Equality Impact Assessment Policy

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Owner	Principal's Advisory Group for Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Intersectionality.
Author	PAG EDII

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1. Introduction

1.1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a proactive, discrimination risk assessment.
It is the systematic analysis of a policy, practice, procedure or provision (whether formal or informal) to assess whether the policy has a disparate (unequal) impact on people with protected characteristics.

1.2. The impact could be positive, neutral or negative.
The key aim of an EIA is to identify and rectify negative impact and guide decision making.

1.3. The benefits of an EIA are to:

- Help to demonstrate compliance with the law
- Ensure a written record of equality considerations you have taken into account
- Ensure decision-making includes consideration of the actions that would help to avoid or mitigate any negative impacts on particular protected groups.
- Make decisions based on evidence
- Make decision-making more transparent.
- Improve or promote equality of opportunity and inclusion.

2. Scope and Aim of Policy

This policy applies to all college policies and some college decisions.

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to tell you how to carry out and EIA and to explain why an EIA is carried out.

3. What are our Legal Requirements?

Our legal requirement is to meet our public sector equality duties (PSED).
We have a legal requirement to consult, not discriminate, to advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations (See Appendix 1 for further information about our PSED).

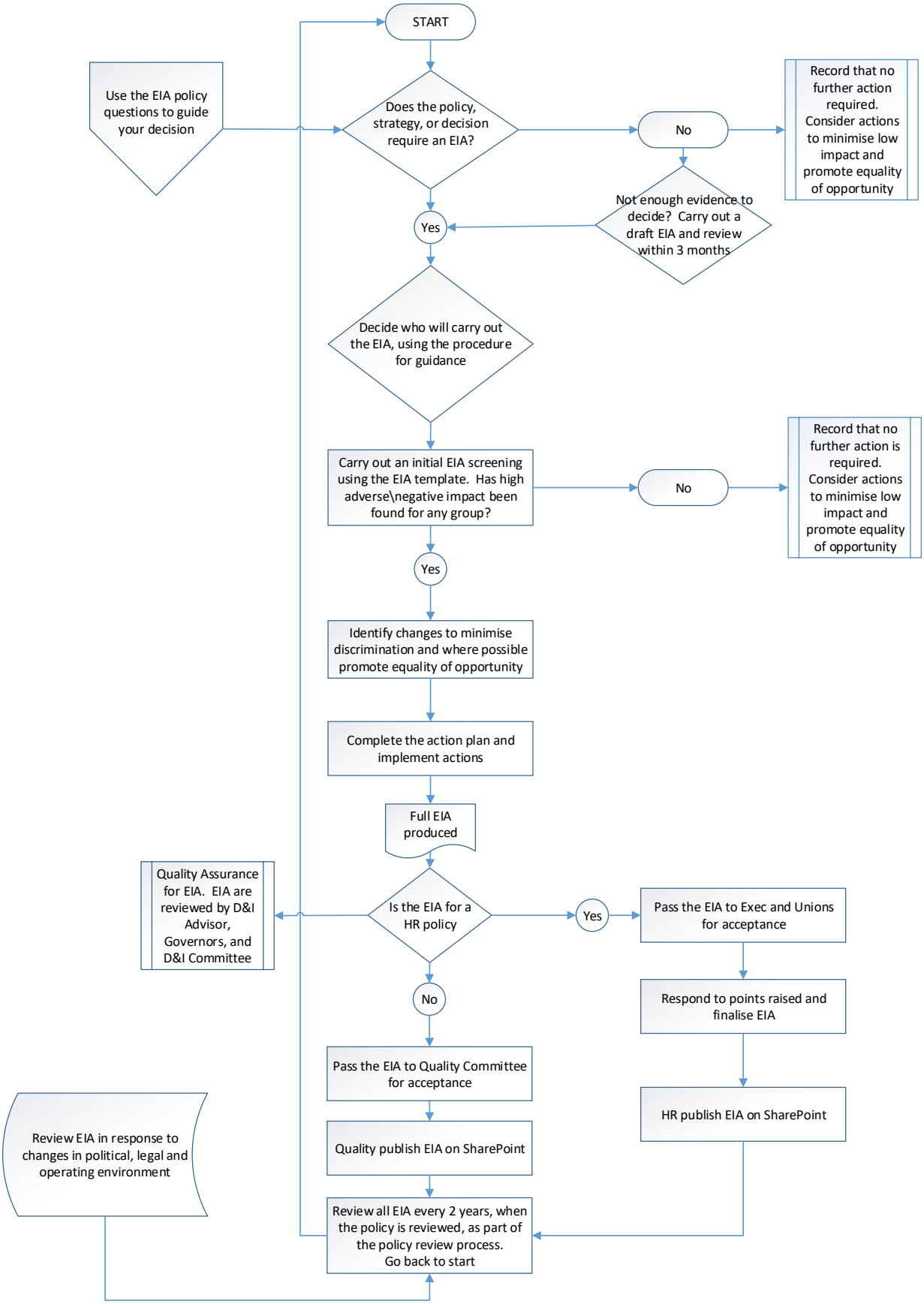
EIA are the tool we use to help show we comply with the PSED.

3.1. EIA help to analyse our policies and practices to make sure they do not discriminate or disadvantage people. EIAs also improve or promote equality through:

- Equality of process
- Equality of outcome, and
- Equality of choice.

4. Procedure

4.1 Flow chart
The flow chart illustrates the EIA process:


START
Use the EIA policy questions to guide your decision
Does the policy, strategy, or decision require an EIA?
No
Record that no further action required. Consider actions to minimise low impact and promote equality of opportunity
Not enough evidence to decide? Carry out a draft EIA and review within 3 months
Yes
Decide who will carry out the EIA, using the procedure for guidance
Carry out an initial EIA screening using the EIA template. Has high adverse\negative impact been found for any group?
No
Record that no further action is required. Consider actions to minimise low impact and promote equality of opportunity
Yes
Identify changes to minimise discrimination and where possible promote equality of opportunity
Complete the action plan and implement actions
Full EIA produced
Quality Assurance for EIA. EIA are reviewed by D&I Advisor, Governors, and D&I Committee
Is the EIA for a HR policy
Yes
Pass the EIA to Exec and Unions for acceptance
Respond to points raised and finalise EIA
HR publish EIA on SharePoint
No
Pass the EIA to Quality Committee for acceptance
Quality publish EIA on SharePoint
Review EIA in response to changes in political, legal and operating environment
Review all EIA every 2 years, when the policy is reviewed, as part of the policy review process. Go back to start

5. Why do we carry out an EIA?

5.1. EIA's, or a consideration of the impact on protected characteristics (see Appendix 1) should be carried out **before** a decision is made so that proper consultation can be carried out and relevant adjustments made before a policy or procedure is implemented.

5.2. ACAS state that "doing it at the end" will not enable the college to properly consult and involve those effected. Opportunities for picking up issues and making adjustments as part of the policy development will be missed. It won't save time and may in fact lead to delay or even fundamental repositioning.

6. Duties and Responsibilities

6.1. The Policy Owner or manager for the department concerned is responsible for ensuring an EIA is carried out for policies and decisions (where appropriate) in their area.

6.2. It is the responsibility of the person approving the policy to ensure the EIA is completed correctly.

6.3. A Policy will not be approved by Exec, the Policy Committee, or the Governing Body, unless the EIA has been completed.

6.4. The PAG EDII will review one random EIA per meeting

7. Who should carry out EIAs?

7.1. An EIA should be carried out as a panel, to ensure a robust assessment is undertaken.

7.2. An EIA should be carried out by a minimum of two people. Choose two people who fall into two of the four categories below:

a) The lead person conducting an EIA must have a detailed understanding of the policy and policy area (policy, practice, procedure or provision (whether formal or informal)) and must be in a position to ensure changes are made where they are needed. Usually this is the person responsible for developing the policy
b) A subject area expert
c) A member of staff with a working knowledge of equality, diversity, inclusion and intersectionality (EDII)
d) Someone not directly connected to the policy. This can be the line manager of the policy owner or staff from another department

8. Procedure

8.1. Steps:

- Decide if an EIA is needed for decisions or new\existing policies (see below)
- Decide who should carry out the EIA (see below)
- Decide if there is enough information to carry out an EIA
- Complete a draft EIA and full EIA within 3 months, or
- Complete a full EIA
- Approval by Policy Committee or Governors or relevant group
- Review every 2 years when the policy is reviewed, or when changes warrant a review (operational, legal or political changes)

9. When do we need to carry out an EIA?

9.1. Policy

All policies require an EIA.

9.2. When should an EIA be carried out for existing policies?

An EIA should be completed:

- When an existing policy is being reviewed according to the published review timetable (every 2 years).
- Where there is a major change to the law or operating environment, which could impact on equality groups.
- EIAs may be completed retrospectively, as part of ensuring compliance. The important thing is that they are being done as part of the college governance.

9.3. When should an EIA be carried out for new policies?

9.4. EIA's, or a consideration of the impact on protected characteristics should be carried out before a decision is made so that proper consultation can be carried out and relevant adjustments made before a policy or procedure is implemented. An EIA is required as part of decision making to understand the impact of a policy or decision.

10. Decisions

10.1. An EIA is needed for:

10.2. A decision

- Strategic decisions, operational decisions, policies/procedures and practice.
- The whole college – staff at all levels and students
- All functions/faculties/departments

10.3. See Appendix 2 for more information about which decisions require an EIA.

11. How to carry out the EIA

11.1. Use the EIA Template to record the EIA.

11.2. The EIA process must be considered from the very beginning of policy development rather than after the policy has been completed. This will encourage you to be thinking about equality outcomes from the beginning and will hopefully lead to fewer changes once the policy is complete.

EHRC quote: "There is no point in producing a document for its own sake, and doing so after the decision has been taken will not achieve compliance with the public sector equality duty."

11.3. Steps taken:

11.4. Gathering information and evidence. This may include previous EIAs, student data such as success rates, feedback or surveys, staff consultation etc.

11.5. Consultation. It is a legal requirement that consultation takes place with appropriate stakeholders as part of the EIA process. This will include consulting with recognised trade unions, relevant interest groups and for the disability equality duty it is necessary to ensure that disabled people are engaged in the EIA process.

11.6. Recording and analysing the evidence and consultation feedback and making a judgement on the policy. It might be necessary to make changes or amendments to the policy in order to address any adverse impact.

11.7. Making changes. Quite often changes resulting from an EIA can and should be made immediately. However there will be times, with procedures for example, where an action plan will be required. It is important to be focused and succinct so that outcomes are clear and achievable.

11.8. How much evidence is needed? (Draft EIA)

11.9. Lack of evidence should not prevent an EIA from being undertaken – provisionally as a draft EIA.

With new policies or management decisions there may be little evidence. In such cases you should make a judgement that is as reliable as possible. Consultation will strengthen these value judgements by building a consensus that can avoid obvious prejudices or assumptions. Guard against 'groupthink' by having a diverse range of consultees.

11.10. Where a draft EIA has been carried out, there must be plans to gather the required data so that a full assessment can be completed **within 3 months**.

11.11. The scale of these plans should be proportionate to the policy or decision. When there is enough evidence a full EIA should be prepared.

11.12. Disability. Where appropriate, questions that involve disabled people can be put to our Working Group for disability (contact via Diversity and Inclusion

Advisor), a user group or via staff or student representatives. Their considerations and views will amount to evidence that can be used in an assessment.

11.13. How to analyse impact and take action?

- An EIA is about making comparisons between groups of employees, students or service users. An EIA will uncover differences, however difference is normal and it would be surprising if comparisons were always the same.
- You are looking for bias that can occur when there are significant differences (disproportionate difference) between groups of people in the way a policy or practice has impacted on them, asking the question "Why?" and investigating further.

11.14. What to do if there is significant difference

There are four options, if significant difference (often called an adverse impact) is found. Record this on the EIA Template:

1. **Stop the Policy.** Decide to stop the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups
2. **Change the Policy.** Adapt or change the policy in a way which will eliminate the bias, or not adversely affect certain groups of people, or miss opportunities to affect them positively. This can involve taking steps to mitigate adverse impacts, or to bolster or tailor positive ones.
   Legally, people can be treated differently in some circumstances, such as putting in place single-sex provision where there is a need for it. Document the reasons for this on the EIA Template and the information you used to make this decision.

3. **Justify the Policy.** For example, if the data shows the policy operates against disabled people, women or particular communities but we can't see any way around it. The policy or practice has been examined from **every** angle, considered all available options carefully, and there still seems no other proportionate way to achieve the aim of the policy or practice. Then you are going to continue with this policy or practice knowing full well that it may favour some people less than others. Seek a second opinion from another key manager, should you need to justify an adverse impact. Record this on the EIA Template.

4. **Stop it but pilot the Policy or decision.** This provides an open door for consultation where a decision must go ahead. A pilot may run for 3 months and is then reviewed.

   In most cases, where disproportionate disadvantage is found by carrying out EIAs, policies and practices are usually changed or adapted. This is a positive feature and demonstrates fairness by removing barriers to both staff, students and service users.

12. Publish and review

12.1. All EIAs should therefore be signed off by a Senior Manager, or the Governing Body. Quality policies are then published on the Quality SharePoint site. HR policies are published on the HR SharePoint site.

13. Quality Assurance of an EIA

13.1. A policy will not be approved, by a Senior Manager or the Governing Body, unless accompanied by an EIA. A policy may be rejected if the EIA requires improvement.

13.2. This is a learning process to help staff gain experience carrying out an EIA and improve the quality of equality impact analysis.

13.3. Spot checks of policies are carried out by the PAG EDII and may recommend an EIA within 30 days.

13.4. The Governing body will review the policy and EIA, if there is no adverse impact to any group then the EIA is correct and complete.

14. Sources

- ACAS, Managers Guide to Equality Impact Assessments
- Equality Challenge Unity (ECU) EIA Guidance
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) EIA Guidance
- Equality Act 2010 Technical Guidance on Further and Higher Education (EHRC)

QED Training and Consultancy

15. Associated Policies and Procedures

Equality Impact Assessment template

16. Policy Validity

This policy is valid for the academic years 2021-2024 and is due for review in March 2024.

17. Policy Owner and Writer

17.1. The Senior Manager responsible for this policy is: Julia Thompson. The author is Steve Hyland

18. Policy Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

18.1. A review of this policy will be undertaken by the review date by the policy writer and will be approved by the Person responsible.

19. Equality Impact Assessment

19.1. This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed and generates no concerns about differential impact. The Equality Impact Assessment is filed on the Quality SharePoint site.

20. Policy Amendments

20.1. If you have any comments, observations or requests for amendment of any policy then please post them to the Policy Feedback mailbox.

policy.feedback@midkent.ac.uk and equality.diversity@midkent.ac.uk

Appendix 1

What are our Public Sector Equality Duties?

General Duties

In the exercise of its functions, MidKent College, as a public authority must have due regard to the need to:

1. **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and any other unlawful conduct in the Equality Act 2010. (Please see Appendix for more information about discrimination).
2. **Advance equality of opportunity**
   This involves:
   - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
   - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
   - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
3. **Foster good relations**
   This involves:
   - Tackling prejudice
   - Promoting understanding

People with Disabilities

The Equality Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

Protected Characteristics

The equality duty covers the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. **Public authorities** also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their **marriage or civil partnership** status. This means that the first aim of the duty applies to this characteristic but that the other aims (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.

(Please see Appendix 3 for more information about discrimination).

Specific Duties

1. **Publish equality information:** Public authorities to publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty.
2. **Public authorities to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives** it thinks it should achieve to meet the general equality duty. To be done at least **every four years**. This was to be done for the first time by 6 April 2012. Ensure the objectives are specific and measurable.

Appendix 2
The Protected Characteristics in the Equality Act and Sample Trigger Questions

Decisions which require an EIA

The following questions can help to decide whether a decision is relevant to equality and therefore require an EIA:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them.
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major decision, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set?

Age

The Protected Characteristic of Age means: A person of a particular age (e.g. 32 year old) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 – 30 year olds). Age does not apply in relation to the provision of education (e.g. school pupils).

Young children (under 5s).
Children (5+).
Young people (e.g. teenagers).
Young adults.
'Working age' people.
Older people (retired).
Older people who are vulnerable (frail, elderly).

Have you taken into account (where relevant)?

- Age-appropriate communication methods for the age group. E.g. use plain English and use Easy Read where appropriate.
- Whether parents/carer/advocate involvement is necessary and accounted for.
- Attitudes towards older people. E.g. avoid and challenge stereotypes, be inclusive in communications and ensure diversity is represented.
- With age comes disability: consider disability issues too.
- Ability to attend meetings or get involved during working/studying hours.
- Access to income (limited for younger people and older people).
- Physical access and the physical environment (access to … access within …) for people with young children in buggies/prams.
- Independence.
- Access to own car (e.g. too young to drive).
- Whether a location is affected by closure or other restriction (e.g. area neat to a place where young people congregate or regular meeting place for elderly group).
- Events and selecting appropriate times for the day or days of the week e.g. people who care for children will find evenings and weekends difficult, working age people will find weekdays difficult, school holidays, etc.
- Where different age groups have equal access to the service and benefits? What evidence do you have?
- Whether there are any barriers to participation e.g. low numbers compared to the population? What evidence do you have and what can you do to mitigate those barriers?
- Older people and younger people may be included to say what they think someone wants to hear, rather than how they really feel or think. Bear this in mind when discussing options and ensure the person feels free to make choices and express views without cause for concern, for example.

Disability

The Protected Characteristic of Disability: A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It includes recurring and progressive conditions (i.e. the adverse effect will arise in future because of the acquired condition) and certain illnesses and conditions such as cancer and HIV. NB Carers are covered 'by association'.

- People with mobility disabilities.
- People with manual dexterity or other physical disabilities.
- People with hearing impairments.
- People with visual impairments.
- People who are Deaf (British Sign language users).
- People who are blind.
- People with learning disabilities or other mental/cognitive impairments.
- People with mental health conditions.
- People with a communication difficulty such as Dyslexia.
- People with a long-term health condition or illness such as cancer or HIV.

Have you taken into account?

- The duty to identify and make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. This is an 'anticipatory duty' in relation to services and public functions – therefore it is necessary to consider the needs of potential customers. Has a disability access audit been carried out on the property and is it being implemented within a reasonable time-frame?
- Ability to get around with wheelchair access or restricted mobility. Physical access and the physical environment should consider access to the building as well as access within, and access to facilities such as toilets.
- Heavy doors (could they be difficult to open for some people?).
- Height of things like reception desks and access buttons – can they be access by someone in a wheelchair?
- Availability of handrails.
- Steps or steep slopes. Alternative access points (with clear signage) if the main entrance cannot be adjusted.
- Slippery/highly polished surfaces for walking which can be hazardous to people with motility problems. Uneven or bumpy paths outside can be problematic.
- Ability to use equipment or tools (manual dexterity – would adjustments need to be made?).
- Ability to hear – particularly if in a noise environment. The need to see someone who is speaking (with good light levels), or use a Loops system.
- Ability to see – signage and other written communications. Is the minimum font size used (12 Arial or similar 'sands serif' font)?
- Ability to adjust settings on a webpage, e.g. Larger font larger, contrast changes
- Inclusive language or imagery used in communications which reflects diversity and reduces stereotyping; particularly relevant where people who are under-represented or in a minority. Absence of such things makes people feel "invisible" and "worthless".

- Closure or restriction of a location or building (e.g. area near to a regular meeting place or facility that offers excellent access).
- Ability to use public transport / access to own car.
- Disabled parking bays.
- Obstacles and tripping hazards, yellow safety signs that are visible for people with visual impairments. Uncluttered areas.
- Provision of information in large font (16 points) and, if printed, on yellow paper. Does any written information include the standard 'accessible formant request' statement?
- Good colour contrast (e.g. black on yellow or vice versa). Red and green together can be problematic for people with colour blindness.
- Possible limited use of English, particularly for Deaf people who use British Sign Language – plain English and possibly Easy Read (symbol format) as a minimum. Information in British Sign Language video format where possible. BSL Interpreters for meetings. Staff awareness of Deaf culture, translation policy and basis BSL.
- Possible use of audio or Braille / tactile formants for written communications.
- Ability to cope with stressful situations.
- Trust and familiarity with people or the environment.
- If someone needs support with an issue, would an Advocate or mediator be able to help (this may also be helpful for other people e.g. ethnic minorities or young people)?
- Need to take medication or breaks for respond to changes in condition.
- Ability to read or process complex information. Are plain English and Easy Read versions available?
- Diet and food allergies, intolerance or diabetes e.g. nut free, wheat free, lactose free and sugar free options available if serving food/ Clear food labelling.
- If planning an event, ask delegates if they have any dietary or access needs.
- Whether disabled groups have equal access to the service or benefits? What evidence do you have?
- Whether there are any barriers to participation e.g. low numbers compared to the population? What evidence do you have and what can you do to mitigate those barriers?

Race / Ethnic origin

The Protected Characteristic of Race means: A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. The term BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) or Ethnic Minorities generally refers to people who are not white British, by the Census definition. It includes people who would classify themselves under 'White Other' such as a White person from Eastern Europe, and Travellers and Gypsies.

- Arabic People.
- Asylum seekers and refugees.
- Asian or Asian British people.
- Black or Black British people.
- Chinese people.
- Irish people ('White Other').
- People of mixed heritage.
- Travellers and Gypsies.
- White British people.
- People whose ethnic origin is 'White Other' e.g. White Australian.

Have you taken into account?

- Difference of skin colour. E.g. policy or guidance that includes reference to skin colour (such as 'if the patient is pale') also takes into account darker skin colours (such as 'eyes are yellow').
- Culture / norms (which may overlap with religion / belief) e.g. courtesy (handshaking, eye contact, presence of members of the opposite sex), diet, naming systems; these things are particularly relevant where services involve personal care of visiting people in their homes.
- Nationality or national origins (e.g. passport status).
- Isolation or low trust and confidence because of previous negative experience including lack of appropriate service provision which caters for cultural needs.
- Nomadic lifestyle and access to accommodation, access to a postcode of 'landline' – particularly relevant for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
- Language difficulties – use of plain English and symbols of pictures (Easy Read) for people who do not speak English. Whether translations or interpreters are needed (see the Translation and Interpreting Policy)?
- Inclusive language or imagery used in communications which reflects diversity and reduced stereotyping and 'colour-blindness'; particularly relevant where people who are under-represented or in a minority. Absence of such things makes people feel "invisible" and "worthless". E.g. images of local ethnic minority people are included in publications.
- Whether all racial groups have equal access to the service or benefits? What evidence do you have?

Religion or belief

The Protected Characteristic of Religion and Belief means: Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

- Atheists.
- Baha'i.
- Buddhists.
- Christians.
- Humanists (form of atheism).
- Jews.
- Muslims.
- No faith or religion.
- Pagans.
- Sikhs.
- Other faiths and beliefs (unable to list all).

Have you taken into account?

- People's belief in God.
- People who do not believe in God or follow formal worship.
- Prayer or Sabbath or Festival commitments.
- Diet e.g. halal, kosher (vegetarian and vegan options are also OK, but must be separated from meat and fish). Clear food labelling.
- Dress including jewellery and headwear.
- Inclusive language or imagery used in communications which reflects diversity and reduces stereotyping – being 'faith-blind' or assuming everyone has a faith or belief in God. Absence of such things makes people feel "invisible" and "worthless".
- A location is affected by closure or restriction (e.g. area near to a place of worship or regular meeting place); particularly relevant for highways planning and maintenance or public transportation links.
- Staff awareness (particularly relevant for direct care services).
- Whether people with difference faiths and beliefs have equal access to the service or benefits? What evidence do you have?
- Whether people with difference faiths and beliefs have equal access to the service or benefits? What evidence do you have?
- Whether there are any barriers to participation e.g., low numbers compared to the population? What evidence do you have and what can you do to mitigate those barriers?

Sex, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity

There will be some points of convergence between some of the sample trigger questions below in respect of all the following Protected Characteristics.

The Protected Characteristic of Sex means: A man or a woman (biological sex). The term 'gender' means the social / psychological identity of being male or female.

The Protected Characteristic of Gender Reassignment means: A person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male to match the gender identity).

The Protected Characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership means: A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner. A married person is a person who is legally married under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973. A civil partner is someone who has been registered as a civil partner under the Civil Partnership Act 2004. The provision is asymmetrical in nature since it only affords protection to people who are married or civil partners but not single people. It excludes people who have never married, divorcees, fiancées, "co habiteés" widows and widowers.

The Protected Characteristic of Pregnancy and Maternity means: Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave. It is unlawful to treat a woman unfavourable (e.g. asking her to leave) because she is breastfeeding.

Have you taken into account?

- Biological differences that may affect how a service needs to be provided e.g. men and women's health screening for certain cancers is difference.
- Privacy and discretion. E.g. separate changing facilities or sensitivity when carrying out physical contact – if a woman would reasonably object to the presence of a man and vice versa.
- Sensitivity and privacy if someone is under-going gender re-assignment.
- Body shape and typical style and preferences such as dress. E.g. uniforms are available in styles that suit a female form as well as a male form.
- Parenting / caring responsibilities, which may be different due to the age of children or size of family unit. The majority of caring is carried out by women. If men are caring they may have additional issues of isolation. Single parents – issues may be different for lone mothers and lone fathers.
- Marital / Civil Partnership status. E.g. refer to 'spouse or partner'.
- Provision for expectant or new mothers (e.g. being able to breastfeed in public, health and safety considerations, rest and changing rooms).
- Inclusive and non-sexist language or imagery used, particularly in communications. Information should reflect diversity and reduces stereotyping of men and women. E.g. non-gender specific language such as her/him or his/her.

Absence of things makes people feel “invisible” and “worthless”.

- Ability to access a car. In households with one car, women are less likely to have access to the family car.
- Whether men, women and transgendered people have equal access to the service or benefits? What evidence do you have?
- Whether there are any barriers to participation e.g. low numbers compared to the population? What evidence do you have and what can you do to mitigate those barriers?
- Personal safety and fear of crime – women have a greater fear of crime because of the nature of crime towards women (e.g. sexual assault and rape). This could, for example, restrict a woman’s ability to get out and about.
- Dominance – for example, a woman may not want to use cycle routes when men cycle ‘aggressively’ at speed. Is the provision of facilities and services overall balanced and catering for women’s and men’s needs? For example, more cyclists are male and more horse-riders are female, but is the provision of cycle routes and bridleways proportionate and fair? Women need more toilet cubicles than men – how do toilet queues compare between men and women?
- Whether single-sex or transgendered provision is necessary because a combined service would not be effective e.g. a women’s refuge for victims of domestic violence.
- Gender pay gaps – does it seek to address a pay gap? Will it take into account that women earn less on average than men?
- What improvements can you make to any issues identified?

Sexual orientation

The Protected Characteristic of Sexual Orientation means: A person's sexual orientation / attraction towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual).

- Lesbian women (L) and gay (G) women and men
- Heterosexual men or women
- Bisexual (B) men or women.

Have you taken into account?

- Use of language that is inclusive and not 'heterosexist' – such as reference to Civil Partners or partners rather than just spouse, or assuming a partner is of the opposite sex.
- Sensitivity that some LGB people are not 'out': no-one should be forced to 'out' themselves.
- Isolation or low trust and confidence because of previous negative experience and homophobia.
- Services should be delivered in a way that does not assume or require identify of sexual orientation to members of staff (unless unavoidable because of the nature of the service, such as Civil Partnership ceremonies).
- Whether everyone regardless or because of their sexual orientation, has equal access to the service or benefits? What evidence do you have?
- Whether there are any barriers to participation e.g. low numbers compared to the population? What evidence do you have and what can you do to mitigate those barriers?
- Other factors that are relevant to your service.

Equality/Diversity Fast Track Checklist for Organisers of Events

- The following checklist aims to help organisers of events to consider what their participants need to enable them to participate fully and equally.

Checking the Venue

- Does the venue enable disabled people, including wheelchair users, to move around independently and freely?
- Is reserved car parking available close to the entrance for disabled people, and signposted? If there is a barrier to enter the car part, can a Deaf person use it?
- Are accessible toilet facilities available for disabled people and large enough for wheelchairs?
- Is a hearing loop available or could a portable one be hired?
- Do you have enough rooms (e.g. use of breakout rooms for small workshop sessions). And can they be accessed easily?
- Are assistance dogs welcome?
- Is catering available for people with specific diets e.g. vegan, vegetarian, allergy free, Halal, Kosher (if Halal / Kosher is not available, vegetarian and vegan options are a substitute)?
- Will food be separated and clearly labelled (all fish, meat and vegetarian options should be made up and served separately)?
- Are caffeine free hot drinks available?
- Can lighting be adjusted to assist people with visual impairments?
- Are emergency procedures clear and easy to understand?
- If access is required to difference floors, is there a lift with voice announcements?
- Will people feel safe leaving the venue after an evening meeting?
- Is the venue accessible by public transport?
- Can a room be made available for private prayer if needed?
- Does the venue operate an equality policy which would mean that everyone, including lesbian and gay people, would feel welcome?
- Are microphones and loud-speakers available for presenters and for taking questions from the audience?
- Find another venue if it will not be accessible to a disabled person. If you already know that participants <u>do not</u> have specific access needs then it is OK to use venues that are unable to provide full access if your options are limited.

Contacting delegates and speakers

- Have you asked all delegates and speakers if they have any access, dietary or other requirements?

Accommodation

- Is suitable overnight accommodation available within the vicinity, which meets individual requirements?

Responding to needs and checking communication methods

- Are interpreters needed e.g. for those whose first language is not English, British Sign Language, etc.?
- Are speech-to-text typists or lip speakers needed?
- Are presentations or hand-outs needed in different formats? E.g. Audio, Braille, large print on yellow paper, Easy Read, etc. Remember to give yourself time to make arrangements.
- Can information about evacuation procedures be given to all delegates in a form they can understand and access?
- Have event materials / presentations been checked to ensure they are free from bias, discrimination, stereotyping, etc.?
- Are presentations (e.g. PowerPoint) accessible – good contrast and font size, slides not too crowded. Will you make sure the presentation takes into account people with hearing or visual impairments e.g. by not relying on visual information alone?
- Will photographs be taken? If so, will someone check that attendees do not have a problem with flash photography?
- Are presenters on a stage, and can disabled presenters' access the stage? Can seating be rearranged for wheelchair users?

Support

- Will staff, trained in equality awareness, be available to support delegates, if they require assistance?
- Will presenters and assistants ensure that microphones are used by everyone, including delegates asking questions? It is not enough to say 'I will shout', especially if delegates are using the Loop system.
- Will delegates be able to sit in a place where their needs can be met or the can access support e.g. see a BSL interpreter or hear adequately.
- In the event of a fire or other emergency will someone be able to assist wheelchair users and other delegates who need to help with evacuation.
- Don't forget to consider disabled people or people who require interpreters when carrying out a health and safety risk assessment.

Appendix 3

Discrimination

These are some of the types of discrimination:

Direct discrimination

This means treating a person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances. An example of direct discrimination would be to apply harsher discipline to a student or member of staff because they are disabled.

Indirect discrimination

This is where a **policy, provision, practice or criterion** is applied equally to everyone, but

- it can only be met by a considerably smaller proportion of people from particular equality groups
- is to their detriment and results in disadvantage and / or exclusion
- and cannot be objectively justified

An example of indirect discrimination might be where a University's rules or practices do not allow for a particular racial group's customs and these cannot be justified in terms of the institution's needs.

Differential impact

This is where a particular group has or will be affected differently by the policy, service or practice under consideration in either a positive, negative or neutral way.

Negative / adverse impact

This is the point at which the differential impact of a policy, service or practice becomes detrimental to a particular group of people.

Adverse impact is broader in scope than 'discrimination'.