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): Library Laptops for Loan by Self-Service (Main Library)
B. Reason for Equality Impact Asessment (Mark **yes** against the applicable reason): • Proposed new policy/practice **Yes** • Proposed change to an existing policy/practice No • Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice No • Other (please state): N/A
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: Name: Barry Croucher Job title: Head of Help Services School/service/unit: Information Services, User Services
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)? No • It is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA? **Yes** The current laptop loans service in the Main Library is staff mediated. This means that a student wishing to borrow a laptop must visit during advertised Helpdesk opening hours (http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/using-library/library-opening/main-library) and attend the Helpdesk to ask for a laptop to be issued to them (subject to availability). There is a maximum of 45 laptops available. From mid-July, the current service will be **supplemented** by a self-service alternative. This means that a student wishing to borrow a laptop, having first registered for this service with the Helpdesk, may visit at any time 24/7 during Main Library advertised opening hours (http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/using-library/library-opening/main-library) and use a self-service kiosk to borrow a laptop without staff intervention (subject to availability). There is a maximum of 24 laptops available.

The kiosk comprises 2 main components: a 19" touchscreen user interface, and two cabinets of 12 laptops. The issue process is:

- Student presents University card to touchscreen to identify themselves
- Student accepts terms and conditions displayed on screen
- Student selects the service, ie laptop loan
- Locker LED light flashes (*the most charged laptop is offered)
- Student presents card again and enters PIN
- Bay containing the locker releases
- Student unplugs and removes the laptop
- Record of loan is added to the Patron account in Alma (the Library Management System) in real time
- If the student fails to remove the laptop, after a short interval the loan is cancelled, is removed from the Patron record and the locker bay locks
- A receipt can be printed

*locker bays can be grouped (eg middle bays) to allow convenient height access

Laptops are returned to the Main Library Helpdesk or, to reception when the Helpdesk is closed.

E. Equality Groups

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

The policy is relevant to all equality groups as it will apply to any Matriculated Student of the University of Edinburgh wishing to borrow a laptop from the Main Library by self-service. The service impacts all students so in theory has the potential to impact all nine protected characteristics but we feel it is particularly relevant to disability, race, pregnancy and maternity.

Age

Some older students may find it harder to reach the top or bottom lockers so in order to facilitate access for these students and disabled students laptops can be grouped together in the middle lockers with the most convenient height access.

- Disability

Locker bays can be grouped (eg middle bays) to allow convenient height access, which may be suitable for mobility disabled students.
Students with a disability may have entitlement, mediated by SDS, to a personal laptop; for others, increasing the availability of laptops for loan is beneficial.
Providing the means to borrow a laptop at any time the Main Library is open (24/7) increases the choice and convenience for disabled students.

- Race (including ethnicity and nationality)

The 19" touchscreen terminal defaults to English language. This is the teaching language of the University. The Library has an option to pay for up to 35 additional languages: this option has not been purchased.
Students who do not own a personal device will find that an increased availability of laptops for loan is beneficial.

- religion or belief
- Sex

Research has shown that caring responsibilities tend to apply to more woman than men therefore providing the means to borrow a laptop at any time the Main Library is open (24/7) increases the choice and convenience for those who may be caring for dependents.

- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity

Providing the means to borrow a laptop at any time the Main Library is open (24/7) increases the choice and convenience for students with children or other dependants.

- marriage or civil partnership[1]

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

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

The current staff mediated laptop loan service operating in the Main Library shows strong demand for the (maximum) 45 laptops – 2850 loans in 2015/16 - and indicated in part by the number of requests placed - 264.

The University of Edinburgh has 37,861 Matriculated Students (http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/factsheet/StudentFactsheet310117.pdf). All are entitled to borrow a laptop from the Main Library, George Square. Of these, 8,729 are part-time students, who may find availability of loan laptops 24/7 to be an advantage.

In 2015/16 10.2% of students (3644) were registered with the Student Disability Services (http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service/about/annual-reports). However, it is not known how many disabled students borrow library loan laptop loans as this information is not recorded. Many disabled students will receive their own laptops as part of their disabled student allowance/provision complete with additional assistive software so there may be fewer disabled students who use this service than would otherwise be the case.

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

Use of the self-service laptops will be recorded and analysed via Alma, and adjustments made to the service if necessary, at this stage we feel we have sufficient information to proceed

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

Feedback from students will be monitored for anyform of prohibited conduct and in addition reasonable adjustments will be put in place as required.

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity[2]

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

The laptops for loan are built to provide a wide range of software and allow the student administration rights for customisation during the loan period. The laptops are not limited to use within the Main Library; rather they can be taken anywhere. Students may advance not only their studies but any other personal activity requiring computing facilities (assuming acceptable use compliant with the University of Edinburgh Computing Regulations), thus widening equality of opportunity. Allowing all students 24 access to this facility may help to facilitate use of this service by some users who would find it more difficult to be in the library during Helpdesk hours such as those with certain disabilities, those who are carers and those with childcare responsibilities. Therefore, it is hoped that this greater flexibility would foster good relations and reduce barriers and promote opportunities.

- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations: Allowing all students 24 access to this facility may help to facilitate use of this service by some users who would find it more difficult to be in the library during Helpdesk hours such as those with certain disabilities, those who are carers and those with childcare responsibilities. Therefore, it is hoped that this greater flexibility would foster good relations and reduce barriers and promote opportunities.

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

Although the touchscreen has been designed to be accessible with good colour contrast and the icons well spaces out it may present a barrier, eg to disabled students with particular impairments. Helpdesk staff will assist on request during advertised Helpdesk service hours and the students will be able to continue to borrow laptops from the Helpdesk during Helpdesk hours in they prefer.

The disposition of laptops within vertical cabinets may present a barrier, eg to disabled students with particular disabilities unless accompanied by a helper, and Helpdesk staff will assist on request during advertised Helpdesk service hours. Locker bays can be grouped (eg middle bays) to allow convenient height access, which may be suitable for some disabled students who may have difficult accessing the higher and lower level lockers.

The touchscreen only provides instructions in English but as this is the main teaching language of the University we do not believe it should create any barriers. Again Helpdesk during Helpdesk hours will be happy to assist any users experiencing problems using the system.

This service is supplementary to the existing staff mediated laptop loan service, which provides an alternative during advertised Helpdesk opening hours.

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

The self-service laptop loans will be advertised through the IS website and in Main Library user guides in print and online via .pdf . The IS website should comply with the University Web Accessibility Policy which is based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2 AA standards. Alternative formats of this information can be provided free of charge on request.

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

The Disability Information Officer for Information Services was consulted about any potential issues that might affect disabled users.

The Student Disability Service and Chaplaincy have been informed and they have not raised any concerns to date.

- 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:

There is no other known potential or actual impact other than those discussed above of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations. We have considered installing assistive software on these laptops but due to the time this would add to the build on each return it was felt this was not practical, in addition we felt there would not be demand for this given that most students who require this provision would receive it via the Student Disability Service in the form of their own personal laptop complete with assistive technology.

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 stated 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).

No specific actions are required for implementing findings of this EqIA. The policy will be monitored and reviewed and equality groups consulted when any specific issues arise.

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

August 2018

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes

I. Sign-off

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

Barry Croucher, Head of Help Services, Information Services, User Services

Accepted by:
Richard Battersby, Acting Director, Information Services, User Services

Date: 18 July 2017

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