**Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance**

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The purpose of this guidance is to support the completion of Equality Impact Assessments.

This document should be used together with the Equality Impact Assessment Form.

It is recommended that the guidance document is read through fully prior to commencing an Equality Impact Assessment.

If support is required at any point throughout the Equality Impact Assessment process, contact the Equality and Diversity Section at equality@admin.cam.ac.uk.

**Introduction – what is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and what does it involve?**

The EIA is the university’s mechanism for undertaking equality analysis of new, or changes to existing, policies, functions or practice with relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duties (under the Equality Act 2010).

It involves the analysis of data, information and feedback from staff and/or students. This helps us to understand the actual, or potential, impact of policies, functions or practice when assessed against the nine protected characteristics.

**It is strongly advised to undertake the EIA in the early stages of proposal development.** Contact your assigned E&D Consultant as soon as possible to support you.

EIAs can help to meet the university’s commitment to:

* prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct in line with the Equality Act 2010
* advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
* foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

**Relevant protected characteristics:**

Age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and

maternity, religion or belief, race, and sexual orientation

Further information on Protected Characteristics is available at:<http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/training/equalities-law/public-equality-duties>

**The EIA Process: What are the stages?**

**Stage One:** Proposal Details and Review of Evidence

Evidence Base

**Stage Two:** Assessing Impact and Action Planning

**Stage Three:** Outcome, Completion and Recommendations

Findings are reported to relevant Committee or Governance body.

**Completing the Form**

The EIA Form is available to download at

<http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/equality-diversity-cambridge/equality-Impact-assessments/EAA-form-and-guidance>.

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

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

**STAGE ONE: Proposal Details and Review of Evidence**

All EIA applicants are required to complete Stages One and Two.

**Question 6** informs the timescale and whether analysis by the EIA Review Group needs to be done prior to the next scheduled meeting. It is helpful to know if the EIA is required to go to a specific governance committee, and any key dates of those meetings.

For **Question 7** you may wish to consider:

* intended aims and outcomes of the policy
* relationship with other University policies and/or functions
* when it was originally introduced (if an existing one)

Please attach relevant documentation e.g. draft policy, business case document. Without this it is not possible to make an assessment. Documents can be appended to this form or attached separately in an email.

**All documentation will be considered as confidential.**

For **Question 8** please consider the potential number of staff/students/others governed or impacted by it.

**EVIDENCE BASE AND CONSULTATION**

**Question 11** asks for details of the information sources used to develop your proposal.

Information sources could include:

* CHRIS data
* Monitoring information
* Staff or student surveys
* Research
* Information held on local systems
* Relevant evidence from previous consultation/engagement events etc.
* [E&D Annual Information Report](http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/equality-and-diversity-cambridge/equality-information-and-reports.)

What does this information tell you about your proposal?

Please contact the E&D Section or your assigned E&D Consultant to advise on the best data sets to use if you are unsure.

You may have found that there is a lack of data or opportunities for consultation.

**Question 12** allows you to explain this and whether this has prevented an accurate assessment of any potential negative impacts or effects.

**Question 13** asks for information around engagement and consultation with those affected by the proposal. If your proposal presents any impacts to staff regarding protected characteristics, then they should have been engaged/consulted. Use the form to summarise the main issues highlighted in the consultation. A full report is not required. If there is concern that there may be disadvantage with regard to one or more protected characteristics, this should be captured in the Action Plan (Stage Two).

**STAGE TWO: Assessing Impact and Action Planning**

**Question 14** (Assessing Impact and Action Planning) requires consideration of both the positive and negative equality impacts that the proposal has, or is likely to have, in relation to each of the protected characteristics, using outcomes from the data analysis exercise in the previous stage.

Consider the proposal in practice, how it would interact with those potentially affected by it (staff, students, visitors, suppliers etc).

The ‘**Detail of Impact**’ column asks whether, and if so, how, the proposal will affect people differently according to their expression of a particular protected characteristic. This section should be completed whether the impact is positive or negative. An assessment should be completed for **each** protected characteristic where impact has been identified.

There may be instances where a negative impact for one protected characteristic may have a positive impact on another one. The EIA Form allows for this occurrence to be recorded.

* **Questions to consider:**
* Do policy outcomes differ with regard to different protected characteristics?
* Are the impacts negative, positive or neither?
* If there is a greater impact on one group, is that consistent with the policy aims?
* If the policy has negative impacts on people with particular characteristics, what steps can be taken to mitigate these effects?
* Will the proposal deliver practical benefits for certain groups?
* Do other policies etc. need to change to enable this policy to be effective?
* **When looking at a policy which has a negative impact** on individuals, we must consider:

1) **Can the policy be objectively justified?** e.g.

a. Is there a real business need?

b. Is it proportionate and appropriate? e.g.

i. Does the need outweigh the discriminatory impact?

ii. Can the aims reasonably be achieved by less discriminatory methods?

2) **If the policy can’t be objectively justified, what changes can be made to address this?** i.e. to ensure it can be objectively justified?

3) **If changes can’t be made** such that it does not have an adverse impact or it cannot be objectively justified, **the proposal may need to be abandoned**.

**Submitting Your Equality Impact Assessment**

When Stage One and Stage Two are complete, please submit to the E&D Section (equality@admin.cam.ac.uk), who will respond within fourteen working days. 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 EIA:

* If **no** negative impact has been identified in Stage Two:
* E&D Section will advise that **due regard** has been paid.
* EIA will proceed to Stage Three for Completion requiring EIA Review Group sign off
* If negative impact has been identified, the EIA will need to proceed to be fully assessed at the EIA Review Group.

**THREE: Outcome and Completion**

This stage completes the EIA process by providing formal approval of its findings.

The Proposal Owner will arrange for the committee or governance body that oversees the proposal to approve or make specific comments or recommendations to some, or each of the sections.

Assessment and decisions will be made by the EIA Review Group. These decisions will be recorded in the minutes of the EIA Review Group meeting.

Stage Three will be completed by the E&D section, who will contact the Proposal Owner to confirm completion of the EIA.

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

**Appendix: Definition of Terms**

**Negative Impact**

Where a policy or function negatively impacts on those who share one or more protected characteristics compared to those who do not share those protected characteristics.

**Positive Impact**

Where a policy or function is likely to impact positively on those who share one or more protected characteristics in a way that may support the University in meeting its public equality duties such as:

* promoting equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
* encouraging participation by those who share one or more protected characteristics
* promoting understanding between those who share one or more protected characteristics and those who do not, 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:

<http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/training-overview/protected-characteristics>

**Public Sector Equality Duties**

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

* eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
* 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:

<http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/training/equalities-law/public-equality-duties>