

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

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)	Student Engagement and Representation Policy
<b>New or reviewed</b>	New
<b>Owner/Review Lead and role</b>	Rory O'Neill, Enhancement and Student Partnership Co-ordinator
<b>Department or School</b>	Learning and Teaching Team
<b>Date of assessment</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> March 2024

**1. Purpose of policy / practice / procedure / project being assessed – brief description**

In recent years, significant work has been undertaken to strengthen and enhance student engagement and representation on committees and groups at GSA. This ambition is also articulated in our Student Partnership Agreement between the GSA Students' Association and the School, to promote and facilitate a culture of partnership working with our students. Identifying a gap in our policies, in 2022/23, the Learning and Teaching Team and GSA Students' Association embarked upon a project to develop a Student Engagement Policy, recognising a need to bring clarity and consistency of practice in student engagement and representation across the academic schools of GSA.

In 2022/23, a consultation process to scope and develop the policy was launched, informed by the Student Partnership Group and undertaken with students and staff across the academic Schools and professional support departments. Consultation has included individual student and staff feedback sessions, meetings with Lead

Representatives, workshops with representatives of both staff and students at the Student Partnership Group, GSA Learning and Teaching Conference, and an analysis of previous years' Student Rep Surveys.

Attached to the policy is an enhancement project titled 'Diverse Student Voices' where we seek to explore the multifaceted aspects of student's learning experiences, how students share their voices both within and out with the traditional representative structures and identify enhancements to practice in cultivating a culture where all students' voices can be heard, represented and empowered.

**2. Evidence used when undertaking this assessment** – this can comprise of internal and external reports, survey data, etc

The Student Partnership Agreement establishes an initial set of success indicators by which we will measure the impact of our work to promote partnership and ensure a strong and vibrant student voice in our learning, teaching and student experience work. As part of these, we have set the ambition that the diversity of our student representatives be comparable with the diversity of our student body in order that our student voice roles and structures capture the full spectrum of experiences of all our students. As such we have committed to monitoring the diversity of our student representatives through demographic data compared to annual [GSA student equality monitoring](#) as a benchmark. This annual monitoring exercise has been used to inform the EqIA of this policy in order to determine potential negative and positive equality impacts. In addition, discussions with key stakeholders and agencies has informed this review alongside engagement with key academic literature.

Due to the ratio of our reps to cohort size it is not possible to provide a like for like comparison by population. However, in 2021/22 and 2022/23 it was clear within the data set that international students and students whose ethnicity is reported within the BAME category appear to be under-represented within our student representative pool.

In response to these trends the L&T Team have undertaken a project exploring how we can best capture the diversity of students' voices which will report in summer 2024. Recommendations from this project will be taken forward in session 2024/25.

**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>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
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<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. It is also known that in 2022/23, there was 76.5% of the student population aged under 25.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. It is also known that in 2022/23, 20.8% of all GSA students had disclosed a disability.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Support mechanisms are already available to students in these roles, such as assistive technologies for engaging in student feedback mechanisms and further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b></p>	<p><b>Neutral impact</b></p>

	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral impact
<b>Gender reassignment</b> (covers Trans identities)	<p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. In 2022/23, 67.6% of students declared that their gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth, 3.3% disclosed that their gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth, and 29.1% did not provide any information.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. Data on marriage and civil partnership is also not included in the Student Equality Monitoring Report, as marriage and civil partnership are protected by the Equality Act 2010 only in employment context, which is not applicable to students.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b></p>	<p><b>Neutral impact</b></p>

	<p>role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. Data relating to student pregnancy and maternity is not included in order to preserve anonymity given relatively small numbers.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<b>Race</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. In 22/23, 21.1% of undergraduate students and 56.7% of postgraduate students identified as coming from a minority ethnic background.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational</p>		

	<p>role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Through analysing the student data it's been noted that BAME students are underrepresented and the Policy seeks to address this issue through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. In 2022/23 68.3% of all GSA students disclosed having no religion, 13.5% as Christian (all denominations), 5.8% as Other Major Religions and Beliefs (including Spiritual), 3.8% as Any Other Religion or Belief, 8.6% as Prefer not to say/Information not provided.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. It is also known that in 2022/23, 31.6% of all GSA students identified as 'Male', 66.5% identified as 'Female', 1.3% identified as 'Other' and for 0.7% there was no information available or they preferred not to say.</p>		

	<p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
	<p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation. In it know that in 2022/23, 14.5% of students identified as Bisexual, 5.7% as Lesbian or Gay, 56.4% as Heterosexual, 2.7% as Other, and 20.7% as Prefer not to say/Information not provided.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		

	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>
<b>Impact on other groups</b> (e.g. Care Experienced; Carers; Military Veterans; Low Socioeconomic Status (SES); Asylum Seekers; British Sign Language Users, etc)	<p>The Policy states that School Officers will be remunerated for their role thus having a positive impact on students with caring responsibilities or with low socioeconomic status.</p> <p>The policy aims to provide the opportunity for all students regardless of background to participate in student engagement and representation.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion a student representative may disengage from their role leading to issues with communication and quoracy. In these instances, the appropriate member of academic staff responsible for that representational role should contact the student about their engagement and offer support.</p> <p>Further guidance for students and staff to support the implementation of the policy is being developed through the Diverse Student Voices project.</p>		
<b>4. How has the identified negative impact been mitigated?</b> – please provide details of undertaken actions broken down by protected characteristic			
<p>The policy’s aim is to enable opportunity for all students, regardless of their background to engage in the student voice eco-system at the Glasgow School of Art. This includes being a democratically elected class representative, providing feedback to the class representative or applying to be a School Officer, who are appointed based on skills and experience relevant to the collecting of feedback from students and are employed members of staff. Monitoring of the diversity of our student representatives will continue within our SPA implementation and associated actions from the Diverse Student Voices project will aim to enhance representation across the GSA. In order to ensure effective implementation of the policy and embedding of core principles of EDI in the recruitment, development and support of student representatives we also plan to offer a range of training and guidance for staff and students.</p> <p>In constructing this EqIA we also recognise that with any policy development or enhancement intervention there is always the risk of unanticipated negative equality impacts. As such the policy will be reviewed by the Student Partnership Group one year after operation in autumn 2025.</p>			
<b>5. Any outstanding mitigation (where applicable)</b> – please provide a concise action plan with action owner and a timescale for completion			



<b>Action</b>	<b>Equality Impact</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Time frame</b>
Produce clear and accessible student and staff guidance to Student Voice that is responsive to the policy.	Support students and staff to engage with and implement the new policy and clarify key aspects of the policy, such as principles and advertising the new roles of School Officers.	Enhancement and Student Partnership Co-ordinator and GSASA	September 2024

<p>Develop inductions for student reps and staff to support engagement with and implementation of the student engagement policy for academic session 2024/5</p>	<p>Support both student reps and staff to engage with, and implement the new policy and clarify key aspects of the policy, such as roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Enhancement and Student Partnership Co-ordinator and GSASA</p>	<p>July 2024</p>
<p>One year on Evaluation</p>	<p>Assess initial impacts of the student engagement and representation policy.</p>	<p>Enhancement and Student Partnership Co-ordinator, GSASA and Head of Learning and Teaching</p>	<p>Reporting to SPG in February 2026</p>
<p><b>6. How does the outcome of this assessment and the actions undertaken support GSA's <a href="#">2021 - 2025 Equality Outcomes</a></b></p>			

**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:**

- The policy places emphasis on programme or local enhancement routed in constructive feedback between students and staff with establishing clear roles and responsibilities for closing the feedback loop and placing student feedback at the heart of conversation at the Student Staff Consultative Committee.

**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:**

- The policy enables the opportunity for students to discuss their physical and digital environment with staff related to their programme and the opportunity for professional support departments to attend where applicable.

**EQUALITY OUTCOME 3: Actively build and support a staff population which is more reflective of the Scottish population and encourage a diverse student body:**

- In developing a streamlined, simpler and more local student representative system, the policy enables a more attractive space for students and staff to convene and discuss enhancements to the student learning experience; ultimately making GSA a more attractive place for a diverse student body and a staff population reflective of the Scottish population.

**EQUALITY OUTCOME 4 – A fair pay and career progression framework which underpins equality of opportunity for all, actively works towards reducing the gender pay gap and addresses occupational segregation.**

- As outlined in section 4, the policy introduces the School Officer to appoint, induct and support students in roles that facilitate the gathering of feedback from the student body which is aligned to the Student Consultant Grade 3 roles and responsibilities.

**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?

The introduction of the Student Engagement and Representation policy ensures clear and transparent expectations, processes and structures which provide students an active and meaningful voice in their educational journey within the GSA. In developing the policy we have aimed to ensure that barriers to engagement and providing feedback to inform that journey are mitigated, and that moving forward with the implementation of the policy we actively work to ensure the diversity of our students have opportunities to feedback on their experience and inform future enhancement.

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

Following approval the Student Partnership Group will act as the oversight body for the implementation of the policy and its one year on evaluation, receiving update on how training and guidance in relation to the policy supports the changes in practice and monitoring the effectiveness of the approach through workshops with members.

Feedback will be shared with Education Committee as the reporting body for the Student Partnership Group.

**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

**February 2026**

**Signed off by Owner/Review Lead** Rory O’Neill, Enhancement and Student Partnership Coordinator

13/05/24

**Signed off by Executive Lead** Rachel Dickson, Deputy Director Academic

13/05/24

**Signed off by Equality Lead** Ceit Mackintosh, Equality Officer

13/05/24

**Signed off by Education Committee** Rachel Dickson, Deputy Director Academic [convenor]

13/05/24