GSA SUMMARY REPORT OF EQUALITY CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY IMPACT

Date of Assessment:	April 2014
School / Department:	Student Support and Development
Lead member of staff:	Jill Hammond Head of Student Support and Development
Location of impact assessment documentation (contact or web link):	j.hammond@gsa.ac.uk
Area of decision making / Title of policy, procedure or relevant practice:	**Support for Disabled Students - IRF Policy**

Please indicate if this is:		
	New:	☐
	Existing/Reviewed:	✓
	Revised/Updated:	☐

Summary of how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):

The IRF process has been impact assessed at each stage to ensure that it meets the requirements of the PSED and aligns with the GSA statement on equality and diversity.

The Individual Requirement Form (IRF) is the means by which a disabled student's learning needs are formally communicated to their programme leader. As such, this policy relates directly to the removal of barriers for a group of students with a protected characteristic, and is intended to ensure that disability related needs are assessed and reasonable adjustments made in the learning and teaching environment.

Given the fact that many students disclose disability post enrolment, other equality considerations (such as different cultural attitudes and/or understandings of disability) that may affect disclosure have been considered. Primary consideration has been given to the equality and diversity dimensions of access to, and provision of, services with an emphasis on transparency and availability of services to all students whether or not they identify as disabled. Fostering of good relations between staff and students, disabled students and their peers, and students and the Learning Support and development service was also considered.

Evidence used to make your assessment:
Monitoring statistics in respect of:
- Referrals by protected characteristic
- Point of referral
- Outcome of adjustments made
- Academic appeals
- Complaints related to learning related needs
- Student evaluation

Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:
The impacts are positive for disabled students and for those who have not yet disclosed a disability. It is designed to:
- Assure disabled students and those considering disclosing a disability of GSA's commitment to supporting their participation and removing barriers to their participation (preventing discrimination, providing equality of opportunity)
- Offer clear information to all students about the availability of support, irrespective of

whether they already have evidence of a disability (providing equality of opportunity)

- Set out transparently the purposes and processes that support the IRF system
- Highlight the respective responsibilities of students, Programme Leaders and Student Support within these processes (fostering good relations)

Negative impact was considered with reference to the potential for disabled students being perceived to be treated more favourably than other students. To mitigate against this, the policy defines disability and also invites any student who thinks they may require support in the learning and teaching environment to discuss issues with the Learning Support and Development team. It was also considered important to recognise that students may not share the same cultural understanding and/or awareness of disability related needs, and therefore information and access to support is not dependent on self-identification. The policy and processes also emphasise sensitivity, discretion and confidentiality to mitigate against any student concerns about stigma.

Summary of the actions you have taken or plan to take as a result:
(Please attach your action plan)

1   The learning needs assessment process and the effectiveness of the IRF process will continue to be monitored by the learning support and development service on an annual basis.

2   Continue to undertake regular reviews with students to ensure that individual needs are being met.

3   Support local monitoring within academic schools and where required resolution of any issues raised.

4   Ensure that the GSA complaints procedure is available to students where matters of policy implementation or application are felt to be an issue.

Summary of what you anticipate will change as a result of your actions and where / when these will be reported and reviewed:

It is anticipated that the policy will support consistency of practice across programmes and inform the development of inclusive learning and teaching practice for all students.

Issues arising in academic appeals are monitored at institutional level and with academic related assurance and enhancement issues are reported through the academic committee and programme monitoring and review processes.

State how these changes will contribute to the delivery of GSA's equality outcomes:

The policy will contribute most significantly to equality outcome 1, which relates to hidden disability and mental health issues. The IRF policy provides a concrete commitment on the part of the GSA to support those students who disclose hidden disabilities or mental health issues.

The outcome of your assessment:

No action – no potential adverse impact   ☐

Amendments or changes to remove barriers / promote positive impact ✓

Proceed with awareness of adverse impact   ☐

Sign-off, authorisation and publishing:

Review Lead

Name	Jill Hammond
Position	Head of Student Support and Development
Signature	Jill Hammond
Date	April 14

Executive Lead

Name	Craig Williamson
Position	Registrar
Signature	Craig Williamson
Date	May 2015

Equality Lead (Head of Student Support and Development)

Name	Jill Hammond
Signature	Jill Hammond
Date	May 2015