, activities, practices, criteria or key decision-making.)*

<b>Policy being assessed: Absence Management</b>	
<b>Briefly describe the aims and purpose of the policy:</b> To provide a framework for managers to be able to deal with sickness absence both informally and formally	
<b>EIA undertaken by: (Name/s and Job Title/s)</b> D Rigby M MacPherson	<b>Date:</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> August 2010
<b>On behalf of: (Title and/or Dept):</b> Corporate HR	

<b>ASSESSMENT</b>				
<b>What is the potential impact/s on any the following groups? (Mark as appropriate below)</b> <i>The meaning of impact in this context is how the policy may affect people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances, either adversely or beneficially, to ensure that they are not discriminatory and are making a positive contribution to equality of opportunity. This includes both direct effects and other effects as an indirect consequence of the policy.</i>				
<b>To assess potential impact/s consider what information is needed to make an initial assessment</b> e.g. feedback from stakeholders, relevant staff/students data; external evidence/benchmarking; expert advice.				
<b>Group</b>	<b>Potentially Beneficial</b>	<b>Potentially Adverse</b>	<b>No Anticipated Impact</b>	<b>Evidence/Explanation of this Assessment of the Impact</b> [provide explanation]
<b>Disability</b>	x			The policy makes specific provision for people with disabilities
<b>Age</b>			X	Policy may have to be reviewed in light of the legislation to abolish to DRA
<b>Gender (inc. trans gender)</b>			X	See comments below
<b>Marital Status</b>			X	
<b>Maternity</b>			X	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			X	
<b>Race/Ethnicity/ Nationality</b>			X	See comments below
<b>Religion or Belief</b>			X	

<b>EIA Screening Outcome</b>	<b>Mark X below as appropriate</b>	<b>Specify action to be taken:</b>
<b>No impact identified</b>	<b>x</b>	<i>No further EIA action, but statistics will be reviewed after one full year of operation</i>
<b>Minor Impact</b>		
<b>Beneficial Impact only identified</b>		
<b>Major Impact</b>		

This policy provides a framework within which unsatisfactory absence levels can be managed.

A positive theme running through the policy is that managers must always seek HR advice before even considering taking any formal action due to unsatisfactory absence levels, which should mean any potential for discrimination by inexperienced managers will be ironed out. In addition, the policy makes positive provision for people with disabilities, and also those who may need reasonable adjustments to be able to continue working.

The Trade Unions provided a paper suggesting that the use of the Bradford Factor score system to monitor absence levels could be discriminatory, specifically in relation to women who suffer from Dysmenorrhea and Migraine.

Statistics available within the University do not suggest that menstrual related illness (the title used to record such absences) are a significant cause of absence, with only 81 days having been recorded within the 12 months to August 2010. Although ‘headaches / migraine absences’ (613.5 days) are higher, there is no existing breakdown of the two, and therefore it would be impossible to comment on whether absences were for headaches or migraines.

We discussed the Trade Union paper as part of the EIA, and reached the view that the Bradford Factor score system does not discriminate so long as it is managed and monitored effectively. This policy does not instruct managers to take formal action once specific scores have been reached. It suggests they may consider it, but they can only take any action once advice has been sought from HR, and the OHU where appropriate.

HR Advisers will ensure through the practical application of the policy that where any potential for discrimination exists, e.g. where an employee has high absence levels due to gender specific reasons amongst others, then further investigation would be warranted before the matter reaches a stage where formal action may be taken, as is the case with all employees who reach unsatisfactory absence levels.

These points will be reinforced during the training provided as part of the policy’s implementation. Additionally, statistics will be reviewed after the policy has been in operation for 12 months to assess whether the new monitoring system is working effectively.

The data analysis in the Redundancy Policy EIA was noted during the development of this policy, as it indicated there are likely to be higher proportions of women, BME and younger staff with under one year’s service than not. In the case of the Absence Management Policy it was decided to limit the excluded group to those on Probation rather than all with under one year’s service. A separate Probation Policy is being developed to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for managing absence issues for that group.

<b>Briefly describe how this Policy will be monitored</b>	By local HR Teams
<b>When will the EIA be reviewed</b> ( <i>optional where no risk has been identified</i> )	<b>Date: January 2012</b>

**For assistance if required, please contact Equality and Diversity at 650 8253 or e-mail [equality-diversity@ed.ac.uk](mailto:equality-diversity@ed.ac.uk)**