



## 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):**

**Library Course Collections Programme.**

The course collections programme features **three elements** which are complimentary to the overall aims of the programme, but which work in parallel with each other to differing timescales and with different stakeholders:

- 1. Course Collections Service** (*Resource Lists @ Edinburgh* linking to the Acquisitions, E-Reserve and Print Reserve services)
- 2. Course Collections Library Materials Budget Allocation**
- 3. Course Development Best Practice – Library Involvement**

Overall the aim of the programme is to create a unified fund within the Library Materials Purchasing Budget for the development of Course Collections. This development (or acquisition of resources) will be fed through use of the Resource Lists online service, and will also facilitate the complementary print item and electronic (scanned item) reserve services.

The Library will be involved in ongoing developments as part of the University's Student Experience Project, particularly around Programme Course Information Management (PCIM), and will be looking to ensure every course has a comprehensive Resource List included.

**B. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (delete as applicable):**

- Proposed new policy/practice

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

Name: Laura M. Shanahan

Job title: Head of Collections Development and Access

School/service/unit: Library and University Collections, 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 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? (delete any that are not relevant):

- 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 statements where applicable/relevant:

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

This practice change has the potential to affect all protected equality groups, with most impact on disability and race, and to a lesser degree sex, pregnancy and maternity.

There is evidence to suggest that improvements must be made in relation to the manner and time in which taught students receive information about the resources they require to complete their studies. The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy (<http://edin.ac/1dZCibd>) published in 2013 states that lists of core resources must be made available to students at least four weeks in advance of their studies commencing, and that this is not being achieved. This is particularly important for some disabled students e.g. for those who require the materials transferred into alternative formats or who may need longer to read texts.

In addition, feedback from student surveys suggest that there is a gap between their expectations of availability of resources for taught programmes from the Library, and the provision recommended by course organisers. The recent Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES) 2015 highlighted this, with the satisfaction score of only 73% for the question "*I have been able to find my course reading list resources from the library*".

Approximately 40% of students at the University are now from Europe or other overseas countries.<sup>2</sup> Although the teaching language of the University is English, and

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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.

English language skills are included in the University entry requirements, this group of students can require extra time and assistance in accessing English language resources, where English is not their first language.

The Practice change supports significant improvements through the publication of deadline dates for submission of resource lists to the Library, allowing for corresponding service work (i.e. acquisition of resources, digitisation, sharing of list with students) to be completed in time for the four week access period described in the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy. This includes provision of resources in alternative formats.

These deadlines also support the additional time that may be required for students whose first language is not English.

The availability of readings online enables students with caring responsibilities to access resources from home, flexibly.

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

The Library has undertaken some surveys of Library users to evaluate their experiences with Library Course Collections and have been gathering feedback from academic staff and course organisers with individual meetings. Recent evidence for the need for change has been mentioned above in relation to the ESES survey 2015.

Further investigation will be undertaken over the period of the programme development, to establish any challenges encountered by protected groups in relation to this service.

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

The application of the Course Collections Programme is expected to benefit each of the equality groups. There will be no anticipated discrimination, harassment, victimisation or less favourable treatment.

It has the potential to have a positive impact on disabled users, by improving the accessibility of materials; improve the efficiency of learning for students through the availability of resources in alternative formats; allow greater time for access to resources online (on campus or remotely), and within the four week period identified by the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

It also has the potential to benefit international students by allowing students to access materials sooner giving students for whom English is not their first language the chance to review the course materials sooner.

The availability of readings online enables students with caring responsibilities (which has been shown to be statistically more likely to be female) and those with child caring responsibilities to access resources from home, flexibly.

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<sup>2</sup> Mid-Year Student factsheet (January 2015): <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/governance-strategic-planning/facts-and-figures/university-factsheet>.

- **If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>3</sup>**

In alignment with the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, this programme supports the advancement of equality of opportunity. It seeks to enable all students to have a consistent experience across taught programmes, with Library Resources provided to meet their needs, and a Resource List available in a timely manner. This will be of particular benefit to disabled students and students for whom English is not their first language and who may benefit from having access to the texts at the earliest opportunity, allowing a longer time period for review. It will assist with the service of changing of course materials into alternative formats for disabled students by allowing the service and students earlier access to the materials to be reformatted. In addition, it should reduce the need for students to purchase as many of their own copies of course readings, through increased library provision – improving the experience for financially disadvantaged groups.

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

EUSA (Edinburgh University Student Association) have strongly supported the development of the Resource Lists @ Edinburgh service, which is part of the Programme, as a means by which to improve student experience and support the advancement of equality of opportunity. It will demonstrate the University's commitment to the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy and a desire to ensure it is effective; as well demonstrating the commitment of the University to Equality and Diversity.

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

The Programme widens participation for all groups, in that Resource Lists @ Edinburgh can be made openly available to all staff and students at the University online. This affords any protected groups, with barriers to physically attending taught courses or the Library, the ability to access their Learning Resources online at any time. There are no anticipated barriers identified through the programme proposal.

Information Services provides free access to computers on which to access the online resource lists for all students and staff throughout the University sites. The increase in availability of resources within the Library is expected to have a corresponding socio-economic benefit.

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

Promotion of the service is undertaken face to face by Library staff, in Committees, with EUSA, and through our website. All materials are available in an alternative format upon request.

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

The Student Disability Service and International Office have been notified of this programme and its development, and will be involved in the ongoing development. The Information Services Disability Information Officer has also been involved in its

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<sup>3</sup> This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

development; it is assisted by the IS digitisation service for disabled students.

All feedback, including surveys, will be monitored for any potential positive or negative impact on the nine protected characteristics.

- 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:

We are aware that there may be the requirement to make reasonable adjustments for individual users – for example, for students unable to use an online system, we would be able to provide the resource list in an alternative print format.

#### **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. (Delete the options that do not apply):

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

The establishment of the practice change supports equality for the nine protected characteristics.

#### **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 Library has undertaken some surveys of Library users to evaluate their experiences with Library Course Collections and have been gathering feedback from academic staff and course organisers with individual meetings. However, further investigation is required over the period of the programme to establish any challenges encountered by protected groups in relation to this service.
- As above, the Course Collections Programme has the potential to remove barriers to learning and accessing Library Resources, and advancing the student experience beyond the current process for Course Collection delivery. There is currently no mandate for course organisers to utilise the Resource Lists @ Edinburgh service, which reduces the consistency of experience across the institution. However, the programme will seek to incentivise use of the service in order to expand use, and in order to far exceed current levels of provision for students.
- A long-term aspiration would be to achieve 100% use of Resource Lists @ Edinburgh for all taught programmes at the University. We have set a target of 300 courses for 2015/16.

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

When/if there is a major change to this practice, or if we receive any positive or negative feedback related to the nine protected characteristics.

#### **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)): Laura M. Shanahan, Head of Collections Development and Access, Library and University Collections

Accepted by (name):

Jeremy Upton, Director of Library and University Collections

Date: 29.05.15