

**Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Recording Form**

Please refer to the notes and examples in the EIA Guidelines to help complete this record.

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| Title of Activity/Proposal/Policy/Practice | Responding to a death policy and procedure | | EIA Team and Lead Member of Staff (names of all people involved in this EIA) | Emma Miller – Portfolio Manager | Date | 27/02/2023 |
| Type of Policy/Practice/ (tick box) | New | Checkmark with solid fill |
| Existing |  |
| Revised |  |

**Step 1 – Plan your process**

Considering the aims of the policy/proposal and the people will be involved.

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| What are the aims and purposes of the activity/ decision/ new or revised policy or procedure?  See Note 1 | This policy provides a high-level overview of the responsibilities and actions required by a range of college stakeholders in response to a death. It therefore focuses on a broad range of functional responses undertaken at both corporate and departmental level. |
| Who will be affected?  See Note 2 | Potentially all internal and external stakeholders |
| Who will be consulted?  See Note 3 | Dependent on the situation, but likely to be:   * Police Scotland * Emergency services * Executive Team member/s * Senior management team member/s * Finance Team * Student services – student related death or staff that regularly interact with students * HR – staff related death * International team – for international students and homestay hosts |

**Step 2 – Consider the Evidence**

What are the evidence we need and how we can gather them?

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| What evidence is available of how the policy/decision, etc. affects, or may affect, protected groups?  Evidence could be quantitative, qualitative or anecdotal.  Do we have enough evidence to judge what the impact may be?  See note 4 | This policy and procedure relates to all people that are connected with the college either through employment, for studies, providing a service or are onsite at the time of death.  It encompasses a wide range of potential incidents that may occur. However, it recognizes the need for tailored actions for each unique event. The policy delineates the standard administrative tasks and expectations in the event of a death occurring within the UK, involving individuals who are either on college property or at events affiliated with the college.  It is important to acknowledge that Edinburgh College has not previously maintained a comprehensive policy and procedure concerning responses to death. Previously, guidance and instructions for various aspects were dispersed among different teams and departments. By consolidating all instructions into a single document, the aim is to reduce confusion surrounding the process and ensure consistent and appropriate responses in such sensitive situations. |

**Step 3 – Assessing the impact**

This involves:

* Considering relevant evidence relating to people who share a protected characteristic
* Assessing the impact of applying a decision of a new or revised policy or practice against the needs of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and each protected characteristic.

How will the policy / decision help the College to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty?

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| **Eliminating discrimination, harassment, and victimisation** | **Advancing equality-**   * **Removing disadvantage** * **Meeting different needs** * **Encouraging participation** | **Fostering good relations**   * **Tackling prejudice** * **Promoting understanding** |
| This policy and procedure plays a critical role in ensuring equality and fairness in handling such sensitive situations. By clearly outlining the administrative tasks to be undertaken, the procedure ensures that all necessary steps are followed uniformly, regardless of the individual's background, identity, or circumstances surrounding their death. This structured approach helps eliminate any potential for discrimination, harassment, or victimization in the handling of the deceased person's affairs. Moreover, by providing assurance that essential steps are being taken systematically, the procedure reduces the risk of oversight or error that could inadvertently add further distress to the bereaved family, friends, colleagues, or other affected individuals. Thus, the implementation of this policy and procedure not only fosters a culture of inclusivity and respect but also promotes efficiency and sensitivity in managing the aftermath of a death within the college community.. | **Removing disadvantage**:  By establishing clear guidelines and protocols for responding to a death, the procedure ensures that all individuals involved, regardless of their background or circumstances, are treated fairly and without bias. This helps to remove any potential disadvantage that may arise from subjective or arbitrary decision-making, ensuring equitable treatment for all.  **Meeting different needs**:  The procedure can outline specific measures to address the diverse needs of individuals affected by the death, including family members, friends, colleagues, and the wider college community. By recognising and accommodating these varying needs, such as cultural or religious practices, language preferences, or emotional support requirements, the procedure promotes inclusivity and ensures that everyone receives appropriate assistance and consideration during a difficult time.  **Encouraging participation**:  Having a policy and procedure in place for responding to a death fosters engagement by providing clear guidelines and roles for stakeholders involved. This clarity encourages active participation, collaboration, and transparency, leading to a greater ability to refine practices and instructions. When individuals are empowered to contribute to the process and their voices are heard and valued, it promotes a culture of continuous improvement. Through feedback and collective input, the college can refine its practices and instructions to ensure they are effective, efficient, and sensitive to the needs of all involved parties. This is facilitated through step 5: review of the Critical incident management policy and procedure. | By outlining clear steps and responsibilities, the procedure ensures that responses to death are conducted in a fair, respectful, and impartial manner, regardless of factors such as race, gender, or socioeconomic status. This helps to combat prejudice by emphasizing equal treatment and respect for all individuals involved. Additionally, the procedure promotes understanding by providing guidelines that encourage empathy, sensitivity, and cultural awareness when dealing with bereaved families and communities. By fostering an environment of inclusivity and mutual respect, the procedure contributes to building positive relationships and trust within the college community. |

See Note 5

Key Questions to ask:

1. What potential positive/neutral/negative impacts can be identified?
2. What does evidence demonstrate about positive/neutral/negative impacts for different protected characteristic groups? E.g. statistics on participation, progression or outcomes, feedback or complaints
3. Does the policy/procedure/practice/decision take account of the needs of people with different protected characteristics? How is this demonstrated?
4. Does it affect some groups differently? Is this proportionate?

See Note 6

| Protected characteristic | Potential  Positive Impact Y/N | Details of Expected Positive Impact | Potential Negative Impact Y/N | Details of Expected Negative Impact |
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| Age | Y | The policy and procedure can ensure that age-related considerations, such as support for young or elderly individuals affected by the death, are addressed sensitively and appropriately. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  Without sufficient consideration for the needs or preferences of older individuals, there is a risk of inadvertent discrimination based on age in the event of their passing. |
| Disability | Y | The policy and procedure can ensure the needs of individuals with disabilities, such as providing accessible communication and support services. The policy and procedure promotes inclusivity and accessibility. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  Without careful consideration, the policy and procedure may overlook the specific needs of individuals with disabilities. |
| Gender reassignment | Y | The policy and procedure can ensure that individuals undergoing gender transition or identifying with a different gender are respected and supported according to their preferences and needs. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  If there is a failure to respect an individual's gender identity in death, it could result in misgendering or other forms of discrimination against transgender or non-binary individuals. |
| Marriage/civil partnership (relevant in employment law) | Y | The policy and procedure can acknowledge the significance of partnerships in the context of bereavement and ensure that partners are informed and supported appropriately. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  The needs of individuals in a civil partnership or married couples may not be adequately address, potentially excluding them from important decision-making processes or funeral arrangements. |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Y | The policy and procedure can recognise the unique needs of pregnant individuals or those on maternity leave who may be affected by the death, providing necessary support and accommodations. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  If the unique circumstances of pregnant individuals or new parents are not considered, it could result in added stress or discomfort for their families during an already challenging time. |
| Race | Y | Considerations for cultural and religious sensitivities surrounding death can be incorporated into the policy and procedure, ensuring that individuals from diverse racial backgrounds are respected and supported according to their customs and beliefs. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  Without careful consideration, unintentional racial disparities may be perpetuated in how deaths are handled or memorialised, leading to feelings of exclusion or marginalisation among certain racial or ethnic groups. |
| Religion or belief | Y | The policy and procedure can accommodate religious or belief-based practices related to death rituals and mourning, respecting the diverse spiritual needs of individuals affected by the loss. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  If diverse religious or cultural practices surrounding death and mourning are not accommodated, it could infringe upon individuals' rights to practice their faith or customs. |
| Sex | Y | The policy and procedure can ensure that gender-related considerations, such as privacy and dignity, are upheld during the handling of the deceased individual's affairs, promoting respect for individuals' gender identities. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  There may inadvertently be a prioritisation of certain gender norms or expectations surrounding death, potentially disregarding the preferences or needs of individuals based on their sex. |
| Sexual orientation | Y | The policy and procedure can consider the needs and preferences of individuals of diverse sexual orientations, ensuring that support services are inclusive and non-discriminatory. | Y | The policy and procedure aim to provide a consistent response to death within the college community, ensuring impartiality for all individuals. However, it acknowledges that each death is unique and may require more detailed actions beyond what is outlined.  Without inclusive language and provisions, there may be a failure to address the needs or wishes of individuals in same-sex relationships or those who identify as LGBTQ+, leading to feelings of invisibility or erasure within the community. |

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| Other  characteristic  See Note 7 | Potential  Positive Impact Y/N | Details of Expected Positive Impact | Potential Negative Impact Y/N | Details of Expected Negative Impact |
| Social deprivation | Y | By providing clear guidelines on how to respond to a death, the policy ensures that all individuals, regardless of their social background or circumstances, receive equitable support and assistance during a difficult time. This can help mitigate feelings of isolation and marginalization, particularly among those from socially deprived backgrounds who may lack strong support networks.  The policy includes actions to provide support services, counselling, and other resources to individuals affected by the death. This ensures that those facing social deprivation have access to support systems to cope with the emotional and practical challenges that arise from the loss of a peer or colleague. | Y | The policy and procedure may not adequately address the needs of individuals from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, resulting in limited access to support services or resources that could help them cope with the loss.  Socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals may already face heightened levels of stress and mental health challenges. Inadequate support or provisions may exacerbate these issues, leading to increased psychological distress and social isolation.  The policy's implementation may inadvertently overlook marginalized communities or individuals with limited access to information or communication channels, further perpetuating social deprivation by excluding them from crucial support networks or services. |
| Care Experienced people | Y | By outlining clear procedures and guidelines, the policy ensures that all individuals, including Care Experienced people, are treated equitably and with dignity in the event of a death. This helps prevent any discriminatory practices or biases that may otherwise occur.  The policy may include instructions to offer accessing to support services, counselling, and other resources to assist individuals affected by the death. For Care Experienced people who may lack strong support networks, these resources can be invaluable in coping with grief and loss. | Y | Care Experienced individuals may already be vulnerable due to their past experiences, and the death of a peer or staff member can trigger intense emotional distress. If the policy and procedure fails to provide adequate support or acknowledgment of their unique needs, it can exacerbate feelings of grief, isolation, and trauma.  Care Experienced people may have complex relationships with institutional settings like colleges, influenced by past experiences of instability, loss, or trauma. A policy that does not consider these nuances may fail to address their specific emotional and practical needs during a time of bereavement, leading to a sense of alienation and misunderstanding.  Care Experienced individuals may have limited support networks or may struggle to access external sources of support during difficult times. If the policy and procedure does not facilitate meaningful connections or provide accessible resources, it can further isolate Care Experienced people and hinder their ability to cope with the loss effectively.  If the policy and procedure inadvertently perpetuates stigma or discrimination against Care Experienced individuals by overlooking their needs or treating them differently, it can reinforce existing negative stereotypes and societal biases. This can contribute to feelings of marginalisation and erode trust in the college's support systems. |
| People with caring responsibilities | Y | People with caring responsibilities often have limited time and resources to navigate complex administrative processes. A detailed procedure provides clarity on the steps to be taken following a death, reducing confusion and stress during an already difficult time. Clear guidance ensures that individuals with caring responsibilities know what to expect and where to seek support, alleviating some of the burdens associated with managing unexpected events.  Many people with caring responsibilities may need flexibility in their work or study arrangements to manage their caregiving duties effectively. A responsive procedure can accommodate these needs by offering flexible options for bereavement leave, adjustments to deadlines, or alternative study arrangements. By recognizing and accommodating the diverse needs of individuals with caring responsibilities, the policy demonstrates empathy and understanding, fostering a supportive environment within the college community.  People with caring responsibilities may require access to additional resources or support services to help them cope with the emotional and practical challenges of bereavement. A comprehensive policy can provide information about available support services, counselling resources, or external organizations that aids individuals with caregiving responsibilities. By facilitating access to these resources, the procedure ensures that individuals receive the support they need to navigate the grieving process and manage their caregiving responsibilities effectively.  Bereavement can be a deeply isolating experience, particularly for individuals with caring responsibilities who may feel overwhelmed by their responsibilities. A supportive policy encourages community and connection by fostering an environment where individuals feel comfortable reaching out for support from colleagues, peers, or college staff. By promoting open communication and mutual support, the policy helps to strengthen social connections and build a sense of solidarity within the college community. | Y | People with caring responsibilities, such as caregivers for family members or dependents, may already be under significant stress and pressure. The death of a student or staff member can add to their burden, requiring them to navigate additional administrative tasks and emotional support for themselves and their dependents. People with caring responsibilities may have limited time available to fulfil additional responsibilities arising from a death within the college community. If the policy and procedure does not provide clear guidance or streamline administrative procedures, it can exacerbate time constraints and create challenges in balancing caregiving duties with other obligations.  Dealing with death can be emotionally challenging for anyone, but for individuals with caring responsibilities, the emotional strain may be intensified. If the policy and procedure lacks sensitivity or fails to offer adequate support, it can contribute to feelings of overwhelm, grief, and isolation, further impacting their ability to fulfil their caregiving role effectively.  People with caring responsibilities may require additional support and accommodations to fulfil their responsibilities effectively during a period of bereavement. If the policy and procedure does not account for their specific needs or provide accessible resources, it can hinder their ability to seek assistance and cope with the emotional and practical challenges they face. |
| Any other groups that need to be taken in consideration? |  |  |  |  |

**Step 4 – Acting on the results of the assessment.**

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| What actions can be taken or amendments made to policy to reduce the negative impact?  See note 8 | **Inclusive Language**: Ensure that the language used in the policy is inclusive and sensitive to diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and identities. This includes using gender-neutral language, respecting cultural practices, and acknowledging the needs of individuals from different communities.  **Awareness**: Provide training and awareness sessions for staff members involved in implementing the policy. This training should focus on empathy, cultural competence, and understanding the specific needs of marginalized groups.  **Consultation with Stakeholders**: Engage with relevant stakeholders, including student and staff representatives, community organizations, and external experts, to gather feedback on the policy and identify areas for improvement. This collaborative approach ensures that the policy reflects the needs and concerns of those it impacts.  **Accessibility and Support**: Ensure that the policy and associated resources are easily accessible to all individuals, by ensuring that accessibility guidelines are being followed.  **Flexibility and Customization**: Recognise that each death and individual circumstance is unique and allow for flexibility and customisation in implementing the policy. This may involve providing options or alternative procedures to accommodate different cultural or religious practices, family dynamics, or personal preferences, etc.  **Continuous Review and Improvement**: Establish a process for ongoing review and improvement of the policy based on feedback, evaluation data, and changing needs or circumstances. This ensures that the policy remains responsive and relevant over time, adapting to emerging challenges or best practices in the field. |
| Is there a need to address any gaps in evidence? | Implement a systematic review process for the policy and procedure, conducting bi-annual assessments as well as after each critical incident resulting in a death. This approach ensures that the policy remains responsive and relevant over time, adapting to emerging challenges, feedback, and best practices in the field. |
| How will equality be advanced/ good relations be fostered? | By instituting a systematic review mechanism for the policy and procedure, we will conduct bi-annual assessments and reviews following each critical incident involving a death. This proactive approach guarantees that the policy stays dynamic and pertinent, continuously evolving to address emerging challenges, incorporate feedback, and align with best practices in the field. This commitment to ongoing evaluation fosters equality by ensuring that the policy remains inclusive, responsive, and reflective of evolving societal needs and expectations. |
| Who has been involved in carrying out this assessment? | Portfolio Manager completed this assessment |
| If you cannot fully review the impact now, what else must be done, by/with whom and why? |  |

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| **Recommended decision:** (place an x against relevant outcome)  See note 9 | Outcome 1: Proceed – no potential identified for discrimination or adverse impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken | **X** |
| Outcome 2: Proceed with adjustments to remove barriers identified or to better promote equality |  |
| Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified some potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality |  |
| Outcome 4: Stop and rethink as actual or potential unlawful discrimination has been identified |  |
| Any other recommendations? | | |
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**Step 5: The monitoring and review stage**

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| **Plan actions to reduce negative impact, advance equality and monitor the impact of the policy, proposal or decision**   * Please indicate if there is any data which needs to be collected as part of action to be taken and how often it will be analysed. * Indicate how the person responsible will continue to involve relevant groups and communities in the implementation and monitoring of the policy, etc. * How will the impact of the policy/procedure/decision be monitored?   See Note 10 | | |
| **Action to be Taken:** | **Person Responsible:** | **Completion/Review Date:** |
| Review of full procedure by key listed teams and action leads as outlined in the policy and procedure | Portfolio Manager will oversee | Every 2 years |
| Utilise the lessons learned following an incident to enhance and refine the process. | * Critical incident GOLD and SILVER commands * Portfolio manager | After a critical incident involving a death has occurred |
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| **Signature of Lead: Emma Miller**  **Date: 04/03/2024** | | |

**Step 6 – Review and Publication**

See Note 11

Please send the completed EIA record to [equality@edinburghcollege.ac.uk](mailto:equality@edinburghcollege.ac.uk) for

* review by Quality and Improvement;
* publication in whole or in part on the College website.

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| **Date of Review** | **04/03/24** |
| **Date of Publication** |  |