

**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 | Personal Relationships at Work Guidance | | EIA Team and Lead Member of Staff (names of all people involved in this EIA) | Director of HR & OD  Projects and HR Systems Assistant | Date | January 2025 |
| Type of Policy/Practice/ (tick box) | New |  |
| Existing | X |
| 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 document is intended to provide guidance in areas where personal relationships overlap with working relationships and to ensure that managers manage this appropriately and that employees can refer to it if they become involved in a personal relationship at work. |
| Who will be affected?  See Note 2 | All employees will benefit from clear guidance and instruction for their professional integrity of relationships between employees and other employees, and between employees and students. |
| Who was consulted?  See Note 3 | HR team |

**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 | It is not possible to gain specific evidence of the impact on specific groups from previous cases within the College as issues with personal relationships are fairly rare and this management guidance was developed in response to one case in 2023/24 where guidance was requested.  The guidance is available to managers on the manager portal. |

**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** |
| Provides a clear guidance in areas where personal relationships overlap with working relationships and ensure that where employees become engaged in a personal relationship at work appropriate steps are taken to protect both parties and to ensure that the relationship at work remains professional. | This guidance clarifies what personal relationships are and what actions can be taken to ensure that the relationship at work remains professional. | This guidance is available to employees and should ensure that a consistent approach is taken across the College.  Additionally, Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure, and Safeguarding Policy are in place.  We have a process set up that any related incidents should be reported appropriately. |

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** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age | Yes | If any employee feels they are being discriminated in regard to this matter due to their age, they have a process in which to raise this and have it addressed and resolved. | Yes | Younger employees may be perceived as more inclined to develop a relationship at work as they are less likely to be in a long-term relationship. However regardless of their ages, personal relationships between employees or between employees and students may occur.  Employees whose parent(s) also work in the College maybe misjudged that they were offered their positions because of family connections.  Employees regardless of age maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Disability | Yes | The clear guidance is provided what activities employees can be involved under circumstance. Any additional supports are provided if required. | Yes | Due to developmental or physical disability, they may be more vulnerable to fall into a personal relationship with other employees.  Employees regardless of their disability maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Gender reassignment | Yes | This guidance applies fairly to all employees regardless of their gender identity. | Yes | They may get unwanted attention from other employees, that they may feel offended.  Employees regardless of trans status/history may be at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Marriage/civil partnership | Yes | This guidance provides the list of activities that affected employees can or cannot be involved. Additional supports are provided by HR. | Yes | Although affected employees follow this guidance and declare their relationship, their activities may be perceived as compromised.  Managers maybe disproportionately more concerned about newer relationships than couples who have been married for a long time.  Employees maybe reluctant to seek support from managers because of concerns of information being inadvertently shared with their spouse/partner.  Employees regardless of relationship status maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Yes | The College offers confidential support in the Employee Assistances Programme, which is available to all employees and their families. | Yes | Under pregnancy or maternity environment, existing personal relationship may be altered.  Employees may be reluctant to seek support from managers because of concerns of information being inadvertently shared with their spouse/partner.  They may get unwanted attention from other employees, that they may feel offended. |
| Race | Yes | If any employee feels they are being discriminated in regard to this matter due to their race, they have a process in which to raise this and have it addressed and resolved. | Yes | Due to different culture or social environments of their upbringing, their approach to personal and professional relationships may not be same as other employees.  Employees regardless of their ethnicity maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Religion or belief | Yes | If any employee feels they are being discriminated in regard to this matter due to their religion or belief, they have a process in which to raise this and have it addressed and resolved. | Yes | Due to their religion or belief, their approach for personal and professional relationships may not be same as other employees.  Employees regardless of their religion or belief maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Sex | Yes | If any employee feels they are being discriminated in regard to this matter, due to their gender, they have a process in which to raise this and have it addressed and resolved. | Yes | Male employees tend to be in more managerial or decision-making position so their relationships may be perceived to cause a conflict of interest with their duties more than female employees.  Employees regardless of their gender maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Sexual orientation | Yes | If any employee feels they are being discriminated in regard to this matter due to their sexual orientation, they have a process in which to raise this and have it addressed and resolved. | Yes | Due to the different social environment of their upbringing, their approach to personal and professional relationships may not be same as other employees.  Employees regardless of their sexual orientation maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |

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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 | Yes | All employees should be treated equally and this guidance provides a clear guidance of processes and which activities they can be involved. | Yes | Due to their financial circumstances, they may be more vulnerable for falling into business/commercial/financial relationships with other employees, that may cause issues.  Employees regardless of their social economic background maybe at risk of being complained of sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| Care Experienced people | Yes | All employees should be treated equally and this guidance provides a clear guidance of processes and which activities they can be involved. | Yes | Due to their potential disruptive upbringing, e.g. constant changes of homes etc, they may be more vulnerable falling into personal relationships at work.  Employees of this group maybe at risk of being complained about sexual harassment when the conduct is unwanted. |
| People with caring responsibilities | Yes | If any employee feels they are being discriminated in regard to this matter due to their caring responsibilities, they have a process in which to raise this and have it addressed and resolved.  The College offers confidential support in the Employee Assistances Programme, which is available to all employees and their families. | Yes | Disputes of caring responsibilities within the household can overspill into the workplace and may have an impact on work performance or other interpersonal relationships with colleagues.  Managers may inadvertently assume that female employees may have more caring responsibilities than their male partners. |
| Any other groups that need to be taken in consideration? | No |  | No |  |

**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 | The occurrence of personal relationships developing at work is rare and the manager guidance will be revised, if needed, in the light of experience.  Managers may also require guidance to support employees whose job role may be affected by newly developed or existing personal relation. |
| Is there a need to address any gaps in evidence? | The policy may need to address, in future, sexual harassment or domestic abuse in connection to personal relationship at work. |
| How will equality be advanced/ good relations be fostered? | All employees should be treated equally and additional supports are provided to employees if required. |
| Who has been involved in carrying out this assessment? | HR team |
| If you cannot fully review the impact now, what else must be done, by/with whom and why? | See above comments |

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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:** |
| Provide additional support and guidance to affected group of employees if required. | HR Partners | Ongoing |
| All relevant information is recorded and monitored if the process is followed appropriately and no unfair discrimination occurs. | HR Team | Ongoing |
| Collect feedback from HR Partners if they receive any feedback or claims from protected characteristic employees affected. | HR Partners | Ongoing |
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| **Signature of Lead: Director of HR & OD**  **Date: 17th January 2025** | | |

**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** | **27 February 2025** |
| **Date of Publication** | **11 March 2025** |