THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Before carrying out EqIA, you should familiarise yourself with the University's EqIA Policy Statement and Guidance and Checklist Notes, and undertake our online training on Equality and Diversity and EqIA. These, along with further information and resources, are available at www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/equality-diversity/impact-assessment

EqIA covers policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services, but will be referred to as 'policy/practice' hereinafter.

Institute for Academic Development

Feedback on plans and implementation of the new procedures are <u>invited and encouraged</u>.

A. Policy/Practice (name or brief description):   Change in on campus operations for the Institute for Academic Development to allow safe working in University buildings to control the risks from Coronavirus (Covid-19)
B. Reason for Equality Impact Asessment (Mark **yes** against the applicable reason):   • Proposed new policy/practice   • Proposed change to an existing policy/practice - **Yes**   • Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice   • Other (please state):
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: Name: Dr Jon Turner   Job title: Director, IAD   School/service/unit: Institute for Academic Development
D. An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any if the following apply to the policy/practice, if it: • affects primary or high level functions of the University - **Yes**   • is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)? - **Yes**   • It is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA? - **Yes**
E. Equality Groups   To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant and why? (add notes against the following applicable equality group/s)   • Age - Yes

- Disability - Yes
- race (including ethnicity and nationality) - Yes
- religion or belief - Yes
- sex- Yes
- sexual orientation- Yes
- gender reassignment - Yes
- pregnancy and maternity - Yes
- marriage or civil partnership[1] - No

AGE

There is evidence that the susceptibility of individuals to Covid-19 increases with age. Robust, consistent operating procedures will reduce this risk and provide reassurance to this group. A risk assessment has been carried out to mitigate the risk of Covid19; building signage implemented and various hygiene and local cleaning protocols adopted for all users.

Travel to and from work using public transport may be more difficult and riskier for older individuals. This should be mitigated by reviewing hours of shift pattern to reduce peak use of public transport and encouragement to use other methods of transport when possible (e.g. walking, cycling, private car) in addition to reduced time on campus and potential for increased flexibility around home working for all staff where possible.

DISABILITY

The one-way circulation system implemented in some parts of the building to maintain social distancing will create longer walking routes. This could impact negatively on those people with impaired mobility. This should be mitigated by developing alternative measures and/or local management systems that can be implemented to reduce longer walking routes when required.

The single exit & entrance to 1 Morgan Lane while accessible may not the easiest to access for those people with impaired mobility. This should be mitigated by developing alternative measures and/or local management systems that can be implemented on an individual basis where needed. These plans would make use of a more easily accessed entrance to the building and would be developed in collaboration with another building user (Law Diploma Office – as per normal working practices).

There will be fewer toilets available in order to ensure social distancing, but the same number of accessible toilets will be available in unchanged locations. This will be included in return to work.

Approved signage in the buildings has been produced in consultation with the University's Disability Service and senior university management. The national body – Colour Blind Awareness – has reviewed the signage and approved the visual contrast that addresses all combinations of colour blindness. For those individuals who have other visual impairments, where known, this could be mitigated through individual risk assessments and through revised PEEPs.

RACE

There is evidence to suggest BAME individuals can be more vulnerable to COVID-19, due to multiple factors, none, some or all of which may apply to any individual. Robust, consistent operating procedures will reduce this risk and provide reassurance to this group. A risk assessment has been carried out to mitigate the risk of Covid19; building signage implemented and various hygiene and local cleaning protocols adopted for all users. BAME

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[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.

individuals, who are concerned that they may be at increased risk, can discuss this with their line manager in the first instance, or any IAD line manager who they are comfortable with. Line managers should engage with the individual, considering their particular circumstances, to ameliorate risk while at the same time ensuring that individuals are not excluded from undertaking activities that they are able and willing to do.

RELIGION OR BELIEF
There are currently no prayer facilities within IAD Offices. If required, a vacated & locally cleaned single occupancy office can be used for religious observance.

SEX
There is strong evidence to show that during the Covid-19 pandemic, women have taken on higher levels of caring responsibilities, e.g. childcare, home schooling, elderly care. This may disproportionately affect women in terms of stress/mental health, as well as potentially more likely requiring them to continue to work from home over the longer term. IAD will undertake a separate EqIA addressing remote working if required. As part of our return to work process, all staff will have an interview by their Line Manager to understand their circumstance and identify potential issues with returning to work which will then be reviewed. Line managers should engage with the individual, considering their particular circumstances, to ameliorate risk while at the same time ensuring that individuals are not excluded from undertaking activities that they are able and willing to do.

Evidence exists that men, especially those in older age categories, are more vulnerable to COVID-19. Robust, consistent operating procedures will reduce this risk and provide reassurance to this group. A risk assessment has been carried out to mitigate the risk of Covid19; building signage implemented and various hygiene and local cleaning protocols adopted for all users. Men who are concerned that they may be at increased risk, can discuss this with their line manager in the first instance, or any IAD line manager who they are comfortable with. Line managers should engage with the individual, considering their particular circumstances, to ameliorate risk while at the same time ensuring that individuals are not excluded from undertaking activities that they are able and willing to do.

There will be fewer toilets available in order to ensure social distancing, and so this may result in unavoidable queuing for both male and female staff and guests however due to the reduced levels of building occupancy this is unlikely to be a significant problem.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION
It is possible that some LGBT+ people may during period of lockdown have experienced disproportionate feelings of isolation and mental health and wellbeing problems. IAD will undertake a separate EqIA addressing remote working if required. As part of our return to work process, all staff will have an interview by their Line Manager to understand their circumstance and identify potential issues with returning to work or continued working from home which will then be reviewed. LGBT+ individuals who are concerned about the impact of continued work from home can discuss this with their line manager in the first instance, or any IAD line manager who they are comfortable with.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT
There is evidence that the lack of explicit gender-neutral facilities in higher education institutions causes indirect discrimination, and increases the risk of harassment for individuals who have undergone gender reassignment in addition to non-binary staff and students. There will be fewer toilets available in total in order to ensure social distancing, but the same number of gender-neutral toilets will be available in unchanged locations. Individuals who are concerned about impacts to them arising from new social distancing plans that related to their gender reassignment can discuss this with their line manager in the first instance, or any IAD line manager who they are comfortable with.

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY
Pregnant women have been included in the list of people at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable) as a precaution. IAD will comply with health and safety and absence leave requirements for pregnancy and maternity. A risk assessment will be undertaken for all pregnant workers and new mothers, regardless of how many weeks' gestation. The risk assessment will consider: their job; any pre-existing health conditions; use of public transport; social-distancing guidance on minimising contact and maintaining a 2m distance. Pregnant women who are concerned that they may be at increased risk, can discuss this with their line manager in the first instance, or any IAD line manager who they are comfortable with. Line managers should engage with the individual, considering their particular circumstances, to ameliorate risk while at the same time ensuring that individuals are not excluded from undertaking activities that they are able and willing to do.

On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups
All feedback from staff and visitors will be gathered and analysed to note any potential unexpected positive or negative impacts that need to be addressed.

Information available through the UK government inquiry into the impacts of COVID-19 on people with protected characteristics has been consulted. The evidence for impacts on protected groups will change as new information becomes available. IAD will keep up to date with information and incorporate new evidence of equality impacts as they arise.
We will be monitoring particularly the UK government inquiry findings: "Unequal impact: Coronavirus (Covid-19) and the impact on people with protected characteristics" which will look especially at impact relating to gender, disability and BAME individuals
https://committees.parliament.uk/work/227/unequal-impact-coronavirus-covid19-and-theimpact-on-people-with-protected-characteristics/

Are there gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed:
We are satisfied that we have addressed the potential impacts that we are aware of. We will review our practices and this assessment as the understanding of the impact of Covid-19 and adjustments to working arrangements for those with protected characteristics become better understood and as guidance from the University, government and health authorities is updated.

We intend to seek continuous feedback on this assessment and engage meaningfully with responses.

Could application of this policy/practice lead to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups?
The implementation of this new practice has the potential to impact indirectly on equality. We believe these impacts are justified in achieving the aim of protecting staff and guests from Covid-19 illness and mitigating the spread of infection. Some colleagues may feel excluded from undertaking activities that they are able and willing to do as a result of the adjustments we have made to campus working or concerns around a return to campus. We will continue to work hard to address these sorts of concerns if and when they emerge, and work with line managers and all colleagues to monitoring the impact of these changes.

Will the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity[2] ?
The new practice should enable staff from all protected characteristic groups to resume work. The potential for increased flexibility around home working may be a positive benefit for some groups.

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

Is there an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations?
Applying this practice and ensuring its good communication will provide reassurance to **all** staff that their health, safety, and well-being are being prioritised, and that issues of equality have been carefully considered. Continued support for staff to work from home, and work flexibly, can foster good relations with those for whom these flexible working practices allow them to maintain good work-life balance.

Will the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?
No other protected groups will be affected, but there will be some inherent inequity imposed by the social distancing requirements. Variety in the size and layout of working spaces mean that some colleagues will be in shared spaces and others will have individual spaces. This may make some colleagues feel more comfortable at work than others, equally it may make some colleagues feel more isolated at work than others (given limited access to any social or meeting space). In addition, a number of staff will continue to work from home and engage in more activity remotely. While some individuals may find this advantageous, others will not.

In addition to allowing, once buildings are able to re-open, individuals to retrieve items from offices to ensure a more comfortable and safe home-working environment and ensuring homeworking risk assessment are undertaken, we continue to sign post to resources & guidance to support mental & physical health & wellbeing while working from home. We will monitor and review these arrangements, for individuals and collectively at regular intervals (every 3 months and when there are significant changes in University or government guidance).

How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?
We will ensure that all information on the policy will be available in alternative formats on request. We will discuss this EIA (and subsequent reviews) at our planning group (management team) and all staff online update meetings, as well as sharing by email and on our dedicated sharepoint site.

How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?
All feedback from staff will be gathered and analysed to note any potential unexpected positive or negative impacts that need to be addressed. As part of the return to work process all staff will be given a 1 to 1 meetings with their line mangers as well as a follow up meetings once they have returned to campus.

The policy will be monitored continually after implementation and factors re-evaluated as governmental and University policy is revised over time. Policy modification will be approved via the IAD Planning Group.

Is there potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations?
Applying this practice and ensuring its good communication will provide reassurance to all staff that their health, safety, and well-being are being prioritised, and that issues of equality have been carefully considered. The revised practice aims to provide opportunities for as many staff as possible to resume work on campus.

F. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust.

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.

Option 3: Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be mitigated/or justified
As noted, we have identified the steps that we will take to address and limit potential adverse impacts. We will also regularly review the impact on colleagues, review and update practice as soon as we are able to in line with University and government guidance. Our first priority is the health and safety of IAD staff and other building users and visitors.

Option 4: Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.

G. Action and Monitoring

1. **Specify the actions required for implementing findings of this EqIA and how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).**

IAD Planning Group will have the responsibility to ensure that all IAD Line Managers are aware of and understand the EqIA and its findings. IAD Line Managers will be required to disseminate the EqIA and its findings to their teams and ensure understanding and awareness among all IAD staff members. During this time, it will be made clear to all members of teams that they should immediately contact their line manager should their circumstances change.

As indicated in the section '**How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?'** feedback on the policy will be sought and comments will be reviewed by the IAD Planning Group who will have responsibility for monitoring and making changes as needed.

2. **When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?**
The policy will initially be reviewed one month after re-occupation of IAD Office space. After that the policy will be re-visited at least once every three months, as anticipated changes in policies at the government or University level are implemented, or as and when feedback necessitates a review of the policy.

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **Yes**/No

If No – please specify when it may be published or indicate restrictions that apply:

I. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)):
Olivia Eadie – Head of Operations & Projects
Jon Turner – Director, Institute for Academic Development

Accepted by (name):
Jon Turner

Date: 26th August 2020

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