

GSA SUMMARY REPORT OF EQUALITY CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY IMPACT

Date of Assessment:	April 2014 (<i>updated May 2015</i>)	
School / Department:	Directorate	
Lead member of staff:	John Martin Assistant Company Secretary	
Location of impact assessment documentation (contact or web link):	j.martin@gsa.ac.uk	
Area of decision making / Title of policy, procedure or relevant practice:	GSA Governance and Management	
Please indicate if this is:	New:	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Existing/Reviewed:	✓
	Revised/Updated:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Summary of how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):</p> <p>The PSED and equality consideration have been incorporated into the recent review of GSA's Statement of Corporate Governance and Code of Practice. Revisions have been made on the basis of the new draft code developed by Scottish universities as a result of the Scottish Government's review of Higher Education Governance in September 2011. The new code for the Scottish HE sector takes account of issues including transparency, diversity of Boards and recognition of equality legislation.</p> <p>Equality consideration has therefore been central to the development of GSA's revised Statement of Corporate Governance and Governance Code of Practice.</p>		
<p>Evidence used to make your assessment:</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Government's review of Higher Education Governance (2011) • Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance <p>These sources provided a benchmark from which to assess GSA's Statement of Corporate Governance and Governance Code of Practice, highlighting gaps in practice and areas where both negative and positive equality impact have the potential to occur, for example reference to equality legislation.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of the current GSA Board of Governors, taking account of protected characteristic where possible <p>Consideration of the current composition of the Board highlighted that work needs to be done in respect of enhancing the diversity of Board members.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board papers, agendas and minutes 		

These were considered to identify the profile of equality consideration in discussions and decision making at Board level.

Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:

Positive impact can be identified in the fact that HR Committee is a Board committee offers a potentially strong route for communication of equality and diversity issues to the Board, e.g. statistical analyses considered by HR Committee, together with relevant policy discussions. Also, the Board's membership includes elected staff and the student president in addition to lay members and ex-officio senior staff.

The Board of Governors was directly involved in the training and project work commissioned from astar-fanshawe in late 2012/early 2013, part of the consultative process which led to approval of the School's Equality Outcomes. This had the positive impact of raising the profile of equality consideration and the requirements of the legislation.

However, equality/diversity and the underpinning legal responsibilities were not specifically mentioned in the School's formal Statement of Corporate Governance.

While the gender balance of the Board of Governors is 50:50 (and the incoming Chair is female), representation from ethnic minority groups is less satisfactory (note: the School does not presently seek such confidential personal information from Governors as faith or sexual orientation). (*Update at May 2015 – this information will now be sought from Governors*).

There is not presently a mechanism for checking that policies being brought to the Governors have, when appropriate, been impact assessed.

Summary of the actions you have taken or plan to take as a result:

(Please attach your action plan)

References to equality and diversity have been inserted in the School's updated Statement of Corporate Governance (which has also been benchmarked against the new Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance). This will embed the consideration of equality in governance and management at GSA.

Increased emphasis on the role of the Nominations Committee in future Governor appointments will include constant reference to the 'Skills and Attributes Matrix' for the Board (as required by the Scottish Code), which will emphasise the aspiration for membership to be as representative as possible, in terms of both skills (e.g. experience in equality and diversity issues) and attributes (e.g. gender and ethnic origin). The Nominations Committee is also considering the ways in which Governors will be recruited in future, which (as indicated in the Scottish Code) needs to be more open and transparent, e.g. all vacancies should be advertised and candidates assessed against the skills and attributes specified in the Matrix. The Matrix and the Board's appointment processes will be considered further at the Board's strategic awayday meeting in February 2014. This open and skills focused approach seeks to ensure that discrimination is eliminated in the appointment process and supports the development of a diverse, representative Board which, through its operation, is able to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with staff, students and external stakeholders.

The increased role of the Nominations Committee (and the provision henceforth of regular written reports from this committee to the Board) will also offer the opportunity for that committee to draw to the attention of the Board any continuing shortcomings in equality and diversity in relation to the membership of the Board and its various committees.

The HR Committee (a Board committee) should also be a channel of communication to the Board

on equality and diversity issues.

In addition to these formal mechanisms, the Board’s senior officers and GSA staff involved in governance also need to develop the discipline of considering equality and diversity routinely when planning the Board’s activities.

The Board’s annual agenda timetable will be discussed at the Board’s February 2014 strategic meeting, and this discussion will include consideration of a suitable mechanism for the Board to receive progress reports on the School’s Equality Outcomes, as approved by the Board in April 2013. Again, this approach embeds the consideration of equality and due regard to the PSED in governance and management, ensuring that responsibility and accountability for action, monitoring and review sits at the highest level. *(Update at May 2015 – the programme for the Board Awayday in February 2015 did not provide an opportunity for discussion of the agenda timetable, but reconciliation of that timetable with Equality Outcome training will be finalised for 2015/16).*

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

Impact / change	Milestones	Timeframe
Equality is considered as an integral aspect of GSA’s governance framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSA’s Statement of Corporate Governance and Governance Code of Practice align with the Scottish HE Code 	Approved and updated annually by Board
GSA Board is more diverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process of recruitment of new members to the Board to be revised in line with the new Code. • Implementation of Skills & Attributes Matrix for selection • Open and transparent advertising for vacancies will take place to encourage a greater diversity of application 	Policy in place from December 2014 for future recruitment to Board Approved by Board – December 2014 Policy in place from December 2014 for future recruitment to Board
Discussion and decision making at Board level take account of equality consideration and give due regard to the PSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas will include equality consideration • Board minutes will record discussions of equality consideration and due regard to the PSED 	Implemented in line with Board meetings schedule Implemented in line with Board meetings schedule

State how these changes will contribute to the delivery of GSA’s equality outcomes:

The changes outlined above will contribute to the delivery of all GSA’s equality outcomes as a result of ensuring that strategic decision making at the highest level takes account of equality consideration.

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:

Review Lead

Name	John Martin
Position	Assistant Company Secretary
Signature	John Martin
Date	April 2014

Executive Lead

Name	Craig Williamson
Position	Registrar
Signature	Craig Williamson
Date	May 2015

Equality Lead (Head of Student Support and Development)

Name	Jill Hammond
Signature	Jill Hammond
Date	May 2015