

Equality Impact Assessment

Document:	Changes to Student Funding Service
Executive Summary:	<p>This assessment looks at the potential impact of proposed changes to how students access advice and support from the Student Funding Team.</p> <p>The main change involves use of the online contact us function as the primary method of communication about funding. Telephone and face-to-face will be used only as required and as the exception.</p> <p>The impact of any changes made will be reviewed using student feedback.</p> <p>Although negative impacts have been identified for some protected characteristic groups, it is recognised that the use of online contact will be a more accessible option for most individuals because students will be able to make initial contact with the funding team at any point.</p>

By law we must meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 including the Public Sector Equality Duty. Please give due regard to the following when completing an EIA;

- 1: Does the policy/practice eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?
- 2: Does the policy/practice promote equality of opportunity?
- 3: Does the policy/practice promote good relations?

Protected Characteristic	<p>Commentary</p> <p><i>For each protected characteristic provide a commentary of impact. If a negative impact occurs, consider the following;</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Change the policy so impact is no longer negative</i> 2. <i>Justify why it has to be done e.g. health and safety legislation</i> 3. <i>Consider how you are going to mitigate the impact</i>
Age <i>Someone belonging to a particular age, or range of ages</i>	<p>Positive impact for under 25s who prefer to engage online.</p> <p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p> <p>Negative impact - Student Association feedback suggests that some mature students would benefit from additional IT support in the first few weeks of college.</p>

	<p>Mitigation - e.g. 1-1 support with Achievement Coach/funding team, written guidance, comms through course tutors?</p>
<p>Care Experienced <i>Someone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked after background at any stage in their life. This includes adopted children who were previous looked-after.</i></p>	<p>Potential negative impact (are care experienced people less likely to have access to device and internet?) There is increased capacity to support with additional devices and Wi-Fi connectivity. Care experienced students benefits from dedicated support, which will mean that provided students disclose any issues – they will be picked up promptly. Written guidance will inform students that this support is available if they disclose that they are care experienced to the student advice service.</p> <p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>

<p>Marriage/Civil Partnership <i>Married couples and civil partnership should be treated the same on a wide range of matters</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>
<p>Race <i>Refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation A <i>persons sexual and/or romantic attraction to other people, or lack thereof</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>

<p>Disability <i>A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities</i></p>	<p>Negative impact on those whose disability reduces their ability to use email as a primary form of communication. This can be mitigated by arranging telephone or face-to-face (digital) appointments where required. Additional support for this group may also be available through the student support service. Written advice will signpost students to this additional support.</p> <p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p> <p>Positive Impact – An online system may encourage more requests for funding support from students who would ordinarily avoid face-to-face conversations due to underlying anxieties and associated mental health issues.</p>
<p>Gender identity/reassignment <i>The process of transitioning from one gender to another (can include changing names, pronouns, dressing differently, medical intervention and living in their self-identified gender)</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>
<p>Pregnancy/maternity <i>Refers to being pregnant and the period after birth (linked to maternity leave in the employment context)</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>
<p>Religion or Belief <i>Religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief (atheism)</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>
<p>Sex <i>Gender assigned at birth</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>

Student Carer <i>Providing unpaid care to a family member or friend who could not cope without their support.</i>	Positive impact. Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.
Employment or Trade Union Membership	Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.
Past Criminal Convictions	Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.
Poverty or Deprivation	<p>Negative impact. Those from the most deprived groups are less likely to have access to devices and internet connections in order to contact the service. This could be mitigated by asking this group to contact student services for support. Additional support is in place for students to access college laptops and improved wifi access.</p> <p>Positive Impact - Contact can be made with Student Funding Team 24 hours a day using the online function rather than within office hours so can be done to fit with individual's needs.</p>

Owner:	C Chapman	
Date initiated:	6 th August 2020	
Consultation:	Equalities Officer	
Signature (Owner)		
Signature (Equalities Officer)	Amy Brydon	26/01/21