



Equality Impact Assessment

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): School of Engineering – Alrick building - Changing 1st floor Male toilets beside room 1.A117 to Female only

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

- Proposed new policy/practice – Yes, proposal to change a Male only toilet on the 1st floor of the Alrick building to a Female only toilet
- Proposed change to an existing policy/practice
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice
- Other (please state):

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: Ben Gordon

Job title: Buildings Manager

School/service/unit: School of Engineering

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 EqlA?

E. Equality Groups

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

- Age
 - this change would benefit this group as changes in menstrual cycle and bladder function can be linked to the menopause, a condition that is often, although not always, linked to age.

- Disability
 - Yes, the change of one Male toilet facility to the 1st floor of Alrick to a Female only will lessen the demand on the single accessible toilet on the floor that is currently used by female members of staff.
- race (including ethnicity and nationality)
 - It is not believed the change from Male to Female will affect this group but should over time evidence highlight it is a factor the matter will be reconsidered.
- religion or belief
 - this change would benefit this group as in many cultures and religions, women are forbidden from sharing close spaces such as bathrooms with men they are not married to, or related to. This particularly becomes an issue during their menstrual cycle.
- sex
 - Yes, the proposed change in toilet provision seeks to change a Male only toilet with 2 WC cubicles, 1nr urinal and 2nr wash hand basins in to Female only.
Currently the 1st floor of the Alrick building has no dedicated Female toilet with female members of staff, researchers and students having access to one accessible toilet on the floor. The nearest female only toilet in on the floor below or to the 2nd floor of the adjacent Faraday building, both are not easily accessible for those working in the IBioE laboratories on the ground floor of Alrick or those working on the 1st floor west end of Alrick.
In contrast there is Male provision on the 1st floor of Alrick and to the 1st floor of the Faraday building which is at the same floor level. The change in one toilet facility from male to female seeks to address an imbalance in Male / Female provision to this floor of the Alrick building and seeks to provide “Suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences..... at readily accessible places.”
- sexual orientation
 - It is not believed the change will affect this group but should over time evidence highlight it is a factor the matter will be reconsidered.
- gender reassignment
 - It is not believed the change will affect this group but should over time evidence highlight it is a factor the matter will be reconsidered.
- pregnancy and maternity
 - the additional female toilets to the 1st floor of Alrick will improve provision and be of benefit to this group.
- marriage or civil partnership¹
 - It is not believed the change will affect this group but should over time evidence highlight it is a factor the matter will be reconsidered.

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

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

Currently the 1st floor of Alrick has no dedicated Female toilet provision. There are female academic members of staff, professional services staff, early career

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.

researchers and students who have offices and / or use facilities on this floor. The nearest female toilet is in the ground floor reception area of the Alrick building or the 2nd floor of the adjacent Faraday building. Some members of staff would pass at least two Male toilet facilities to reach the nearest dedicated female only toilet.

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

This application lowers the number of male-specific facilities in the building but there are sufficient number of male toilets elsewhere on the floor, in the building and neighbouring buildings.

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity²

Applying this proposal advances equality of opportunity for female members of staff and students.

- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations:

Applying this practice and ensuring its good communication will provide reassurance to staff and students that their health, safety, and well-being are being prioritised, and that issues of equality have been carefully considered.

- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?

The School does not believe at this time that the proposal will create any barriers for other groups but should evidence point to a barrier the matter will be reconsidered.

- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?

The change will be communicated to School staff and students by email and through relevant management groups. Additional signage in the area will be augmented to alert building users of the change.

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

This change is being made in response to feedback from female staff who work in the area, one of whom has been consulted in the creation of this EqIA.

- 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:

The change to the toilet in this area will reduce the possibility of indirect discrimination.

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

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

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 EqlA and how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).
 - This new practice will be introduced and monitored one year following its introduction to monitor any adverse impact on groups with protected characteristics in the School.
 - Estates Dept contacted to provide a quote to convert the Male toilet facility into a Female only one.
 - If quote acceptable School to authorise works via P&M
 - School notified of proposed change
 - Arrange for works to progress
 - Update local signage
2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?
One academic year after the practice is implemented.

H. Publication of EqlA

Can this EqlA be published in full, now? Yes

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

I. Sign-off

EqlA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)):

David Ingram – Prof of Computational Fluid Dynamics/ Director of Diversity and Inclusion
Hannah Chalmers – Personal Chair of Sustainable Energy Systems
Sinead Gilmour – PhD Student
Andy McDermott – Health and Safety Officer
Sarah Farrukh – PDRA
Eftahalia Chatzisyneon - Senior Lecturer in Civil and Environmental Engineering
Marjorie Drysdale - Research Administrative Assistant
Hongye Zhang – Lecturer in Superconducting and Cryogenic Electric Machines

Accepted by policy owner: Ben Gordon – Buildings Manager

Date: 20 March 2025

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