

ULSTER UNIVERSITY POLICY SCREENING PRO-FORMA

Information about the policy

Note: 'Policy' includes any strategy, policy (proposed/amended/existing) or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten.

Name of the policy

Fitness to Study Policy

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

New

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The purpose of this policy is to provide a coordinated response by academic and professional services staff in circumstances where a student's mental or emotional wellbeing, physical health or behaviour is causing significant concern for the welfare of the student, other students and/or staff.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

Disabled students

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Director of Campus Life initiated the policy. The Disability Service Manager wrote the policy.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Director of Campus Life owns the policy. The respective Course Directors implement the policy.

Part 1

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? (Please select one answer)

Yes

No

If yes, are they

Financial. Tuition fees and accommodation fees

Legislative. Disability Legislation (SENDO)

other? (Please specify _____)

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

Staff

Students

Other service users (e.g. prospective students, conference delegates)

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other, please specify _____

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

Policy Name	Policy Owner
Fitness for Professional Practice Policy	Executive Deans
Student Discipline Policy	University Secretary
Health & Safety Policy	Director of People and Culture
Student Accommodation Policy	Director of Campus Life
Student Social Media Policy	Chief Operating Officer

Part 1

Dignity at Work and Study (Bullying and Harassment) Policy	Director of People and Culture
Student Support Critical Incident Policy	Head of Student Support

Available evidence

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? (Please specify details for each of the Section 75 categories)

Note: evidence can come from many sources. Examples include the University's management information systems, internal or external research, surveys or consultation exercises. Anecdotal evidence such as feedback from service users may also be used.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	The University's EO data were reviewed. Religious belief was not found to impact on the policy.
Political opinion	The University does not collect data on political opinion, or make assumptions regarding Political Opinion based on Community Background. Political Opinion was not found to impact on the policy.
Racial group	The University's EO data were reviewed. Religious belief was not found to impact on the policy.
Age	The University's EO data were reviewed. Religious belief was not found to impact on the policy.
Marital status	The University's EO data were reviewed. Religious belief was not found to impact on the policy.
Sexual orientation	The University's EO data were reviewed. Religious belief was not found to impact on the policy.
Men and women generally	The University's EO data were reviewed. Religious belief was not found to impact on the policy.
Disability	The University's EO data were reviewed. In AY 2017/18, 10.4%

Part 1

	of students declared a disability.												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Condition</th> <th>17/18</th> <th>16/17</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mental Health</td> <td>263</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ASD</td> <td>146</td> <td>101</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multiple disabilities</td> <td>249</td> <td>186</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Condition	17/18	16/17	Mental Health	263	250	ASD	146	101	Multiple disabilities	249	186
Condition	17/18	16/17											
Mental Health	263	250											
ASD	146	101											
Multiple disabilities	249	186											
Dependants	The University's EO data were reviewed. Religious belief was not found to impact on the policy.												

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? (Please specify details for each of the Section 75 categories)

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.
Political opinion	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.
Racial group	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.
Age	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.
Marital status	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.
Sexual orientation	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.
Men and women generally	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.
Disability	Anecdotally, students with mental health issues are more likely to face difficulties meeting academic requirements during the

Part 1

	<p>course, or during transition to higher education/between years.</p> <p>This might lead to concerns regarding the student's fitness to study.</p> <p>Ulster University Student Wellbeing Survey 2017 (Margaret McLafferty and Prof Siobhan O'Neill) findings revealed that 10% of new entry students received treatment for emotional problems in the previous year. Of the students surveyed, the highest prevalence rates were found for suicidality (31%), major depressive episode (24.2%) and generalised anxiety disorder (22.6%).</p> <p>The National Association of Disabilities has recorded feedback from memberships on the increase of concerns of mental health in the sector, and the rising impact and challenges felt by universities and colleges in recent years. Mental health is now an intrinsic part of the model of inclusive practice linking the student's mental health to their academic progress and achievement.</p>
Dependants	None identified. The policy aims to support all students, specifically those with mental or physical health issues.

Consultation

Consultation with relevant groups, organisations or individuals about the policy can provide useful information about issues/opportunities which are specifically related to them (i.e. evidence to inform the policy). Please indicate whether you carried out (or intend to carry out) any consultation exercises prior to equality screening?

The following groups were consulted during the development of the policy:

- Learning and Teaching Committee
- Executive Dean Committee
- Student Discipline Working Group
- Residential Services Team
- Student Support Services
- Students' Union
- Trades Unions

Screening

Introduction

The answers to the following screening questions will assist the University in making a decision whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment on the policy. The following information is provided to help you to identify and comment on the level of likely impact of the policy in questions 1-4:

Select 'major' impact if:

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there are insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Select 'minor' impact if:

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations;
- e) Differential impact observed and opportunities exist to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 2

Select 'none' if:

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented in Part 1, please complete the screening questions (Questions 1-4).

Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (Please provide details)		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? (minor/major/none)
Religious belief	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Political opinion	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Racial group	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Age	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Marital status	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Sexual orientation	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Men and women generally	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Disability	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for this category. It aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.	Minor (+)
Dependants	The policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None

Part 2

2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Political opinion		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Racial group		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Age		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Marital status		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Sexual orientation		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Men and women generally		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Disability		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Dependants		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.

Part 2

3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (Please provide details)		
Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact (minor/major/none)
Religious belief	The policy is unlikely to impact on good relations for this category.	None.
Political opinion	The policy is unlikely to impact on good relations for this category.	None.
Racial group	The policy is unlikely to impact on good relations for this category.	None.

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Political opinion		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.
Racial group		No. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

<p>5 Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, please provide details of any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities? (<i>For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people</i>). Please include details of any data which you have used to determine/identify this impact</p>	
<p>Section 75 categories (please specify)</p>	<p>Details of policy impact and details of data which describes the policy impact</p>
<p>All</p>	<p>The policy is likely to benefit all students with mental or physical health issues.</p>

Disability Duties

<p>6. Does the policy provide an opportunity to encourage disabled people to participate in University life?</p>	
<p>If Yes, provide details</p>	<p>If No, provide reasons</p>
<p>Yes. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues, so that they can participate fully in their education at Ulster/ in University life.</p>	

Part 2

7. Does the policy provide an opportunity to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?	
If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Yes. The policy aims to support students with mental or physical health issues, by providing a positive response to 'challenging' situations.	

Part 3

Screening decision

Based on the evidence considered and outlined in Part 1 and the responses to the screening questions (Part 2), please indicate the screening decision for this policy:

Note: The University should take particular care not to screen out policies that have a procurement aspect if there is potential to promote equality of opportunity through the procurement of services.

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- Screen in** the policy (subject the policy to an Equality Impact Assessment)
i.e. the likely impact is 'major' in respect of one, or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories
-
- Screen out** the policy without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted (no Equality Impact Assessment)
i.e. the likely impact is 'none' in respect of all of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories
-
- Screen out** the policy and **mitigate the impacts on equality by amending or changing the policy**, or by **developing an alternative policy or action** (no Equality Impact Assessment)
i.e. the likely impact is 'minor' in respect of one, or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories
-

Part 3

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment (i.e. 'screen in' the policy), please provide details of the reasons.



If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment (i.e. 'screen out' the policy), please provide details of the reasons.



Part 3

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment (i.e. 'screen out' the policy) and mitigate the impacts on equality by amending or changing the policy, or by developing an alternative policy or action, please provide reasons to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy:

The likely impact is '**minor**' in respect of one, or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories. However, the policy is likely to have a **positive** impact for these categories. In line with University policy, the policy will be reviewed two years after implementation and, if necessary, amended.

Timetabling and prioritising

If the policy has been **'screened in'** for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to the University's functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score will be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the University in timetabling. Details of the University's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable will be included in its quarterly Screening Reports.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details:

Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: 	Director of Campus Life	11/9/18
Approved by: 	Director of People and Culture	8/1/20

Note: Following approval by the Senior Leadership Team/Senate, the policy owner must inform the University Secretary that the policy has been approved. Once the Council of the University has been informed of the policy (either directly or through an appropriate Committee), the policy owner can then promulgate the policy and develop appropriate training or awareness raising material in relation to the policy.

A copy of the screening pro-forma will be made available on the University's website and be made available on request.

Review

Note: Policies must be reviewed at least every two years, but sooner if changes in legislation or other variables require review.

This policy is due for review (in terms of its impact on equality of opportunity and good relations) by the policy owner on:

08/01/20

(Insert date)