



Grouper Equality Impact Assessment

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.

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

Grouper is a group management system which facilitates the handling of organisational membership. Grouper can create groups of services which can be allocated to an individual e.g. computer services for staff, students or visitors. Grouper was a procurement chosen as part of the implementation of an in-house Identity Management System. We needed a Group Management solution and after evaluating a few products, both commercial and free open source ones, Grouper was chosen.

Grouper uses a unique number key which links in to the University Identification Data Management (IDM) system. IDM is where the data is stored and grouper can pull information from IDM to create management groups. No personal data is stored in Grouper.

Grouper is used by University staff only and very few staff have access to the system.

Update 2019 – there have been no changes to the Grouper system or changes in it's use within the University. The Grouper 4 release has been delayed an we will update this then. At this time there are no plans to update.

B. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (Mark **yes** against the applicable reason):

- ~~• Proposed new policy/practice~~
- ~~• Proposed change to an existing policy/practice~~
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice **YES**
- ~~• Other (please state):~~

Update 2019- this is an update to the existing EqIA as scheduled.

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: Alex Carter

Job title: Head of Service Management

School/service/unit: Applications Directorate, Information Services Group

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

Grouper has the potential to impact on all 9 protected characteristics as it is available to all university staff upon request, although in practice only a few staff actually have access. Therefore practically, we feel the characteristics of disability race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and sex may be the most likely to be affected.

Grouper may be of relevance to the protected characteristic of disability in that the system will need to be accessible in terms of meeting current guidelines as stated by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2 AA standard and be compatible with assistive technology. The University has a web accessibility policy which is based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2 AA standard. (<https://www.ed.ac.uk/about/website/accessibility/accessibility-policy>).

Grouper may be of relevance to the protected characteristic of race as the system will be automatically in English. This is mitigated by the fact that the main teaching language of the university is English so we don't feel this will cause a negative impact.

No personal data is stored on Grouper. Grouper uses a unique number key which links to the University IDM system which stores any personal data. Grouper then uses the data from IDM to create the management groups. The data is not saved on Grouper. This therefore mitigates any Data Privacy concerns.

In addition, Grouper will be available 24 hours a day which will allow access for groups who require flexible working hours, such as those disabled users, groups with certain religious beliefs which restricts the days or times they can work or those under the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity and those with caring responsibilities' (which have been shown to be disproportionately woman) who may not be working normal office hours.

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

- On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups:

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.

The Information Services Disability Officer has tested the technology in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2, including checking the system for compatibility with assistive technology and any areas for improvements have been noted and dealt with accordingly.

Update 2019 – The IS Disability Information Officer is due to test the accessibility of Grouper 4 once this is released and we have decided to install it.

- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed:

At this stage, we feel we have sufficient information to proceed.

- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:

We do not feel that Grouper will result in any form of prohibited conduct. We will do all we can to make the system as accessible as possible. Where disabled staff are unable to use the system, where the changes are within our control, we will look to rectify this through reasonable adjustments. Examples include providing additional assistive technology to the user or providing one to one assistance.

There could be an expectation that the application should be translated into different languages. However, the Universities business is carried out in English as this is the main teaching language of the university and the system will only be used by small numbers of University staff, therefore, we do not believe this will lead to any disadvantage.

No personal data is stored on Grouper. Grouper uses a unique number key which links to the University IDM system which stores any personal data. Grouper then uses the data from IDM to create the management groups. The data is not saved on Grouper. This therefore mitigates any Data Privacy concerns.

Update 2019 – we are not aware that this service has results in any form of prohibited conduct and we have received no positive or negative feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics. We have no one raise any issues with the system being in English or with the accessibility of the system.

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity²

Grouper has the ability to advance equality of opportunity as the system will be available 24 hours a day which will allow access for groups who require flexible working hours, such as disabled users, groups with certain religious beliefs which restricts the days or times they can work or those under the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity and those with caring responsibilities' (which have been shown to be disproportionately woman) who may not be working normal office hours.

- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations:

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

We hope that Grouper, as a group management system, will enable efficient organisational membership for both staff and students as it creates a centralised database for services to be allocated to users through the Universities IDM system. As a result, we believe this will allow for a quicker and more efficient service to be run through the University and will positively impact all parties involved in the University.

Further, we hope the consideration we have shown to potential impacts on all protected characteristics as part of the implementation of Grouper will demonstrate the commitment Information Services and the University has to Equality and Diversity issues and so we will be able to foster good relations.

- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?

Grouper should not create any barriers for other groups. For example, it won't disadvantage users on low incomes as the university provides free 24hour access to IT facilities for all staff where they will be able to use Grouper.

Update 2019 – we are not aware that this service has created any barriers for any groups and we have received no positive or negative feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics.

- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?

A Grouper Wiki page is available for use of Grouper by university staff. The link is: <https://spaces.internet2.edu/display/Grouper/University+of+Edinburgh+Grouper+Page>

There is not an extensive need for communication of Grouper as only a select handful of staff have access at the moment. Where a user has the need for information in alternative formats this will be provided free of charge. Grouper is currently used only by support staff for IDM-related administration. Release to the wider community would be via a future project to release "Grouper as a Service". Training would be covered via project rollout by online training and individual face to face training where required

Update 2019 – we have received no requests for information in alternative formats

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

The Information Services Disability Officer has conducted an accessibility assessment of grouper. We will continue to monitor feedback and complaints for any positive or negative feedback. We plan to do another accessibility test of the system is changed significantly.

Update 2019 – we have received no positive or negative feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics. The IS Disability Information Officer will review the accessibility of the system again when the move to Grouper 4 is made.

- Any potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations:

Nothing further to what has been stated above.

Update 2019 – as above

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.

For the reasons stated above.

~~**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~~

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

Update 2019 – as above

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).

All feedback will be monitored for any potential positive or negative impacts on any of the 9 protected characteristics.

Staff will be made aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments where necessary and provide information in alternative formats as required.

Update 2019 – as above

2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?

Anytime the system goes through a significant upgrade/change i.e. a software upgrade or when we receive any positive or negative feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics. The Grouper 4 release is due in 2019 and the accessibility testing will be redone and this EqIA updated accordingly then. Currently it is scheduled to take place in May 2019.

Update 2019 – we review the EqIA when there is any significant upgrade/change i.e. a software upgrade or when we receive any positive or negative feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics or when Grouper 4 is released and we decide to install it.

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: **Chris McKay, Service Manager, Service Management, Information Services Group**

Accepted by: **Alex Carter, Head of Service Management, Applications Directorate, Information Services Group**

Date: **28 June 2018**

Update – As above 16th May 2019

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