



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): Microsoft Teams Live Events

The University of Edinburgh is licensing Microsoft Teams Live Events to all users across campus. This site-wide service is similar to Microsoft Teams itself in that it will provide additional functionality to all staff and students, allowing users to host town hall events with 'producer' and 'presenter' roles and up-to 10,000 audience members. The product is built by Microsoft and is therefore available globally. It is for internal use and collaboration externally.

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 **YES**
- Other (please state):

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Alex Carter**

Job title: **Head of Service Management**

School/service/unit: **Information Services**

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 **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)? **YES**
- 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)

- Age
- Disability
- race (including ethnicity and nationality)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership¹

The Microsoft Teams Live Events service, being an online service, has the potential to affect all staff and students and therefore may impact on all nine protected characteristics. However, the protected characteristic of disability may have the greatest impact, as this is an online service, and it will need to be accessible in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA standard, including being able to work with assistive technology. Furthermore, the aforementioned assistive technology includes voice recognition software, screen readers or screen magnification software. Reasonable adjustments will need to be put in place should a disabled user be unable to use the system and we were unable to resolve this. MS teams have produced information on the use of live events and screen readers [MS Teams live events and screen readers](#) and wider accessibility information on MS teams at [MS Teams and Accessibility](#)

Teams Live Events may be of relevance to the protected characteristic of race as the system has the default language setting of English. This is mitigated by the fact that the main teaching language of the University of English. It should be noted that there is the ability to change the language preference in the 'settings' tab quickly and easily. This could therefore have a positive impact on the protected characteristic of race.

The availability of the service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, alongside use as a mobile app (by downloading the Microsoft Teams mobile app) may positively impact several of the protected characteristics. In particular, pregnancy and maternity, disability, those with caring responsibilities (which could be disproportionately women) and those who observe and adhere to specific times of religious observance. Teams Live Events allows for flexible home / 'on the go' access for those that may not be able to work in an office environment where they can use the web-based browser.

In terms of religion and belief we are aware that some religions prevent the photography or filming of individuals, Teams Live Events does not insist that a user turn on a camera (attendees cannot turn on their camera), nor is it mandated by the University that a user must have the camera on.

Any content added to Teams Live Events by users (in the form of messages, files, meetings) should not discriminate against any of the protected characteristics. Any content found to discriminate would result in disciplinary action. Within Teams Live Events, a user would be identifiable to other users, and therefore caution will be needed to ensure other users are not making judgments based on an individual's name, particularly with regard to gender or race. Similarly, users can upload a

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.

photograph to accompany their name in Teams Live Events, albeit it is optional. There should be no discrimination for users who do not wish a photograph to be used, including for religious reasons. Moreover, if a person is undergoing gender transformation, the system would pull the information from the University staff and student directory, meaning any changes would follow accordingly. In this instance and others, the user could upload whichever photo they wished and change it over time, as users can manually change their profile photo at any time.

The University vision involves a continuing commitment to equality and diversity for both students and staff. The University has a single Equality Strategy to ensure that equality and diversity are guiding principles in our pursuit of academic excellence.

Notes against the following applicable statements:

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

Information on impacts to any of the protected characteristics will continue to be monitored via any feedback we receive, positive and negative. If feedback is received showing a negative impact on a protected characteristic, this will be addressed either by providing additional information on the service to mitigate the issue, changing how Microsoft Teams Live Events is provided at the University, or if we cannot immediately deal with the issue ourselves, opening conversation with Microsoft on the issue.

We have consulted with the Staff Disability Network and the Student Disability Service at the University also to get feedback.

- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this will be addressed:

At this stage, we have sufficient evidence to proceed.

- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:

We do not feel that Microsoft Teams Live Events will result in any form of prohibited conduct. We will endeavour to make the system as accessible as possible, and where issues are out with our control, this will be reported to Microsoft. In terms of the possible effect on disabled users and the inability to access the service, particularly if we were also unable to rectify this issue, then reasonable adjustments would be put in place to ensure no user experiences any disadvantage. This could include utilising access of the service through provision of assistive technology.

Teams Live Events is a Microsoft-based system. Should any adjustments to the technology be out with our control, we will work with the supplier to ensure that such adjustments are put in place.

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

Microsoft Teams Live Events contributes to advancing equality of opportunity, alongside the other online communication platforms used by the University, by allowing users to access ways to meet and communicate with people, through presenting, producing or attending events 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from home. This could advance equality of opportunity for people with caring responsibilities, those who observe times of religious observance, as well as disabled users.

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

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

In completing this EqIA we hope to have identified the possible protected characteristics that may be affected, positively or negatively, by the implementation of Microsoft Teams Live Events. Hopefully this demonstrates the commitment Information Services and the University has to Equality and Diversity issues. Further, Teams Live Events has been used to host events on Equality and Diversity issues, including workshops on mental health at the University, events ran by the Staff Pride Network on LGBT and allyship in the workplace and public lectures ran by Race.Ed on issues surrounding race equality, with further events scheduled.

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

Microsoft Teams Live Events should not create barriers for any other groups. One group who should be mentioned however, are those with lower incomes who may not have at home IT access to set up, produce or view Live Events online. To mitigate this Schools should make arrangements with their students who do not have at home IT access and who need to watch a Live Event, to ensure they can get access to this. In terms of staff who may not have at home IT access, that staff member's Line Manager should make arrangements to purchase/or provide a laptop/desktop etc, for the staff member in order that they can organise/produce/present or attend Live Events.

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

The University-wide communication of Teams Live Events as a platform to help run online events is available on the University of Edinburgh website. These webpages were created following University guidelines (University Web Accessibility Policy) in accordance with level AA, 2.1 standard of the of the W3C recommended version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. An accessibility statement has been added to these pages in line with The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018

Users who request permissions to organise Teams Live Events, or who are asked to be producers and presenters in Teams Live Events, will be directed to another webpage on the University of Edinburgh website which provides information, advice and guidance on using the service. This page was also created following University guidelines (University Web Accessibility Policy) which adhere to level AA, 2.1 standard of the of the W3C recommended version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Producers and presenters are required to complete training videos created by the Digital Skills and Training team, before using Live Events. The videos are on the University Media Hopper service and have captions. Disabled users can request these webpages and training videos in an alternative format, free of charge.

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

The Information Services Disability Information team will review the accessibility and compatibility of Microsoft Teams Live Events with assistive technology to support disabled users of the service. We have consulted with the Student Disability Service and the Staff Disability Network and will continue to consult with relevant stakeholders as appropriate. Furthermore, any feedback we receive on Microsoft

Teams Live Events will be monitored for any positive or negative impact on the nine protected characteristics and acted on accordingly. Where we cannot make changes ourselves on an issue we can open up discussions with Microsoft.

- 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:

We do not envisage any potential impact through the Microsoft Teams Live Events service. We will continue to look at how accessibility might be improved.

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.

We made this decision based on the information given above.

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).

Feedback received from staff using Microsoft Teams Live events will be monitored for any information about issues affecting any of the protected characteristics and this will be dealt with appropriately. Staff will be reminded of the need to make reasonable adjustments, provide information in alternative formats and to work with Microsoft to implement improvements.

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

This EqIA will be updated as and when any upgrades or changes to the service are made, or when we receive any feedback, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics.

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **Yes**

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)):

Eilidh MacLeod, Messaging Services Assistant, Service Management, Information Services

Accepted by (name): **Alex Carter, Head of Service Management, Information Services**

[This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named above. If not, specify job-title/role.]

Date: **10/2020**

Update 2023:

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

Sharon Chen, Online and Digital Events Service Assistant, Service Management, Information Services Group

Accepted by (name): **Alex Carter, Head of Service Management, Applications Directorate, Information Services Group**

Date: **07/2023**

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