



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):

Principles for Flexibility – Mandatory Study Abroad and exchanges– S1 2002 (relative to decision to cancel all S1 study abroad, exchanges and fieldtrips because of Covid-19)

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
- Other (please state): YES

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: Colm Harmon

Job title: Vice Principal Students

School/service/unit: Student strand of Covid-19 Adaptation and Renewal activities.

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
- 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. Equality Groups

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

- Age
 - applies to all students with UG applicants predominantly under 21 and PG applicants predominantly under 30. Older/independent students may be less able

to take advantage of the proposed flexibility given impacts on child and other care services.

- Disability
 - Applicants with a physical disability or who have a disabled family member may be more at risk from Covid-19 and therefore less able to take advantage of the proposed flexibility. The principles are intended to protect individuals and the university from the risks of Covid-19.
- Race (including ethnicity and nationality)
 - applicants from BAME backgrounds may be less likely or less willing to take advantage of the flexibility given the disproportionate impacts of Covid-19 on some ethnic groups-
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership¹

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

- On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups:
 - The policy adjustment recognises explicitly the importance of mandatory study abroad to students, evidenced in the numerous requests to introduce flexibility. The risk based approach embedded in the principles means that the impact on individuals will be highly variable. Students planning to visit the same country may have different outcomes to their requests for flexibility – as the decision to grant flexibility will depend not only on their personal characteristics but also on the willingness of the partner to reach agreement on their responsibilities.
 - It is recognised that students in all equality groups will have variable responses to the risk of Covid-19 and no student will be required to undertake study abroad in S1.
- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed
 - There is no data with which to assess the likelihood of covid-19 impacts on students due to undertake mandatory study abroad. It is however likely that WP students may face additional financial or confidence barriers to mobility as a consequence of Covid-19. It is already known that WP students are less likely to seek study abroad opportunities.
 - Policy only applies to those with a requirement for mandatory study abroad or exchange. The relative risk/protected characteristics of the two groups have not been considered. This reflects the significant opportunity cost associated with the establishment of partner agreements to allow study abroad to progress under the principles and the need to prioritise those with an academic requirement to undertake such study.
- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:
 - The policy change will directly discriminate, as a result of medical information, against some students with a disability or health condition which places them at higher risk of contracting covid-19. The fact of a disability does not in itself mean that flexibility will not be approved and the policy is intended specifically to protect those individuals at risk.

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.

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity²
- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations:
- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?
- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?
 - Cancellation of S1 study abroad has been communicated to all students. The introduction of flexibility will be communicated directly to those with mandatory study abroad requirements.
- How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?
 - Development of policy amendment progressed through SWARD as a sub-group of ART-STUDENT- Delivering Curriculum Resilience. The sub-group deliberately includes representation from impacted schools and student representation is included in DCR.
- 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:

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.

Policy is proportionate in achieving the desired objectives and recognises explicitly that the risks of Covid-19 on individual student may be significantly variable and that the university has a direct responsibility to ensure that risk assessment is enhanced to address the additional risks of Covid-19.

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).
 - Numbers of students able to undertake study abroad (and successfully complete) will be reported to University Executive.
2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?
 - Consideration of extension of the policy will be undertaken in Semester 1 as study abroad during S2 is considered.
 -

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes

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

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

I. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning

Accepted by Colm Harmon, VP Students

Date: 25 August 2020

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