

GSA SUMMARY REPORT OF EQUALITY CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY IMPACT

Date of Assessment:	September 2016	
School or Executive Group Area:	Registrar and Secretary	
Department:	Policy and Governance	
Lead member of staff: e-mail:	Policy and Governance	
Area of decision making/title of policy, procedure, programme or relevant practice:	Course Approval Policy Course Information Documentation Programme and Course Amendment Policy (Minor) Minor Course and Course Amendment Pro Forma	
Please indicate if this is:	New:	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Existing/Reviewed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. Summary of how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):

The process of approving new courses and making amendments to existing courses and programmes pays due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by requiring that documentation being considered contains questions on specific implications for protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). The questions also require that where there is positive impact, this is identified and shared, and where there is potential for negative impact, that proposers provide details of how these will be removed or mitigated.

The Course Approval Policy and the Programme and Course Amendment Policy (Minor) and supporting documents, which all fall within the remits of PACAAG involve (normally) a three stage process that ensures: ¹

- New course proposals are of appropriate academic quality, complies with GSA and University of Glasgow policies and regulations, and are suitable additions to the portfolio of the relevant Programmes/Schools/GSA.
- Existing programmes and courses are also kept under review and are revised, amended and updated appropriately to take account of changes in programmes and courses or in response to student feedback.
- A robust consultative process which includes the views of student representatives, is conducted and analysed and included within the documentation presented to the approving groups.
- The approval process is clearly outlined in the policies and provides a fair way in which proposed courses and changes to courses and programmes (minor) are assessed in line with

¹ However, the level of scrutiny a new course proposal is subject to, at any of these stages, is determined largely by the volume of the curriculum that is new. This process marks a way in which greater consideration is given to courses that pose a substantive degree of academic risk to the maintenance of consistent academic standards, including the requirements of Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

the maintenance of consistent academic standards.

2.Evidence used to make your assessment:

Quantitative data

The policies and documentation being considered are tools utilised for aiding the decision making processes for course approvals, as well as for programme and course amendments, therefore quantitative data is not available or applicable in the context of conducting this EIA.

Qualitative

A systematic analysis of the following documentation was conducted to identify the impact, positive or negative on different groups, in particular those covered under the protected characteristics:

- Course Approval policy
- Programme and Course Amendment Policy (Minor)
- Course Information Document (completed)
- Minor Programme and Course Amendment Pro- forma
- Student Consultation Proforma
- Remit, Process and Membership – PACAAG

Anecdotal

Discussions were held with Programme Leaders who have recently proposed the introduction of new courses, in particular, on their approach to responding to the two equality related questions in the pro-forma. Staff were also asked to comment on their view regarding the adequacy of these questions in aiding the relevant persons concerned at all stages of the approval process to reflect and consider equality issues before decision to approve a course is reached.

3.Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:

Positive Impact

- The two policies being considered are required to be compatible with QAA standards which integrate equality and diversity. In line with this, is the expectation that programmes have been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and that this is considered when approving new courses and making minor amendments to either courses or programmes. This requirement offers the opportunity to identify any adverse impact on persons within protected characteristics and for measures to be put in place to remedy or mitigate any identified effects, offering the opportunity for a positive impact for all students.
- The reviewed questions on equality, and the new ones formulated, require that proposals give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and ensure a robust and meaningful use of completed Equality Impact Assessments as a tool for mainstreaming equality in the development of curriculum and learning, teaching and assessment practice.
- The Programme and Course Amendment Policy (Minor) has been changed to recognise the importance of not disadvantaging students already enrolled in a programme. This consideration is a positive measure in ensuring that the equality impact of amendments on enrolled students is considered before approval is granted. In general, minor amendments would not have an adverse impact on any student. Furthermore consultations with students registered on courses and programmes are made providing them with an opportunity to respond to proposed changes.
- The approval process is robust and includes feedback from students, and where appropriate,

external sources, which informs the content provided in the documentation. This process could be enhanced by providing specific questions and creative methods of inquiry which enable students to provide their feedback from an equality and diversity perspective.

Negative/Adverse Impact

- Currently the Course Approval Policy does not make reference to equality and diversity in the application of the policy nor does it provide guidance on how equality issues can be considered during this process. It also does not provide decision makers an opportunity to scrutinise any adverse impacts identified in the proposals nor mention how any impact identified would be reported and monitored. This has, however, been addressed in the Programme and Course Amendment Policy (Minor) and the Course Approval Policy could benefit from this.
- While student cohorts are consulted, the process may not be inclusive (some groups may be excluded or not make their needs known). The current pro-forma for student consultations could benefit from a specific question that would enable Course Leaders to engage students to reflect from an equality perspective when providing feedback.

4.Actions you have taken or planned as a result of your findings:
(Please complete the action plan in this section)

Action	Equality Impact	Person responsible	Time frame
Revise the Equality related Questions on the Course Information Documentation (for both the Course Approval, and Minor Prog and Course Amendments Pro-formas) to provide for proposers to reflect or consider equality issues.	Ensures that any impact on equality is considered before key decisions are made. This will also enhance the development of curriculum and learning, teaching and assessment practice.	Policy and Governance have revised the Course Information Document (CID) with the proposed changes.	November
For Course Approval, provide a specific question within the student consultation process to allow Programme Leaders the opportunity to help students provide feedback from an equality perspective.	Enables feedback provided by students to be inclusive and more likely to provide relevant information relative to student needs.	Policy and Governance in consultation with Student Rep, amend the Student Consultation form.	November
Include in the Remit for PACAAG that it will maintain oversight and seek assurance from the relevant schools that due regard has been given to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).	Promote the mainstreaming of equality and diversity within the decision making process in GSA.	P&G to consider this when revising the Remit for PACAAG.	November
For New Course Approval add a statement on the policy to indicate how the policy will be applied with regards to equality and diversity. This will align the policy with the Programme and	Enables implementers of the policy to apply the policy fairly and in consideration of their equality duties.	Policy and Governance have revised the Course Approval Policy appropriately.	November

Course Amendment Policy (Minor) and provide consistency.			
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5. Where/when will progress and the outcomes of your actions be reported and reviewed:

Policy and Governance, as part of their normal quality assurance review activities, will continue to monitor the actual impact of the policies and documentation, but also be flexible enough to take action if unexpected negative impact is identified by relevant staff/students.

6. How will your actions and intended outcomes contribute to the delivery of GSA's equality outcomes:

The actions will contribute directly to GSA's Equality Outcome 7 (2013-17) by ensuring that the process of course development and programme amendment explicitly engages with the diverse needs of students and the development of student confidence in engaging creatively with issues of diversity and equality in their work with others.

It is the intention that equality analysis be integrated as a core part of the decision - making process, ensuring that any potential impact on equality therefore will be considered before any key decision is made.

The outcome of your assessment:

- No action (no potential for negative or positive impact)
- Action to remove barriers/mitigate negative impact
- Action to promote positive impact

Sign-off, authorisation and publishing

Review Lead

Name	Vee Toyi
Position	Policy Officer
Signature	Vee Toyi
Date	8 November 2016

Executive Lead

Name	Craig Williamson
Position	Registrar and Secretary
Signature	Craig Williamson
Date	9 November 2016

Equality Lead (Head of Student Support and Development)

Signature	Jill Hammond
Date	9 November 2016