THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Template

This form is intended to help you decide whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is needed and, if it is, to carry out the assessment of impact.

Before carrying out EqIA, you should familiarise yourself with the University's EqIA Policy Statement 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 is part of the University's general equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The Equality Act 2010 specifies the following 'protected characteristics': age, disability, race (including ethnicity and nationality), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage or civil partnership. This form uses 'equality group' to mean persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.

The University has a general equality duty to have due regard to the **needs** to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Under the Scottish Regulations, the University has a specific duty – subject to relevance and proportionality - to assess the impact of applying proposed new or revised policies and practices against the needs above. 'Policy and practice' should be interpreted widely to include the full range of the University's policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services – essentially everything we do.

This form is a tool to help with screening and EqIA and is designed to lead you through the process through asking pertinent questions and giving examples. However, the law does not dictate a particular form for EqIA. The requirement is to actively consider how a policy or practice will meet the general equality duty, and take any necessary action. Wherever practicable, EqIA should be built into standard processes and tailored to the nature of the policies or practices involved.

It is, however, necessary to publish EqIA where the policy or practice is applied, so all EqIAs – in whatever format - should be sent to equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk for publication.

The form includes: some details about the policy/practice; a screening analysis to indicate whether full EqIA is required; and then a number of questions to enable full EqIA.

Answers should be recorded after the questions and the form can be expanded and supplemented as required. Answers may be as long or short as is necessary and relevant, bearing in mind that the effort involved in EqIA should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy or practice to equality.

Once completed, this form will be the record of the screening and, where applicable, the EqIA of the policy or practice. All full EqIAs are published.

A. Policy or Practice (name or brief description): Change of accessible study room 4 from assistive technology to general bookable accessible study room.
B. Reason for screening (delete as applicable): • Proposed change to an existing policy/practice • Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: Name: Viki Galt Job title: Disability Information Officer School/service/unit: Information Services
D. Screening Analysis 1. Does the policy or practice affect primary or high level functions of the University? Yes 2. Is the policy or practice relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' set out in the introduction above)? Yes 3. Is the policy or practice one on which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA? Yes If the answer to any of these questions is 'Yes', an EqIA should be carried out on the proposed/revised policy or practice at an early stage and in any event before it is finalised.
E. Screening outcome Equality Impact Assessment required: Yes Record notes about the screening process or outcome here. An EqIA is required this will be complete before the room changes and published just after the room use has been changed
F. Sign-off Screening undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Viki Galt Disability Information Officer Accepted by (name): Viki Galt Disability Information Officer Date: 29th April 2013

If EqIA is not being carried out, delete the remainder of this form and send the completed form to equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk.

G. Equality Impact Assessment

Before assessing the policy/practice, ensure that you have a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy or practice, the context, the intended beneficiaries and the results aimed for.

In answering the questions below:
- Bear in mind that the extent of EqIA should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy/practice to equality. It may not be practicable or necessary to answer every question or address every potential scenario.
- Focus mainly on aspects of the policy/practice that are most relevant to the question, to ensure most attention is given to the most important areas.
- Relate answers to consideration of the available evidence and address any gaps or disparities revealed, where feasible without disproportionate effort. For new policies, assess potential impact.
- Describe any action identified to address any issues highlighted.
- Where there is potential for adverse impact, but the policy/practice will still be applied, indicate the rationale for that decision.

Initial/partial EqIA: in some circumstances - particularly for new policies/practices – there may be limited information on which to base EqIA. In these cases, the EqIA should be carried out to the extent possible and should identify arrangements for monitoring/investigation of equality impact and for fuller EqIA in future.

Wholly positive impact: Some policies/practices may be viewed as having only positive equality impact. For these, consideration should still be given to ensure that no adverse impact is overlooked and to ensure that full advantage is taken of the positive impact, e.g. through effective communication. However, the effort involved in carrying out EqIA should not be excessive.

1. Overview. Indicate the current status of the policy/practice or the stage of development/review. Also note any general comments here regarding the relevance and significance of the policy/practice to equality. Which aspects of the policy/practice are particularly relevant (which should be the main focus for EqIA)? On what aspects of equality does the policy/practice particularly impact?

   At present the University has 15 accessible study rooms which are for sole use by disabled students. Access to these rooms is determined by need as evaluated by Student Disability Services. Currently, there are 5 sole occupancy rooms which are for the use of one individual only for one year, 4 assistive technology rooms which house specific pieces of assistive hardware and software and 6 general bookable rooms which disabled students can book for up to three hours. Following a review of the booking figures for these rooms it appeared there was a low demand for the assistive technology rooms and high demand for the general bookable rooms. We therefore propose to change room 4 of the assistive technology rooms into a general bookable room and move the hardware and software from room 4 and spread it amongst rooms 1 to 3. As this directly affects disabled students the changes are particularly relevant to disability as a protected characteristic. The main focus of the EqIA is whether the potential change might have any positive or negative impact on disabled students.

   Update 2015 – Since the last EqIA we have continued to monitor booking room statistics and we conducted a survey of accessible study room users. The statistics showed that the 3 remaining accessible study rooms were used more than previously but the figures remained much lower than for the general bookable rooms. Anecdotally the number of comments made to Student Disability Services

about students ability to book general bookable accessible study rooms declined. The survey indicated that the majority of students found it difficult to book a room sometimes and therefore our decision to change one general assistive technology accessible study room to a general bookable study room seems to have been a sensible decision.

2. To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant? Policies/practices applying to substantial groups of students or staff will be relevant to all equality groups, which should be noted. However, also indicate any equality groups for which the policy/practice is particularly relevant, and why.

As this directly affects disabled students the changes are particularly relevant to disability as a protected characteristic. The other equality groups should not be affected directly as this service is only available to disabled students as a form of reasonable adjustment.

In answering the questions below consider each of these equality groups. As part of this, consider diversity within, as well as between groups (e.g. different disabilities, different racial groups). Consider the implications of combinations of protected characteristics e.g. issues of relevance to women may vary once race, religion and age are taken into consideration. Also consider the impact on those with caring/family responsibilities (which tends to impact more on women).

3. What evidence is available about the needs of relevant equality groups? E.g. information/feedback from equality groups or other stakeholders, involvement or research with equality groups or individuals, equality monitoring data, service monitoring data, information for other similar policies/practices, staff surveys, research reports, demographic information, audit, inspection or management reports and recommendations.

We have collated evidence from the booking room system which indicated that the assistive technology room 4 was booked only 1.62% of the time in Semester 1 compared to the general bookable rooms which ranged from 50.30% to 69.29% of the time. In addition Student Disability Services had been reporting anecdotal feedback from students finding it difficult to book an accessible study room

Where are the gaps in evidence? If there is insufficient information to properly assess the policy, how will this be addressed? If information cannot be gathered now, consider building monitoring into the plans for implementation/review of the policy/practice. Note: the resources put into collecting evidence should be proportionate to the relevance of the policy/practice to equality.

Based on this evidence we felt we had sufficient information to change accessible study room 4 (assistive technology) to a general bookable accessible study room and review in 6 months' time.

Update 2015 – The percentage usage numbers for the assistive technology accessible study rooms increased 5.14% to 11.49% and the general bookable study rooms ranged in the Main library from 53.65% to 79.62%. In particular, usage of accessible study room 4 which had previously been the assistive technology study room increase from 1.62% to 36.15%. We feel the usage figure was lower than the other bookable study rooms as students although informed by a variety of methods took some time to realise this was now a general bookable room.

4. Might the application of this policy/practice lead to discrimination, harassment or victimisation? Might it result in less favourable treatment for particular equality groups or

give rise to indirect discrimination? This change in practice should not result in any of the above.

This change in practice should not lead to any forms of prohibited conduct.

5. Are reasonable adjustments built in where they may be needed?
Any student who was using the equipment in room 4 was given access to the same equipment in rooms 1 to 3.

Update 2015 – We have received no negative comments regarding the change to accessible study room 4 and all students who were using the technology in this room were given keys to another assistive technology room with the equipment they required in it. We have received no negative feedback about this.

6. Does the policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity[1]? Will it help to:
   - remove or minimise disadvantage
   - meet the needs of different equality groups
   - encourage increased participation of particular groups
   - take account of disabled people's impairments?

This policy should help to assist disabled students and make it easier for them to book rooms whilst still ensuring that those students who need to access the assistive technology are still able to do so without any inconvenience. This will ensure the needs of some disabled users are better met.

7. Is there an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations between people in any protected group and those who are not[2]? Will it help to tackle prejudice and/or promote understanding?
   Hopefully this will allow those disabled users who use the accessible study rooms to see we can respond to need as it changes and develops to offer the best access and quality of service possible.

8. Is there evidence (or an expectation) that people from different equality groups have different needs or experiences in relation to the policy/practice? If so, what are they?

   No.

9. Is there evidence (or an expectation) of higher or lower uptake by any equality group(s)? If so, give details of the differences and the reasons for these (if known)?

   These rooms are only accessible to disabled students and therefore disabled users will be most affected by this change.

10. Is any equality group excluded from participating in or accessing the service or functions? If so, why?

    Only disabled users have access to these rooms as a reasonable adjustment as permitted under the Equality Act 2010.

11. Does the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups? For example, because of the time when the service is delivered or because of restricted income? Is the communication of the policy/practice accessible to all groups?

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[1] This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership
[2] This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership.

N/A

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

We will continue to monitor this change through contact with Student Disability Services, student representatives on the Student Disability Committee and subgroups as well as continuing to monitor the levels of room bookings.

Update 2015 – We continue to monitor usage and booking statistics and through gathering feedback from students via comments and suggestions made to their advisors in the Student Disability Service and more formally through surveys.

13. Are there any other points to note regarding the potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations? If so, note these here.

It is hoped that this change will improve service to those disabled users who require access to individual study rooms and therefore promote good relations and reduce potential discrimination against disabled students. We will ensure those students currently using room 4 will be spoken to individually to reassure them that they will still have access to the same resources in rooms 1 to 3.

H. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

There is a legal obligation to take account of the results of the EqIA in the development of a new or revised policy or practice. This requires considering taking action to address any issues identified, such as removing or mitigating any negative impacts, where possible, and exploiting any potential for positive impact. Clearly any unlawful discrimination must be eliminated.

Having considered the answers in section G, select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed. Delete the options that do not apply.

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust. There is no evidence of potentially unlawful discrimination and all reasonable opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations have been taken, subject to continuing monitoring and review.

As detailed above we view this change as having a positive impact on improving access to disabled student to accessible study rooms and have taken steps to ensure disabled students who use the assistive technology rooms will not experience any detriment.

I Action and Monitoring

1. Specify the actions required to implement the findings of this EqIA.

    We will meet with individual students currently using room 4 and reassure them that they will be able to continue to access the same resources without any disruption or breaks in service in rooms 1 to 3.

2. State how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above). We will continue to monitor student feedback and room bookings data to ensure the ratio of assistive technology rooms to general bookable assistive study rooms best meets the needs of disabled users.

3. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?
    When there is next a change to use in the accessible study room or when feedback or statistics indicate a need for us to revisit this decision.

J. Publication of EqIA

EqIAs are published on the Equality and Diversity website.

There is a statutory requirement to publish EqIAs within a reasonable period. However, in some circumstances there may be valid reasons to limit what is published or to delay publication.

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes

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

J. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)):Viki Galt, Disability Information Officer

Accepted by (name): Viki Galt, Disability Information Officer

Date: **20th May 2015**

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