

## Equality Impact Assessment Form (EqIA)

As a public sector organisation, GSA has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to assess the impact all of its new or revised policies, practices, procedures or projects may have on protected groups (as defined by the Act).

The purpose of this assessment is to use relevant evidence and critical thinking to identify any impact (positive, negative or neutral) the policy, practice, procedure or project that is being assessed may have on the people it affects or is intended for.

The EqIA is a tool which helps mainstream equality into everything GSA does. It requires us to consider how we can mitigate or eliminate negative impact and, in turn, advance positive outcomes. Therefore, it must be undertaken during the development / review of the policy, practice, procedure or project it refers to and not after it has been finalised. Ideally, EqIAs should be a team effort of relevant parties to ensure a variety of perspectives have been consulted. All finalised EqIAs must be signed off by an executive lead and either the Head of Student Support and Development or GSA's Equality Officer, however, support from the Equality Officer is available at any stage of completion.

Further guidance on how to complete an EqIA can be found on GSA's website and the Equality and Diversity section on the staff intranet. If you have any additional questions, please contact [equality@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:equality@gsa.ac.uk).

<b>Name of Equality Impact Assessment</b> (E.g. Area of decision making/title of policy, procedure, programme or relevant practice)	Hybrid Working Guiding Principles
<b>New or reviewed</b>	New
<b>Owner/Review Lead and role</b>	Morag McElhinney, Director of HR
<b>Department or School</b>	HR
<b>Date of assessment</b>	15/08/2022

<b>1. Purpose of policy / practice / procedure / project being assessed – brief description</b>			
To set out Guiding Principles for staff to be supported by managers and team to work in a hybrid way – that is between campus and remote working - whilst balancing operational and strategic requirements. Hybrid working is not a contractual arrangement/ entitlement.			
<b>2. Evidence used when undertaking this assessment – this can comprise of internal and external reports, survey data, etc</b>			
Data on GSA staff profile GSA Staff Focus groups 2021 CIPD/ People Management insights ECHR guidance on hybrid working			
<b>3. Type of impact by protected characteristic – please provide details of the potential impact (could be more than just one type); make reference to relevant evidence (from the list you provided above) where applicable</b>			
	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
<b>Age</b>	Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p> <p>Young people may be more likely to be living in shared accommodation or less likely to have suitable working space at home. This may result in greater need to have the option to work on campus.</p> <p>While we recognise that many older people are highly capable when it comes to using new technologies, some older employees may not be as comfortable. Training and support will be provided to support staff who require it.</p> <p>Potential issue of isolation and a negative effect on mental health.</p>	

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p> <p>There may also be positive impacts in terms of providing the flexibility to work in an environment that is the best match in terms of meeting both work requirements, and those that relate to the specific needs of each individual disability, e.g. reduce the impact of distractions typical in an open plan office.</p> <p>There may be both positive and negative impacts for employees with mental health conditions; some staff may find the increased flexibility supportive.</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p> <p>There may be an impact on those with disability who require specialist adaptations and who require particular support (e.g., software, adjustable furnishings) at home and/or in the office.</p> <p>There may be an impact on those with neuro-diverse conditions who may require certain adjustments to working environments or practices.</p> <p>There may be both positive and negative impacts for employees with mental health conditions; some may find home-working isolating.</p> <p>It may also be the case for some disabled individuals who opt to work mostly remotely that they don't get to socialise with their teams as much, potentially leaving them feeling excluded.</p>	
<b>Gender reassignment (covers Trans identities)</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p>	

	<p>Potential positive impact in terms of mental health can be expected for trans individuals who have not come out at the work place but feel safer at home.</p> <p>Hybrid working could also allow for comfortable and effective working post cosmetic/medical treatments, thus eliminating stress and anxiety related to in person interactions with people after undergoing such procedures.</p>	<p>Data published by Stonewall and Rethink Mental Health suggests trans employees may be more likely to experience mental health problems and in some cases hybrid working may have a negative impact on mental health e.g. isolation or in situations where the individual has not come out to the people they live with (if applicable).</p>	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p>	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p> <p>Flexible working would allow pregnant individuals with specific pregnancy requirements (e.g. modified or full bed rest) to still work (where desired and appropriate). This is expected to have a positive effect on their mental health.</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p>	
<b>Race</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p>	

<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p> <p>Hybrid working could benefit anyone with religious and/or other beliefs, providing more flexible arrangements for praying or other religious or belief practices, such as fasting.</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p>	
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p> <p>Data shows that statistically females more likely to suffer domestic abuse. Therefore, remote working may result in increased rates of domestic violence incidents.</p>	
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.</p> <p>Similar to 'gender reassignment' above: Potential positive impact in terms of mental health can be expected for individuals who have</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.</p> <p>Similar to 'gender reassignment' above: There is a potential for negative impact on mental health in situations where the individual has</p>	

	not come out at the work place but feel safer at home.	not come out to the people they live with (if applicable).	
<b>Impact on other groups</b> (e.g. Care Experienced; Carers; Military Veterans; Low Socioeconomic Status (SES); Asylum Seekers; British Sign Language Users, etc)	<b>Positive impact</b> Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks.  Remote working may have a positive impact for people who need more time to be able to build social connections.	<b>Negative impact</b> Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress.  Working from home could potentially negatively affect some as the increased costs of heating/lighting, electricity demands, broadband, also desk/table or having sufficient working space, could cause increased demand on personal finances, particularly impacting on those on low incomes. However, colleagues are still fully able to work from the office full time if that is their preference, where space and facilities can be provided. Colleagues can also apply for a tax refund through HMRC if they are working from home.  Additionally, remote working could have a negative impact on building social skills for those who need support in that area.	<b>Neutral impact</b>

**4. How has the identified negative impact been mitigated? – please provide details of undertaken actions broken down by protected characteristic**

We will continue to monitor the impact of Hybrid working through engagement with staff and managers, including TU Forum, Hybrid Working questionnaire, staff surveys, and if any negative impacts are identified we will take steps to address these.

Hybrid working is not mandatory and for staff who want to be in the office due to personal circumstances, they are able to work from there.

Mandatory Display Screen Equipment for working remotely.

Implementation of Report and Support tool for staff to access support and for GSA to address reported incidents/ themes.

Risk assessments are undertaken appropriately to inform working arrangements eg for disability, stress at work.

Continue to signpost Flexible Working Policy to support staff e.g. with carer and/ or childcare responsibilities.

The actions identified in section 5 below are ongoing supportive actions and will be provided on an ad hoc basis, thus not a detriment to launch of the Guiding Principles.

**5. Any outstanding mitigation (where applicable) – please provide a concise action plan with action owner and a timescale for completion**

Action	Equality Impact	Person Responsible	Time frame
Reasonable adjustments for disabled staff should inform decisions about where work is best delivered.	Disability	Line manager with HR guidance and OH input as required	During review period or any hybrid request thereafter
Training on technology/ ICT to support hybrid working arrangements.	Age	L&D Manager with IT	Next catalogue of learning review
Encouraging team practices for social wellbeing – arrangements for regular contact, collaboration,	Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Sex, Sexual orientation, Care experienced	SLG, Line managers and teams	During review period and during life time of the People Strategy

<p>supervision, support and engagement to minimise risk of isolation and deteriorating mental health.</p> <p>Good line management practice is encouraged and developed e.g. regular 1:1s, career reviews, staff development, team meetings</p> <p>Coaching and development support for having conversations around personal circumstances to enable open and honest discussion about Health and Wellbeing needs including anxiety and mental health.</p> <p>Continue to monitor impacts of hybrid working via surveys and analysing data in relation to all protected characteristics for any signs of disproportionate negative impact.</p> <p>Organisational promotion of not having to be in the office to be working.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Sex, Sexual orientation, Care experienced</p> <p>All</p>	<p>HR Function and SLG</p> <p>HR Function</p> <p>HR Function, TUF</p>	<p>During review period and during life time of the People Strategy</p> <p>During review period and during life time of the People Strategy</p> <p>During Review Period</p>
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**6. How does the outcome of this assessment and the actions undertaken support GSA's [2021 - 2025 Equality Outcomes](#)**

Hybrid working arrangements require employees, managers and teams to have conversations and rich dialogue about how best to collectively deliver work, taking into account the different circumstances of individuals and the different work being delivered. Recognising differences and working together to find successful delivery mechanisms that support colleagues directly contributes to the equality outcomes (in particular - EQUALITY OUTCOME 1: *Actively foster and support an organisational culture in which dignity and respect for self and others is understood and practiced, where confidence is encouraged and promoted, and where ignorance, prejudice and bias is challenged*).



Hybrid working also presents an opportunity to think about the impact of working environments on individuals, especially in relation to disability, ensuring that adaptations are put in place to support campus or remote working (this directly supports EQUALITY OUTCOME 2: *Continue to evaluate our physical and digital environment, aiming to optimise accessibility and inclusivity by acknowledging and providing for the needs of our students, staff and stakeholders*).

Hybrid working arrangements may be attractive to candidates due to personal circumstances and may be something to flag in recruitment campaigns to attract a more diverse applicant pool (this supports EQUALITY OUTCOME 3: *Actively build and support a staff population which is more reflective of the Scottish population and encourage a diverse student body*).

Data from the survey(s) undertaken on the impact of hybrid working arrangements on staff and students will provide further insights into a range of experience for a range of people with different protected characteristics and personal circumstances (which supports EQUALITY OUTCOME 5: *Develop a comprehensive and robust equality and diversity data set which enables us to identify gaps, inform action, assess progress and measure impact for each Equality Outcome*).

**7. How does the outcome of this assessment and the actions undertaken support the three main duties GSA has under the Equality Act 2010 [Equality Act 2010](#) to:**

- **eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;**
- **advance equality of opportunity;**
- **foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?**

- Hybrid working can be requested by all employees, the differentiating factor on whether it can be supported will be related to the requirements of the work being delivered.
- High quality discussion between employees and managers and across teams to enable a collective approach to delivery of work is a fundamental principle for hybrid working.

**8. Where/when will action progress and outcome be reported and reviewed?**

- Following the trial between September- December there will be a review of the impacts, informed by surveys and feedback from stakeholders.
- Feedback will be shared at TU Forum and SLG, and published more widely with staff also. Any EDI issues may be reported to the EDI Committee.

**Next review date** – please consider any outstanding actions outlined above; the review period must be in line with the policy/service review and/or at intervals of no more than three years

**January 2023**

<b>Signed off by Owner/Review Lead</b> Morag McElhinney	1/9/22
<b>Signed off by Executive Lead</b> Morag McElhinney	(date)
<b>Signed off by Equality Lead</b> Svetoslava Sergieva – Equality Officer	01/09/2022
<b>Signed off by Education Committee</b>	(date)