



## 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):** Enquiry Management Project (SRA002)

As part of the Service Excellence Project, a new Enquiry Management team is being set up, who will sit within Student Recruitment & Admissions. In addition to creating a new team, we are procuring software to support the team and the wider university, making it easier to track the enquiries that we receive, and to provide a friendly and efficient service to prospective students.

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

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

**C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:**

Name: Jenny Thacker

Job title: Head of Enquiry Management

School/service/unit: Student Recruitment & Admissions

**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 partnership<sup>1</sup>

As the change has the potential to impact on any prospective student or related stakeholder who contacts the university there is the potential for the change to impact positively or negatively on all of the 9 protected characteristics. In addition, this change will impact on new and existing staff who will require training on the new system and will be following different procedures to that which they have used before.

Disability – All existing and new staff will be asked if they have any reasonable adjustments and any additional reasonable adjustments that may need to be put in place as consequence of the new software will be done so as soon as possible. Both sides of the software will need to be accessible in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2.1 AA standard including compatibility with assistive software. To ensure this the Information Services Disability Information Officer will test the software and in accordance with The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and accessibility statement will be added. If for any reason a user was unable to access the software and we were unable to remedy this, reasonable adjustments would be put in place – such as the user contacting the service by email or phone to ask for assistance. For British Sign Language users they can contact the University via the BSL Contact Scotland Online Service. Any training will take account of the need to be held in accessible locations and attendees will be asked if they require any specific adjustments e.g. induction loops etc and materials will be provided in alternative formats free of charge upon request.

Race – The system will be in English but as English is the main teaching language of the University and this system we do not believe this should create any disadvantage. Browser functionality should allow those who would prefer to view the system in an alternative language to do so. There may be an issue for some users accessing the systems for other countries with website restrictions such as China and in this case users would be able to email their query. Data on nationality and ethnicity will not be collected as part of enquiry management processing. If collected for monitoring purposes, this information will not be attached to records within the enquiry management system.

Gender reassignment – the system does not require any photographs and student names are linked from the University Euclid system so as soon as the main system is updated this system will be too so if any student is in the process of changing their name or photograph this should happen as soon as the Euclid system is changed without delay. The University is in the process of installing gender neutral toilets where possible and ideally wherever the new team was located this provision would be in place. Data will not be collected on sex as part of interactions with the Enquiry Management team, so will not be recorded on the record.

Religion or belief – the system asks no information about user's religion and no photographs are required so any users with a religious belief prohibiting the taking of photographs would not be disadvantaged. In addition, training will take place on a variety of days to avoid clashing with days/times of religious observance.

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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.

Age, Sex, Sexual orientation, Marriage and Civil Partnership – the system does not ask a user's sexual orientation or marital/partnership status. The system does record a user's name from which a gender or race might be assumed, and may record date of birth, from which the user's age can be determined. However, all staff must complete training in unconscious bias and if it were suspected that any inference on gender, race or age was being made to influence decisions severe action would be taken in line with the Universities Equality and Dignity and Respect Policies.

- Pregnancy and Maternity – Training will take account of the need to be held on different days to allow those with caring/parental responsibilities to attend. .

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

- On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups: Previously there was no software system to manage these enquires so they were being answered in Outlook. This new system should make it more efficient and easier to track queries. We have consulted with the IS Disability Information Officer who will test the accessibility of the system as we are aware disabled users will require the system to be accessible in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA standard including compatibility with assistive software. We also will consult with the Student Disability Service.
- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed: - Policy will be reviewed throughout the course of the project until close Q2 2020 (next review Autumn 2019), however at this stage we feel we have sufficient evidence to proceed. We will continue to monitor all feedback for any implications (positive or negative) on any of the 9 protected characteristics.
- 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 system will lead to any form of prohibited conduct. We will make the system as accessible as possible and where for any reason a user is unable to use the system and we are unable to rectify this we will ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place as detailed above to ensure no disadvantage.
- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity<sup>2</sup> - The new system will make is easier for users to contact the University, and should help encourage queries from users who might have felt less able to do so before e.g. the new accessible system should make it easier for some disabled users to get in contact. In addition, the process should make it easier for users with different and multiple protected characteristics to access information specific to those characteristics such as disability support at the University, information on the Chaplaincy etc .
- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations: It is hoped that having a new accessible system will make it easier for users with different and multiple protected characteristics to access information specific to those characteristics, such as disability support at the University, information on the Chaplaincy etc. It is hoped this will foster good relations including that the University has considered potential equality issues in depth in the creation of this service, which should show the University's commitment to Equality and Diversity.
- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?

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

The system should not create barriers for any other groups such as those on low incomes as the University provides free 24 hour IT facilities to all staff and current students. Free IT facilities are available through the UK in local libraries, and internationally will be available at schools and universities. If a user had no computer access they will still be able to contact the University by phone or in person to ask a query.

- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant? - Communication will be made by a variety of formats – internal communications, website and training sessions. The University website is governed by the University Website Policy which requires websites as far as possible to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA standard including compatibility with assistive technology. As required by law all communication and training materials will be provided in alternative formats free of charge to any user requiring this as a result of a disability. The training sessions will take regard of accessible locations both in terms of access and egress and will take place on different days and times of days to ensure no disadvantaged to those with caring/parental responsibilities, those who observe times of religious observance etc.
- How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice? - We will continue to monitor all feedback for any comments (positive or negative) related to any of the 9 protected characteristics and act accordingly. We will continue to hold Peer reviews and Stakeholder reviews via targeted and anonymous surveys to gather feedback. We will continue to consult with the Information Services Disability Information Officer about the accessibility of the system and with the Student Disability Service.
- 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.

#### **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.

#### **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).

- Work is ongoing to ensure that before the system goes live all data collected, and required fields in the software would not lead to any form of prohibited conduct and follow good practice.
- Training on unconscious bias, equality & diversity and customer service will be given to all members of the team.
- Staff will be advised on reasonable adjustments and the need to provide information in alternative formats upon request, and relevant university policies in regard to age, widening participation and declared disabilities.
- Any surveys or collection of data for monitoring purposes will meet current university practice with regard to equality and diversity.
- We will continue to seek the views of users – by monitoring all feedback for any positive or negative comments related to any of the 9 protected characteristics

- The IS Disability Information Officer will review the accessibility of the system and as far as possible these changes will be implemented.

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

The EqIA will be updated on an ongoing basis as the project continues and will be published live when the software launches.

**H. Publication of EqIA**

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? No

If No – please specify when it may be published or indicate restrictions that apply: Draft version, completion at end stage of delivery estimated Q2 2020

**I. Sign-off**

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Michelle Coyle, Senior Project Manager, Student Recruitment & Admissions Project, Service Excellence Programme

Accepted by (name): Jenny Thacker, Head of Enquiry Management

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

Date: 04/10/19

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