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):

Argyle House Multifunctional Device (MFD) Relocation and Sustainability Initiative

The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated all ISG colleagues based at Argyle House to work away from the office. Staff have undertaken roles and responsibilities in an almost entirely digital environment, with working practices moving away from everyday use of MFDs, which comprise printing, photocopying and scanning among other functions.

While Printing Services colleagues have ensured environmental considerations when deploying MFDs across the University estate, the Social and Civic Responsibility Delivery Plan of the University's Strategy 2030 necessitates further work in this area. Consolidation of MFDs, which originally existed on all staffed floors of Argyle House, to one unit is an important initiative that contributes to University-wide objectives that are in turn based on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, there are several local benefits to the initiatives, including the elimination of short-term, single-use paper items, improving the resource efficiency of the MFD, which will be based at the Reception area on Floor E, the general entrance to the building, and an overall reduction of waste.

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

- Proposed new policy/practice
- Proposed change to an existing policy/practice **Yes**
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice
- Other (please state):

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Gavin McLachlan**

Job title: **Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer, and Librarian to the University**

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

D. An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any if the following apply to the policy/practice, if it:

- affects primary or high level functions of the University **No**
- 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 EqIA? **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 partnership[1]

The initiative has the potential to affect all staff, students and users of Argyle House, and therefore may impact on all nine protected characteristics.

However, the protected characteristic of disability may have the greatest impact, as this relates to relocation of a MFD that allows several every day operational uses. ISG staff currently reside on Floors D, E, F, H and K of Argyle House, meaning colleagues on four out of five areas will need to visit the aforementioned Reception space on Floor E to use a MFD, either down or up a stairwell or via a lift. Some disabled staff may need to print out resources and / or make greater use of the MFD for specific reasons related to their disability. There may also be some disabled staff for whom moving through the building to collect printing may be difficult and / or cause significant pain or tiredness. In both of these cases, mangers will be reminded of the legal need to provide reasonable adjustments to ensure no disabled person is placed at a disadvantage.

Similarly, there may be staff with temporary injuries that would not meet the legal definition of disability but for whom adjustments will need to be put in place for the period of the aforementioned temporary injury.

With regards to the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity, there may be pregnant members of staff who for certain periods and reasons find it very difficult to visit Floor E to access a MFD. As noted with regard temporary injuries, temporary adjustments will be put in place to address this situation.

Communication about the relocation and sustainability initiative will be undertaken in a variety of ways. An article on the University website (EdWeb) provides colleagues with details about the relocation and principles behind the initiative. EdWeb is governed by a [Website Accessibility Policy](), which is designed to be accessible as far as possible in line with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA standard](), including compatibility with assistive technology such as voice recognition software, screen readers or magnification software. In particular, EdWeb holds an [Accessibility Statement](), as per The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile

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[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.

Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Moreover, an email to all ISG staff, and the weekly Chief Information Officer (CIO) ISG Newsletter, will give context and inform colleagues of the initiative. Reasonable adjustments will need to be in place should a disabled person prove unable to access information on the relocation and initiative, and that we were also unable to rectify.

Another significant consideration is race, whereby information about the relocation and initiative is written in English, which is mitigated by the fact that the main teaching language of the University is English. There is a potential positive effect in that by providing the details about the change online, individuals can access the information and subsequently use browser translation tools to convert into a preferred language.

There may be the potential for various documents to be more accessible for some disabled users if sent electronically rather than being printed out, which is hoped to be a product of this change. This, of course, relies on the electronic documents created being accessible. The Disability Information team offer training on this subject and maintain a series of webpages that detail how to undertake this: Creating Accessible Materials. In addition, the team randomly spot checks and reviews documents being circulated.

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

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

- On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups:
Consultation has been undertaken throughout the development of this initiative, including with the ISG Senior Leadership Team (SLT), which represents each directorate within Argyle House, the building owners, Telereal Trillium, the ISG Disability Information team. We will monitor all feedback received for any comments, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics.

- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed:
At this stage, it is felt 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 believe that this process will not lead to any prohibited conduct for the reasons detailed above and below. Should a disabled user prove unable to access the relocated MFD, and we were also unable to rectify this issue, reasonable adjustments would be put in place. A review of these measures and the initiative itself, alongside any feedback received, positive or negative, on all nine protected characteristics will be continually undertaken.

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity[2]
The initiative is an important contribution to the Social and Civic Responsibility Delivery Plan of the University's Strategy 2030. There may be the potential for various documents to be more accessible if sent electronically rather than being printed out, which is hoped to be a product of this change. This, of course, relies on the electronic documents created being accessible. The Disability Information team offer training on this subject, maintaining a series of webpages. In addition, this team randomly spot

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

checks and reviews documents being circulated. By examining the potential positive and negative impacts of all the protected characteristics, it is hoped that this demonstrates the University's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, specifically through enhancing equality of opportunity.

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

It is hoped that by considering impacts, positive and negative, on all the protected characteristics via the relocation and initiative, and subsequently this EqIA, we are showing that both ISG and the University is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We have considered ways to mitigate and provide support and information to users in these groups.

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

While the relocation primarily affects staff, students and users of Argyle House, individuals can continue to access a MFD on Level E of the building and at existing locations, including 24 / 7 at the George Square Main Library. All staff will still have their allotted credit for printing and photocopying unaffected for work related matters, while scanning remains free, meaning there should be no detriment to those of lower socio-economic circumstances

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

A communications plan will ensure that the relocation and initiative will be communicated to all staff, students and users of Argyle House. This will include information about the sustainability measures and move itself, available on EdWeb. EdWeb is designed to comply with the WCAG 2.1 AA standard and has an Accessibility Statement as per The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Staff will also be informed by email and digital newsletter through appropriate channels. Any and all information will also be available in alternative formats for disabled users, free of charge, on request.

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

ISG SLT welcomes feedback and suggestions on an ongoing basis. We will monitor all feedback for any comments, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics and act accordingly. Should we receive any negative feedback, we will take all appropriate steps to resolve the issue and work towards updating building users.

- 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:

Nothing other than that stated above and below.

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.

For the reasons detailed above and below.

~~**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).
    We will monitor all feedback for any comments, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics and act accordingly. We will also advise staff of the need to make reasonable adjustments where appropriate, including providing information in alterative formats, free of charge, upon request. The Disability Information team will continue to promote the creation of accessible digital documents, including training, online guidance and random spot checks.

2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?
    The initiative will receive an annual review in August 2022, which will coincide with the Hybrid and Home Working Programme assessing the impact of colleagues returning to Argyle House. A review shall take place if there are any significant changes to the initiative, in addition to receiving any feedback, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics. On each of these occasions, the EqIA will be updated.

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)): **Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management and IS Planning, IS Corporate, Information Services Group**

Accepted by (name): **Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer, and Librarian to the University, Information Services Group**

Date: **09th September 2021**

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