



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 EqlA 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.

Name of Equality Impact Assessment (E.g. Area of decision making/title of policy, procedure, programme or relevant practice)	External Examiner Policy
New or reviewed	Reviewed (using new template)
Owner/Review Lead and role	Dr Jennifer Norris, Senior Policy Officer
Department or School	Academic Quality Office
Date of assessment	August 2026

1. Purpose of policy/practice/procedure/project being assessed – brief description
The purpose of the External Examiner Policy is to ensure that independent external experts support the maintenance and enhancement of academic standards and quality across taught programmes. As a key part of GSA's quality assurance mechanisms, External Examiners provide objective judgment on whether assessments are rigorous, fair, and aligned with learning outcomes, and whether student achievement is comparable to other UK institutions. The policy sets out how External Examiners are appointed, outlines the requirements of the role, and details operational procedures underpinning the process of external examining.

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

External Examiner policy (publicly available on GSA Documents)
 External Examiner nomination form (EE1)
 Change to appointment of External Examiner form (EE2)
 External Examiner handbook (publicly available on GSA Documents)
 External Examiner report form (published in the External Examiner policy)
 Internal records of external examiner appointments, reports, and visits, including feedback from external examiners and from Schools
 QAA [External Examining Principles](#) and associated guidance documents
 Previous Equality Impact Assessment of the External Examiner policy and process (2017)

3. Type of protected characteristic or wider equality area

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral impact
Age	As per section 1.9 of the Policy, External Examiners are required to have a certain amount of education, experience, and professional standing, which makes the role particularly open to older individuals. The External Examiner policy also requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment.	As per section 1.9, External Examiners are required to have a certain amount of education, experience, and professional standing, which generally means that younger individuals are less likely to be considered for or appointed to the role.	

	The policy outlines a programme of mentoring (in section 1.22) for any new External Examiners who have not previously served as External Examiners at another institution, which can support younger individuals in developing experience. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the assessment of students) throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report.		
Disability	The External Examiner policy requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the assessment of students)	In line with section 5.2 and 5.3, in-person campus visits and travel to Glasgow are normally required as part of the external examining process – GSA’s historic buildings and urban location can be challenging to access for those with mobility-related disabilities, and some disabilities may make long-distance or even local travel within Glasgow difficult.	

	throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report. Materials are provided to External Examiners in electronic format, which increases the accessibility of documentation for individuals with reading-related disabilities (enabling use of screen-readers and text-to-speech tools, for example). Schools, in making arrangements for individual External Examiner visits, can provide accessible venues (e.g. ground-floor rooms) as required. This is covered in more detail in the Health & Safety Visitor Policy.	The examination of some forms of student assessment materials may present difficulties for individuals with different types of disabilities (e.g. visual or hearing impairments, dyslexia). The requirement for an External Examiner to submit a written report may impact individuals with disabilities such as dyslexia.	
Gender reassignment (covers Trans identities)	The External Examiner policy requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the		

	assessment of students) throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report. Gender-neutral toilet facilities are available across the GSA campus.		
Marriage and civil partnership			The policy has no impacts directly associated with marriage or civil partnership status.
Pregnancy and maternity	Quiet spaces, and other spaces suitable for breastfeeding, are available across the GSA campus, and Schools are encouraged to signpost this in the process of making arrangements for External Examiner visits. can signpost their availability.	The policy specifies 4-year terms of appointment for External Examiners, and does not make explicit provision for interruption/continuity/extension/renewal in the case of parental leave, which could disadvantage expectant or new parents.	
Race	The External Examiner policy requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that	External Examiners are required to have a certain amount of education, experience, and professional standing. In a societal context of historic underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minority groups in higher education and the arts, these	

	External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the assessment of students) throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report.	requirements could nevertheless constitute a barrier to individuals from racial or ethnic minority backgrounds.	
Religion and belief	The External Examiner policy requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the assessment of students) throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report. Quiet spaces (e.g. suitable for prayer) are available across the GSA campus, and Schools are encouraged to signpost this in the process of making arrangements for External Examiner visits.	In line with sections 5 and 6 of the policy, in-person campus visits and travel to Glasgow are required as part of the external examining process; these dates are at fixed points in the calendar. For individuals of some faiths or religions, these visits at set dates could conflict with periods of religious observance, e.g. Shavuot for undergraduate assessment & exam boards in late May or Rosh Hashanah in early September for PGT exam boards, or Ramadan/Eid (which does not have a fixed date in the Gregorian calendar and moves throughout the year).	

Sex	The External Examiner policy requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the assessment of students) throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report.		
Sexual orientation	The External Examiner policy requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the assessment of students) throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report.		

Impact on other groups (e.g. Care Experienced; Carers; Military Veterans; Low Socioeconomic Status (SES); Asylum Seekers; British Sign Language Users, etc)	The External Examiner policy requires (in Section 1.7) that a diverse pool of candidates is considered for each External Examiner appointment. The External Examiner policy requires (in section 7.3) that External Examiners should consider matters of equality and diversity (as relevant to the assessment of students) throughout the process of preparing their Annual Report.	As per section 1.9 of the policy, External Examiners are required to have a certain amount of education, experience, and professional standing, which generally means that individuals from a low socioeconomic status (SES) are less likely to be in a position to take up the role due to an accumulation of disadvantages. Section 1.9 of the policy requires External Examiners to be fluent in English (as the working language of GSA), which could be a disadvantage to users of BSL, individuals with language-related disabilities, or individuals whose first language is not English. External Examiners are required to visit Glasgow and the GSA campus on an annual basis, with no provision made for infant or childcare during an examiner's visit, which could disadvantage parents (and especially single parents and/or parents of	
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		children with disabilities) in the role. Dates are provided many months in advance to facilitate securing childcare provision.	
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4. How has the identified negative impact been mitigated? – please provide details of undertaken actions broken down by protected characteristic

Age: To mitigate potential discrimination on grounds of age, a programme of mentoring is provided for all individuals new to external examining.

Disability: In making arrangements for External Examiners' visits to Glasgow, Schools proactively consider travel and accessibility requirements of each individual.

Documentation from the Academic Quality Office and from Schools is provided electronically, in accessible Word and PDF formats. GSA's virtual learning environment (Canvas) includes extensive accessibility tools for all users.

Other groups: to support parents and others with caring responsibilities, External Examiner events are not held outside of normal working hours.

All categories: Schools are required to consider a diverse pool of candidates for each External Examiner appointment; this is undertaken by Programme Leaders and the relevant School Board of Studies.

All External Examiners are required to consider matters of equality and diversity (in relation to the assessment of students) in preparing their Annual Reports.

The Academic Quality Office, through the administration of the External Examiner process and routine reviews of policy and process (such as Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting, and reporting to Education Committee and Academic Council), will continue to monitor the impact of the policy and actions.

Equality Monitoring Data will continue to be collected by HR.

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
Amend section 1.15 Term of Office to specify potential arrangements for External Examiners whose tenure may be interrupted by a period of parental leave or disability-related leave.	By creating clear structure and guidelines for these scenarios, this will ensure that External Examiners who are otherwise able to fulfil the requirements of the role are not disadvantaged by periods of maternity/paternity or disability-related leave during their tenure.	Academic Quality Office/Senior Policy Officer	Policy update completed by end of Semester 2 of academic session 2026/27
Audit all documentation provided to External Examiners by AQO for accessibility, using accessibility-checking tools.	By assessing all of the documentation provided by AQO against accessibility standards, this will ensure that External Examiners with disabilities or access needs such as screen-readers are not disadvantaged by key aspects of the External Examining process.	Academic Quality Office/Senior Policy Officer	Audit completed by end of Semester 1 of academic session 2026/27 Updated documentation to be re-issued in Semester 2 of academic session 2026/27 (in alignment with contact to Schools & External Examiners)
Ensure that Schools proactively signpost the availability of adjustments and accessible facilities (quiet spaces, prayer rooms, gender-neutral toilets, etc.) as part of the standard	By encouraging proactive signposting of accessible facilities, the burden on disadvantaged individuals to ask for support will be reduced; more individuals may also receive adjustments.	Academic Quality Office/Senior Policy Officer	Communications and attendance at ASM Forum in Semester 2 of 2026/27.

process for arranging External Examiner visits.			
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6. How does the outcome of this assessment and the actions undertaken support the [16 National Equality Outcomes \(NEOs\)](#)?

Although the External Examiner policy and process are primarily staff-focused and therefore do not directly align with the primarily student-focused National Equality Outcomes, the policy and process both support a number of NEOs.

By requiring Schools to consider diverse candidate pools for each External Examiner appointment, the External Examiner policy supports the National Equality Outcomes relating to staff diversity and representation:

'Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on college Boards and university Courts.'

'Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of teaching and non-teaching staff to align with student representation in the sector.'

By requiring External Examiners to consider and comment on diversity and inclusion in the preparation of their Annual Reports, the External Examiner policy and process support the National Equality Outcomes relating to diverse and anti-racist curricula, as well as to reasonable adjustments for disabled students.

7. How does the outcome of this assessment and the actions undertaken support the three main duties the Glasgow School of Art has under [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (underpinned by the [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?**

This Equality Impact Assessment supports GSA's Public Sector Equality Duty by identifying and addressing potential barriers within the External Examiner process for people with protected characteristics.

The assessment also helps eliminate discrimination by recognising areas where disadvantage may arise, such as disability-related leave and parental leave, and committing to action in the form of policy improvements to mitigate these potential disadvantages.

The policy promotes equality of opportunity through requirements to consider diverse candidate pools, to provide mentoring for new External Examiners, and to make information and examiner visits as accessible as possible.

By requiring External Examiners to consider equality and diversity in their annual reports, the policy further supports inclusive practice and helps foster good relations across the GSA community.

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

Review and audit of all External Examiner-related documentation for accessibility will be undertaken in Semester 1 of 2026/27, with refreshed documents re-published and circulated to Schools and External Examiners in Semester 2 of 2026/27.

Amendment of the policy to incorporate provisions pertaining to interruptions due to parental leave and disability-related leave: progression during academic session 2026/27, following consultation with HR, School representatives (Academic Support Managers and Programme Leaders), and External Examiners.

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

August 2029 – three years

Signed off by Owner/Review Lead (name and role)	Dr Jennifer Norris, Senior Policy Officer (Academic Quality Office), 25 August 2026
Signed off by Executive Lead (name and role)	Professor Rachel Dickson, Deputy Director and Vice Principal Academic, 7 September 2026
Signed off by Equality Lead	Ceit Mackintosh, Equality Officer, 31/08/2026