

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The purpose of this document is to ensure that decision makers consider the impact of their policies and procedures on those who share protected characteristics. An EqIA should be undertaken for new practices or changes to current practices that could directly or indirectly affect staff, students and stakeholders.

Title of the Policy/Decision/Change Considered:	Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
Impact Assessed by:	Ralph Burns
Signature(s) of assessor(s):	Ralph Burns
Date of Impact Assessment:	Feb 2025

Step 1: (a) Identify the aims of the policy/decision/change.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) What is the purpose of the policy/decision/change? (ii) Why has this policy/decision/change been come about? (iii) How does the policy/decision/change seek to achieve its purpose?
<p>To provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. Wrongdoing is anything which causes colleagues legitimate concern and which they feel it is in the public interest to raise, and which can be defined as a 'qualifying disclosure'. It sets out the procedure by which 'workers' can report concerns to us about workplace practices, without fear of reprisals. Any 'worker' reporting a concern is protected when making a disclosure in the public interest. The policy encourages 'workers' to raise any matters of genuine concern with FVC who will take any allegations seriously and investigate matters appropriately and as far as is possible, confidentially.</p>

Step 1: (b) Identify who is affected by the policy/decision.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Who benefits from this policy/decision/change? (ii) How does the group of people benefit from the policy/decision/change? (iii) Who does not benefit from the policy/decision/change? Is anyone disadvantaged either directly or indirectly? (iv) If so, how is the group of people disadvantaged by this policy/decision/change?
<p>All workers including staff, board members, agency workers and contractors benefit from this policy as it provides a structured, legally protected, process, both formal and informal, to support resolution of complaints and as a means for staff to raise concerns with the knowledge these will be dealt with in a fair, consistent, and professional manner.</p>

Step 2: Consultation

Where a policy, decision or change is organisation specific, it can be useful to consult those that will be directly impacted. This may not always be appropriate or proportionate. It may be useful to explore other types of information available such as college data, Listening to Learners, cultural surveys etc.

Is a consultation required for any stage of this process?	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Policies require consultation from staff representatives to ensure fairness and transparency	
Where a consultation was identified as being proportionate and appropriate	
(i)	Outline the analysis of the data gathered during the consultation
(ii)	The recommendations identified following this analysis
Union representatives are offered the opportunity to consult on changes, in this case changes are limited due to national agreements	

Step 3: Consider the evidence and assess impact by protected characteristic.

(i)	What data or evidence have you used to consider the impact of the policy/decision/change on each protected characteristic? For example student/staff demographic data; consultation responses; national data/reports. If you lack data/evidence, where else could you look for/gather data? Is this reasonable/proportionate to the change proposed?
(ii)	Referring to the evidence you do have available, would this policy positively or negatively impact on those who share protected characteristics?
(iii)	If there is an identified impact, where negative, detail the action required to mitigate this impact. Where positive or no impact, are there any other actions that could be identified to further enhance the positive impacts of the policy/decision/change?

Protected Characteristic	Evidence	Impact	Action Required
Disability	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees - including people who have / do not have a Disability. However, it is recognised that on balance, some people with disabilities may experience greater difficulties articulating a complaint or reading complicated information	Positive	Flexibility to support adjustments whether supportive companion or nature of meeting
Sex (man or woman)	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees regardless of sex.	Positive	
Race (refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins)	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees of different ethnicities, nationalities or race.	Positive	
Age	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees of all Age groups as it provides a formal process for reporting wrongdoing. We recognise that on balance, some younger workers may, experience greater reservations about raising a complaint - perhaps for fear of not being taken seriously. Conversely, some older workers may feel less inclined to raise a complaint for fear of losing their job. However, as there is little national evidence and no local evidence to support this conjecture.	Positive	

Gender Reassignment (the process of transitioning from one gender to another)	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees including those transiting .	Positive	
Sexual Orientation (whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes)	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees of all sexual orientations.	Positive	
Religion and Belief (including no belief)	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees of different Religions and Philosophical Belief Systems.	Positive	
Pregnancy and Maternity	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave	Positive	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	This policy provides an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. The policy should therefore have a positive impact on all employees both married and single.	Positive	
Other Identified Groups (e.g. carers, care experienced students)	There is no evidence to suggest any disadvantage or negative impact based on this characteristic	Neutral	Data will continue to be collected to expand understanding in this area

(iv) If it has been identified that more evidence is required, detail the action plan to collect that evidence and identify the timescale for this;

In order to reduce the risk of discrimination based on protected characteristics, all staff have been required to complete mandatory training. This will help ensure that employees involved in the process are aware of their potential biases and how their actions and words may impact on others.

Step 4: Decision Making

Select an option below that identifies the next stage of the implementation stage;	
No amendment to the policy/decision/change is required. It has been concluded that the policy/decision/change is robust with no negative impact.	x
Adjustments the policy/decision/change are required to take steps to meet the general duty and reduce negative impact on those who share protected characteristics.	
Adverse impact has been identified but a decision has been made to implement the policy/decision/change without adjustment.	
Adverse effects have been identified and the impact cannot be justified or be considered reasonable or proportionate. The policy/decision/change will not proceed.	

Step 5: Publication:

	Does this group need to be aware of this EqIA?	How will information be shared with this group?
Students	No	
Employees	Yes	
Partner organisations & stakeholders	No	
Other - please state:	Yes	Board members and other workers will be made aware of the policy via communications channels
Are there any barriers to communicating with the groups identified?	No	
If yes, how will any barriers to communication be overcome?		

Step 6: Monitoring and Review

Is monitoring required as part of the process of implementation?	Yes
If yes, how will this policy/decision be monitored to assess its impact on protected characteristics groups? E.g. will qualitative/quantitative data be collected? Survey, Student Council, Listening to Learners sessions?	Data from instances where the policy is enacted will be reviewed both statistically and through feedback
Staff member/designation responsible for ensuring monitoring/review takes place:	Ralph Burns
Review date:	Feb 2028

Please send the completed EqlA to equality@forthvalley.ac.uk

If you require any assistance in completing an EqlA, please contact equality@forthvalley.ac.uk