



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

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):

The Timetabling Project has developed a Shared Academic Timetabling Policy as part of the transition to a common shared timetabling system and practice across the University. The policy governs the allocation of timetabled learning and teaching activities and ad-hoc bookings for space that is used for learning and teaching.

The policy covers:

- Principles of Operation;
- Roles and Responsibilities of Local and Central Stakeholders;
- Teaching Times and Availability;
- Allocation Principles and Factors (including Booking Management and Course and Room Conflict Resolution);
- Standard Year Planning Cycle for Timetabling (including standard events and initiatives such as Flexible Learning Week);
- Equality and Diversity;
- Measures for Monitoring and Reviewing Service; and
- Guidance on Timetable Implementation

The Shared Academic Timetabling Policy can be found on [Insert full hyperlink here].

The project delivers 2 key benefits in relation to EqIA:-

- Student focused, comprehensive institutional timetabling which enhances student experience
 - The accessibility needs of students are incorporated within the shared timetabling provision.
 - Change and escalation processes are in place to support requests from students, which will be handled in a fair and consistent manner.
 - Ability in future to provide information to support the production of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)
- Supporting the University flexible working policy, ensuring equality of provision in line with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, the General Equality Duty and the Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012

Policy includes clear roles and responsibilities for all participants within the timetabling process, including:-

- Responsibility for ensuring support requirements for disabled students and staff are considered
- Student responsibility to advise of individual accessibility requirements

The policy has been produced in consultation with a wide group of University stakeholders, including Student Disability Service and Support groups.

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

- Proposed new policy/practice
- Proposed change to an existing policy/practice
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice - YES

Other (please state)

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Scott Rosie**

Job title: **Head of Timetabling and Examination Services**

School/service/unit: **Timetabling and Examination 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

All three elements listed above are applicable to the revised policy for Shared Academic Timetabling and the extension of central timetabling practices.

- Timetabling supports the primary teaching function of the University
- Timetabling needs to consider equality and accessibility issues when timetabling activities and allocating students to those activities

Given the direct impact on students and staff activities at the University, it is reasonable to expect the University to carry out an EqIA

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 partnership¹

As this policy and associated practices will affect most students and staff, the impact on all 9 protected characteristics has been considered.

¹ 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.

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

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

- This policy has the potential to impact all students and staff and therefore impact on all 9 protected characteristics, in particular:-
 - All 9 Protected Characteristics (PCs):
Timetabling is committed to:
 - Using the central timetabling system to randomly allocate students without distinction or differentiation. Schools also reserve the right to review and request manual student allocation should a need for specificity arise (due to a need or identified imbalance) as approved by the Head of School;
 - Providing training and support to assist with the fair collation and access of information;
 - Allowing both staff and students to request change to their allocated activities to meet individual requirements, regardless of circumstance or reason. This can be requested through a variety of mechanisms (such as online form) with no obligation to go into detail about reasoning; and
 - Adopting a proactive and reactive approach in helping to meet flexible working, caring and family leave related policies.
 - Disability: The central timetabling system will record accessibility requirements including physical access issues and issues relating to all disabilities including hearing and visual impairments against all teaching space to help ensure, as much as possible, the appropriate space allocation to students and staff. This will be facilitated by:
 - Estates/PEEP colleagues and associated parties (Disabled Go) who inform the Timetabling team of accurate and up to date room information and disabled egress;
 - The central timetabling system receiving feeds from other major university systems/databases (EUCLID) that can be used to proactively and reactively assist in appropriate allocation of space for students and the construction of PEEPS;
 - Local staff advising of their availability and requirements during timetable data collation that can then be considered when allocating space; and
 - Regular checks of equipment provision within rooms in consultation with the Learning Technology Section (LTS) or local providers to ensure appropriate functionality and compliance with other policies (e.g. Mainstreaming of Adjustments including the required use by lecturers of a microphone).
- For accessing timetabling information, the information is provided electronically and the software has been tested for accessibility in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines AA standard.
- Religion or belief: Timetabling will endeavour to accommodate requirements relating to religious/belief observance when scheduling classes. This will be achieved through being able to apply system restrictions if recommended by the University Chaplaincy team and student/staff requests for change.
 - Pregnancy & maternity: Timetabling will make appropriate adjustments in respect to timings and accessibility to ensure this category is covered within the University family leave related policies, and its flexible working policy.
 - Gender reassignment: Room bookings are made by name though University authentication. As such any change to name (including gender reassignment) should be captured through the normal update to personal details and these will feed through to the room booking system. Titles which denote gender are

not represented in the information which is displayed or provided on timetables.

- Race: All interaction with Timetabling (including system, policy, information and practice) is conducted or provided in English. As English is the main teaching language of the University, it is felt that this should not lead to disadvantage.
- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this will be addressed:
It is felt that there is sufficient information at this stage to proceed
- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:
It is felt that this policy and practice does not lead to any form of prohibited conduct, based on the reasons given in this document which detail the steps which have been taken to ensure no individuals with one or more protected characteristics are placed at a disadvantage.
- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity²
By providing a standard approach for timetabling, which takes into account equality requirements, the equality of opportunity should be advanced in the following ways:
All students regardless of College membership or PCs are provided with timetables that appropriately represent their teaching and learning commitments in an easily accessible format (Office 365/Web timetables). These formats can be altered or used with appropriate assistive technologies as required thus improving access for some disabled users.
All staff are able to advise of their availability (for instance with regard to access needs or times of religious observance) and be trained in regards to the submission of timetabling information. When conflict arises, staff and the Timetabling Team can consult and work together on a solution and compromise.
- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations:
The policy and practice for Shared Academic Timetabling may foster good relations by providing a consistent approach for timetabling and attempting wherever possible to account for individual needs across the university, considering students' advised-accessibility requirements, room suitabilities, travel constraints, religious beliefs, caring/parental responsibilities etc. It includes a defined central approach for handling conflicts and requests for changes to timetables and room bookings regardless of, or outwith consideration, to PCs. This provides clarity and fairness to all parties, fostering good relations ensuring that all individuals are given the same opportunities and no individual from any protected characteristic is placed at a disadvantage.
- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?
Disadvantaged groups such as those on low incomes should not be disadvantaged as the University offers free 24 hour access to IT facilities for both student and staff, for the viewing of timetable information and the booking of rooms. If the circumstance of a student or staff member changes (such as those who have experienced a temporary injury but who would not meet the formal definition of disability), timetabling is committed to accommodating requirements through the change request process.
- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?
The policy will be communicated via the Timetabling Unit website policy page, with an accompanying communication to alert Schools, who are primarily impacted by the

² This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

changes proposed. The University web pages are governed by the University Web Accessibility Policy which is based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines AA standard. Information will be provided in alternative formats free of charge upon request for disabled users where required.

- How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?
The policy has been developed in consultation with a large variety of stakeholders throughout the University, including the Staff Disability Officer, Student Disability Service, the Chaplaincy, the International Office, Support Groups, Trade Unions and Directorates. We will continue to monitor all feedback on the policy for any positive or negative comments related to any of the 9 protected characteristics and act accordingly.
- 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:
Nothing other than that mentioned above.

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.
- YES

No further change is required for the reasons stated above.

Option 2: Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.

Option 3: Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be mitigated/or justified

Option 4: Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.

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).

We will remind staff of the need to make reasonable adjustments and to provide information in alternative formats upon request. We will continue to monitor all feedback for any positive or negative comments related to any of the 9 protected characteristics and act accordingly.

The effectiveness of the policy and practice will be monitored through the:-

- a. Provision of appropriate feedback mechanisms to measure end-user satisfaction
- b. post-allocation analysis to ensure policy aims are met

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

Timetabling Policy and its implementation is a key aspect of University operations and will be regularly reviewed, whenever there is a change to policy or feedback received from

PCs by governance groups and committees across the University and the EqlA updated then.

H. Publication of EqlA

Can this EqlA be published in full, now? ~~Yes~~/No

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

I. Sign-off

EqlA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Amy Partridge-Hicks (Service Excellence Partner, Business Lead – Timetabling); and Sandra Miller (Service Excellence Business Analyst – Timetabling)

Accepted by (name): Scott Rosie (Timetabling Service Owner)

Date: 04/06/2018

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk