**Equality Impact Assessment Form**

**Department/Section:**  HR & Organisational Development **Date of Assessment:** 29/04/2021 **Review Due:**

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**Step 1**

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| Aim of proposed activity/decision/new or revised policy or procedure:  Initial decision to require staff to work from home, where possible, stemmed from the pandemic -associated need for this mitigating measure and from the government's guidance, law of proibited travel as well as from the relevant to the emerging context Health and Safety legislation and the duty of care. Further decision making is taking place on enabling home working as a flexible working option to staff in the post pandemic long-term period. SARS-CoV-2 virus associated pandemic exposed and advanced further inequalities ina society. It also forced business to review their working practices with the government placing duty on employers to enable staff to work from home, where possible and can't be objectively justified otherwise. The duty stemmed primarily from the health and safety concern and closure of core services. As we emerge from the pandemic, it's an impertive that we review our approach to more continuous home working options, particularly where these can objectively protect those proven most at risk from COVID-19 and communicable diseases, in general. This is as the SARS-CoV-2 is anticipated to become an ongoing reality that we must manage and mitigate against, where possible. This EQIA looks into decision on home working requirement during pandemic as well as in the post-pandemic period.  | **New** | **[x]**  |
| **Revised** | **[ ]**  |
| **Existing** | **[ ]**  |

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| Who will be affected?staff, students, visitors | Who will be consulted?staff | Evidence available:staff survey 2021organisational equalities intelligence ‘Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19’ published by Public Health England‘COVID-19 Post-lockdown position paper’ – National Association of Disabled Staff Networks (NADSN)‘Supporting Black, Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff during the COVID-19 crisis’. HERAG‘BAME Women, mental health and COVID-19’. Business in the Community Factsheet.‘Hidden Figures: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBT’; ‘The Essential Briefing on the Impact of COVID-19 on LGBT Communities in the UK’; ‘Hidden Figures: LGBT Health Inequalities in the UK’; LGBT Foundation reports.‘Briefing Note: Mothers and fathers balancing work and life under lockdown’, Institute for Fiscal StudiesRace Equality Foundation: Coronavirus information and resourcesCOVID-19: supporting BAME Communities. Ubele InitiativeBAME women account for over half of pregnant women in UK hospitals with covid-19 (BMJ, June 2020). |

**Step 2**

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| **Potential** Positive/Negative/Neutral Impact Identified.**P, N, N/I** | Age | Disability | Gender Reassignment | Marriage/Civil Partnership\* | Pregnancy and Maternity | Race | Religion or Belief | Sex | Sexual Orientation |
| Eliminating Discrimination. | P | P & N | P | N/I | P | P | P | P & N | N/I |
| Advancing Equality of Opportunity. | P | P & N | P | N/I | P | P | P | P & N  | N/I |
| Promoting Good Relations. | P | P & N  | P | N/I | P | P | P | P & N | N/I |

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| **Summary of EIA Outcome – please tick** |
| No further action to be carried out. | [ ]  |
| Amendments or changes to be made. | [x]  |
| Proceed with awareness of adverse impact. | [ ]  |
| Abandon process – Stop and Rethink. | [ ]  |

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| **Step 3** Action to be taken  Negative impact of pandemic-associated requirement for home working impacted negatively on households with children where women became overburdened by the sumultaneous caring and working duties. In anticipation of this, Perth College UHI agreed with UNIONs, prior to the furlough scheme, that staff with caring duties will be excused from home working at full pay if they wish. This was then replaced with the government-introduced furlough scheme with staff receiving 100% their normal pay. This mitigated negative impact on staff with caring duties affected by the breakdown in their usual childcare arrangements, most of whom are women.Potentially negative impact of ie suitable work station and online communication methods on staff who have a disability and those who are pregnant associated with employer's potentially lesser ability to assess and put reasonable adjustments in private places/home.For the post-pandemic considerations:Ensure equality monitoring of flexible working decisions involving home working requests, particularly where these requests are on grounds of health and safety (protection from communicable diseases, health and social harms (ie domestic abuse)).Monitor impact of current HR and other corporate policies on the individual staff requesting home working post pandemic. Revise and amend policies as soon as negative impacts and risk of indirect discrimination become apparent. Ensure a robust plan for enabling and supporting some staff to work from home permanently or flexibly (agile working) and consider agile working policy. Ensure that robust risk assessments are carried out collaboratively with the staff and others and mitigating actions are taken to prevent adverse impact of home working on staff and business continuity. Consider not only work station and equipment and any additional support needs and adjustments/support required, but also driving for work scenarios where staff permanently work from home (reimbursement of expenses to/from work base-home/office).Consider capacity to provide permanent equipment for home working and reasonable adjustments at a larger scale.Consider e-safety of home working environment and data protection duties.Consider impact on those recovering from long COVID-19 who may have developed a longer term or a permanent health problem or a disability.Develop a new home working policy, equality impact assess it and monitor its impact on protected characteristics. |

Please forward completed EIA forms by e-mail to
pc.equality.perth@uhi.ac.uk