



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):

Notifications Service

A cross-system solution for personalised notifications and emergency communications, enabling notifications to be created from multiple sources and systems and distributed through a central platform.

The Notifications user interface allows for the manual creation of personalised notifications for staff and students, and emergency notifications. The system can also integrate with other University systems to generate notifications.

Notification recipients access their personalised aggregated notifications via MyEd.

Emergency communications are displayed as a banner in MyEd.

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: Mary Elder

Job title: Portal Services Team Manager

School/service/unit: Learning Teaching and Web Services Directorate, 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 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 partnership¹

The notification service can both pull and push personalised communications content created in other University systems, as well as within its own user interface. It could therefore affect all users and all nine protected characteristics. However, given the nature of the service we expect the greatest impact on the characteristics of disability and race.

Disability

Both the user interface for the Notifications Service which staff use to create notifications, and the user interface for MyEd which users use to receive notifications use the University's global experience language; [EdGel](#), in which each of its components had accessibility as a core principle. EdGel aims to comply with the principles stated in the [University's website accessibility policy](#).

The protected characteristic of disability may have the greatest impact, as this relates to accessing the service online through the use of an electronic device (either desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile). This is undertaken via the Notifications Service admin interface and MyEd, the University of Edinburgh web portal. Both services are designed to be accessible as far as possible in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA standard, including compatibility with assistive technology such as voice recognition software, screen readers or screen magnification software. MyEd holds an [MyEd Accessibility Statement](#), as per The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. The notifications interface has likewise been accessibility tested and has an accessibility statement in line with The Public

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.

Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Reasonable adjustments will be made should a disabled user be unable to use the service and we were unable to rectify the issue.

Race

Another significant consideration on the service is race, whereby the Notifications Service and MyEd are 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 facility online, users can access the information and subsequently use browser translation tools to covert to their preferred language.

With regards to the other protected characteristics, all communications sent through the service must not discriminate against any protected characteristic. Any content that was found to discriminate against any of the protected characteristics would result in disciplinary action.

The University vision is a continuing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) for both students and staff. The University has a single [Equality Strategy](#) to ensure that EDI 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:

There is an ongoing programme of feedback and user research. All feedback is checked for any positive or negative feedback related to any of the nine protected characteristics and acted on accordingly.

The Information Services Disability Information team has been consulted and the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS) specifically.

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

At this stage we feel there is 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 believe this service will lead to any form of prohibited conduct.

The admin interface that some staff will use to generate notifications uses EdGel, and has been designed to be as accessible as possible. Notifications are viewed by users within the MyEd portal, which also uses EdGel for its user interface. MyEd is regularly tested for accessibility against the latest version of

the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines including compatibility with assistive software and has an accessibility statement in line with The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

If for any reasons users were unable to use the system, and for some reason our changes were unable to rectify this, we would put in place reasonable adjustments to ensure communications were received by users. This could include provision of the information in alternative formats, which would be free of charge to the user and given upon request. As discussed above, the service will only be available in English, but as this is the main teaching language of the University we do not envisage any disadvantage caused.

Further, notifications supplement existing methods of communication, and do not replace these.

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

Receiving key information via notifications in MyEd provides an additional route for these communications, which may positively affect a number of groups.

MyEd is a free service offered to all users, which is available online 24/7. Notifications via MyEd provides a single location to access critical information, which users from some groups may find faster and easier to access.

As a result, this might help those who adhere to certain times of religious observance, in addition to the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity, people who hold caring responsibilities, and disabled users.

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 implementation of the service, and subsequently this EqIA, we are showing that 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?

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

We do not envisage this service will create any barriers for other groups.

This is an online service which has the potential to impact users with socioeconomic considerations and lower incomes, since this is predicated on accessing the internet via IT equipment (desktop, laptop, tablet and / or mobile device). 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. Finally, other countries have similar options available.

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

Information about notifications for end users is provided via the MyEd support pages on the University website. A wiki site provides information for staff who might want to use the service to send notifications. Both the Wiki site and the University Website are regularly tested for accessibility against the latest version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines including compatibility with assistive software. The Wiki and the University website have accessibility statements in line with The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Information promoting the service, or about updates and improvements to the service is circulated by blogpost and newsletters. All communications and documentation surrounding the service use existing University services, and are made available in alternative formats upon request.

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

Feedback is collected, reviewed and addressed where appropriate. This is an ongoing process, which includes activities such as surveys, interviews, workshops and usability testing, but does not specifically target equality groups and communities.

When new functionality is being developed for the service, for example if we were to enable users to receive notifications through an additional channel as well as MyEd we will consult with relevant stakeholders, including equality groups.

- 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:

None other than what is mentioned 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).

- Provide opportunities for user feedback and to monitor this for any positive or negative impacts on the nine protected characteristics.
- Ensure that all communication and documentation surrounding the service is accessible and available in alternative formats free of charge upon request.
- Ensure users are aware of any potential, reasonable adjustments such as ensuring that the information provided through notifications is also made available through an alternative method.

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

The EqIA will be reviewed when we make changes to the user interface, add additional integrations or when we receive any positive or negative feedback 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)):

Vivienne Mayo, Portal Services – Service Manager, Learning Teaching and Web, Information Services Group.

Accepted by (name): Mary Elder

Mary Elder, Portal Services Team Manager, Learning Teaching and Web, Information Services Group.

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

Date: 08/02/2024

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