



## 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](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.

<b>A. Policy/Practice: Sustainable Travel Policy</b>	
<b>B. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment: Update to previous EqIA following implementation of, and subsequent feedback received from, Sustainable Travel Policy</b>	
Proposed new policy/practice.	<b>Continuation of University-wide sustainable travel policy</b>
Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice.	The Sustainable Travel Policy has been in place since February 2022, with more recent release of an updated expenses policy in mid-2022 as well as policies and guidance available at School / Department and University level. A further Sustainable Travel Policy policy update is due in April 2023.
<b>C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rachael Robertson, Deputy Director, Finance Department</li> <li>- Dave Gorman, Director, Department of Social Responsibility &amp; Sustainability</li> </ul>	
<b>D. An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any if the following apply to the policy/practice, if it:</b>	
Affects primary or high level functions of the University	<b>Yes</b>
Is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)?	<b>No</b>
Is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA?	<b>Yes</b>
<b>E. Equality Groups</b>	
To which equality groups is the policy relevant and why? (delete any that are not relevant):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• race (including ethnicity and nationality)</li> </ul>	

- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership<sup>1</sup>

Add notes against the following statements where applicable/relevant:

<p>On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups:</p>	<p><b>Disability:</b> individuals: with disabilities impacting on mobility; where stress increases due to prolonged travel; where virtual tools are not suitable due to audio or visual impairments</p> <p><b>Sex:</b> greater impact of prolonged travel on those with caring responsibilities; for women where risks are higher when travelling alone</p> <p><b>Pregnancy or maternity:</b> greater impact on: those with caring responsibilities; those where specific modes of transport may not be suitable during pregnancy;</p> <p><b>Age:</b> impact on less senior travellers who may not have as many choices regarding travel as their senior colleagues</p> <p><b>Race:</b> on partners from low-income countries</p> <p><b>All Equality Groups:</b> where travel through certain regions or countries may lead to discrimination. Where applying for an exemption may lead to emotional discomfort.</p>
<p>Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed:</p>	<p>No gaps in evidence were found when considering the policy being put forward at this time.</p> <p>This policy builds on work undertaken by the Travel and Aviation Working Group (TAWG) (June 2020), and the initial EqIA developed alongside the Sustainable Travel Policy (Feb 2021) where mitigation for several of the major policy principles have been developed to ensure that these principles do not negatively impact on equality groups.</p> <p>Further details of these mitigations can be found in <i>Tables 1, 2 and 3</i> at the bottom of this document.</p>
<p>If application of this policy leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:</p>	<p>Responses from the Climate Conscious Travel Consultation (undertaken by TAWG) in early 2020 show that the policy being put forward has the potential to negatively impact on the equality groups noted above should they be implemented without careful consideration for each group.</p> <p>Since implementation, of the sustainable travel policy in Dec 2021 a small number of additional instances have been provided by travellers.</p>

<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.

If the policy contributes to advancing equality of opportunity <sup>2</sup>	It is possible that the policy being put forward would advance equality as the requirement to travel would be greatly reduce. This would benefit staff and students from a range of equality groups who may not be able to travel for a range of reasons.
If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations:	Not directly
If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?	<p>There is potential for this policy to create barriers for those who travel as on behalf of the University. The greatest impact would be on those that travel frequently on behalf of the University as well as those with limited funding, or time, for travel.</p> <p>There are additional barriers for academic staff and students whose research takes place in remote or potentially hazardous locations.</p>
How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?	The policy will be available through the University website. Upon publication of the policy, this document will be updated with the locations of the policy online, and accessible formats of this document will be available on request.
How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?	<p>The Sustainable Travel Policy (STP) was developed using the outputs from the Travel and Aviation Working Group (TAWG), including a preliminary EqIA focused on the recommendations being put forward.</p> <p>Subsequently, prior to publication of the STP, feedback was gathered from University Senior Leaders, Heads of Schools, as well as other relevant roles at the University related to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.</p> <p>The final STP copy was discussed with the University's Equality and Diversity team and, where applicable, representatives from the equality groups in question, prior to final submission to the University Executive.</p> <p>Since publication of the STP, concerns related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion have been collated from staff and students by the Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability. This updated EqIA is based on feedback received since the publication of the STP.</p>
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?	Wording of the policy needs to take into account of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion for all equality groups noted above.
<p><b>F. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome</b></p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.</p>	

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

<b>G. Action and Monitoring:</b>	
Specify the actions required for implementing findings of this EqlA and how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).	<p>Wording of policy is to be amended to ensure that all additional concerns raised since the STP was published, relating to equality groups, are been taken into account.</p> <p>Where a specific policy principle directly negatively impacts on an equality group, mitigating measures are clearly outlined within the policy.</p>
When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?	The policy is due to be reviewed every 3 years. However, due to the concerns raised since implementation, it is expected that the STP will be reviewed more regularly in the first instance.
<b>H. Publication of EqlA</b>	
<p>Can this EqlA be published in full, now?</p> <p>If No – please specify when it may be published or indicate restrictions that apply:</p>	This Equality Impact Assessment can be published in full following the publication of any updated Sustainable Travel Policy or, should the decision be taken not to update the policy, at this time.
<b>I. Sign-off</b>	
EqlA undertaken by:	<b>Siôn Pickering</b> Project Coordinator, Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS)
Accepted by:	<b>Dave Gorman</b> Director, Department of Social Responsibility & Sustainability
Date:	05.04.2023

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

Policy Principle	Equality Group impacted	How Equality Group could be impacted	Mitigation
Requesting exemption to policy	All Equality Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional emotional distress at recounting previous experiences</li> <li>• Potential for unintentional “forced disclosure”</li> </ul>	Process based upon implementation of policy. Proposed that any exemptions requested are done via a general, non-detailed, request via the risk assessment and booking process for each individual trip. No further details are requested and exemptions are not followed up.
Travel hierarchy for local travel	All Equality Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traveller unable to travel specific modes of transport for disability or health reason</li> <li>• Traveller unable to travel by specific modes of transport due to increased risks of personal safety</li> </ul>	Travelers are able to travel locally using all available active transport / public transport / shared vehicle modes of transport (e.g. taxis or city car club) and policy wording reflects these as suitable options where required. Policy notes that private vehicle use is available option in limited circumstances.
Travel hierarchy for national & international travel	All Equality Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where travelling by specific modes of transport may not be possible for disability or health reasons</li> <li>• Where travel through a region or country may lead to discrimination</li> </ul>	<p>Travelers are able to travel nationally by air if required and policy wording reflects these as suitable where required</p> <p>Travelers are able to travel in higher flight classes (up to business class) where required for disability or health related reasons and policy wording reflects these as suitable options</p> <p>Policy notes that traveller safety is of utmost importance. As such a trip should only be undertaken when safe to do so, considering all elements of the trip (by completing risk assessment)</p>
Accommodation booking in Edinburgh	All Equality Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation options available through Edinburgh First are not suitable (e.g. cannot provide access)</li> </ul>	Wording of policy allows for alternative accommodation to be booked where no accommodation available through Edinburgh First is not suitable
Accommodation booking nationally or internationally	All Equality Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation costs prohibit booking safe or suitable accommodation for the traveller (s)</li> </ul>	<p>Policy allows for accommodation bookings to exceed the stated costs, provided this is stated within the travel pre-authorisation process.</p> <p>Wording of policy states that accommodation bookings should consider traveller safety.</p>

Table 1. Details of the mitigations included within the draft Sustainable Travel Policy (2021).

Policy Principle	Equality Group impacted	How Equality Group could be impacted	Mitigation
Accommodation must be booked via Travel Management Company (TMC)	All Equality Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accommodation options are known locally as well-used by visitors, leading to unsolicited requests, hostility, or unwanted attention from locals or other guests</li> <li>No / limited access to self-catered facilities, which may be more suitable for the specific needs of travellers (e.g. those with families)</li> <li>Cost of accommodation options available via TMC not affordable to those with access to limited funding (usually less senior staff /students)</li> </ul>	<p>Mitigation included since STP first released:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy principles not mandated for restricted grant funding (seen as best practice in this instance)</li> <li>Policy principles related to accommodation not mandated for trips over 28 days in duration or for group bookings.</li> </ul> <p>Option to further mitigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend policy wording to allow booking of unregulated accommodation* where travel risk assessments indicate travellers would be exposed to unacceptable risk when staying in regulated accommodation in certain locations. Ensuring that traveller safety remains paramount regardless of accommodation type.</li> </ul> <p>* <i>Unregulated accommodation</i> in this instance is defined as: Any accommodation not booked through the TMC and could include: direct bookings with hosts (e.g. via airBnB or VRBO); certified guesthouses or Bed and Breakfast; and staying with friends and family.</p>
<p><i>Not explicit within scope of policy</i></p> <p>University insurance does not extend to cover family members or others travelling with the member of staff / student</p>	Those with dependants or carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>travellers unable to book appropriate travel or accommodation options for additional dependants or carers</li> <li>Travellers unable to safeguard dependants or carers through University Insurance, additional cost placed on traveller for this unavoidable risk</li> </ul>	<p>Policy to include wording making it explicit that dependants or carers are able to travel with member of staff / student, but all costs associated with this travel to be borne by the traveller, except for insurance (see below).</p> <p>Policy to include wording making it explicit that dependants or carers are eligible for cover under University Insurance when essential that they travel with member of staff / student. Wording to be confirmed with Insurance Office prior to release.</p>

Table 2. Details of additional mitigations suggested to the Sustainable Travel Policy (2021) through the updated EqIA

Proposal	Impacts	Mitigation
Presumption against UK flights	Potential negative impacts for those with caring responsibilities, pregnant women, or individuals with disabilities	Ensure exemptions process takes account of these concerns
	Potential adverse impact on those with limited funding (e.g. early stage researchers, those from low-income backgrounds) leading to a reduction of opportunities	Provide suitable subsidies or discounts for low-carbon modes of transport
	Potential adverse impact on women or individuals of particular religion, ethnicity, or race, due to increased safety concerns	Ensure that traveller safety is prioritised when considering travel options
	Potential adverse effect on frequent travellers as could lead to greater time spent traveling	Ensure decision making process is clear that minimising the number of journeys is the first step.
Partnerships and collaborations with key institutions	Potential positive impact on all groups affected by promoting new norms where travel is not required	Need to ensure virtual collaboration tools account for various forms of disability
Future changes to operating model and home working	Potential negative impact on those with caring responsibilities or disability	Future policy needs to take account of differing home circumstances and the need for reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities
Virtual Collaboration Tools	Potential negative impacts for those with audio or visual disabilities	Ensure that tools selected are suitable with regards to accessibility.
Climate Conscious Travel, reducing requirement to travel overall	Positive impact on all staff through improving work-life balance	None required
	Potential negative on staff or students that do not have suitable remote work spaces available.	Ensuring that all policies and processes put in place allow for individuals to make the most suitable choice for their circumstance

Table 3. Mitigating negative impacts on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. Developed as part of the Travel and Aviation Working Group recommendations in early 2020.