

A. Equality impact assessment

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):

The new Work and Study Away (WSA) Service will establish a single specialist Work and Study Away team that will deal with the administration of student work and study away opportunities. In addition to the new team administering the service, a new IT system will be procured to provide students with a single electronic face-to-face entry point. The team will deal with opportunities outside the University both within the UK and abroad and deliver expert advice on opportunities, locations and third party dealings to students as well as staff involved in local aspects of work and study away, and work collaboratively with these colleagues. At present staff opportunities and visiting students are outwith the remit of this new Service.

The WSA service and its processes will be supported by a newly procured and externally hosted end-to-end system solution. The system, which will facilitate the application for opportunities process, will integrate with the student record, resulting in a student location being recorded in one corporate data set, so when students are away their location is on record and known.

Currently this service is delivered across Schools and Colleges by various people and is not recognised as a University-wide service. In future, there will be one team doing the work, with standardised processes to follow and a system which will capture the information in a central location, as opposed to disparate spreadsheets across the institution which do not allow accurate reporting on student's location

(At the time of completing the equality and diversity impact assessment the name of the proposed service is a working title and may change at a later date).

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: Chris Yeomans

Job title: Deputy Director Edinburgh Global (Work and Study Away Project Sponsor)

School/service/unit: Service Excellence Programme

D. Impact Assessment

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

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

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

NB. Reference below to "staff" refers to staff within the WSA team, not any UoE staff going on work and study away opportunities (which is out of scope), Reference to "students" means those applying for opportunities to work or study away.

This change has the potential to impact on all students and therefore potentially affect all protected characteristics.

The current practice is that students who undertake work and study away activity can have multiple points of contact for advice pre-departure, whilst away, and upon their return from opportunity. They can also receive varying degrees of input from Schools and Support Groups pre-departure and are often responsible for moving Learning Agreements between these departments.

The work and study away activity is delivered by a large number of staff across the University, with no single defined process or best practice which leads to duplication of effort for staff and often inconsistent advice given to both students and staff. There is also inconsistency in relation to recording student location whilst away and uncertainty around responsibilities for dealing with emergency response, which will be addressed by this project.

The project from users' and staff's perspective delivers new business processes and ways of working in relation to work and study away activity delivered across the University. Under the new single WSA Service, expert staff will provide specialist support to students undertaking both mandatory and optional work and study away opportunities as part of their Programme of study, and offer expert advice and guidance to staff on these matters. Students will have a single point of contact, in addition to academic and pastoral support received from their respective Schools, which will improve the quality and consistency of student experience.

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 proposal will also result in a number of policy changes which will underpin the new ways of working and provide greater clarity in relation to service delivery associated with work and study away activity. The associated policy changes will be proposed at the later stages of the project implementation phase and will be equality impact assessed accordingly. The WSA service and its processes will be supported by a single end to end system solution, which will address the inconsistencies with the recording of student location, providing the University with a single corporate dataset.

The project intends to deliver the following benefits:

- Ensure that students who undertake both mandatory and optional work and study opportunities in relation to their programme of study receive fair and consistent advice and treatment.
- Central repository of opportunities available to all students across the University, which will enhance the promotion of opportunities, likely contributing to more diverse participation in these opportunities.
- Case-management approach to ensure greater support and quality of student experience.
- Consistency of experience for all students undertaking mandatory and optional work and study opportunities in relation to their programme of study.
- Ease of access to information and resources for students and staff via a single website, reducing the number of disparate information sources.

The new service delivered by the University of Edinburgh staff is predominantly aimed at its Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate (PGT) students undertaking work and study away activities in relation to their programme of study. Due to the nature of some of the work and study away activities, it was felt that support for Postgraduate Research (PGR) students, Clinical and Veterinary Rotations, Medical or Health Electives and Placements within CMVM and CAHSS Health in Social Science is best to continue to be delivered at a School level, rather than by the new Service. However, it is intended that staff supporting these areas will align with WSA business processes and adopt system improvements. In future the scope of the Service activity might require to be expanded, depending on business needs.

The Service will also have some degree of impact on external partners, who will be expected to interact with it. As part of the partnership agreement process, the Service will review the Equality and Diversity standards of all potential partner institutions to assure the University of its partnership suitability. These processes and checks will be established during the implementation phase and, as an example, would include site visits as part of due diligence, consultation with the University of Edinburgh's staff based globally to advise on the local culture, and memoranda of understanding, etc.

It is not expected that the creation of this Service will result in compulsory redundancies of the staff directly impacted by this change, although it may lead to a change in the nature of some jobs and the need to redeploy and reshape resource. All significantly impacted staff, whose roles are likely to change as a result of this project will be involved and consulted throughout the process. This should ensure that any concerns can be addressed and responded to as appropriate. It is expected that some staff currently based in Schools and Support Groups would move to the new team to share their knowledge and expertise. The new Service is likely to be located in the central area, subject to estate availability, and may therefore result in change of location for some staff from either one of the central areas or more remote University locations.

For all protected characteristics, the WSA team will, with student's or staff's consent, share details of the specific circumstances with 3rd party partners to ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place before the opportunity start date.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Where a significant change of location is required and would adversely affect staff, for example due to current childcare arrangements or caring responsibilities, staff will be consulted throughout the change process. Where possible, existing flexible working arrangements will be honoured and any new requests for flexible working arrangements duly considered, taking into account business needs. The need for private space for nursing mothers will also be assessed and, if required, appropriate arrangements made.

Students will be able to express preference for destinations, so those with parental or caring responsibilities can indicate a preference for locations close to their home. In special circumstances, and where required, the team can manually allocate a student to their preferred location and the University will attempt to meet the needs of those with parental and caring responsibilities as far as possible. The team can provide advice to students who have parental responsibilities and are relocating, for example to help the student with long work and study away opportunities liaise with the third party about available schools etc.

Disability

Consideration will be given to any new disability related adjustments for all staff, as required, including a review of those who already have existing adjustments in place. Line managers will be asked to encourage staff to disclose any disability or reasonable adjustments they might need. Where a significant change of location is required and would adversely affect staff due to a disability-related reason, then existing work locations will be honoured and the need for any adjustments assessed. Staff will be consulted throughout the change process. Where possible existing flexible working arrangements will be honoured and any new requests for flexible working arrangements duly considered, taking into account business needs. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) will be developed in consultation with individual staff requiring such plans and line managers will be responsible for their execution. Once the location of the WSA Service is confirmed, it will be inspected to determine any accessibility issues and these will be appropriately addressed e.g induction loops at reception desks, accessible toilets etc.

It is envisaged that the new centrally managed IT system supporting this change will be accessible in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines AA standard, including compatibility with assistive technology. If, for a specific reason, we are unable to make the system accessible to an individual and we cannot rectify this, reasonable adjustments will be made. The procured system has also been subject to an accessibility assessment in the procurement process. During system implementation phase, the project team will liaise with the Student Disability Service.

Training for those delivering the new Service will be conducted on a variety of days and times in accessible venues and all documentation will be accessibility tested and available on a shared site. Training documentation and advice will be provided free of charge in alternative formats on request.

Race

The IT system will be in English and since English is the main teaching language of the University and majority of system users will be staff or students, this should not create a disadvantage. It is envisaged that students who are away from the University will be able to access the new system through AppsAnywhere service currently being developed by the University. This service will create a technical solution that will offer students and staff working remotely and using their own devices the same applications which are available on campus desktops. We recognise that in some countries where web restrictions apply users may experience difficulties accessing the system. However, it is

expected that large proportion of interaction with the system would take place pre-departure, and any subsequent interactions, where access restrictions may apply, as well as any external/3rd party usage, can be facilitated by Work and Study Away Service as and when required.

Religion

Staff's religious observance could potentially be affected by the change in location and any work pattern changes. Staff will therefore be encouraged to notify their line manager if they are affected and existing working patterns will be reviewed along with any new flexible work pattern requirements.

Where possible, students applying for opportunities will be provided with information on any known limitations on freedom to practice their religion at the destination, so they can make an informed decision about their applications.

Sex, Marital Status and Sexual Orientation

It has been shown that statistically women are more likely to have caring responsibilities than men and therefore, if the change in location and any work pattern changes would cause an adverse effect, staff will be encouraged to notify their line manager if they are affected and existing working patterns will be reviewed along with any new flexible work pattern requirements.

The system will be able to import specification of gender as available from core university student record (SITS): male/female/other. We do not envisage the gender information to be required for processing of the application; however, if such information is deemed necessary at any point in the process i.e. for equality and diversity monitoring purposes, student will be asked for their consent.

Marital status and sexual orientation will not be held in the WSA system. However, guidance on destination locations will include any known restrictions applicable in that country, based on gender, marital status or sexual orientation, so that user can make an informed decision about their application and discuss with WSA service as required.

Gender reassignment

Once the location of the WSA Service is confirmed, it will be inspected to determine whether it has gender neutral toilets. If such do not currently exist, the need for their installation will be assessed and appropriately addressed.

Where individual circumstances apply, the system will allow the student user to flag those to the WSA team for consideration. For example, this could be used to remove the application from automatic scoring/allocation processes to ensure specific requirements are addressed. Where reassignment results in change of sex, name or other details, those will be updated within core university systems, and not via the WSA system. That is, the WSA system will not act as "golden copy" for any demographics or protected characteristics.

All Users

The proposed service will provide support for work and study away activities to students undertaking those activities in connection with their programme of study (i.e. not extra-curricular). These activities may be taking place on a mandatory, optional, or ad hoc basis, and not necessarily be credit-bearing, but students will be directed towards them specifically in relation to their course, programme, module or as part of their independent research. Therefore, the opportunities will need to be available to all students. This will be considered in the review of the work-based Learning Policy during the implementation stages of the project. The policy requires consideration of the Accessible

and Inclusive Learning Policy and of the needs of students to have taken place to support their opportunities.

Users will be able to contact the service in a variety of ways: through the website, phone, email, and face-to-face. Where necessary, staff will meet with students outside the primary service location. The online guidance will also be provided in English and users can use their browser settings to translate the content. We do not believe this will result in any significant disadvantage as English is the main teaching language at the University. However, the service will also offer one to one appointments to provide further assistance and support if required and these can be offered in a variety of locations – for instance to take account of accessibility requirements. Service provision will be monitored on an ongoing basis and any feedback taken into consideration.

PC Access

- The procurement process has included a data security criterion, and the selected supplier will be contractually bound to ensure data protection. All data held will be held within the UK, regardless of location of access. Where possible, protected characteristics will not be held within the system itself but pulled in real time from existing UoE systems.
 - No data will be held locally on PCs as system is entirely web-based front-end.
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- **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:**

We do not envisage that application of this change will lead to any form of prohibited conduct for the reasons discussed in this document.

Due consideration will be given to each of the protected characteristics as mentioned throughout the document; this would, for instance, include flexible working arrangements for those with caring responsibilities or religious observance, the need to make reasonable adjustments, system accessibility, gender neutral toilet provision, provision of private space for nursing mother etc.

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

The change process is a review of business practices currently being carried out by a number of staff in Schools, Colleges and Support Groups under one overarching project and Service, and provides an opportunity to review equality practices and to advance equality of opportunity. In addition, the system will import information from SITS which holds students' disability reasonable adjustment schedules. This, in turn, will allow for better records of users equality needs and their consideration.

There will be a central repository of work and study away opportunities available to all students across the University. Every attempt will be made for opportunities to include information related to accessibility of location, any known aspects of the opportunity which may affect its suitability for students with disabilities and, where known, cultural attitudes towards sexual orientation, religion

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

and disability, sex, marital status and sexual orientation. It is intended that the system will, for each Agreement, provide a link to current guidance on the destination, e.g. FCO guidance, so that applicants can make an informed decision when applying and, if necessary, raise with the WSA team. This will enhance the promotion of opportunities, likely contributing to more diverse range of students applying for these opportunities.

The new automated opportunity allocation process, based on a set criteria, should lead to consistent consideration of students on work and study opportunities, including any requirements under the Equality Act. Where students flag up issues which cannot easily be addressed through automated allocation, the Team will be able to manually override the system to ensure these are being taken into consideration.

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

By demonstrating that Equality and Diversity issues have been considered as part of this change, it is hoped that this will raise the awareness and profile of such considerations and demonstrate the University's commitment to Equality and Diversity.

The supportive nature of the Service and close relationships it will foster with Schools, Support Groups and external partners is likely to enhance relations within the University and with external partners, leading to an increase in the range of opportunities available to a diverse range of students. This would also contribute to achieving the University's Widening Participation objectives, which aim to address the discrepancies in the take-up of higher education opportunities between different social groups.

In addition, it is anticipated that the new Service and its ability to gather and hold accurate information about the protected characteristics and the issues they may face in each country via the risk assessment will ensure students are more aware of the issues they may face on placements.

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

We do not envisage that this practice will create any barriers for any other groups. All agreed equipment required for the Service work tasks will be funded by the University, so there will be no disadvantage to those on low incomes. The new Service is not looking to change the current work and study away funding models and these will continue to be available to students (i.e. Erasmus, International Credit Mobility, etc). Eligibility criteria for students applying for opportunities will not change as a result of either the service changes or system implementation.

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

Advice delivered by the Service will be available online, by email, phone and in person providing users with a variety of means to make contact. The online guidance will be located on the University of Edinburgh WSA website. The University website is governed by the Web Accessibility Policy, which is based on the latest version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines AA standard.

Communication materials will be made accessible to all users, and the new Service and practice communicated via email, newsletters and through the WSA website. The content management system of this website has been extensively tested for accessibility and all content on the website should adhere to the University's Web Accessibility Policy based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Information in alternative formats will be available upon request as required by law, free of charge.

The new Service will be advertised to students and staff online, via email, on paper and face-to-face in multiple settings. In addition to promotion by the Service Excellence and marketing activities undertaken by the Service ahead of its launch and once it becomes operational, Schools will also signpost students to this service via their handbooks and student-staff interactions. The information will be provided repeatedly through different routes and in accessible formats to reach as many users as possible. Information in alternative formats will be available upon request as required by law, free of charge.

It is proposed that staff whose roles will change as a result of this restructure will be informed through an initial team briefing, followed by group/individual meetings outlining the impact of the proposal on their roles and the options available to them. Individual consultation and relevant communication activities and supporting materials will be available to staff and their managers at each stage of the process. Individual consultations will be conducted on a face to face basis, between the individual and their line manager and will be supported by HR. This includes staff on annual leave, long-term sick leave or maternity/ adoption/shared parental leave. Where a face to face meeting is not possible, arrangements will be put in place to consult via video call or telephone call. Reasonable adjustments will be put in place wherever required.

Staff who are out of scope, this includes staff who will be required to discontinue certain tasks with no significant impact on their roles, or colleagues of impacted staff will be advised as a group on the impact on them.

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

A variety of users and individuals whose daily tasks may change as a result of the new practice will be consulted during the development and review of the practice, and equality issues raised will be addressed through the appropriate channels. All feedback will be monitored for any positive or negative feedback related to any of the 9 protected characteristics and addressed as appropriate.

Face-to-face consultation with students has taken place in the development of this proposal and further engagement undertaken via an online survey. There has also been considerable consultation with staff across the University and some with representatives from Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA). Engagement will continue during the implementation phase to develop detailed business processes and standard operating procedures.

The system procurement process has engaged with the Disability Information Officer, and Accessibility requirements form a scored weighted part of evaluation of supplier responses. The procurement has also included a range of staff from IS, schools and EUSA representatives. During implementation phase, the system configuration and service processes will be reviewed with Student Disability Service (SDS), Staff Disability Officer, disabled staff network, LGBT staff network, Chaplaincy, and Edinburgh Global office, as required.

- **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:**

No impact expected from applying the new practice other than the issues 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

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

Based on the answers given above.

~~**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).

The practice will be monitored and reviewed, and equality groups consulted if any specific equality related issues arise. All comments will be reviewed for any feedback (positive or negative) related to any of the nine protected characteristics and acted on accordingly.

- Staff delivering the service will be reminded of the need to make reasonable adjustments and the need to provide information in alternative formats upon request
- Staff delivering the service will be offered and encouraged to take part in the Disability Awareness Training provided.
- Applied reasonable adjustments will be reviewed on an ongoing basis for those staff concerned and new reasonable adjustments put in place as required

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

The practice will next be reviewed after it has been fully implemented, or if there is any feedback positive or negative regarding any of protected characteristics. It is expected that the new Work and Study Away team will be operational in March 2019, and the new system in April 2019.

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)): Maggie Litwinska, Service Excellence Support Officer

Accepted by (name): Chris Yeomans, Deputy Director Edinburgh Global (Work and Study Away Project Sponsor)

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

Date: 08/10/18

A. Leach

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