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 Action Considered:	**Flexible Working Policy and Procedure**
Impact Assessed by:	**Ralph Burns**
Signature(s) of assessor(s):	
Date of Impact Assessment:	**Dec 2023**

Step 1: (a) Identify the aims of the action.

(i)   What is the purpose of the action?   (ii)   Why has this action been come about?   (iii)   How does the action seek to achieve its purpose?

The purpose of the Flexible Working Policy and Procedure is to provide the opportunity for **all staff members** to request a flexible working arrangement to promote work life balance, increase staff motivation, reduce employee stress and improve performance and productivity. It also sets out a fair, legal and consistent process in which to handle requests.

There have been changes to the legislation which are reflected.

Step 1: (b) Identify who is affected by the action.

(i)   Who benefits from this action?   (ii)   How does the group of people benefit from the action?   (iii)   Who does not benefit from the action? Is anyone disadvantaged either directly or indirectly?   (iv)   If so, how is the group of people disadvantaged by this action?

All current and future staff members who have at least *26 weeks service with the College benefit from this policy as the policy and procedure are clear and consistent on the scope of the policy and the process to be followed. It is not envisaged that anyone would be disadvantaged by this policy.

*Subject to new legislation however any change to zero service can only enhance the offering

The college has a number Flexible Working options including; annualised hours, additional unpaid annual leave, compressed working hours, increased hours, reduced hours and part time. There is also a Hybrid working policy for all staff.

Flexible working requests are a statutory right and the college follows that legislation

Step 2: Consultation

Where an action 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 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?	
xYes	o **No**
Detail why there is a need or no need for a consultation.	

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
Data from applications and college stats, consultation with recognised unions, changes to legislation. Data is limited to GDPR restrictions on data retention

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 action 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 action?

Protected Characteristic	Evidence	Impact	Action Required
Disability	**Disability** No known disability 76.55% Disability declared 20.19% Information refused 3.26% **100.00%** There are slightly higher numbers of those declaring a disability applying and being accepted and this is to be expected	Positive	Providing the option for flexible working may support staff with disabilities to continue in employment Working at home or a remote location, or in a location closer to home, may be helpful in enabling staff to support aspects of their disability. Some staff experiencing mental ill health may find

			working remotely beneficial whereas others may feel more isolated. Flexible working arrangements may assist disabled staff who want to avoid the risk of or are not able to travel on public transport at peak times. Offering opportunities for flexible working, including hybrid working may positively impact on diverse recruitment as we are able to attract a greater number of disabled staff. Neurodiverse staff may benefit from a more formal approach or arrangements to flexible working.
Sex (man or woman)	**Sex** Female 57.52% Male 42.48% **100.00%** 70% off applicants were female, higher than the college average which is in line with the premise that women request this more due to their traditional role as primary care giver	Positive	Providing the option for flexible working may support women to continue in full time employment. This can help to narrow the gender pay gap, and advance equality. Applications from men may be lower as some men still attach a stigma to such requests though statistics on rejections do not show any bias
Race (refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins)	**Ethnicity** Scottish 78.34% Other British 11.56% Any other white background 3.42% BAME 1.79% Any other background/Mixed 1.30% Prefer not to say 3.58% **100.00%** Figures on applications are slightly lower on no UK/White backgrounds. There is no figures to suggest those from other backgrounds are being rejected	Positive	This policy and its procedure is intended to ensure fair treatment for all ethnicities and no part of this policy is expected to have any impact on race. It does however provide a means to support any request for support that may result due cultural practices or through having limited family and support networks. More awareness would support this
Age	**Age Band** 16-24 4.38% 25-34 8.93% 35-44 24.03% 45-54 27.92% 55-64 28.25% 65+ 6.49% **100.00%** Applications broadly match the age categories though there is a peak at 35-44	Positive	This policy and its procedure is intended to ensure fair treatment for all ages who may experience the need to apply for flexible working for any reason including caring responsibilities and work life balance. The impacts are likely to be positive. This may support older workers to remain in employment.

	age group suggesting external influences to that band.		
Gender Reassignment (the process of transitioning from one gender to another)	There is no relevant data to make any conclusion in this area. However Scottish Government findings suggest Flexible working can have a positive impact on gender reassignment by providing support for employees who may need flexible working arrangements during their transition	Positive	The College will continue to collect and monitor data in this area
Sexual Orientation (whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes)	**Sexual orientation** Heterosexual or straight 86.11% Bisexual 2.47% Gay Man 0.93% Gay Woman/Lesbian 0.77% Other sexual orientation 0.15% Prefer not to say 9.57% **100.00%** There is no data to suggest any impact of the characteristic on applications	Positive	There is nothing to suggest that anything in the policy or procedure will have an adverse impact on sexual orientation
Religion and Belief (including no belief)	**Religion** No Religion 50.65% Christianity 36.48% Muslim 0.81% Buddhist 0.16% Hinduism 0.33% Other Belief 0.81% Prefer not to say 10.75% **100.00%** Data on this is limited and the overall percentages match college wide figures	Positive	Potential for positive impact on employees who may wish to work flexibly in order to observe religious practices.
Pregnancy and Maternity	There are normally small numbers of women pregnant or on maternity leave at any time and employed at the college	Positive	It is recognised that new caring responsibilities, particularly amongst women may result in a FWR. The college is supportive of this. Pregnant women may benefit for a flexible working arrangement where adjustments support wellbeing

| Marriage and Civil Partnership | **Marital Status**
Civil Partnership   2.14%
Married   52.47%
Not Married/Civil Partnership   27.47%
Other   10.03%
Prefer not to say   7.89%
100.00%

A slightly higher percentage of married staff applied for flexible working reflecting changing priorities | Positive | There is nothing to suggest that anything in the policy or procedure will have an adverse impact on marital status |
| **Other Identified Groups** (e.g. carers, care experienced, SIMD10 and 20) | There is limited evidence on which to determine impact however it is recognised that caring responsibilities, particularly amongst women may result in a request to work flexibly. | Positive | The college is supportive of staff with caring responsibilities and this area will be monitored as more date becomes available. |

(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;

Data monitoring and capturing processes will continue to be used to review the impact of the policy. For the areas that have been identified as having no data or limited data, these areas will be addressed during the next data capturing exercise. In general, further work on raising awareness of the Flexible Working Policy can take place at a local level within team meetings

Step 4: Decision Making

Select an option below that identifies the next stage of the implementation stage;	
No amendment to the action is required. It has been concluded that the action is robust with no negative impact.	**x**
Adjustments the action 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 action without adjustment.	
Adverse effects have been identified and the impact cannot be justified or be considered reasonable or proportionate. The action will not proceed.	

Step 5: Publication:

It is best practice to publish Equality Impact Assessments. It may not always be appropriate to publish EqIAs at the time of development.

	Does this group need to be aware of this EqIA?	**How will information be shared with this group?**
Students	No	
Employees	Yes	**Published on SharePoint**
Partner organisations & stakeholders	Yes	
Other - please state:	No	
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?	**Y**es
If yes, how will this policy/decision be monitored to assess its impact on protected characteristics groups? E.g. will qualitative/quantitative date be collected? Survey, Student Council, Listening to Learners sessions?	Data is collected from applications and from staff and manager feedback
Staff member/designation responsible for ensuring monitoring/review takes place:	**Ralph Burns Head of HR**
Review date:	

Please send the completed EqIA to equality@forthvalley.ac.uk
If you require any assistance in completing an EqIA, please contact equality@forthvalley.ac.uk