



Equality Impact Assessment

A. Policy/Practice (name or brief description):

Support for Study Policy

B. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment:

- Proposed new policy/practice

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: **Gavin Douglas**

Job title: **Deputy Secretary, Student Experience**

School/service/unit: **University's Secretary's 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)? **No**
- 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 partnership¹

The Support for Study Policy will apply to all students. It can reasonably be expected that any member of the student population might fall under a protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act. It is of particular relevance for students with disabilities as the policy aims to provide support for students who have temporary or long-term physical or mental conditions which may have an adverse impact on their ability to study.

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.

Add notes against the following statements where applicable/relevant:

- On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups:
The policy is new. It includes provision for an annual review of data by the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee on case numbers and outcomes. Once sufficient data is available, CSPC will expect to consider it to ensure there is equitable treatment of students in different categories, including relevant protected characteristic groups.
- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed:
As this is a new policy we are not aware of any gaps in evidence, but would note that due to the relatively small number of such cases which are anticipated, and consequently the small number from students in protected characteristic groups, there will be limits on the conclusions that can reliably be drawn from data.
- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:
We have no evidence of this.
- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity²
This work could contribute to advancing equality of opportunity. It should lead to all cases being considered consistently. Each individual case will be handled in a way which appropriately considers any relevant requirements under the Equality Act.
- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations: **Yes, the policy should provide the opportunity to foster better relations with some students by providing a framework of support and understanding.**
- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups? **No**
- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?
Academic Services will communicate the new Support for Study Policy in its Annual Update of new policies. The policy can be made available in different formats. Information about the policy will be publicised to students using the University's "Information for current students" website. Information will also be sent direct to EUSA's Advice Place, Personal Tutors, Student Support Teams, Heads of Schools and Directors of Professional Services in Schools and relevant professional services. The policy will be made available on a new Personal Tutor website.
- How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?
The policy was developed by the Student Mental Health Group and considered and approved by the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) on behalf of the University Senate. CSPC has widespread representation, including from Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA), to gain input into the development of policies and regulation and their review and monitoring.
- Any potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the

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

need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations:
The aim of the policy is to provide support to students where circumstances are having an impact on their studies, or the health, safety, wellbeing or academic progress of others. As such, it is expected that the policy will provide an opportunity to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations but increasing awareness, understanding and support.

F. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

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). **No specific actions are necessary to implement the EqIA findings. The policy itself outlines how practice will be monitored (see the first bullet point in E above).**
2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed? **The policy will be reviewed as part of CSPC's regular three to five year monitoring cycle of update and review.**

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **Yes**

I. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by: **Sara Welham, Head, Governance and Regulatory Framework Team**

Accepted by: **Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary, Student Experience**

Date: **3.6.15**

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