

## Equality 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): A change to rota patterns within the Community Support Team (CST), ACE.**

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

- Proposed new policy/practice
  - Proposed change to an existing policy/practice
- A proposed change to staff rotas for Community Support Officers (CSOs) within the Community Support Team (CST) in ACE to address current staffing issues. This change will harmonise all rota patterns to 4 days on 4 days off. This will involve moving some staff on night shifts from a 7 days on 7 days off rota to a 4 days on 4 days off rota. No contractual terms and conditions will be affected. The change will apply to all 28 CSOs.**
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice
  - Other (please state):

**C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:**

Name: **Michael Broomfield**

Job title: **Senior Community Support Manager**

School/service/unit: **Accommodation, Catering and Events**

**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 **NO**
- 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**

**E. Equality Groups**

To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant and why? (add notes against the following applicable equality group/s)

**We feel the characteristics most likely to have the potential to be impacted are disability, sex, age, and religious or philosophical belief.**

**After consideration, it was found that the rotas were likely to have no foreseeable impact to the protected characteristics of sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, or marriage and civil partnership.**

**Disability:** one of the aims of a proposed rota change to 4 days on 4 days off for all CSO staff would be to improve staff health. It is recognised that moving to a shift pattern with more frequent rest days for night shift and back shift staff could reduce fatigue, and therefore have a positive impact on employees with health conditions or disabilities. However it is also noted that staff may care for others with health needs, and moving to a different shift pattern may make it more difficult for them to fulfil their caring responsibilities.

Reasonable adjustments would be considered if the change to working rotas had a particularly negative impact on disabled staff or for staff who care for disabled relatives (for example if this was to conflict with regular medical appointments). We would also ask any CSOs with any health or disability issues to raise concerns at an individual consultation meeting so any impact can be discussed.

**Sex:** 15% of CSOs are female, and 85% are male. It is noted that all the female CSOs are working part-time hours. Research has shown that childcare responsibilities are more likely to fall to women rather than men. Consideration needs to be given to the impact of a change in shift pattern to anyone with childcare responsibilities (regardless of gender). It is recognised that changing shift patterns could have an impact on employees who have set childcare sharing arrangements in place based around a 7 day consecutive rest break. It is acknowledged that some CSOs may need to find new caring arrangements, and adequate notice needs to be given before a proposed change to 4 on 4 off shifts is implemented to allow this to happen. This is particularly the case where there are child custody arrangements in place.

**Age:** 29% of CSOs are over 55 years old, so they may have responsibility to care for elderly parents. We would ask anyone with caring responsibilities to raise concerns at an individual consultation meeting so mitigations can be considered.

A harmonisation to of the 4 on 4 off shift pattern would be beneficial to older employees who currently work 7 days on 7 days off. This is because having more rest days every 4 days could reduce fatigue, which may be more prevalent in an ageing workforce.

**Religious or Philosophical Belief:** some staff may be members of religious organisations that meet regularly on the same day each week (for example churches or synagogues). Moving to a 4 on 4 off working pattern could mean that they are no longer able to attend these groups regularly every second week. However, over a year, employees will still be able to attend religious organisations the same number of times as they would on a 7 days on 7 days off rota. We would also ask any CSOs who are concerned about their attendance at religious groups to raise concerns at an individual consultation meeting so any impact can be discussed.

#### 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 will be robust. **Based on the answers given above. We will consult with staff to consider particular circumstances.**

~~**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).
  - This is specified above in relation to adequate notice to implement a shift pattern change, as well as individual consultations being offered to consider any mitigations
  - Reasonable adjustments will be considered where applicable, and additional time may be given to staff to adjust to changes in personal circumstances
  - We will review feedback for any positive or negative feedback related to any of the nine protected characteristics
2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?  
Six months from the implementation of the new rota (January 2023).

#### **H. Publication of EqIA**

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

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

#### **I. Sign-off**

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Katie Pearson, HR Casework Advisor for ACE

Accepted by (name): Michael Broomfield, Senior Community Support Manager.

Date: 30.06.22

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to [equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk](mailto:equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk)