



## 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 EqlA of the policy or practice. All full EqlAs are published.

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| <p>A. Policy or Practice (name or brief description):</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Policy and Procedure for Applicants with Declared Disabilities</b></p>  |
| <p>B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of previous undergraduate code of practice carried out; introduction of new policy and procedure which has been extended to include postgraduate and visiting student admissions.</li></ul>   |
| <p>C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:</p> <p>Name: Rebecca Gaukroger</p> <p>Job title: Head of Admissions</p> <p>School/service/unit: Student Recruitment and Admissions</p>  |
| <p>D. Screening Analysis</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Does the policy or practice affect primary or high level functions of the University?<br/>Yes</li><li>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)?<br/>Yes</li><li>3. Is the policy or practice one on which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqlA?<br/>Yes</li></ol> <p>If the answer to any of these questions is 'Yes', an EqlA should be carried out on the proposed/revised policy or practice at an early stage and in any event before it is finalised.</p> |
| <p>E. Screening outcome</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessment required: Yes</p> <p>Record notes about the screening process or outcome here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If EqlA is required, note when/at what stage(s) and by whom EqlA will be carried out.<br/><br/>As part of the review process an EqlA will be carried out by Gillian Simmons, Senior Policy and Project Officer, Student Recruitment and Admissions</li><li>• If EqlA is not required, note plans for review, monitoring or other action (including the communication of any favourable equality impact).</li></ul>   |
| <p>F. Sign-off</p> <p>Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Gillian Simmons, Senior Policy and Projects Officer</p> <p>Accepted by (name): Rebecca Gaukroger</p> <p>Date: 30 January 2014</p>   |

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?

*The Undergraduate Code of Practice - Applicants with Declared Disabilities has been reviewed in consultation with the Student Disability Service and admissions staff from across the University. The scope of the revised policy and procedure has been extended to include postgraduate and visiting student admissions.*

*The review has been undertaken to clarify procedures, to remove processes which are no longer applicable, and to ensure that all applicants who declare a disability are treated the same way in the admissions process.*

*The overarching principle is that declaring a disability should not disadvantage an applicant in the admissions process, but that it will allow the University to make any necessary adjustments prior to the student joining the University or, if that is not possible, will enable discussion to take place with the applicant about possible alternative programmes.*

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>

*This policy applies specifically to applicants with a disability/disabilities, whether or not they have chosen to declare this in their application. These applicants may also be members of other protected characteristic groups, but there would be no impact as a result of having other protected characteristics.*

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).

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.

*Statistical data is available on the number and percentage of undergraduate and postgraduate applicants who have declared a disability, the offer rate for those applicants, and the number of students who have declared a disability in their application who enter the University. In addition, statistical data is available on the number of students within the whole student body who have declared a disability. All of this data can be broken down by College, School and programme.*

*The data allows us to identify the difference between the number of applicants declaring a disability, and the number of students who have revealed a disability. Currently, a greater proportion of the students who matriculate at the University have declared a disability than the proportion of applicants who have declared a disability.*

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.

*Qualitative data from applicants who have disabilities would allow us to assess the new policy from an applicant's point of view. The new Student Panel being set up under the*

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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.

*Student Experience Project will be used to access such students.*

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 policy is designed to mitigate against any discrimination or less favourable treatment of applicants who have declared a disability by clarifying the process which should be used when an application is received from an applicant with a disability.*

*Improved clarity about what the procedure is, why it is in place and how it should be implemented is intended to improve consistency across the University and reduce the risk of any applicant being treated less favourably as a result of declaring a disability.*

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

*The policy is designed to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made prior to a successful applicant who has declared a disability joining the University. The Code also stipulates the need to make reasonable adjustments where required during the selection process e.g. for interview or portfolio assessment.*

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 policy will remove or minimise disadvantage for successful applicants on joining the University. It takes account of disabled people's impairments and seeks to ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place to support a successful applicant through his/her time at the University.*

*Successful implementation will encourage applicants to declare relevant disabilities at an earlier stage in the process, because they will be confident that such information will be valuable in ensuring appropriate support is in place for them when they arrive at the University, and that the information will not be used to discriminate against them in the admissions process. It is hoped that increased confidence amongst disabled applicants will also increase the number of people with disabilities who feel able to apply to the University, thereby increasing participation.*

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?

*Encouraging applicants to declare disabilities at an early stage will allow more time for appropriate adjustments to be made which should improve the transition experience for all new students. Increased openness about disabilities, including learning difficulties and unseen disabilities, will foster good relations between all students.*

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?

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<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.

*It is expected that the policy will only have an impact on applicants with disabilities because it is this group who will benefit from it.*

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)?

*The expectation is that only applicants with disabilities will be affected by this Code of Practice.*

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

*The admissions procedures set out in the policy will only affect applicants with disabilities. They are designed to ensure that all support needs and adjustments which a disabled applicant requires in order to access his/her education can be agreed and put in place prior to the applicant's matriculation. Should it be impossible to provide the adjustments required, the policy sets out mechanisms to discuss alternatives with the applicant.*

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?

*The principles of the policy and the process involved will be made available to applicants with disabilities via the University website, through the admissions offices and the Student Disability Service.*

*No barriers are created to other equality or under-represented groups through the implementation of the policy.*

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

*Equalities groups have not been involved in the current review of this policy, although the Student Disability Service have been fully consulted. However, future monitoring of this policy is planned to include students with declared disabilities, via the Student Panel.*

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.

## **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.

*The reasons for this conclusion are set out in section G.*

### **I Action and Monitoring**

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

*Methods to obtain qualitative feedback from applicants with disabilities will be put in place.*

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

*The qualitative data obtained will be used to inform further review of the policy.*

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

*The policy will be reviewed in January 2015.*

### **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/~~No~~

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)):

Gillian Simmons, Senior Policy and Projects Officer

Accepted by (name): Rebecca Gaukroger

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

Date: 30 January 2014