

## Equality Impact Assessment Screening

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Academic Secretariat
<b>POLICY BEING SCREENED</b>	Student Maternity/Paternity Policy and Guidelines

Could the policy have an adverse impact on equality in relation to:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender or Gender Re-assignment
- Marriage or Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

No.

Does this policy provide opportunities to make a positive impact on equality? Please detail.

The policy provides advice and guidance to Academy students who become pregnant during their studies, or whose partner becomes pregnant, and to those who have recently become parents (e.g. through adoption), on issues related to study, health and safety, and finance.

The policy makes specific reference to pregnancy and maternity being 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010 and that it is unlawful to discriminate, or treat students unfavourably because of their pregnancy, or because they have given birth recently, are breastfeeding or on maternity leave.

The policy states that 'a written Maternity Leave Study Support Plan should be drawn up by tutors, following discussion with a student, detailing study arrangements required during the student's pregnancy, and the anticipated timescale for a return to study'.

The policy also outlines the process for prospective students who notify the Academy that they are pregnant prior to starting a course, stating that the student 'should be given the opportunity to discuss this with relevant staff so that an informed decision can be made as to whether to start or defer studies'. This decision will include the consideration of flexible study arrangements.

The policy states that 'staff must ensure that students are not treated less favourably than any other student on the basis of their circumstances, and that flexibility should be shown where possible to ensure continued learning is facilitated; a series of possible support options are detailed in the policy. Student requests for flexible arrangements should not be refused solely based on being too costly to implement, although the cost will be considered when assessing the overall 'reasonableness' of a request. If a request is refused the reasons for the refusal will be provided in writing to the student.

The policy makes it clear that, where additional arrangements are agreed for a student who has already been granted additional arrangements (e.g. on the grounds of disability), these should be recorded separately in order that it is clear which arrangements relate to which particular circumstance. In some individual circumstances it may, however, be important to consider how pregnancy arrangements overlap and complement existing adjustments e.g. disability.

What evidence has been considered?

Considerable research was undertaken in the drafting of the policy in terms of best practice within the sector.

Historical evidence was gathered from the Academy's Registry in terms of how many students this is likely to affect on an annual basis.

The Policy was reviewed, and approved, by the Academy's Equality and Diversity Committee on 11 October 2016.

**Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required?** No.

**Date:** 13 April 2017