

# EQUALITY ASSURANCE ASSESSMENT (EAA)

## GUIDANCE

**2012/13**

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## Contents

Introduction to Equality Assurance Assessments .....	3
The EAA Process .....	4
Completing the Form .....	5
STAGE ONE: Preparation .....	6
STAGE TWO: Screening .....	7
STAGE THREE: Analysis .....	9
STAGE FOUR: Addressing Impact .....	10
STAGE FIVE: Completion .....	11
Annex A: Definition of Terms .....	12

The purpose of this guidance is to support the completion of Equality Assurance Assessments. This document should be used together with the Equality Assurance Assessment Form.

It is recommended that the guidance document is read through fully prior to commencing an EAA. You may also find the EAA FAQs useful when completing the form.

If support is required at any point throughout the EAA process, contact the Equality and Diversity Section at [EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk)

## Introduction to Equality Assurance Assessments

Equality Assurance Assessments (EAAs) are the University's in-house mechanism for undertaking equality analysis of policies or functions relevant to the Public Equality Duties (Equality Act 2010).

The EAA process is a practical tool that supports positive *outcomes* for protected groups and promotes an inclusive environment at the University. It has been designed to allow assessors to analyse the **actual or potential impact** of policies, functions or decisions on these groups. This provides the opportunity to consider how to mitigate or eliminate, where possible, any adverse impact through the development of objectives and action plans.

EAAs help the University fulfil its commitment to the pursuit of academic excellence, equality of opportunity and a proactive and inclusive approach to equalityby:

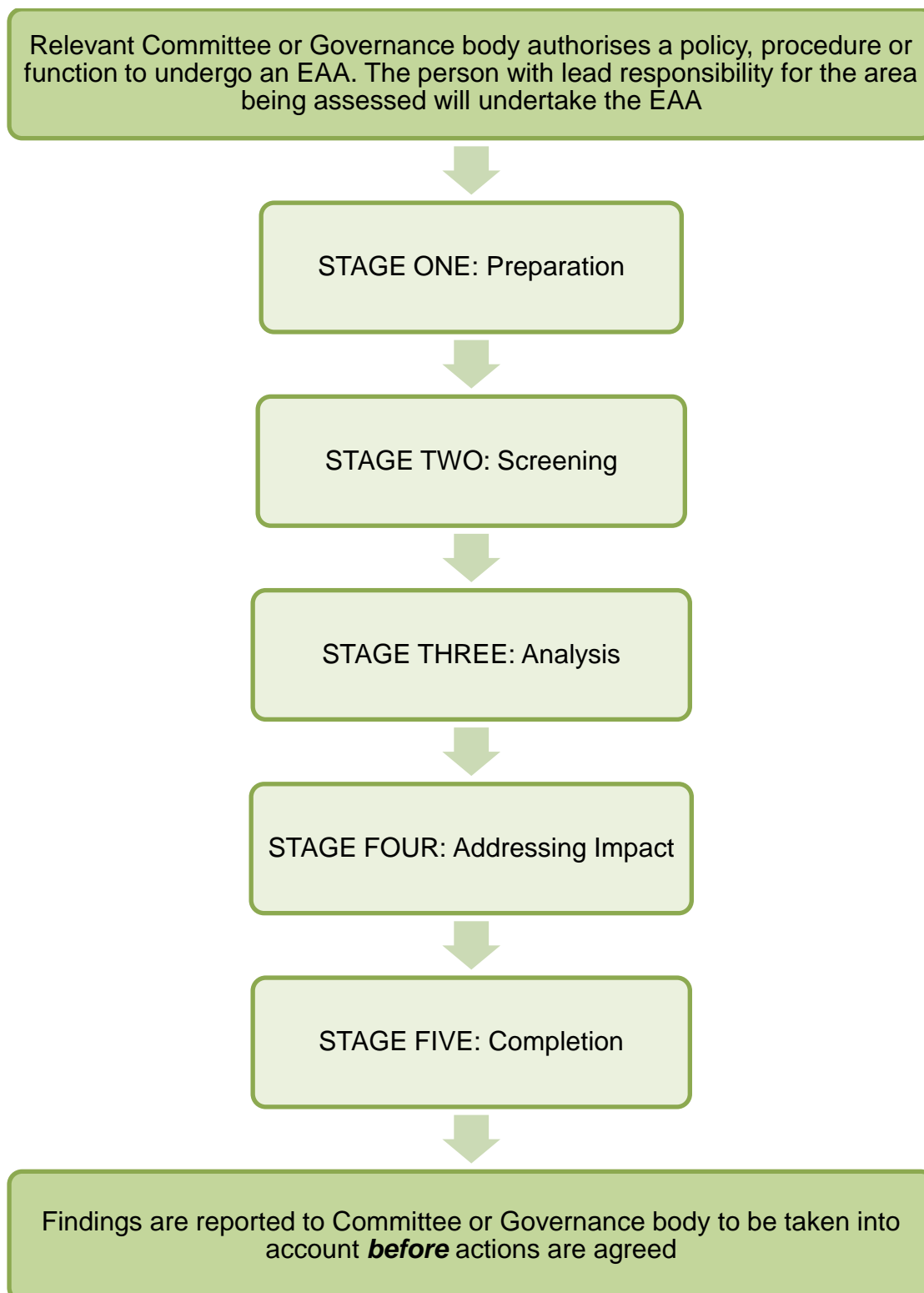
- Preventing unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct in line with the Equality Act 2010
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations

Relevant protected characteristics are (see annex A for definitions):

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Religion or Belief
- Race
- Sexual Orientation

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## The EAA Process



An EAA can be undertaken on any **existing or proposed policy or function** and the E&D Section will guide Committees in deciding which to assess. If the EAA is for a proposed policy or function, it is good practice to undertake this at the early stages of development.

If you are unsure about when to initiate an EAA please contact the EAA Coordinator at [EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk).

The person undertaking the EAA (the Assessor) of the policy or function will lead on the EAA process. However, in order for the University to ensure a consistent approach across the institution, the E&D Section reviews the process at each stage and offers specialist advice throughout.

### **Completing the Form**

The EAA Form is available to download at  
[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/assessments/form/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/assessments/form/)

The form is available in MS Word format. It is recommended that the form be completed electronically. However, note that the document is protected and will only allow editing of relevant sections.

It is possible to edit the form by either scrolling through the relevant section or by editing the text in another MS Word document and then copy and paste the text into the form.

The remainder of this document will guide you through the complete of the EAA form.

**For any support relating to the form either contact the Equality and Diversity Section at [EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk) or the assigned E&D Consultant.**

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## STAGE ONE: Preparation

Complete questions 1a – 1i to describe the policy or function that will be assessed by the EAA process.

When describing the policy or function (1h) you may want to consider the following:

- intended aims and outcomes of the policy
- relationship with other University policies and/or functions
- potential number of people/employees/students governed or impacted by it
- when it was originally introduced (if an existing one)

If you answer 'No' to either 1d or 1e you are advised to undertake the relevant training and/or attend a briefing session at the earliest opportunity.

Online training - [www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/training/online/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/training/online/)

EAA Briefing - [www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/events/#all](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/events/#all)

**When this section is complete, submit the EAA FORM to the E&D Section ([EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk)).**

**Please do NOT proceed to STAGE TWO until advised to do so.**

The E&D Section will:

- Allocate a Unique Reference Number for the EAA
- Identify the potential equality impact of the policy or function being assessed as High, Medium or Low (for E&D Section reference only)
- Advise on the next steps for carrying out the EAA and if appropriate assign an E&D Consultant to the EAA.

**The E&D Section will respond within five working days.**

## STAGE TWO: Screening

**It is recommended that you have an initial meeting with a representative from the E&D Section before commencing this stage.**

The Screening process requires the Assessor to consider both the **positive** and **disproportionate or adverse** (see Annex A: Definition of Terms) equality impact that the policy or function is likely to have on each of the protected groups.

Consider the policy or function in practice, **how it would interact with those potentially affected by it** (whether this be staff, students, visitors/suppliers etc.) and then **assess how this would impact on people belonging to the different protected groups** (Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Sex and Sexual Orientation).

Consideration of relevant data (quantitative and qualitative), information and evidence will be needed in order to undertake Stage Two effectively. A list of existing sources of equality information, including data and consultation reports can be found on the E&D webpages although this is not exhaustive:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/documents/ea/>

For some characteristics data may be sparse, if you are finding it difficult to obtain evidence for one or more characteristic that is relevant to your policy or function please contact the E&D Section for advice.

### Questions to Consider

- Does the data highlight any apparent disparities between how the policy or function impacts on protected groups and others?
- From the research or information considered, is there any indication of differential (whether positive or adverse) impact on protected groups? This requires identification of factors that affect any of the protected groups differently to the others.
- Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this policy?

In completing 2e consider the potential or actual, adverse/disproportionate or positive impacts of the policy or function in relation to each of the protected characteristics and tick as appropriate. You may find the following examples useful when considering potential impacts;

**Examples of adverse/disproportionate impacts**

- When developing a form to enquire about staff dependents, not including Civil Partner in the list of relationships will exclude those Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual members of staff in registered civil partnerships.
- When changing the shift patterns for security staff to increase the hours per shift, this could impact adversely on those with certain disabilities which may, for example, require regular breaks for rest or eating.

**Examples of positive impacts**

- When developing a policy to reduce late working, this may benefit staff and students who follow religions where observance may be regulated by the hours of daylight (for example Jewish and Muslim).
- When increasing the provision of English language courses, this may support the integration and reduce isolation for staff, students and dependents who are likely to be from Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

When this section is complete, submit the EAA FORM to the E&D Section ([EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk)).

Please do **NOT** proceed until advised to do so.

When the information available has been analysed, the E&D Section will make a decision about the appropriate next steps for the EAA:

- If **no** disproportionate or adverse impact has been identified in STAGE TWO, the E&D Section will advise the Assessor that the EAA will proceed to STAGE FIVE: Completion (see page 11 for guidance on STAGE FIVE).
- If a disproportionate or adverse impact has been identified, the EAA will need to proceed to STAGE THREE.

The E&D Section will respond within 14 days.



## STAGE THREE: Analysis

This stage considers the different potential or actual disproportionate or adverse impact that has been identified, makes an assessment of the scale of the impact and supports the development (in STAGE FOUR) of mitigating measures to reduce or eliminate, where possible, the identified disproportionate or adverse impact.

Questions 3a - 3d need to be completed for **each** identified area of disproportionate or adverse impact.

There may be instances where a disproportionate or adverse impact for one protected group may have a positive impact on another protected group. The EAA FORM allows for this occurrence to be recorded.

### Questions to Consider

- Do policy outcomes and service take-up differ between people with different protected characteristics?
- Are the disproportionate impacts adverse ones?
- If there is a greater impact on one group, is that consistent with the policy aims?
- If the policy has adverse or disproportionate impacts on people with particular characteristics, what steps can be taken to mitigate these effects?
- Will the policy deliver practical benefits for certain groups?
- What changes could be made to positively promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations?
- Do other policies need to change to enable this policy to be effective?

If additional space is required to complete this stage, please use the EAA Continuation Sheet STAGE THREE: Investigation, which can be downloaded at

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/assessments/form/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/assessments/form/)

When this section is complete, submit the EAA FORM to the E&D Section ([EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk)).

Please do **NOT** proceed until advised to do so.

The E&D Section will respond within 14 days.

## STAGE FOUR: Addressing Impact

This stage outlines the specific actions that can be undertaken to mitigate or eliminate, where possible, the disproportionate or adverse impacts that have been identified based on the findings in STAGE THREE.

**The University's equality duties are outcome focussed, so it is important to consider how a particular action will mitigate or eliminate, where possible, disproportionate or adverse impact on protected group(s).**

It is advised that you include consideration of the following points;

- The resources needed to deliver the action (for example, staffing hours or budget)
- Which functional area will have responsibility for delivering the action and which overseeing body will monitor its delivery
- A short summary detailing how progress against the action will be assessed or measured
- A review date allows for progress to be assessed and the objectives and associated actions modified if needed

**If additional space is required to complete this stage, please use the EAA Continuation Sheet STAGE FOUR: Addressing Impact, which can be downloaded at**

**[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/assessments/form/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/assessments/form/)**

**When this section is complete, submit the EAA FORM to the E&D Section ([EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk)).**

**Please do NOT proceed until advised to do so.**

**The E&D Section will respond within 14 days.**

## STAGE FIVE: Completion

This stage completes the EAA by providing formal approval of its findings. STAGE FIVE. **Sections 5a and 5b are completed by the E&D Section**

Once steps 5a and 5b are complete the E&D Section will return the EAA to the Assessor who will arrange for the relevant Committee Secretary to submit the EAA to the Committee or governance body that oversees the policy or function area. The relevant body may agree to the whole EAA or make specific responses to some or each of the Actions outlined in STAGE FOUR. These decisions need to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The Committee Secretary will then complete section 5c.

**When section 5c is complete, submit the EAA FORM to the E&D Section ([EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:EAA@admin.cam.ac.uk))**

**Section 5d will be completed by the E&D Section who will contact the Assessor to confirm completion of the EAA.**

The University is required by law to report how it meets its public equality duties. This is done in part through the completion of EAAs, which show due regard and are reported through the EAA Schedule annually. The E&D Section, on behalf of the University, has responsibility for holding information on EAAs for potential public scrutiny.

## Annex A: Definition of Terms

### Age

Age refers to a person belonging to a particular age group, which can include people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages.

The Equality Act 2010 makes discrimination on the grounds of age in employment and education provision unlawful unless it can be objectively justified. For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/age/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/age/)

### Disability

Disability refers to someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The definition of disability includes a broad range of conditions like Depression, Diabetes, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Asperger's Syndrome, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, HIV and Schizophrenia. For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/disability/#introduction](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/disability/#introduction)

### Disproportionate or Adverse Impact

This is a situation where a policy or function which is the subject of an EAA is likely to impact on one or more protected group in a way that is more likely to have a negative impact than it would on those who are not members of the protected group(s).

### Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic and the term refers to someone who is transgendered. It includes anyone who has proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex. For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/gender/#introduction](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/gender/#introduction)

### Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy refers to women who are pregnant, whilst maternity covers a period of 26 weeks after birth. In relation to the University, the Equality Act prohibits discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity in employment, education and in the provision of goods and services. For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/pregnancy/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/pregnancy/)

**Positive Impact**

This is a situation where a policy or function which is the subject of an EAA is likely to impact positively on one or more protected group in a way that may support the University in meeting its public equality duties such as;

- promoting equality of opportunity between one or more protected groups by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- promoting positive attitudes towards people of protected groups
- encouraging participation by people from one or more protected groups
- promoting understanding between different groups to foster good relations

**Protected characteristics**

Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 defines the following groups as protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief (including lack of belief), Sex and Sexual Orientation. For more information visit

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/)

**Public Equality Duties**

The Equality Act 2010 broadens the Public Equality Duties to cover all protected groups (except Marriage and Civil Partnership). Section 149 requires public bodies, including the University to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/law/principles/#harassment](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/law/principles/#harassment)

**Race**

Race is a protected characteristic that refers to an individual's race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/race/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/race/)

**Religion or belief**

Religion or belief is a protected characteristic that refers to a:

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- Religion (e.g. Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Rastafarianism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Buddhism).
  - Denomination of a religion (e.g. Anglicanism, Catholicism, Sunni, Lamaism).
  - Religious or philosophical belief (e.g. Humanism, Spiritualism, Atheism and Climate Change).

Protection also applies to those who do not have a religion or belief. For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/belief/#introduction](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/belief/#introduction)

### **Sex**

Sex (or gender) is the protected characteristic that refers to a man or woman. For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/sex/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/sex/)

### **Sexual orientation**

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic relating to a person's sexual orientation towards people of:

- The same sex as him or herself (the person is a gay man or a lesbian).
- The opposite sex from him or herself (the person is heterosexual).
- Both sexes (the person is bisexual).

For more information visit:

[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/orientation/#introduction](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/characteristics/orientation/#introduction)