



Equality Impact Assessment

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):

New ordinance relating to the composition of the Senatus Academicus to comply with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

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

- Proposed new policy/practice
- Proposed change to an existing policy/practice **Yes**
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice
- Other (please state):

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Professor Peter Mathieson**

Job title: **The Principal**

School/service/unit: **Senatus Academicus**

D. What is the reason for carrying out an Impact Assessment of the policy/practice?

- **The policy/practice affects primary or high level functions of the University**
- **It is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)**
- **It is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA**

E. Aims and practices

What are the main aims of the new policy / regulation / guidance, or the changes to the existing policy / regulation / guidance?

What changes to practices will they introduce?

The principal objective of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 is to enable Senate to exercise its powers within a 'more modern, inclusive and accountable' framework.

The main changes that the 2016 Act brings in relate to the composition of Senate:

- **More than 50 per cent of Senate members must be elected**
- **Persons appointed by being elected by the students of the institution from among the students of the institution must make up at least 10 per cent of the total membership of Senate, up to a total of 30 members**
- **The University is no longer required to make all professors members of Senate**

These changes will be reflected in a new ordinance, to replace University Ordinance 204.

F. Are these changes are likely to have particular impacts (whether positive or negative) for students (or staff) with particular protected characteristics? **Yes – positive impacts**

If you answer yes, state these impacts and which protected characteristic groups they are most likely to affect.

Changes to the composition of Senate may have an impact on its demographic make-up, since the changes will allow representation from different proportions of staff categories, which in turn are subject to differences in demographics.

It is hoped that the changes to the composition will be more likely to promote diversity among members than the current Senate model. The following measures have been taken which are likely to lead to a diverse Senate membership:

- **A third of the membership will comprise elected non professorial members, which will allow the membership to reflect a broader range of academic staff in different roles**
- **Elected academic staff members, including those in the professorial category, will stand for three-year terms, and elections will be conducted on an annual basis. This will allow regular rotation of membership**
- **Senate meetings and e-business will be conducted in a way which will not prevent members of staff in any category from taking part; currently meetings are conducted on Wednesday afternoons, ending before 5 pm.**

The following points have also been taken into consideration in drafting the new ordinance:

- **The new model removes the automatic right of all professors of the University to become members of Senate. Professors of the University instead will have a reserved pool of 100 members, comprising a third of the membership, which reflects the current level of attendance at meetings of this category, meaning that there is likely to be room for all those who wish to become members, judging by the current levels of interest.**
- **Under the new model, students will be full members, rather than associate members, as they are currently. Since it is recommended that the Students' Association have delegated responsibility for appointing the 30 student members, the Students' Association should ensure that students across all categories and levels are able to stand for election.**
- **Up to 75 members of Senate will be *ex officio*; while the Senate is not directly responsible for appointing individuals to these roles, they will be subject to the equality and diversity measures of the University in appointing staff members, and this category is therefore likely to be diverse as a result.**

G. If you have answered yes to Question F, what evidence has assisted you to assess the likely impact of these changes?

Please summarise the main sources of evidence you have utilised, and what the evidence has told you.

All academic staff members were given the opportunity to comment on the recommended model via a questionnaire, which included a set of demographic questions which were analysed in relation to overall support for the recommended model. The analysis of this data did not show that any demographic group was more or less likely to support the model.

The Students' Association was also asked to respond formally on behalf of all students, and in this response, the Students' Association expressed support for the recommended model.

H. If you have identified that the changes are likely to have particular negative impacts for students (or staff) with particular protected characteristics:

- Is the policy / regulations justifiable and why?
- Have you amended the policy / regulation etc in order to remove or minimise these unintended impacts, and, if so, how?

I. If you have identified that the changes are likely to have particular positive impacts for students (or staff) with particular protected characteristics, what actions will the University take to maximise these benefits?

Academic Services will publicise the availability of places through a broad range of channels, to ensure that members of staff in all categories are aware of opportunities to stand for election

J. 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.

K. 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).

The Scottish Governance Code stipulates that Senate must conduct its own review of effectiveness on an annual basis and, as well as undertaking an external review of Senate and its committees at least every five years.

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

The new ordinance will only be officially reviewed if the findings of the regular reviews mentioned above highlight the need for significant changes to the agreed composition of Senate.

L. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **Yes**

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

M. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by **Theresa Sheppard, Academic Policy Officer, in consultation with the Senate Task Group on the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act.**

Accepted by (name): **Tom Ward**

Date: **5 April 2019**

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