



Equality Impact Assessment Template

Before carrying out EqlA, you should familiarise yourself with the University's EqlA Policy Statement and Guidance and Checklist Notes and undertake our online training on Equality and Diversity and EqlA. These, along with further information and resources, are available at www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/equality-diversity/impact-assessment

EqlA 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): Voluntary Severance (VS) Programme 2025
B. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (Mark yes against the applicable reason): Running a VS Programme in 2025 – time limited from January – July. This EQIA was written originally in December 2024, updated in March 2025 with application assessments and updated finally in May 2025 with outcomes. All three versions are held in HR although this latest version is published. Comments have been added where required, rather than replaced.
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: Name: Jo Roger Job title: HR Director, Partnering and Change School/service/unit: Human Resources
D. An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any of the following apply to the policy/practice, if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• affects primary or high level functions of the University Yes• is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)? No• It is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqlA? Yes
E. Equality Groups To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant and why? (add notes against the following applicable equality group/s) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age• Disability• race (including ethnicity and nationality)• religion or belief

- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership¹

The VS programme will be available to eligible staff at the University of Edinburgh from January 2025. A similar programme was run back in September 2020 – 223 applicants were accepted and exited the University in 2021. There were no complaints raised or feedback received that suggested any less favourable treatment for particular equality groups.

Pregnancy and Maternity:

- **For the VS Programme 2025 consideration has been given to the VS payment for those members of staff who are on maternity/adoption/shared parental leave. The VS payment will be based on the staff member's normal annual salary and contractual allowances and service in post will include time spent on paid and unpaid maternity/adoption/shared parental leave.**

Age consideration:

- **Particular age groups may be interested in the VS programme and likely to be at an age where accessing their pension is an option. Information on accessing pensions has been detailed in the FAQs**
- **Those in a younger age group may have less service in the role and financial package may be lower i.e. a lesser statutory redundancy payment for being under 22. This is statutory legislation and set out by Government.**

Race/Ethnic background:

- **It is recognised that UK immigration and visa rules may mean that some staff may not be able to apply for VS due to their visa conditions or those of their dependants. This was called out in FAQs for the scheme to ensure all staff took the necessary steps to ensure they understand the impact should they take VS. This is not to discourage applicants from other ethnic backgrounds, or offer favourable treatment to white staff but is recognised as a potential impact for some staff.**

Impact on remaining staff where VS has been approved:

- **Consideration was given during the process to the staff that would remain in employment if someone in the team structure exits via VS.**
- **A risk assessment was carried out to ensure that a) the work can substantially be removed and not redistributed. b) There are parts of the role that will remain, and the manager has risk assessed the impact and is satisfied this will be achievable through the redistribution/redesign of work planned and have minimum impact on the workload demands on staff/ impact on staff members.**

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

- **On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups:**

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.

- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this will be addressed:
- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:
- 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?

There was a communication campaign focusing on ensuring all staff, HR Partners and managers are aware of the detail of the programme. Consideration was given to those who do not have access to a computer and information regarding the programme will be communicated locally.

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

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).

Continuous monitoring will take place when the VS programme is running and any complaints/feedback about the practice will be closely monitored and responded to.

Update 21.3.25

After the application window closed an assessment took place of the 457 applications received and EDI data was presented and analysed.

The gender split for applications was fairly evenly split, 48% of applicants were male and 52% were female. When compared to the staff split for the whole University – 44% male, 56% female – there were slightly more male applicants compared to the male proportion of the

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

institution. There is no indication that the scheme terms and conditions create any cause for this.

The average age of applicants for VS was 58 – 58 for male and 57 for female applicants. This indicates that there is a specific age group who have applied for VS – those in an older age group who are potentially of an age to access their pension. The average age of the University population is 41 – 40 for female and 41 for male. Consideration has been given to this data particularly around any applications being declined as it is important to minimise any indirect age discrimination – for example, declining an application due to having to pay the shortfall in someone's pension due to their age and length of service would not be appropriate. Robust guidance has been written and advice provided to ensure any indirect age discrimination does not take place.

84% of the applicants identified as white, compared to 60% of the overall population of the University identifying as white. This means that proportionately more white people applied for the VS scheme, compared to the proportion of BAME staff, and those for whom we had no data/prefer not to say. Whilst VS scheme rules do not impact on the eligibility for staff who have identified as having another ethnic background/prefer not to say, individual eligibility to work in the UK being tied to employment, UK visa rules or dependant's right to remain requirements may have prevented or discouraged BAME/no data/prefer not to say applicants.

The data available on disability is not robust due to the number of individuals who do not have a recorded response on disability. For example, of the 457 applicants who have applied for VS, 349 have not responded if they have a disability. This is mirrored in the University wide data as 12,000 staff are recorded as not known for disability.

Update 9.5.25

An assessment of all 457 applications took place and 6 Business Cases completed by Budget Holders were sent to the Central Panel for final consideration and review.

Of the 457 applications assessed and sent to the Central Panel, 47% were male and 53% were female. 346 applications have been approved of which 46.5% were male and 53.5% were female. 111 applications were declined after assessment. 51% of the declined applications were male and 49% were female. Of the 457 applications 239 were female applicants. 23% of female applications were declined and 77% of female applications were approved. Of the 457 applications 218 were male applicants. 26% of male applications were declined and 74% of male applications were approved. The data suggests there was no direct inequality based on gender for the outcome of a VS application although a slightly higher proportion of female applicants were approved than male.

The average age for the 346 approved applications was 58 and average age for the 111 declined applications was 57. The average age of those applying for VS was 58 therefore the data for approved and declined applications does not suggest any inequality based on age for the outcome of a VS application. Further analysis was carried out to identify any outliers. 14 applications were received from the 16-34 age group and 5 applications were declined. 45 applications were declined in the 55-64 age group and 30 in the 65+ so 68% of declined applications were in the older age group categories. Although 5 applications were declined in the youngest age group, 16-34, 9 were approved.

Out of the 457 applications, 383 applicants identified as white, 19 as BAME, 44 preferred not to say and 11 were not known. 75% of applications from individuals who identified as white were accepted while 25% were declined. 84% of applications from individuals who identified as

BAME were accepted and 16% were declined. Similar to the update from March 2025, whilst the scheme attracted more white staff, there was not an inequality based on ethnicity for the outcome of a VS application. A higher percentage of applications from BAME applicants were accepted when compared to the percentage of white applicants.

As stated above in the update from March. The data available on disability is not robust due to the number of individuals who do not have a recorded response. For example, of the 346 approved applicants it is not known if 267 have a disability and for the 111 declined applicants it is not known if 85 have a disability.

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

A lessons learned session will take place when the programme comes to an end and this session will be documented to ensure any future programme addresses any issues faced and continues with good practice.

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **No**

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

EqIA to be continually reviewed and published with the launch of the VS Programme.

I. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): **Nikki Malloch, HR Partner, Employee Relations and Employment Policy**

Accepted by (name): **Jo Roger, HR Director, Partnering and Change**

Date: **15/05/2025**

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