THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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

Management of SAAS discretionary and childcare funds (Practice)

Scholarships and Student Funding Services (SSFS) administer discretionary and childcare funds for the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS), an agency of the Scottish Government. Students domiciled in the UK who are in financial difficulty can receive up to £3,500 in an academic session. Students domiciled in the UK with childcare responsibilities can receive funding for registered childcare provision. There is no upper limit on how much they can receive.

B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable):

Undertaking a review of an existing practice

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: Robert Lawrie

Job title: Director of Scholarships and Student Funding

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

Equality Impact Assessment required: Yes

This assessment will be carried out by Robert Lawrie, in conjunction with SSFS staff. It will be monitored and reviewed annually.

F. Sign-off

Screening undertaken by: Robert Lawrie, Director of Scholarships and Student Funding

Accepted by: Robert Lawrie, Director of Scholarships and Student Funding

Date: 28 March 2013

G. Equality Impact Assessment

1. **Overview. Indicate the current status of the policy/practice or the stage of development/review.**

   SAAS discretionary and childcare funds are administered by the University on behalf of the Scottish Government. This equality impact assessment only relates to the practice of administering the funds by the University.

2. **To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant?**

   SAAS discretionary and childcare funds are relevant to all protected characteristics under the Equality Act. As this is a Scottish Government policy, the University is not responsible for any discrimination inherent in the policy itself, which is equality impact assessed by policymakers. Equally, as students apply through, and receive advice from, the University's Student Association (EUSA), their practices and policies also underpin the impact on equality groups.

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

   Analysis of data on the scheme, and from Academic Registry's new feedback system, will enable us to determine the impact our administration of SAAS discretionary and childcare funds is having on different equality groups. We plan to monitor and review this annually.

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

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

   Not applicable.

6. **Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity[1]? 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?**

   SAAS discretionary and childcare funds are primarily designed to remove or minimise disadvantage. As they are aimed at students from lower income households, and those

[1] This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

with childcaring responsibilities, they may also have a positive impact on students from some ethnic minority groups, students with disabilities, and women. Evidence shows that people within these groups, on average, tend to come from lower income households:

http://www.poverty.org.uk/summary/key%20facts.shtml

http://poverty.org.uk/07/index.shtml?2

Furthermore, the University is committed to promoting and administering these funds fairly, consistently and to a high level of rigour to ensure those who need the funds most can access them

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[2]? Will it help to tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding?**

   SAAS discretionary and childcare funds encourage widening participation by attracting students from disadvantaged groups or those with additional responsibilities that could preclude them from accessing higher education. This creates a more diverse student population which will foster good relations between different groups.

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?**

   Not applicable

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)?**

   We only collect data from certain equality groups and will analyse these on an annual basis. We will use information from our newly implemented feedback service to determine the impact (if any) on the other equality groups.

   SAAS discretionary and childcare funds are promoted widely using a variety of media. We are confident that our approach is inclusive and fair.

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

    Not applicable

11. **Does the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?**

    No

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

    If our analysis of data and feedback highlights any issues relating to equality groups we will discuss this with colleagues and (if applicable) other stakeholders to determine a plan of action.

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

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.

SAAS discretionary and childcare funds are designed to promote equality by widening participation in higher education.

H. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

Outcome: Continue the policy or practice

At this stage we do not believe our administration of SAAS discretionary and childcare funds will discriminate against any equality groups and will instead promote equality.

I Action and Monitoring

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

We will monitor our administration of SAAS discretionary and childcare funds on an annual basis using data and feedback.

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

An annual report will be presented to senior management on an annual basis.

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

Autumn of each year

J. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now?

Yes

J. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by: Robert Lawrie, Director of Scholarships and Student Funding

Accepted by: Robert Lawrie, Director of Scholarships and Student Funding

Date: 28 March 2013