



## Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Template

This form is intended to help you decide whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is needed and, if it is, to carry out the assessment of impact.

Before carrying out EqIA, you should familiarise yourself with the University's EqIA Policy Statement 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 is part of the University's general equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The Equality Act 2010 specifies the following 'protected characteristics': age, disability, race (including ethnicity and nationality), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage or civil partnership. This form uses 'equality group' to mean persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.

The University has a general equality duty to have due regard to the **needs** to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Under the Scottish Regulations, the University has a specific duty – subject to relevance and proportionality - to assess the impact of applying proposed new or revised policies and practices against the needs above. 'Policy and practice' should be interpreted widely to include the full range of the University's policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services – essentially everything we do.

This form is a tool to help with screening and EqIA and is designed to lead you through the process through asking pertinent questions and giving examples. However, the law does not dictate a particular form for EqIA. The requirement is to actively consider how a policy or practice will meet the general equality duty, and take any necessary action. Wherever practicable, EqIA should be built into standard processes and tailored to the nature of the policies or practices involved.

It is, however, necessary to publish EqIA where the policy or practice is applied, so all EqIAs – in whatever format - should be sent to [equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk](mailto:equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk) for publication.

The form includes: some details about the policy/practice; a screening analysis to indicate whether full EqIA is required; and then a number of questions to enable full EqIA.

Answers should be recorded after the questions and the form can be expanded and supplemented as required. Answers may be as long or short as is necessary and relevant, bearing in mind that the effort involved in EqIA should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy or practice to equality.

Once completed, this form will be the record of the screening and, where applicable, the EqIA of the policy or practice. All full EqIAs are published.

A. Policy or Practice (name or brief description): Library external borrower charges
B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Proposed change to an existing policy/practice</li></ul> <b>Update 2016: Review and updating of existing EqIA</b>
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:  Name: Barry Croucher  Job title: Head of Help Services  School/service/unit: IS User Services Division/Help Services
D. Screening Analysis  1. Does the policy or practice affect primary or high level functions of the University? No 2. Is the policy or practice relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' set out in the introduction above)? Yes 3. Is the policy or practice one on which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA? Yes  If the answer to any of these questions is 'Yes', an EqIA should be carried out on the proposed/revised policy or practice at an early stage and in any event before it is finalised.
E. Screening outcome  Equality Impact Assessment required: Yes  Record notes about the screening process or outcome here. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An EqIA is required. This will be carried out by Barry Croucher, Head of Help Services</li></ul>
F. Sign-off  Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Barry Croucher, Head of Help Services  Accepted by (name): Bryan MacGregor, Director, IS User Services [This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named in C above. If not, specify job-title/role.]  <b>Date:</b> June 2015  <b>Update 2016: Reviewed by Winnie Chambers, Help Services Team Manager</b>  <b>Accepted by Barry Croucher, Head of Help Services</b>

If EqIA is not being carried out, delete the remainder of this form and send the completed form to [equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk](mailto:equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk).

## G. Equality Impact Assessment

Before assessing the policy/practice, ensure that you have a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy or practice, the context, the intended beneficiaries and the results aimed for.

In answering the questions below:

- Bear in mind that the extent of EqIA should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy/practice to equality. It may not be practicable or necessary to answer every question or address every potential scenario.
- Focus mainly on aspects of the policy/practice that are most relevant to the question, to ensure most attention is given to the most important areas.
- Relate answers to consideration of the available evidence and address any gaps or disparities revealed, where feasible without disproportionate effort. For new policies, assess potential impact.
- Describe any action identified to address any issues highlighted.
- Where there is potential for adverse impact, but the policy/practice will still be applied, indicate the rationale for that decision.

Initial/partial EqIA: in some circumstances - particularly for new policies/practices – there may be limited information on which to base EqIA. In these cases, the EqIA should be carried out to the extent possible and should identify arrangements for monitoring/investigation of equality impact and for fuller EqIA in future.

Wholly positive impact: Some policies/practices may be viewed as having only positive equality impact. For these, consideration should still be given to ensure that no adverse impact is overlooked and to ensure that full advantage is taken of the positive impact, e.g. through effective communication. However, the effort involved in carrying out EqIA should not be excessive.

1. Overview. Indicate the current status of the policy/practice or the stage of development/review. Also note any general comments here regarding the relevance and significance of the policy/practice to equality. Which aspects of the policy/practice are particularly relevant (which should be the main focus for EqIA)? On what aspects of equality does the policy/practice particularly impact?

Reference access to the University libraries is free for members of the public and University of Edinburgh Alumni, but charges apply for the privilege of borrowing from the general collections. Alumni are entitled to a 50% reduction in charges relative to charges that apply for the public.

Charges are made in order to make a small contribution to the cost of running circulation services and materials costs.

Information Services (IS) is concerned that Edinburgh is charging too much to both groups of users, relative to other comparable libraries based on our research.

Charges will be reduced for the public from 1 April 2015 and removed for University of Edinburgh Alumni. Alumni are members of the University community, and entitled to

borrowing as a free service, as enjoyed by other members of the University community. This change has been approved by Library Committee.

Charges are shown in the tables below:

Table 1.: Reduce charges to the public

Period of membership	Current charge	New charge
3 months	£75	£30
6 months	£125	£55
12 months	£200	£75

Table 2.: Remove charges to UoE Graduates as External Borrowers

Period of membership	Current charge	New charge
3 months	£37.50	Nil
6 months	£62.50	Nil
12 months	£100	Nil

By lowering charges it is expected that borrowing will be more affordable for the public, including all equality groups, while Alumni will not have to pay in future.

Borrowing and returning books involves use of library buildings and self-issue and self-return equipment.

The policy applies to the public and former students of the University and so will be relevant to all equality groups.

2. To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant? Policies/practices applying to substantial groups of students or staff will be relevant to all equality groups, which should be noted. However, also indicate any equality groups for which the policy/practice is particularly relevant, and why.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are (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>

In answering the questions below consider each of these equality groups. As part of this, consider diversity within, as well as between groups (e.g. different disabilities, different racial groups). Consider the implications of combinations of protected characteristics e.g. issues of relevance to women may vary once race, religion and age are taken into consideration. Also consider the impact on those with caring/family responsibilities (which tends to impact more on women).

The policy is mainly relevant to equality groups in terms of ability to pay charges for the privilege of borrowing from the University library collections, and in encouraging the public and Alumni to join and use the library services, promoting the University's community role and commitment to lifelong learning. By reducing the charges there is the potential to have positive impact on all protected characteristics i.e. it is repeatedly reported that disabled users tend to earn significantly less than their peers and therefore by reducing charges we should make it easier for users to access materials.

The policy is particularly relevant to disability because of access to library buildings and use of self-issue and self-return equipment used in borrowing/returning books and the need to make these as accessible as possible.

3. What evidence is available about the needs of relevant equality groups? E.g. information/feedback from equality groups or other stakeholders, involvement or research with equality groups or individuals, equality monitoring data, service monitoring data, information for other similar policies/practices, staff surveys, research reports, demographic information, audit, inspection or management reports and recommendations.

There are 200 members of the public who are registered as External Borrowers in 2014/15; 78 have borrowed items this Session, with 1 person billed for a lost item. 343 Alumni are registered currently as Library members, of whom 56 have borrowed items this Session and 3 have been billed for a lost item. To date no one has been turned away because they cannot afford the charge and no exceptions have been requested.

Where are the gaps in evidence? If there is insufficient information to properly assess the policy, how will this be addressed? If information cannot be gathered now, consider building monitoring into the plans for implementation/review of the policy/practice. Note: the resources put into collecting evidence should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy/practice to equality.

We feel there is sufficient evidence to proceed but we will monitor memberships of the Library, lost books arising from the non-return of loans, and review. All feedback will be monitored and reviewed for any potential positive or negative feedback in relation to the 9 protected characteristics, and in relation to Equality and Diversity.

**Update 2016: The reduction in External borrower charges and the removal of charges from alumni has had a marked effect: in 2015/16 the number of External users increased to 590, with 138 of these borrowing items during the year. None of these was billed for a lost item. The number of Alumni users increased fivefold to 1729, with 513 of these borrowing, only 2 of whom were billed for lost items. We do not record any information on the protected characteristics of external borrowers so are unable to tell if this has not only led to an increase in borrowers but an increase in numbers of those with certain protected characteristics borrowing.**

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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.

4. Might the application of this policy/practice lead to discrimination, harassment or victimisation? Might it result in less favourable treatment for particular equality groups or give rise to indirect discrimination?

No, we do not envisage the change in policy to lead to any form of prohibited conduct, in fact the change in policy should improve access for users by reducing costs. As the University does not discriminate on the basis of any of the 9 protected characteristics during recruitment/ admission or at any point of the student's time at University the decision to offer Alumni free access should not discriminate against any of the 9 protected characteristics

**Update 2016: The change in policy has led to vastly increased take-up of borrowing by external and Alumni users, with no negative impact discerned. We have received no negative or positive feedback or complaints related to any of the 9 protected characteristics.**

5. Are reasonable adjustments built in where they may be needed?

New and existing users who are attracted by the offer of reduced/no charges for external borrower membership and use the libraries to borrow and return books will find that any reasonable adjustments required to facilitate their use of the library, such as with access or use of equipment, will be made. For example, disabled users who may have difficulty using the self-service book issue and return machines may borrow and return books via staff at Library Helpdesks during Helpdesk opening hours. No charge will be made for any reasonable adjustments.

Update 2016: All borrowers, internal and external, and any users unable to use the self-issue/return machines for any reason can borrow/return via staff at Helpdesks during library opening hours. **We have had no request for any reasonable adjustments since the change in policy.**

6. Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>2</sup>? Will it help to:
- remove or minimise disadvantage
  - meet the needs of different equality groups
  - encourage increased participation of particular groups
  - take account of disabled people's impairments?

The new external borrower charges may prove more affordable for the public and will be free to Alumni, perhaps encouraging greater participation by equality groups in their use of the libraries and library collections. As discussed the access to the collections has been made as accessible as possible and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure disabled users impairments have been taken into account.

**Update 2026: External borrowers have been catered for in the same way as students and staff, with any extra assistance necessary being offered when required.**

7. Is there an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations between people in any protected group and those who are not<sup>3</sup>? Will it help to tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding?

We are keen to strengthen public engagement with the Library and its collections, and also to support and develop a continuing relationship with our Alumni, through external borrowing and

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

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

through doing this to foster good relations with all equality groups. This is in accordance with the University Strategic Plan and the Strategic Theme of Lifelong Community.

The libraries are a focus of student life and attract large numbers of visitors, for example there were nearly 2 million visits to the Main Library in the past year and so this change in policy may encourage greater use of the library by members of the general public from all equality groups which may help to foster good relations and tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding by demonstrating the University takes equality and diversity issues seriously and does not discriminate against any equality group.

8. Is there evidence (or an expectation) that people from different equality groups have different needs or experiences in relation to the policy/practice? If so, what are they?

Disabled users need the library buildings and self-issue and self-return machines to be accessible.

9. Is there evidence (or an expectation) of higher or lower uptake by any equality group(s)? If so, give details of the differences and the reasons for these (if known)?

No, we do not envisage external borrower membership will be used taken up more by any equality group.

**Update 2016. No evidence has been found to suggest that external borrower membership has been taken up more by any equality group, but this is not something of which we would necessarily be aware as we do not request such details from users.**

10. Is any equality group excluded from participating in or accessing the service or functions? If so, why?

No equality group is excluded from participating. There may be a small number of disabled users for whom we are not able to make the library building or issue/return equipment fully accessible in which case reasonable adjustments would be put in place to ensure no disadvantage.

**Update 2016 – we are not aware of any user not being able to participate with the new system.**

11. Does the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups? For example, because of the time when the service is delivered or because of restricted income? Is the communication of the policy/practice accessible to all groups?

No, the new charging policy for external borrowers should help to reduce for the public, and remove for Alumni, barriers because of restricted income.

**Update 2016: The significant increase in numbers of external and alumni borrowers since the reduction/removal of charges indicates that barriers have been reduced as stated above which we hope is indicative of a reduction in any barriers to accessing the system.**

The policy will be communicated on the IS website. It will also be communicated via the Alumni monthly e-newsletter. Communication of the policy will be in English which is the main teaching language of the University, and so we do not envisage this would cause any disadvantage. If this should prove to be an issue, we would look at providing the information in another language on request. All communication about the policy will be available in alternative formats upon request for disabled users.

**Update 2016: the policy is publicised on the IS website at**

**<http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/using-library/join->**

[the-library/external-fees](#)

**This website complies with the University Web Accessibility Policy which is based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2 AA standard and is compatible with assistive technology.**

**We have had no requests for the information in alternative formats or in other languages.**

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

In consultation with the IS Disability Information Officer the needs of disabled users will continue to be taken into account. All feedback will be reviewed for any potential positive or negative impact on any of the 9 protected characteristics.

**Update 2016 – we have done and will continue to monitor all feedback for any positive or negative issues relating to any 9 of the protected characteristics. To date we have not received any feedback relating to any of the 9 protected characteristics.**

13. Are there any other points to note regarding the potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations? If so, note these here.

No.

#### **H. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome**

There is a legal obligation to take account of the results of the EqIA in the development of a new or revised policy or practice. This requires considering taking action to address any issues identified, such as removing or mitigating any negative impacts, where possible, and exploiting any potential for positive impact. Clearly any unlawful discrimination must be eliminated.

Having considered the answers in section G, select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed. Delete the options that do not apply.

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust. There is no evidence of potentially unlawful discrimination and all reasonable opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations have been taken, subject to continuing monitoring and review.

State the reasons for this conclusion and the evidence used, if not already included in section G.

Included in Section G above.

#### **I Action and Monitoring**

1. Specify the actions required to implement the findings of this EqIA.

Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the new charging policy for external borrowers. Communicate that the information about charging is available in alternative formats on request.

IS Head of Help Services to discuss with Alumni Services about communication to Alumni.



**Update 2016: All relevant staff are aware of the charging policy and leaflets are available for users at Helpdesks as well as the information being available online. Information continues to be available in alternative formats and staff are aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments.  
Alumni Services publicise the policy on their webpages.**

2. State how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).

Monitoring of feedback for any positive or negative comments about any of the protected characteristics, and in relation to Equality and Diversity.  
Monitoring of external memberships.  
Monitoring of lost books by external members.

**Update 2016: Monitoring continues to be carried out as above.**

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

June 2016.

**Update 2016: The policy will next be reviewed when or if any further changes are proposed or when we receive any negative or positive feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics.**

#### **J. Publication of EqIA**

EqIAs are published on the Equality and Diversity website.

There is a statutory requirement to publish EqIAs within a reasonable period. However, in some circumstances there may be valid reasons to limit what is published or to delay publication.

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes

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

#### **J. Sign-off**

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)):

Barry Croucher, Head of Help Services, IS User Services

Accepted by (name): Bryan MacGregor, Director of IS User Services

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

**Date:** 11 June 2015

**Update 2016: Review undertaken by Winnie Chambers, Help Services Team Manager**

**Accepted by Barry Croucher, Head of Help Services**

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

