



## 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): <b>Student Disability Service restructure: Providing an Integrated and Effective Service (PIES)</b>
B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Other (please state): <b>Service restructure/reorganisation</b></li></ul>
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:  Name: <b>Sheila Williams</b>  Job title: <b>Director</b>  School/service/unit: <b>Student Disability Service</b>
D. Screening Analysis  1. Does the policy or practice affect primary or high level functions of the University? <b>YES</b> 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)? <b>YES</b> 3. Is the policy or practice one on which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA? <b>YES</b>  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: <b>Yes</b>
F. Sign-off <b>Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary, 19/01/15</b>  Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): <b>Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service</b>  Accepted by (name): Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary  Date: <b>19/01/15</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
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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?

**The EqIA concerns the restructure of the Student Disability Service (SDS) and is therefore of primary relevance to disabled students.**

**The main drivers for the restructure, first mooted in 2011-12, are:**

- to put the student at the heart of the support process
- to enhance service delivery and good practice by training all Advisory staff to support all disabled students (currently the service has 2 Advisory teams, each of whom support students with certain impairments)
- to ensure that waiting times for disabled students are reduced
- to ensure that students do not have to have more than one appointment depending on their disability
- to effectively utilise the SDS's relatively small core Advisory team, making best use of limited physical space
- to minimise the impact of staff absence, resulting in fewer cancellations of student appointments.

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):

- **Disability, but potentially all protected characteristic groups if supported by the SDS.**

3. What evidence is available about the needs of relevant equality groups? E.g.

**EDMARC and HESA equality monitoring data,  
Statistical data on numbers of disabled students and types of impairment  
Service monitoring data, including footfall, Learning Profiles, DSA needs assessments carried out  
Waiting list statistics for Educational Psychologist appointments, for DSA assessments, Tutor waiting times, waiting times for IT training  
Benchmarking information for other similar policies/practice in HEIs  
Management reports and recommendations.**

**Monitoring of waiting times will be used as comparison data, also the annual SDS Student evaluation/review and the results of the International Student Barometer (ISB).**

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?

**The changes should lead to more favourable treatment as students should have shorter waiting times and have their recommended support implemented more**

**quickly.**

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

**They can be, if necessary.**

6. Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>1</sup>? Will it help to:
- remove or minimise disadvantage **Yes, see above.**
  - meet the needs of different equality groups **Yes**
  - encourage increased participation of particular groups
  - take account of disabled people's impairments? **Yes**

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>2</sup>? Will it help to tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding?

**As stated above, it is hoped that the service we provide to students will be speedier, will benefit from the development of Advisors' knowledge of other impairments and will thereby be perceived as – and will be - more effective/efficient.**

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?

**Feedback from the SDS annual student evaluation records expectations (or hopes) by students that they should be able to be seen more quickly, have fewer appointments/interactions and access the service in different ways eg via Skype.**

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)?

**Slower take up of the service from postgraduate students, which includes international students (although numbers are increasing).**

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

**Hopefully not, although some students state that they have not heard of the service. (Although an annual mailing is sent to all students to advise them of our existence).**

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.**

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

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<sup>1</sup> This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

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

**The restructure is still a work in progress, but SDS has a project plan, with a timescale of implementation from September 2015, ongoing discussion, consultation and training, being overseen by a project steering group and a Training Implementation Group.**

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.

**Impact on staff – some staff are reluctant to change their way of working to move to a more integrated service delivery. Some staff have expressed anxiety at having to support students with certain impairments/disabilities.**

**This is because the service has previously operated with 2 teams of Advisors; one team supports students with physical impairments, sensory impairments, mental health problems and temporary injuries. The other team sees students who have specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, Asperger Syndrome, AD(H)D, dyspraxia and dyscalculia. (As disabled students often experience one or more impairment, this can be an inappropriate and unhelpful division of expertise.)**

**Discussion about and staff consultation on the restructure began in mid-2012. To take forward the change, the SDS has drawn up a plan and timetable for implementation (following further staff discussion). A steering group has been formed and meets regularly, as was a group which carried out a skills audit and has now been replaced by a Training Implementation Group (see below).**

**Each Advisor has (or will shortly have) an individual schedule which clearly indicates when they are expected to see certain students and in which capacity eg initial appointments, drawing up a student's Learning Profile, carrying out a Disabled Student Allowance Needs Assessment etc.**

**Training is being arranged and provided for all staff from now and over the next 15 months to enable them to skill up on key areas. Case study meetings are ongoing inhouse to exchange information and share skills and experience. Advisors will be expected to shadow colleagues enabling them to learn on the job.**

**Training already delivered and planned will include:**

- 1. Supporting students with mental health problems**
- 2. Technology training on assistive technology**
- 3. Deaf awareness**
- 4. Visual impairment**
- 5. AD(H)D**
- 6. Asperger Syndrome**
- 7. Audio notetaking**
- 8. Ergonomics training**
- 9. Conflict management**
- 10. Interpreting an Educational Psychology report**

## **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.**

### **I Action and Monitoring**

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

**Ongoing, provision of training and exchange of knowledge. Operational management eg waiting lists, align different practices existing in the 2 Advisory teams.**

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

**Ongoing monitor and review via the PIES Steering Group**

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

**Ongoing; major review after one year of implementation from September 2015 ie summer 2016**

### **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**

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

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): **Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service**

Accepted by (name): **Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary** Date: **19/01/15**

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