



## 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.

Assessing equality impact is a useful way of improving policy development and service delivery, making sure that we consider the needs of our students, employees and the wider community we serve, identify potential steps to advance equality and foster good relations, and do not discriminate unlawfully.

EqIA is part of the University's public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the associated Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The Equality Act 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 Universities policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services – essentially everything we do.

The form includes some administrative 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. All policies and practices that are being developed or reviewed should be screened and, where indicated, subject to full EqIA.

This form is designed to lead you through the process of EqIA through asking pertinent questions and the provision of examples. Answers should be recorded after each question or set of questions and the form can be expanded 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.

It is recommended that you undertake our online training on Equality and Diversity and EqIA before you carry out EqIA. This can be found at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/equality-diversity/training-resources/e-diversity-training>

**A.** Policy or Practice (name or brief description):

**Management of Graduations (Practice)**

- *Students can choose to either graduate in person or in absentia.*
- *If choosing “in person” they attend the relevant set of ceremonies held in the McEwan Hall either in June/July or November. The June/July ceremonies are predominately (but not exclusively) undergraduate students graduating and November is predominately postgraduate (predominately taught postgraduate). Students attend the ceremony allocated (which is done on a School basis) but there is also an option to request a deferral to a later set of ceremonies if there are unavoidable and reasonable circumstances. This is done on a case by case basis.*
- *To attend a ceremony the student applies via an online form which is located on the Academic Registry website.*
- *Each student will receive 2 guest tickets. Additional tickets (up to max. of 3 per student), if available, are distributed prior to the ceremony via a random ballot. Requests for extra tickets are via the online form process. Tickets are distributed (via mail or collection) when Registry is notified, by the relevant School, of their award (extra tickets are collected on the day).*
- *Students attending also have to order hood/gowns via Ede & Ravenscroft.*
- *Prior to the ceremony students are required to check-in and receive a seat ticket. Their seat is allocated to match the programme running order. Prior to the ceremonies any student identified as not being present is removed from the list of names to be read by the presenters which represent each School. This is done via a presenters’ meeting shortly prior to each ceremony.*
- *There are signers for the deaf at each ceremony and requirements for students or guests with special requirements are also catered for and can be requested via the online form e.g. dedicated parking for those with mobility problems, seating in lower section of Hall can be requested, the Hall has an induction loop, students with mobility problems or specific mental health issues are seated within the cohort of graduating students in ways which allows easy access to the stage and other facilities.*
- *A programme listing all those attending the relevant ceremony is produced for each ceremony. Each student will receive their degree certificate (printed by SAS and presented to the student in a folder and accompanied by a certificate tube) and Higher Education Achievement Record, HEAR, (i.e. transcript) and the ceremony. All graduates are also listed in the Scotsman and Herald newspapers although students have the option to opt out and not have their name appear.*
- *Those graduating in absentia have their degree certificate and HEAR mailed to them after the relevant ceremony.*
- *There is no graduation fee charged.*
- *Students in debt to the university (library, accommodation, tuition fee debt) are barred from graduating under the University’s Student Debt Policy.*
- *Student Administration Services is not responsible for: the academic procession; academic dress hire; building management and staffing of the McEwan Hall; photography; webcasting; receptions; Honorary graduate arrangements. SAS does however liaise closely with the internal and external people who manage these areas.*

**Further information:**

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/registry/graduations](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/registry/graduations)

[www.ed.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.32046!/fileManager/collection\\_policy.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.32046!/fileManager/collection_policy.pdf)

B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable):

- Undertaking a review of an existing practice

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: Craig Shearer

Job title: Assistant Director of Academic Registry (Head of Student Administration Services)

School/service/unit: Academic Registry

D. Screening Analysis

1. Does the policy or practice affect primary or high level functions of the University? Yes
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

E. Screening outcome

If the answer to any of questions in section D above is 'Yes', an Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out on the proposed/revised policy or practice at an early stage and in any event before it is finalised.

Equality Impact Assessment required: Yes

Record any notes about the screening process or outcome here.

- If EqIA is required, note when/at what stage(s) and by whom EqIA will be carried out.
- If EqIA is not required, note any plans for review, monitoring or other action (including the communication of any favourable equality impact).

F. Sign-off

Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Craig Shearer, Assistant Director of Academic Registry, Head of Student Administration Services

Accepted by (name): Craig Shearer, Assistant Director of Academic Registry, Head of Student Administration Services

[This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named in 3 above. If not, specify job-title/role.]

Date: March 2013

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.

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 practice is continually under review as part of our commitment to enhancing the student experience. Our aim is to make the graduation arrangements as inclusive as possible to ensure the event is an enjoyable occasion for students, guests and staff. The requesting to attend a ceremony process and the actual ceremonies are particularly relevant within the EqIA context.***

2. To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant? The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are (delete as applicable)

- Disability

***This is relevant for both students and guests. Students inform us of any specific requirements via the ceremony attendance web form. We offer: dedicated parking beside the Hall for those requiring easy access; seating on the lower level which does not involve access via stairs; access via wheelchair lifts into the hall; signers for the deaf; induction loop in the hall. There is the opportunity for students to request any relevant requirements beyond these and these are handled on an individual basis e.g. seating with easy access to the stage, additional seating for student's personal assistants to help them to the stage, seating to cater for students with anxiety or other issues possibly requiring easy access to exits, toilets etc. We can also complete parts of the process for those with a mobility or sight impairment e.g. we check them in and collect their gowns for them etc. All arrangements are made in direct consultation with the student to ensure they are completely comfortable with the arrangements. Access to the stage is via a ramp which is used by all students therefore anyone with a mobility issue is catered for as part of the normal process. We also ensure students with any requirement have a named contact in the lead up to the ceremony and on the day to ensure their needs are catered for.***

***Applying to attend a ceremony is done via an online form which is therefore accessible in all relevant formats.***

***There is the possibility for a student to defer (offered on a case by case basis) if an illness or disability means there is a significant difficulty in attending the allocated set of ceremonies.***

- race (including ethnicity and nationality)

***Although we specify a dress code we also indicate that dress related to a***

**student's ethnic or national background can be worn**

- religion or belief

***The ceremony is secular and inclusive in approach to its content. Chaplains representing the various faiths associated with the University Chaplaincy are involved in the ceremony and present a "moment for reflection" which is inclusive and non-faith based.***

- gender reassignment

***Any student requiring any special arrangements related to gender reassignment can arrange these via the online form or by contacting us in confidence. A member of staff deals with these arrangements in a confidential a manner.***

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 will 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 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.
  - ***Evidence is gathered via the online form which collects information pertaining to individual students (and thereby collated to gain information about relevant groups). The form collects information about the common requirements e.g. access but also offers an "other" facility to collect other types of requirements. The data collected is analysed after each set of ceremonies to ascertain any new requirements presenting themselves.***
  - ***We also have a feedback process on our website which can be used by students/staff/guests to highlight issues and concerns. This feedback process is constantly monitored and comments replied to by a senior member of staff. This mechanism will be more visible in future graduations i.e. highlighted in programmes and communications to collect further information.***
  - ***We also receive informal feedback from the students and guests we assist via special requirements. This information is useful as it is direct and usual received immediately after the ceremonies.***
  - ***This evidence is deemed as sufficient in assessing our practice.***

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.

4. Might the application of this policy/practice lead to discrimination, harassment or victimisation? Might it result in less favourable treatment for particular groups or give rise to indirect discrimination? No
5. Are reasonable adjustments built in where they may be needed? Yes

6. Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>1</sup>? Will it help to:
  - remove or minimise disadvantage Yes
  - meet the needs of different groups Yes
  - 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? No
  
8. Is there evidence (or an expectation) that people from different protected groups have different needs or experiences in relation to the policy/practice? If so, what are they? Yes: as above 2.
  
9. Is there evidence (or an expectation) of higher or lower uptake by any protected group(s)? If so, give details of the differences and the reasons for these (if known)? No
  
10. Is any protected group excluded from participating in or accessing the service or functions? If so, why? No
  
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? No
  
12. How are relevant equality groups or communities involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice? Via feedback process (see 3. Above)
  
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. 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 major change – 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.

<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.

No immediate actions required.

2. State how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).  
Feedback and requests will be analysed after each set of ceremonies.
3. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?  
On-going reviews after each set of ceremonies.

#### **J. Publication of EqlA**

The University's Records Management Office publishes EqlAs on its website. There is a statutory requirement to publish EqlAs within a reasonable period. However, in some circumstances there may be valid reasons to limit what is published or to delay publication. Can this EqlA be published in full, now? Yes/No

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

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

EqlA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Craig Shearer, Assistant Director of Academic Registry, Head of Student Administration Services

Accepted by (name): Craig Shearer, Assistant Director of Academic Registry, Head of Student Administration Services

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

Date: March 2013

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to .