Committee Papers

Effect of the proposal(s) on equality

Legislative background

The University is subject to the General Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010. This means that, in the exercise of our functions, we must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are: disability, race, sex, age, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Aim of this approach

Recording the known and potential effect of proposals on equality through completion of this section of the committee cover sheet is one way of evidencing our compliance with legislation and also supports our commitment to inclusivity.

Things to consider

- **Does the proposal involve, or have consequences for, the people the University serves and employs?**

  If the answer to this is yes, consider whose needs the proposal is designed to meet. Is it designed to meet specific needs such as the needs of particular groups of students, staff or visitors or does it apply to all students, or all staff or all members of the campus community? Consider those who might be affected indirectly as well as those affected directly.

- **Does the proposal require decisions to be made in relation to individuals or groups of individuals?**

  If the answer to this is yes, what is the decision-making process and is it fair and transparent? Do decision-makers need equality-related guidance that is specific to the proposal in order to ensure fair decisions are made? If so, how will this be provided?

- **How will the effect this proposal has/may have on groups of people with the protected characteristics covered by legislation be monitored?**

  Consider what the University needs to know about the effects of this policy and how this information could be captured. What steps need to be taken to ensure that all perspectives are taken into account? What information is already available? Is this sufficient to make a judgement on whether the policy has a differential impact on different groups? If not, what additional information might be useful?
Is this proposal designed to mitigate against an identified, unjustified differential impact on any particular group of people who share a protected characteristic, for example as a result of a complaint or issue being raised?

There may be cases where a differential impact is justified e.g. for health and safety reasons or because it is to address the needs of a particular group through positive action.

What are examples of differential impact?
- A lower participation rate of a group of people who share a protected characteristic compared to others
- Lower success rates in a particular process
- Eligibility criteria which disadvantage a group, or groups, of people who share a protected characteristic
- Whether access to services or benefits is reduced or denied in comparison with other groups
- Poorer quality of treatment for some groups over others
- Whether a particular group faces increased difficulty, discomfort, time, inconvenience or indignity as a result of the policy

Could this proposal result in differential impact on any particular group of people who share a protected characteristic?

If the answer to this is yes, consider whether this impact is justified. If not, what changes could be made to the proposal to reduce the negative impact on one group without creating a negative impact for other groups?

Are there any ways in which the proposal does, or could advance equality or foster good relations between different groups of people?

‘Advancing equality’ means taking steps to understand and take account of the different needs of different groups of people. ‘Fostering good relations’ means promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.