

**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 | Student Mental Health Policy and related documents | | EIA Team and Lead Member of Staff | Learning Support Team Leader (Sighthill), Learning Support Manager, ECSA VP- Welfare, Head of Corporate Development, Head of Student Experience, Information Manager, Equalities Officer. | Date | 06/04/18 |
| Type of Policy/Practice/ (tick box) | New | X |
| Existing |  |
| Revised |  |

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| **Step 1 – Considering the aims of the policy/proposal and evidence of how it affects different groups** | |
| What are the aims and purposes of the activity/ decision/ new or revised policy or procedure?  See Note 1 | * To ensure that there is a coherent approach across College for students and prospective students who disclose or experience mental ill health. * To promote mental wellbeing for all Edinburgh College students. |
| Who will be affected?  See Note 2 | Students, plus staff members who implement the policy. |
| Who will be consulted?  See Note 3 | | The development of this policy and related documents is as a result of previous discussions on the need for more mental health support for students (please see box below). The EIA team above represent areas that have experience of supporting students with mental health conditions, including the VP - Welfare of the Student Association representing students. |
| 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 | | The numbers of students declaring a mental health condition in the College has more than doubled since 2014/15 (from around 432 to around 972). The Students’ Association identified in 2016/17 that one of the five key issues for students was around mental health support for students. The College is taking forward a number of measures to support these students and discussions indicate that staff require clearer guidance around support for students. Part of the proposal includes a Fitness to Continue Study support plan, so that an alternative, more supportive route can be taken rather than via a disciplinary procedure. The College has researched good practice in this area, such as the Mental Health policy developed by Napier University. |

**Step 2 – 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.

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** |

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 | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit students of all ages. Additionally, evidence indicates that an increasing number of school pupils are declaring mental health conditions, so the policy will support these transitioning students. |  |  |
| Disability | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit students with mental health conditions. Having a Fitness to Continue support plan may also offer an alternative route to the disciplinary one for students who have social or communication needs that make it difficult for them to manage in a classroom situation. | Y | The Mental Health Policy is one of the ways in which the College wants to reduce the stigma of Mental Health and encourage students to seek support, so we will take action to ensure that students with a mental health condition feel supported rather than singled out (see step 3). |
| Gender reassignment | Y | Due to the prejudice they experience, significant numbers of transgender people experience mental health difficulties, so a more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach would be expected to benefit these students. |  |  |
| Marriage/civil partnership (relevant in employment law) | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students. |  |  |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students. |  |  |
| Race | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students. Our figures suggest that students from some ethnic background are less likely to declare a mental health condition, so having a more visible approach to mental health and wellbeing may help to reduce any stigma they feel. |  |  |
| Religion or belief | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students and help to make mental health more visible in the college. |  |  |
| Sex | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students. |  |  |
| Sexual orientation | Y | Due to the prejudice they experience, significant numbers of LGB can experience mental health difficulties, so a more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach would be expected to benefit these students. |  |  |
| Social deprivation\*  See Note 7 | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students, including students who are vulnerable due to social exclusion. |  |  |
| Care Experienced people\* | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students, including students who are vulnerable due to their experiences of care. |  |  |
| People with caring responsibilities\* | Y | A more coherent mental health and wellbeing approach will benefit all students, including those with the added pressures of caring responsibilities. |  |  |

**Step 3 – 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 | As noted above, the Mental Health Policy is designed to better support students who are having difficulties as a result of mental health, so it is important to get this message across to students. A lot of work has already been done on the phrasing of the policy to ensure it gets across this message. It is also important to make it clear in the policy that mental health problems can affect anyone at any time, depending on their circumstances. The Students Association will play an important role in making sure that students understand why the policy is being put in place (and in developing a student-friendly version of the policy). Having different ways of accessing the policy (e.g. in paper and electronic form) will assist people with different needs.  A clear equalities statement in the policy will help to demonstrate that the policy is there to support students from all protected characteristic groups.  Ensure that any support links also refer students to external agencies that can support people from different protected characteristic groups, e.g. LGBT support groups, groups that support disabled people, etc. |
| Is there a need to address any gaps in evidence? | None apparent. |
| How will equality be advanced/ good relations be fostered? | By having clearer guidance and a more coherent approach. We would also hope that the policy would reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, by making students know that they Colleges has support measures in place if they need to seek help. The Policy is part of a whole range of initiatives being taken across the College to improve the mental health and wellbeing of students and staff, including employing a dedicated mental health and wellbeing adviser, holding workshops and devoting a Staff CPD day to mental health. |
| Who has been involved in carrying out this assessment? | The EIA Team |
| If you cannot fully review the impact now, what else must be done, by/with whom and why? | See Step 4. |

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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 4: 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 any feedback on the policy and equality monitoring statistics around fitness to continue to study to ensure impact of policy on different groups. | ST/JM | June 2019. |
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| **Signature of Lead:**  **Date:** | | |
| **Step 5 – Review and Publication**  See Note 11  Please send the completed EIA record to Sara Taylor, Equalities Officer, [sara.taylor@edinburghcollege.ac.uk](mailto:sara.taylor@edinburghcollege.ac.uk) for   * review by Equalities team * publication in whole or in part on the College website. | | |