



## 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](http://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):

### Digitisation Strategy

**A new strategy to give direction to the University's Digitisation Programme, which makes freely available items from the historic collections which are otherwise only accessible through a personal visit. These physical materials may be fragile and difficult to use, but the digital surrogate can be used by people across the world.**

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

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

**C.** Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Joseph Marshall**

Job title: **Head of Special Collections and the Centre for Research Collections**

School/service/unit: **Information Services**

**D.** An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any of the following apply to the policy/practice, if it:

- affects primary or high level functions of the University **No**
- 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 partnership<sup>1</sup>

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

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

All groups are potentially impacted by the Digitisation Strategy as it will create digital content available online to anyone with access to the internet.

Disability – The system that provides the digital version of the images has been tested by the Information Services Disability Information Officer and will undergo further testing as the site develops. The system will meet as far as possible the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version AA standard.

Race – The new online service will allow users' out with the UK to access the images that previously were only available to see by visiting the University. The images are all historic and it is unlikely any would cause any issue within our countries' jurisdictions but due care and attention will be taken with regard to this matter if any materials are identified which might cause issue.

Religion/Belief- Due care and attention will be taken with regard to this matter if any materials are identified which might cause issue or offence to specific religions/beliefs.

Maternity/Pregnancy – By making the images available on line those with parental/caring responsibilities who may have had difficulty accessing the images in person will now be able to view them online in their own time and convenience.

If any users experience any problems accessing the online system or who wish to provide feedback they can contact the Centre for Research Collections Enquiry Point in person, by phone or email <https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/crc/visitor-information/opening-times-location> .

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

Currently the systems used by the University of Edinburgh gather very little information about the people who are using our digitised content. In recognition of this, we are undertaking a review of our systems and information gathering so that future developments are informed by a greater understanding of our online users and their needs. At this stage we feel we have sufficient evidence to proceed.

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

We do not envisage that this new service will lead to any forms of prohibited conduct. All appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that digital content is as accessible as possible, in line with agreed best practice, including the following of accessibility standards in developing webpages. For any users who are able to access physical collection items but not online versions, access will be maintained as it was prior to the development of the Strategy.

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>2</sup>

The Strategy will contribute significantly to advancing equality of opportunity by releasing collections content online across the world, without charge. People who are not able to visit Edinburgh University Library to study collections in person (e.g. for reasons of location, disability, caring/parental responsibilities, times of religious observance etc.) will instead be able to view and download digital images from our website.

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

The Strategy presents strong opportunities to foster good relations by widening access and additionally through identifying material of interest to a diverse audience. Diversity is referenced in the strategy as one of the key drivers.

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

The University offers free 24 hour access to staff and students to IT facilities and local libraries offer free IT facilities, so we do not envisage any disadvantage to those on lower incomes who may not have access to their own IT facilities. Users will still be able to go and see the collections in person where this is possible.

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

The Digitisation Strategy will be placed online once it has been approved by the relevant University committees and promoted through email lists and newsletters. There will also be regular communication through our website and social media about the Digitisation Programme which the Strategy will generate. The University Website adheres to a University Web Accessibility Policy which is based around the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2 AA standard. All communication about this new service will be available in alternative formats free of charge on request.

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

The Strategy was developed following an extensive online consultation from April-July 2017 which attracted over 250 responses from across the University and the wider public. The Strategy also makes a commitment to developing ongoing processes to suggest, select and prioritise material for digitisation. We will continue to monitor all feedback for any positive or negative items related to any of the 9 protected characteristics and acted upon accordingly. The Information Disability Officer and the Student Disability Service, chaplaincy and the International office have been contacted regarding this new policy and given the opportunity to comment.

- 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:

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<sup>2</sup> This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

The impact of applying the Strategy will be a robust Digitisation Programme which will have positive impacts in widening equitable access to collections which are otherwise often difficult to access. The material prioritised for digitisation will also be selected with diversity as a key driver, so the images placed on line will reflect the diversity of the people whose stories are reflected in the University of Edinburgh's historic collections.

#### 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 - The Digitisation Strategy is a positive development for equality impact and is underpinned by robust governance which will ensure regular review and consultation to maintain this.

#### 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).

The EqIA will be presented to Library Committee and University Collections Advisory Committee after October 2017 alongside the draft strategy, and assuming approval will then be presented to the Digitisation Programme board where this will be a regular agenda item. Staff will be made aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments and provide information in alternative formats upon request.

A separate guidance document has been developed for the management of images identified as having significant potential to cause distress or offence.

All feedback will be monitored for any positive or negative items related to any of the 9 protected characteristics and acted upon accordingly. It is hoped there will be resources to analyse usage of the new service to gain additional feedback.

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

October 2018

#### H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **Yes**

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)): **Joseph Marshall, Head of Special Collections and the Centre for Research Collections**

Accepted by **Jeremy Upton, Director of Library & University Collections**

[This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named above. If not, specify job-title/role.]

Date: **21 December 2017**

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to [equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk](mailto:equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk)