



## 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](http://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): **Collections Strategy****

**The Collections Strategy will guide and inform the management of Library General Collections 2023-2028, ensuring collections and associated services are developed to respond to changes in the University and the sector, and to meet evolving user requirements.**

**General Collections comprise the Library's extensive post-1900 physical and online collections which support teaching, learning and research for all Library users. Online collections include a wide range of e-books, e-journals and online databases, with the Library's substantial physical General Collections located in the University's Main Library, site libraries and University Collections Facility.**

**Items which are part of the University's Heritage Collections due to their date of publication, value, provenance, scarcity or local relevance are governed by separate collection policies and are not within the scope of this Collections Strategy.**

**Guiding Principles have been developed to inform the Library's decisions, policies and procedures in the management of General Collections. Guiding Principles are informed by developments and opportunities within the University and the wider sector and reflect the values of the University of Edinburgh and the L&UC and General Collections vision statements.**

**B. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (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: **Hannah Mateer**

Job title: **Head of Collections Services**

School/service/unit: **Collections Services, Library & University Collections, Information Services Group**

**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 partnership<sup>1</sup>

**The Collections Strategy has the potential to affect all staff, students and members of the general public, and therefore may impact on all nine protected characteristics.**

**However, the protected characteristic of disability may have the greatest impact, as this relates to accessing the strategy online through the use of an electronic device (either desktop or mobile) via the University website (which we call EdWeb), where the strategy is hosted. 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 screen magnification software. Moreover, EdWeb holds an [Accessibility Statement](#), as per The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Reasonable adjustments will need to be in place should a disabled user be unable to use the website, and that we were unable to rectify.**

**Another significant consideration is race, whereby the strategy is written in English, which is mitigated by the fact that the main teaching language of the University is also English. There is a potential positive effect in that by providing the policy online, users can access the information and subsequently use browser translation tools to convert to their preferred language. In terms of our commitment to a wider local, national and international community, we are mindful of those that are dependent on online resource and access is limited (including but not limited to China and Russia).**

**The University vision involves a continuing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion for both students and staff. The University has a single [Equality Strategy](#) to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are guiding principles in our pursuit of academic excellence.**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

**The Collections Strategy looks to increase online access and therefore would result in a positive impact, maximising access for protected characteristic groups**

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

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

**With regards to the context and guiding principles of the policy / practice and needs of relevant equality groups**

- **University of Edinburgh's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.**
- **Inclusive, diverse and accessible collections - The Library has a strategic commitment that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will underpin all service delivery, working with stakeholders such as Academics, Edinburgh University Student Association, ISG Disability Information Team, Disability and Learning Support Service to identify ways to ensure a diverse range of content is made available to support teaching, learning and research, and that an environment is provided where all Library users are included and represented. The Library endeavours to provide access to General Collections for all users through ensuring Library buildings and collections are as accessible as possible and providing resources in alternative formats on request.**
- **Work with University of Edinburgh students to establish and promote collections to support student wellbeing and to increase content diversity within General Collections.**
- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this will be addressed:

**At this stage we feel 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:

**The University believes that the Collections Strategy will not lead to any form of prohibited conduct. Moreover, a review of the strategy will be continually undertaken, whereby all feedback, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics will be appraised and acted on accordingly. Moreover, reasonable adjustments will be put in place for users as required, including but not limited to flexible working hours, assistive hardware and software et cetera.**

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>2</sup>

**The policy / practise aligns itself with the Library & University Collections Strategy 2020-2025 with the vision that "we are a dynamic, collaborative and ambitious organisation, built around the strengths of our collections and the skills and creativity of our teams. We deliver opportunities and services in support of the University's exceptional educational and research offering, and to the wider local, national and international community". The Collections Strategy looks to increase online access and therefore would result in a positive impact, maximising access for protected characteristic groups, including those who adhere to specific times of religious observance, the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity / caring responsibilities, and disabled users.**

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

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<sup>2</sup> This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

**With this policy / practice we hope to foster good relations in the following ways**

- **University of Edinburgh's engagement with external local and wider communities.**
- **The need to prioritise and balance collections infrastructure (space, budget, staff resource) to best meet the needs of all library users.**
- **The growth of collaborative national and international library networks, initiatives and services.**
- **Climate change and the development of sustainable collections.**
- **It is hoped that by considering impacts, positive and negative, on the nine protected characteristics via the formulation of the Collections Strategy, and subsequently this EqlA, we are showing that the University is continuing its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion**
- **If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?**

**There is no indication that this policy / practise would create any barriers to any of these groups. The strategy is concerned with improving the overall digital experience when accessing collections at the University, including through desktop computer, laptop, tablet or mobile device. Therefore, this has the potential to impact users with socioeconomic considerations and lower incomes, since this is predicated on making improvements in areas associated with IT equipment (and predominantly internet access). However, all staff and students have free, 24 / 7 IT facilities at the University, principally at the George Square Main Library. IT facilities are also provided at other campuses across Edinburgh. Public libraries in the UK also facilitate free access to the internet. Other countries have similar options available. It should be noted that for members of the general public who hold no affiliation to the University, there may be a low cost charge to join the library.**

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

**The Collections Strategy documentation will be available to all groups published on the University of Edinburgh Library web pages (which we call EdWeb). EdWeb has an associated Website Accessibility Policy and is based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA standard, alongside hosting an Accessibility Statement, as per The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Information on the Collections Strategy will also be provided in alternative formats, free of charge, upon request by users.**

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

**The development of the Collections Strategy has included the involvement of library staff, academics, student focus groups and peer external Universities, including approval from Library Committee including Edinburgh University Student Association, ISG Disability Information Team, Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS). The review and monitoring of the strategy will continue throughout the lifetime of the Collections 2025 Programme and progress will be reported via the Library Committee**

- **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-**

~~**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**

- 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).

**The policy or practice will be monitored initially as part of the Collections 2025 Programme and align to projects being delivered via the programme. On programme closure the monitoring will be managed by Head of Collections Services or nominated Collections Services Team Managers. Staff will also be made aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments and to provide information in an alternative format, free of charge, upon request. Furthermore, we will continue to monitor and respond to all feedback, positive and negative, related to the nine protected characteristics.**

- When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?

**Annually, from the publication of the strategy documentation. It will guide and inform the management of Library General Collections 2023-28. A review will also take place should we receive any feedback, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics. On each of these occasions the EqlA will be updated.**

#### **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)): **Karen Stirling, Senior Project Manager, Project Services, Applications, , Information Services Group**

Accepted by (name): **Hannah Mateer, Head of Collections Services, Library & University Collections, Information Services Group**

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

Date: **27/07/2023**

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to [equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk](mailto:equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk)