

GSA summary report of equality consideration and assessment of equality impact

Date of Assessment:	March 2016	
School / Department:	Learning Resources	
Lead member of staff:	Alison Stevenson	
Location of impact assessment documentation (contact or web link):	Learning Resources Shared Drive \\SHARES03\LIBPub\Public\equality and diversity\TurnItIn Please contact a.stevenson@gsa.ac.uk for access	
Area of decision making / Title of policy, procedure or relevant practice:	GSA Policy on the use of Turnitin Software http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/875812/GSA-Turnitin-Policy-2013.pdf	
Please indicate if this is:	New:	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Existing/Reviewed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Revised/Updated:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please summarise how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):</p> <p>The wording of the policy itself was reviewed with the specific aim of assessing its impact in respect of equality, diversity and participation, giving due regard to the three needs of the PSED.</p>		
<p>What evidence have you used to make your assessment?</p> <p>External peer-reviewed research was used as evidence for potential positive impact on dyslexic student and students with English as a second language. (Davis, M. and Yeang, F. (2008))</p> <p>Data was gathered on the use of TurnItIn from August 2013 to February 2016.</p> <p>We identified several gaps in the evidence base:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TurnItIn data does not provide details of which Schools are making use of TurnItIn so we are unclear how consistent the use of the tool is across course cohorts or by protected characteristic • No data on levels of awareness amongst teaching staff that TurnItIn is available to them. • No source of qualitative feedback from students or teaching staff on whether they found the use of the tool beneficial. 		
<p>Please outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:</p> <p>i) Positive impact</p> <p>TurnItIn is used as formative rather than summative tool at the GSA. External research indicates that the use of Turnitin as a tool to support students in developing their learning strategies at the formative stage of academic writing may be of particular value to dyslexic students and to students with English as a second language if delivered with appropriate support. This has the potential to advance equality for these students.</p> <p>In the last three years just over 3000 originality reports have been generated for students through TurnItIn. However, to date there has been no analysis of these reports to identify trends in respect of the use of Turnitin by protected characteristic or feedback gathered from students as to whether the report has had a positive impact on the development of their academic writing skills.</p>		

ii) Potential for negative impact

It is possible that because the policy does not mandate the use of Turnitin and leaves the choice to academics, some students who would benefit from this tool are disadvantaged because their tutor or course leader chooses not to make it available to the class. The variable use of Turnitin therefore opens the potential for negative equality impact.

This is mitigated to a degree by the promotional work done by the Learning Technology team to build both student and teaching staff awareness of Turnitin as an available tool. When students approach the Learning Technology team directly asking to use the tool they are directed back to their course tutor and support provided to the tutor to make Turnitin available to the student.

Please summarise the actions you have taken or plan to take as a result:

No changes are required to the written policy. However as a result of the assessment we have identified that more information on the pattern of use and the experience of use would be of value.

Action	Equality Impact	Completed	Responsible person
<p>1. An evaluative report, to include analysis by protected characteristic, on the adoption and use of Turnitin will be prepared and will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of the pattern of use of Turnitin across GSA• Feedback from students on how well they feel Turnitin supports the development of their academic writing skills.• Numbers of incidents of academic misconduct as a result of plagiarism as recorded by Registry	<p>Dissemination of the findings of the evaluative report will increase awareness and understanding of the potential positive and negative equality impact of Turnitin for protected characteristic groups.</p>	<p>April 2017</p>	<p>Head of Learning Resources</p>
<p>2. Raise the matter of the pattern of use with the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Group seek advice on balancing autonomy of teaching staff against potential for negative impact identified above</p>	<p>Potential to advance equality through clear guidance and appropriate practice.</p>		

Please indicate what you anticipate will change as a result of your actions and where / when these will be reported and reviewed:

The actions identified above will result in a greater understanding of the potential for positive equality impact in the use of Turnitin across GSA. Actions will be delivered as part of the library's annual operational planning, with progress monitored and evaluated through GSA committee structures and the feedback of users.

Please outline how these changes contribute to the delivery of GSA's equality outcomes:

Actions will contribute to:

- Equality Outcome 1 by promoting the use of a tool which will support staff in delivering their responsibilities for supporting students who disclose a disability
- Equality Outcome 7 by supporting the delivery of learning and teaching practice which advances equality of opportunity for students with particular protected characteristics, for example a disability.

It is intended that actions will result in better understanding of the potential for adverse impact and provide opportunities to promote positive impact.

Please indicate the outcome of your assessment:

No action – no potential adverse impact

Amendments or changes to remove barriers / promote positive impact

Proceed with awareness of adverse impact

SIGN-OFF, AUTHORISATION AND PUBLISHING

Name:	Alison Stevenson
Position:	Head of Learning Resources
Signature:	
Date:	May 2016

Executive lead:

Registrar and Secretary:
Dr Craig Williamson
Approved October 2016

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