

**GSA SUMMARY REPORT OF EQUALITY CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY
IMPAC0054**

Date of Assessment:	6/4/17	
School/Department:	Learning and Teaching Team	
Lead member of staff:	Mark Charters & Maddy Sclater	
Location of impact assessment documentation (contact or web link):	Mark Charters and Maddy Sclater, Centrally located electronically on shared server. m.charters@gsa.ac.uk	
Area of decision making/title of policy, procedure or relevant practice:	Cross-School Electives (Stage 1 & 2)	
Please indicate if this is:	New:	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Existing/Reviewed:	X
	Revised/Updated:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Summary of how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):</p> <p>This Equality Impact Assessment considers the shared curriculum architecture which underpins the delivery of Stage 1 and Stage 2 postgraduate electives within the majority of GSA PGT programmes. The EIA also provides reflections upon collective approaches to curriculum design, delivery, and assessment and feedback practices.</p> <p>In undertaking this EIA we have specifically addressed equality and diversity requirements as set out within the 2010 Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty Scotland.</p> <p>Evidence used to make your assessment:</p> <p>Analysis of postgraduate student population data from 2012-13 to 2014-15 shows the following patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The age profile of students across the PGT Programmes has remained consistent over the period with the majority of students falling into the 25-39 (average 50.5% for the period) and 22-24 age groups (average 32.3% for the period), followed by the 40+ age group (average 13% for the period). This compares with sector wide data for PGT Students (HESA, 2015¹) Student domicile prior to arriving at GSA has shifted over three years. In 14-15 Home and EU students made up 67% of the cohort representing a 14 % increase over the period, whilst overseas students made up 33%, representing a drop of 14% over the period. This is closely in line with the UK sector where 70% of PGT Students are Home and EU students and 30% are overseas international (ECU, 2015² and HESA, 2015³). The reason for this shift is unclear 		

¹ HESA (2015) Student Introduction 2012/13: Student Population Data, Online resources available: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/component/content/article?id=3129> [Accessed 13/6/16]

² Equality challenge unit (2015) HE Statistics Report 2015: Part 2 Students, Equality Challenge unit, online resource available: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Equality-in-HE-statistical-report-2015-part-2-students.pdf> [Accessed 07/6/16]

³ HESA (2015) All students by level, mode, domicile and sex, HESA, online resource available: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/free-statistics> [Accessed 07/06/16]

and will require further examination. Student population data is reviewed as part of the PMAR Process and the L&T team will continue to monitor this shift however it should be noted that the L&T Team have no control over programme recruitment.

- Whilst the overall number of students on the PGT Programme has risen by 45% over the period, there has been a decline in the representation of BME students, falling from 63% in 12-13 to 26% in 13-14 and 24% in 14-15. The reason for this shift is unclear and will require further examination. Student population data is reviewed as part of the PMAR Process and the L&T team will continue to monitor this shift however it should be noted that the L&T Team have no control over programme recruitment.
- The student gender profile has remained consistent over this period, with female students representing an average of 60%, of the cohort. It is noted that data in respect of trans and transgender students is not currently captured. This is in line with the sector norms at PGT level (HESA, 2015⁴)
- The number of students who declared a disability has risen by 3% over the period and sits at 14%. This is well above the national reporting threshold of student's self disclosure of disability which sits at around 8% (HESA, 2015^{5,6}).

PGT Programme statistics are not disaggregated by elective and small elective numbers makes reporting at that level problematic in maintaining student anonymity. However, actions in respect of student feedback and programme monitoring will support the identification of any equality impact related trends within elective provision.

It is noted that no formal student feedback is currently available to inform this impact assessment and actions will be implemented to ensure that student feedback informs future review and development of PGT electives (see below).

Alongside this data the Learning and Teaching team have engaged with elective tutors in considering the Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) as part of their EIA process. The outcomes of course level EIAs have informed thinking in relation to this EIA as has engagement with the wider sector and research in considering curricular alignment, as detailed through the below analysis. Course EIA's indicated a number of central actions relating to the coordination of electives and processes in place to support student learning. As a result we have taken the decision to undertake a full EIA of all Stage 1 Cross-School Electives and thus present an updated assessment in this paper.

Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:

1 Potential for positive impact identified across the Cross-School Elective Provision

- Interdisciplinary Learning:** The Stage 1 electives introduce students to a range of research methods and approaches working within a common set of curriculum aims and intended learning outcomes. Stage 2 electives offer student the opportunity to learn in discipline areas outside of their core practice and programme or to engage in electives aligned with their core disciplinary needs. This provision offers students opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary learning to inform and shape their development as creative practitioners, whilst providing options for students to engage in more discipline and programme aligned

⁴ HESA (2015) All students by level, mode, domicile and sex, HESA, online resource available: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/free-statistics> [Accessed 07/06/16]

⁵ HESA (2015) Full-time students by subject, level, sex, age, disability and ethnicity, HESA, online resource available: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/free-statistics> [Accessed 07/06/16]

⁶ HESA (2015) Part-time students by subject, level, sex, age, disability and ethnicity, HESA, online resource available: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/free-statistics> [Accessed 07/06/16]

curriculum. Stage 1 Course Aims and ILOs are contextualised and delivered through differentiated pedagogic and discipline based lenses, informed by the research methodology being explored through each elective course. This framework enables students to undertake research placed within and linked to their own practice interests whilst simultaneously supporting all students in achieving the same learning aims and outcomes relating to research at postgraduate level. Stage 2 ILOs are constructed to support students' investigations into particular disciplinary content in relation to their creative practice.

Delivery across all Cross-School Electives therefore has the potential to advance equality and foster good relations regardless of protected characteristic by providing opportunities for students to explore their own and shared cultural differences, identity perspectives and specialisms of others whilst also supporting students who wish to study in areas more aligned to their core programme.

- ii) **Ethical Development:** the ethical development of students through their research is an implicit aspect of each Cross-School Elective course and is integral to a student's programme of study. The Stage 1 Electives therefore provide an opportunity to explore equality and diversity within the curriculum through consideration of research ethics in the design and delivery of research. This has the potential to deliver the three needs of the PSED by allowing students to explore issues related to background and identity and enabling them to consider how their practice may impact upon the wider community and upon those who engage with their research as subjects, readers and contributors.

It is identified that there is potential to enhance this positive impact through the inclusion of an explicit requirement to cover ethics within the overarching Aims and Outcomes of Stage 1 electives and that this will form part of teaching, learning and assessment.

- iii) **Equality of Access:** Elective choices are promoted at induction and are open to all PGT students. Allocation of places is based on a preference system with students submitting three elective choice preferences by a common deadline. Places are then allocated randomly according to student preference until classes are full. This ensures the allocation system is fair and free from bias or intervention, providing the potential to foster good relations in interdisciplinary class groups. Where a student is not able to study on one of their preferred elective they are offered an alternative elective choice. If the student is then not satisfied with this resolution they are advised to raise a student complaint through the Student Complaints Process.

- iv) **Consistent and Fair Assessment and Feedback Practices:** The PGT Cross-School Electives Leader is involved in assessment and moderation of all elective courses ensuring consistency and parity, providing positive impact for all protected characteristic groups. Assessment processes are also centrally supported by the Learning and Teaching Team through the provision of a pre-exam board moderation meeting which allows for staff to engage across the elective range with assessment submissions providing CPD for assessment practices in different modes of assessment, ensuring inclusive practice and enhancing and building on staff's engagement with the grading scheme across the elective provision.

- v) **Equality and Diversity Considerations in Approval Process:** All elective courses are established through interaction with the Senior Academic Fellow in digital Learning who also acts as lead for the Elective offer. As such all electives in their development stages receive scrutiny and support from the Learning and Teaching Team in relation to the provision of equality and diversity. This support will be ongoing as we work through the PGT Credit

Reform Process for Elective Courses particularly at stage 2.

2 Potential for negative impact identified across the Cross-School Elective Provision

Although every effort is made to ensure that the needs of all students, regardless of protected characteristic, are met, the following areas have been identified in relation to the potential for negative equality impact:

- i) **Accessible Spaces:** Although the needs of students who disclose an access related disability are accommodated on an individual level in order to ensure they are not disadvantaged, it is recognised that there is currently no systematic or anticipatory process for allocation of learning and teaching spaces that effectively meet the accessibility needs of elective cohorts. This could potentially result in a situation where need could not be met.
- ii) **Reasonable Adjustment:** Through the EIA process it became apparent that a systematic approach is required to ensuring that reasonable adjustments are implemented for students across the electives. As of 2016/17 the Learning and Teaching Team will implement a system which effectively informs elective tutors of the reasonable adjustments to be made within their curriculum design, delivery and assessment. This will be further supported through the Elective tutors Forum by addressing equality, inclusive learning and anticipatory adjustments in the context of the elective framework and the outcomes of this EIA.
- iii) **Collecting and Responding to Student Feedback:** As noted under **Evidence** above, there is no formal student feedback available to inform this impact assessment. The absence of the student voice has potential to result in negative impact for protected characteristic groups where student need and trends related to student experience are not captured. This will be addressed from 16-17 through election of student representatives who will feed into SSCC and the implementation of a formal and systematic survey of PGT cohorts on completion of Stage 1 and Stage 2 in relation to coordination, support, design, delivery and assessment of elective courses. These two approaches will then inform evaluative activity at the end of each academic session.
- iv) **Supporting Students for whom English is their Second Language:** Course level EIA's have identified challenges for some overseas students relative to the requirements of discourse and academic writing in the context of electives. It is recognised that there is potential for negative equality impact for some PGT students from different cultural backgrounds, for whom English is a second language. Due to the fact that the nature of the issues and how these might be resolved have not been explored it is not known whether this is an issue for students relative to electives or more generally at programme level. This will therefore be explored in consultation with Postgraduate Programme Leaders and the Elective Course Tutors Forum in academic session 16/17.
- v) **Technology Enhanced Learning:** In reviewing approaches to teaching methods and delivery it is apparent that there is differentiated practice in the use of technology enhanced learning across the elective provision. In some instances non engagement with technology enhanced learning is positioned as part of curriculum design and delivery in order to support students engagement however in other areas non engagement is not positioned. As part of our approach to supporting elective tutors and enhance the student experience we are therefore in the process of updating tutor guidance to support better engagement with technology to support their students and will identify a series of minimum expectations.

Summary of the actions you have taken or plan to take as a result:

No	Action	Equality Impact	Lead	Deadline
1	As part of the planned review of the credit structure for PGT courses and redevelopment of the Elective offer, Aims and ILOS for electives will be reviewed to ensure ethical development is a core element of Stage 1 electives.	Advancing equality and fostering good relations through embedding equality and diversity consideration within all research methodologies	Head of Learning and Teaching & Senior Academic Fellow in Digital Learning	September 2019 – to be actioned as part of PGT Review
2	Implement systems for room allocation and timetabling that can effectively meet accessibility needs, where these are identified or disclosed.	Mitigate potential negative impacts for some disabled students	Senior Academic Fellow in Digital Learning, Administrative Office L&T	Completed , to be monitored annually
3	Develop a process for sharing information pertaining to reasonable adjustment with elective tutors.	Mitigate negative impact and advance quality through the development of an anticipatory approach to meeting the needs of disabled people	Academic Development Coordinator, Administrative Office L&T	Completed
4	Engage the Elective Tutors Forum in developmental discussion relative to the outcomes of this EIA and the expectation of inclusive curriculum and assessment design	Address the 3 needs of the PSED, providing positive equality impact for students across all protected characteristic groups	Senior Academic fellow in Digital Learning	Completed
5	Establish an elective feedback forum to consider with students effective ways of gaining student feedback, report back actions to students through Programme level SSCC's and Boards of Study.	Advance equality and foster good relations through involvement of students	Academic Development Coordinator, Administrative Office L&T	Completed , to be monitored at the end of each term
6	Instigate a bi-annual survey of elective provision to students and report back to students on actions taken through Programme level SSCC's and Boards of Study.	As above	Academic Development Coordinator, Administrative Office L&T	June 2017, to be monitored at the end of each term
7	Explore tutors experiences of supporting overseas / second language students and identify appropriate actions to address emerging issues following review and analysis of information gathered.	Advance equality, foster good relations and meet the needs of students with different cultural and educational experiences within	Senior Academic Fellow in Digital Learning	Completed , L&T Identified core academic development provision

		Cross-School Electives		
8	Continue to monitor student population data and any emerging trends in the student profile.	Better understand the diversity of the PGT student population and identify any potential negative impacts from curricular of teaching and assessment practices.		Annually
9	Review tutor guidance and update sections relating to technology enhanced learning to encourage proactive engagement with available technologies.	Enhanced student engagement with learning opportunities, Enhance opportunities for catch up, preparation and revision	Senior Academic fellow in Digital Learning and Academic Development Coordinator	September 2017
10	Academic development support in new elective development	Staff are supported to consider equality and diversity during development of new elective courses.	Senior Academic fellow in Digital Learning and Academic Development Coordinator	Ongoing

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 actions identified above will enhance the student experience and take into consideration more fully the opportunities for curriculum to support the delivery of the three needs of the PSED. Actions will support the delivery of an anticipatory approach to advancing equality for students from protected characteristic groups, for example those with a disability or from different cultural backgrounds through the development of systems, practice and student engagement.

Actions identified will be considered annually as part of evaluative activity relating to PGT elective coordination and delivery and will be reported on at the Postgraduate Programme Leaders and Elective Course Tutors Forum in order to ensure transparency and accountability throughout the process.

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

The actions highlighted above will contribute to the delivery of [GSA equality outcomes](#) in a number of ways identified below:

Equality Outcome 2: An inclusive and accessible environment in which the diverse needs of students are systematically anticipated and provided for.

Actions above will specifically address the experience of disabled students by implementing effective processes for the sharing of information relating to need and supporting students through direct reasonable adjustment.

Tutors on the elective programme and those involved in this EIA cover a range of roles both full time and fractional. The developments to be taken forward as a result of this EIA will support input from and discussions with all tutors that will provide a process for further developing their understanding of equality and diversity within GSA and its impact upon the student experience.

Actions relate specifically to this outcome by supporting opportunities to explore and embed consideration of equality within the curriculum through design and delivery, providing opportunities to both advance equality and foster good relations across all protected characteristic groups in relation to students experience on the programme and in respect of the development of students' own practice within and beyond the Programme.

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	Mark Charters, Maddy Sclater
Position	Academic Development Coordinator, Senior Academic Fellow in Digital Learning
Signature	Mark Charters & Maddy Sclater
Date	21/8/17

Executive Lead

Name	Vicky Gunn
Position	Head of Learning and Teaching
Signature	Vicky Gunn
Date	21/8/17

Equality Lead (Head of Student Support and Development)

Signature	Jill Hammond
Date	21/08/17

Student population data for all PGT Programmes 2012-13 to 2014-15

Age

	19-20	21	22-24	25-39	40+	TOTAL
2014/15	2	10	102	161	43	318
2013/14		9	91	141	36	277
2012/13		12	71	109	27	219

	19-20	21	22-24	25-39	40+	TOTAL
2014/15	1%	3%	32%	51%	14%	100%
2013/14	0%	3%	33%	51%	13%	100%
2012/13	0%	5%	32%	50%	12%	100%

Gender Identity

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
2014/15	126	192	318
2013/14	104	173	277
2012/13	92	127	219

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
2014/15	40%	60%	100%
2013/14	38%	62%	100%
2012/13	42%	58%	100%

Domicile

	HOME/EU	Overseas	TOTAL
2014/15	213	105	318
2013/14	176	101	277
2012/13	115	104	219

	HOME/EU	Overseas	TOTAL
2014/15	67%	33%	100%
2013/14	64%	36%	100%
2012/13	53%	47%	100%

Declared Disability

	NOT DISABLED	DISABLED	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
2014/15	274	44	0	318
2013/14	233	44	0	277
2012/13	196	23	0	219

	NOT DISABLED	DISABLED	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
2014/15	86%	14%	0%	100%
2013/14	84%	16%	0%	100%
2012/13	89%	11%	0%	100%

Declared Disability by Category

	No known disability	Two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions	A specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia	A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy	A mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above	TOTAL
2014/15	274	10	0	23	1	6	2	1	0	1	318
2013/14	233	10	1	18	1	11	1	1	0	1	277
2012/13	196	5	0	11	1	5	0	0	0	1	219

Ethnicity

	White	White - Scottish	Irish Traveller	Gypsy or Traveller	Other White background	Black or Black British - Caribbean	Black or Black British - African	Other Black background	Asian or Asian British - Indian	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	Chinese	Other Asian background	Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Mixed - White and Asian	Other mixed background	Arab	Other ethnic background	Not known	Information refused	TOTAL	
2014/15	140	0	62	0	0	6	1	1	0	17	2	2	41	15	0	0	3	9	1	2	4	12	318
2013/14	106	44	3	0	0	5	0	1	0	16	0	0	29	21	0	1	2	2	0	2	35	10	277
2012/13	132	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	16	1	0	31	18	0	0	1	1	1	3	5	6	219