Equality Impact Assessment

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**): Lecture Recording**
B. Reason for Equality Impact Asessment (delete as applicable):   • **Proposed new practice**
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: Name: **Anne-Marie Scott**   Job title: **Deputy Director of Learning Teaching and Web**   School/service/unit: **Learning Teaching and Web, Information Systems.**
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? **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? (delete any that are not relevant):   • Age   • Disability   • race (including ethnicity and nationality)   • religion or belief   • sex   • sexual orientation   • gender reassignment   • pregnancy and maternity

- marriage or civil partnership[1]

Purpose:

EUSA sabbatical officers have been elected in each of the past four elections with lecture recording as part of their manifesto, and at the most recent election lecture recording featured in the manifestos of 3 out of 4 winning candidates. A recent report from external consultants on the Edinburgh student digital experience identified lecture recording as a significant missing component from the student perspective.

Investment in a centrally provided lecture recording solution was also one of the significant recommendations from the recent review of the University Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy (May 2016). Lecturing remains one of the few high-stakes activities within the institution, and if a student is ill or otherwise unable to attend, the institution makes no alternative provision.

We have specific targets in the Strategic Plan for recruitment of non-EU international students and students from under-represented groups, as well as for student satisfaction with learning resources and academic support. Latest National Student Survey results highlight the need to focus on improving the student experience.

A new lecture recording service will provide underpinning infrastructure to meet our ambitions, allowing us to support a diverse student population, and positively contribute to overall student satisfaction. Additionally, where our physical estate is increasingly constraining cohort sizes, lecture recording will afford opportunities to use space differently and mitigate risks.

The University of Edinburgh lags behind our peers within the Russell Group and beyond in our use of lecture recording, and whilst competitor institutions are scaling up their centrally provided solutions we are scaling back. We currently have around 35 rooms enabled for automated, centrally managed lecture recording.

There is strong demand from all 3 Colleges for a single centrally supported system. Funding a new centrally supported lecture recording solution will give the University the underpinning infrastructure required for recording lectures at scale. Following feedback from Knowledge Strategy Committee that the proposed solution should be as widely available as possible, we propose to equip around 400 teaching spaces, comprised of 320 centrally supported rooms, and around 80 locally managed rooms, giving us the capability to record close to 100% of lecture activity within the institution. Additionally, one-off events and activities can be recorded automatically with no extra costs. Rooms with over 35 seats will have camera, audio and slide recording and rooms with fewer than 35 seats will record audio and slides only. This represents the right balance in terms of value for money and utility of the content recorded and is in line with practice at other institutions. Recording of lectures will be highly automated via an integration with the University Timetabling system to keep the administrative burden and barriers to staff participation low. At the request of Knowledge Strategy Committee this project now includes the work required to integrate the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine with the University Timetabling system to ensure that lecture recording benefits are available to all.

Impacts and Opportunities:

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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.

The intention is that the new system will be available and be used by all staff and students. Therefore, there is the potential for this new practice to impact across all 9 of the protected characteristics. We are currently in the procurement phase and will be assessing multiple suppliers, each with their own specific service delivery method.

One of the potential greatest impacts of this practice is on the protected characteristic of disability. In order to address this we issued a series of accessibility criteria based on the web content accessibility guidelines version 2 AA standard, which included compatibility with assistive technology. Each supplier was scored and rated against our minimum 50% pass rate. Centralised lecture recording will also enable students to view or replay lectures from alternative locations which may have a positive impact for some disabled users. This may also have the potential for a positive impact on those with caring and parental responsibilities as it will offer flexibility about how and when they view lecture content. At present subtitles will not be included as standard, although we will continue to investigate options but reasonable adjustments will be made for all disabled staff and students who would require this facility. This is normally achieved through an external company.

Race – English is the main teaching language of the university, however this new practice may offer a potential positive impact for those whom English is their second language, as it will allow them to replay lectures as much as they wish.

Religion/Belief – In general students will not be filmed as part of this practice. Where, for religious beliefs photographic and video imagery is prohibited, we have installed clear signage and a visual indicator so that it is clear when recording is taking place. Students will also be able to seat themselves accordingly in order to avoid being filmed/recorded. Staff use of the system is opt-in in 2017/18. In future years we anticipate any change to policy will continue to include provision to opt-out.

Additionally, there is a wider consultation being led by the University Learning and Teaching Committee to establish Lecture Recording Policy at the University of Edinburgh. A separate EqIA assessment will be produced for this policy.

There will be opportunities to enhance our teaching methods with the new service. We will bring more detail to the EqIA as we progress. In particular, relating the impacts and opportunities to the equality groups. However, we identified some broad benefits when the procurement was initiated.

- A service that can support the recommendations from the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

- Reduce the risks around lecturing as a high-stakes activity (if not able to attend physically currently there is no alternative provision), in particular supporting student well-being and reducing stress.

- Supporting the studies of international students for whom English is not their first language.

- Support the learning of students with specific disabilities. In many cases the provision of a recording of a lecture is the alternative format for attendance at the lecture in person.

- We will ensure as far as possible that the system promotes and facilitates compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2 (http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/).

- All content added to the website must not discriminate against any of the protected characteristics.

Any content that was found to discriminate against any of the protected characteristics would result in severe disciplinary action. The University vision is a continuing commitment to equality and diversity for both students and staff. The University has a single equality strategy to ensure that equality and diversity are guiding principles in our pursuit of academic excellence. The introduction of this strategy coincided with the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and builds on its principle of integrating equality and diversity in policy and practice.

Update Sep 2017. The procurement has now been completed and the system that scored highest on accessibility has been awarded the contract.

Add notes against the following statements where applicable/relevant:

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

As stated above the IS Disability information Officer will be involved in the procurement of the system and any changes in the system will be tested to ensure they are accessible. A full accessibility audit will be conducted once access to the relevant system is established. We have also run this EqIA past the International Office, Student Disability Services and the Chaplaincy

All feedback will be monitored for any comments positive or negative related to any of the 9 protected characteristics. The university will update guidance material and work with our supplier to address any issues. As noted above there is a range of evidence to support the need for this practice.

Update 2017: We continue to monitor feedback and system accessibility and take action as appropriate.

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

At this stage we feel we have sufficient evidence to proceed. We chose a Competitive Dialogue procurement method to allow us to enter into open negotiation with suppliers. During this negotiation we will build our Invitation to Tender and so fill in the gaps in our knowledge. This will help us to be clearer about the opportunities and impacts each system will provide.

Update 2017: Procurement is now complete and 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:

We do not believe that this system will lead to any form of prohibited conduct. We will ensure all requests for reasonable adjustments are dealt with accordingly and all materials on the system will be available in alternative formats free of charge on request.

We believe that the implementation of lecture recording has the potential to have a positive impact on several protected characteristics ie. make it much easier to provide an alternative format for face to face lectures – this is a substantial gap in our current support provision . It will also benefit those for whom have English is a second language.
Update 2017: There is no evidence to suggest that so far this practice has led to any form of prohibited conduct.

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

Fundamentally a recording of a lecture is an alternative format in its own right and why our Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy has given students the right to make personal audio recordings of lectures for some years. Such recordings, whilst valuable, often have poor audio quality and do not capture other information such as any presentation slides or work on chalkboards etc. Lecture recording is a next step along the path to support students with diverse needs.

Lecture recordings will support a wide range of accessibility and inclusivity needs – visually impaired; dyslexia and other learning difficulties; various autism spectrum disorders; students with mental health conditions who may find physical attendance overwhelming, those who experience debilitating anxiety as a result of missing classes. Where students have a schedule of adjustments that includes having a scribe in class with them, a recording will also help the scribe to produce comprehensive notes and clarify areas of subject specific terminology.
This practice will also benefit students for whom English is not their first language, those who struggle with complex technical terms or Latin translations

Update 2017: This service will be used for teaching in semester 1 and will be evaluated after a period of use.

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

We will include the promotion of accessibility as part of our training and support for the system which we feel will continue to demonstrate the seriousness with which Edinburgh University takes the issues of Equality and Diversity and in this case in particular the needs of disabled users and the desire to make the systems they use as accessible as possible.

Update 2017: Preparing for Lecture Recording training included information on accessible presentation design and Delivering Lecture recording emphasised the importance of microphone use. It is hoped this practice will improve relations with those disabled students or students with caring responsibilities unable to attend lectures.
It is also hoped this practice will improve relations with our international students by assisting those from whom English is not their first language.

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

There is the potential for staff being recorded to be disadvantaged – for example staff with specific disabilities may be uncomfortable about being recorded. This will be considered as part of the development of policy and covered in a separate EqIA.
The University offers free 24-hour access to computers for all students and staff so there should be no disadvantage to those on lower incomes who may not have their own devices.

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

We will publish appropriate information on EdWeb, which complies with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2 AA standard. All communication about the practice will be available in alternative formats upon request as well as any materials that form part of the system.

Update 2017: At present we have received no requests for information in alternative formats.

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

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

We will continue to involve the IS Disability Information Officer and the Student Disability Service to ensure the system is as accessible as possible for disabled users. We will monitor all feedback for any comments related to any of the 9 protected characteristics and act accordingly.

- 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 discussed 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. (Delete the options that do not apply):

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust.

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the practice will be robust. There is no evidence of potentially unlawful discrimination and all reasonable opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations have been taken, subject to continuing monitoring , based on the evidence as discussed 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).

Monitor and respond to all feedback.
Regularly consult with our colleagues who are experts in accessibility.
Regularly consult with our supplier who have specific expertise in accessibility within the domain of lecture recording.
Promote good practice when users are creating content.
Ensure staff are aware of the need to provide materials in alternative formats upon request.
Ensure staff are aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments.
Ongoing consultation with Edinburgh University Student Association (EUSA)

Update 2017: All of the actions stated above are ongoing as the practice becomes embedded.

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

We are continually reviewing our policy/practice during the procurement and implementation phases. Any changes to the system or if we receive any positive or negative feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics they will be reflected in the policy/practice work we do.

Update 2017: At the end of Phase 2 of the project (Sep 2018)

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes
I. Sign-off EqIA undertaken by Colin Forrest, Project Manager. Accepted by (name): Anne-Marie Scott, Deputy Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services. Date: to be completed Sep 2016. Update 2017: September 2017.

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