## Introduction

This template will support you in considering the impact of your proposals on different characteristics in equality law. It is a process to check that we are treating everyone fairly, to test if there are any unintended consequences of what you are proposing to do, and to ensure that it will be effective for everyone it is intended to benefit. It will help you to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (England, Scotland and Wales) and/or Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.

It is important that you undertake an Equality Impact Assessment **before** you make any decisions to go ahead with what you are proposing to do. Use this template to record that you have shown the legal due regard to:

* eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
* promote and advance equality of opportunity; and
* promote and foster good relations with respect to the protected characteristics in equality law.

The template covers the six stages of completing an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA):

Stage 1Provide information about the policy/project

Stage 2Decide how much the policy/project impacts on people

Stage 3Gather evidence and consult with relevant stakeholders

Stage 4Identify impacts and mitigating actions that promote equality and good relations

Stage 5Create an action plan and decide how equality monitoring will take place

Stage 6 Agree sign-off

* Information in [square brackets] on the template is provided to help you. Please delete this information from all sections upon completion.
* To support you in completing your EIA, guidance and example EIAs are available: [Conducting Equality Impact Assessments](https://openuniv.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet-equality-diversity-inclusion/Pages/Conducting-Equality-Analysis.aspx)
* Section 3 of the guidance provides instructions on how to complete this template.
* If you require further help, please contact the edi-team@open.ac.uk

## Stage 1: Provide information about the policy/project

The term policy/project covers any proposed, amended, or existing strategy, policy statement, project plan, business plan, change, procedure, or practice that may have an impact on people. It is not necessarily a written document.

**All information in square brackets is for guidance only and can be removed on completion of each question.**

### Please complete all the questions below in relation to your policy/project:

1. Name of the policy/project: [Please ensure you choose a meaningful title for readers who know nothing about your policy/project.]
2. Name, job title and unit of the policy/project manager:
3. Name, job title and unit of the senior accountable executive/project sponsor:
4. Describe the purpose/aim of the policy/project? [Include what you hope to achieve and why it’s being done, e.g., service improvement, policy drivers, strategic priorities, financial reasons.]
5. How many people are likely to be impacted and what category of people will be affected? (e.g., staff, students, contractors, alumni, partners, visitors, public)
6. What is the proposed implementation date?
7. Is it a new or revised policy/project? [If you are amending an existing policy or project, please provide some context around the key differences between the existing policy/project and the proposed change.]
8. How does the policy/project relate to other University strategic priorities or programmes and/or external organisations?

**Projects/policies involving public or student services in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales**

1. Does your project/policy involve any public or student services delivered in Wales?

Please type yes or no here:

If yes, please complete the following:

Projects/policies involving any public or student services delivered in **Wales** are required to meet the Welsh Language Standards. Please refer to the [OU in Wales intranet](https://www.open.ac.uk/wales/en/welsh-language) site for guidance.

Please outline how you will achieve compliance here:

Projects/policies involving any public or student services delivered in **Wales** are required to be developed in line with the wellbeing goals and ways of working defined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Please refer to the guidance in appendix 1 for more information: [Conducting Equality Impact Assessments](https://openuniv.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet-equality-diversity-inclusion/Pages/Conducting-Equality-Analysis.aspx)

Please outline the links between your policy and the Future Generations Act here:

Projects/policies involving any public or student services delivered in **Wales** are required to be planned with consideration of the Wales Socio-economic Duty 2021. Please refer to the guidance in appendix 1 for more information.

Please outline how socio-economic disadvantage will be considered in the development of your project/policy here:

1. Could the implementation of this policy/project have implications for **Northern Ireland** or **Scotland**? [For example, consider political opinion in Northern Ireland. Whilst low socio-economic duty is not legally binding in higher education institutions in Scotland, it is good practice to consider it for every Nation.]

Please type yes or no here:

If yes, please give details and say how any issues will be managed here:

1. Does this policy/project have any implications for students unable to study in the way that the curriculum/service is designed?

* Access to learning (e.g. can only study from the secure curriculum or has read only access to module materials);
* Other University services for students in prisons, secure units, hospitals or in the community under licence, (i.e. studying with limited or no access to the OU’s signed in websites and services); or
* Students who do not generally have Internet access.

Please type yes or no here:

If yes, please give details and say how these implications will be managed or mitigated here:

For advice about provision for students studying in a secure environment or in the community under licence please contact [SISE-general@open.ac.uk](mailto:SISE-general@open.ac.uk)

## Stage 2: Decide how much the policy/project impacts on people

Consider the level of impact (i.e. marked effect or influence) the policy/project is likely to have on people, e.g., students, staff, alumni, contractors, partners and the public.

* If the impact is considered to be major, complete all stages of the analysis, including consultation.
* If the impact is considered to be minor, consultation is not essential but may be beneficial.
* If the impact is none, no further analysis is required and you can move to stage 6, authorisation and sign-off, ignoring the action plan.

### Equality Relevance

The grid below shows that the impact of a project or policy is determined by considering the number of people affected, along with the type of effect, i.e., whether it has significant, some or limited effect.

|  | **Significant effect** | **Some effect** | **Limited effect** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Many people affected** | Major | Major | Minor |
| **Smaller number of people affected** | Major | Minor | None |

**Major** relevance describes an impact that is likely to affect many people to some extent, or one that is likely to affect a small number of people to a significant extent. Examples include an IT system that all staff or students use; plans to increase student fees; changes to eligibility criteria for financial support; development of a new teaching strategy; implementation of a new service for students or staff; a restructure affecting many staff.

**Minor** relevance describes an impact that is likely to affect many people to a limited extent or a small number of people to some extent. Examples include a positive action programme for some protected characteristics; changes to student assignment submission procedures; relocation of a department to a different building nearby; or closure of a staff service that is currently used by few people.

**No** relevance indicates that there will be no impact on people, e.g. changing a waste disposal contractor. It is very rare for changes to have no equality relevance.

Please indicate whether the impact of your change is major, minor or none**:**  [Type your answer here]

## Stage 3: Gather evidence and consult with relevant stakeholders

### Please complete all the questions below in relation to your policy/project:

1. What existing OU information/data informs this analysis? For each data source, state which characteristics there is data for. [Consider both quantitative and qualitative data; EDI data, staff data, student data, feedback, questionnaires, staff surveys (including comments), focus groups. Protected characteristics are age, disability (physical and mental), gender reassignment (also known as affirmation/transgender), race (including ethnicity), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, and marital/civil partnership status. Other considerations: caring responsibility (as related to age and disability status of another); socio-economic background and intersectionality; and in Northern Ireland only: political opinion;]

What external sources of information/data informs this analysis? [For each protected characteristic you will find examples of external evidence sources in section 4 of the guidance: [Conducting Equality Impact Assessments](https://openuniv.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet-equality-diversity-inclusion/Pages/Conducting-Equality-Analysis.aspx)]

1. What consultation is planned/has already taken place to inform this analysis? [Consultation should always take place when the equality relevance is major. If it is a minor change, consultation may be beneficial and is recommended for longstanding policies/projects. Northern Ireland: If the policy or project has major equality relevance and affects people in Northern Ireland, you must consult with the agreed list of organisations in Appendix 6 of the [Equality Scheme.](https://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/sites/www.open.ac.uk.equality-diversity/files/files/Equality%20Scheme%202022-2026.pdf) Suggestions for consultation are included in Section 3.2 of the guidance. Consider who will be impacted by your policy/project: will you need to consult with students, staff; staff networks (to engage with representatives with protected characteristics who are likely to be affected by the policy/project), partners, trades unions. You also need to include the methods you used to consult with others.]

## Stage 4: Identify impacts and mitigating actions that promote equality and good relations

Please complete all columns in the table below. All text in column two (adverse impacts) is provided for guidance only and should be deleted on completion. Where a heading is inapplicable to a protected characteristic, please indicate this by writing N/A (not applicable) in the appropriate column.

Examples of adverse impacts and mitigating actions can be found here: [Conducting Equality Impact Assessments](https://openuniv.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet-equality-diversity-inclusion/Pages/Conducting-Equality-Analysis.aspx)

* When considering any adverse impacts you have identified, the Public Sector Equality Duty is to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
* When considering positive impacts to address under-representation, disadvantages, or meet different needs, the duty is to promote and advance equality of opportunity.
* When considering positive impacts to take prejudice or promote understanding, the duty is to promote and foster good relations.

| **Protected Characteristic** | **Adverse impacts** | **Mitigation for any adverse impacts** | **Positive impacts to address under-representation/ disadvantages/ meet different needs** | **Positive impacts to tackle prejudice or promote understanding** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age | [Younger people, older people, nearing retirement.] |  |  |  |
| Disability:  – physical (mobility, restricted manual skills etc.)  - mental health issues  - sensory difficulties (visual, hearing)  - neurodiversity (autism, dyslexia, ADHD, etc.)  - invisible disabilities (multiple sclerosis, cancer, diabetes etc.) | [Online accessibility, e.g. low click counts and movement around a page, alternative formats; use of specific fonts and colours can help with neurodiversity. Will software work with accessibility software such as readers?]  [Access to buildings and facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, car parks and toilets) that are step-free and a short distance away.]  [Change is always difficult - how will it impact those with mental health issues or neurodiversity?]  [What are implications for people with sensory disabilities, such as sight, touch, hearing, smell and, if relevant, taste?]  [What needs to be built in as standard because you can’t identify all people with invisible disabilities, e.g., regular or additional breaks?] |  |  |  |
| Gender Reassignment  (also known as Gender Affirmation/ Gender Confirmation/Being Transgender ) | [Confidentiality and disclosure, i.e., right of individuals to maintain confidentiality of future identity, current transition and previous identity.]  [Relevant to traditionally gendered services and products, e.g., toilets, changing rooms.]  [Pronoun use: use of them/they/their instead of binary terms in written materials.] |  |  |  |
| Marital or Civil Partnership Status | [Equal opportunity for everyone, irrespective of whether they are single, living together, married or in a civil partnership, separated, divorced.] |  |  |  |
| Pregnancy or Maternity (includes adoption) | [Consider pre-natal appointments and pregnancy sickness.]  [Ensure trans men are included; facilities for feeding babies.] |  |  |  |
| Race (including Ethnicity) | [Doesn’t adversely impact Black, Asian, and other ethnic minority people or groups, nor to anyone assumed not to be born in UK.]  [Cultural sensitivities.]  [English as a second language.] |  |  |  |
| Religion or Belief | [Prayer time; religious festival dates, dress and restrictions, e.g., diet.] |  |  |  |
| Sex (all gender identities, including non-binary) | [Biological sex of male/female.]  [Menopause for women.]  [Impact of part-time working/studying.]  [Consider full range of gender identities, including non-binary.]  [Pronoun use: use of them/they/their instead of binary terms in written materials.]  [Gender neutral toilets and facilities.] |  |  |  |
| Sexual Orientation | [Full spectrum of attractions, including asexual.] [Confidentiality and disclosure.] |  |  |  |
| **Other considerations** | | | | |
| Caring and dependants | [As related to age and disability status of another.]  [Need for flexibility and part-time arrangements.] |  |  |  |
| Political Opinion  (For policy/projects  affecting people in  Northern Ireland) | [Northern Ireland specific: Does it impact religious/political dimension of community relations? Does it affect the recruitment process or other functions relating to People Services?] |  |  |  |
| Socio-economic Background | [Are people from lower socio-economic backgrounds adversely affected? E.g., prohibitive cost, or is a free service likely to have a positive impact etc?] |  |  |  |
| Is there evidence of the potential for intersectional discrimination (of two or more protected characteristics)? | [For example, Black women, older disabled people, race and religion often intersect.] |  |  |  |

## Stage 5: Create an action plan and decide how equality monitoring will take place

### Action planning

For each adverse impact identified in stage 4, you should have identified action(s) that would reduce or remove any negative consequences of what you are proposing to do.

You may also have identified actions to enhance the positive impacts you have recognised.

Please complete the table below by adding each proposed mitigating action you have identified, along with the title of the post and name of the current post holder responsible for the action, and the date on which it is due to be completed. Please include any actions you have identified to enhance positive impacts.

| **Summary of actions proposed (add additional rows if required)** | **Responsibility (should be a named post and current post holder)** | **Date(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

### Monitoring

1. Following implementation of this policy, will any equality monitoring be carried out to determine the actual impact of the policy/project on different protected characteristics? [For further information, see section 3.6 of the guidance.]

**Please type yes or no here**:

If yes, please give details of which management group or committee will receive the monitoring report:

If yes, when will this be reviewed and what ongoing frequency will this monitoring report be produced? [E.g. annually, every two years, at the end of the contract period, etc.]

What is the first date by which equality monitoring will be carried out?

## Stage 6: Agree sign-off

### Please complete all the information below.

Name, job title and unit of author:

Date of completion:

Name, job title and unit of senior responsible executive/owner authorising EIA:

Date of authorisation:

Name of the committee, steering or management group where the EIA is going:

Date sent to relevant body:

Date this completed EIA was sent to the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Team:

Name of EDI Team member(s) reviewing the EIA:

Date of EDI Team final sign-off: