

# Equality Impact Assessment (Impact Identification, Eligibility Review, and Case Study Selection)

## APPENDIX 1: The EIA Form

### EIA Form

#### Name of Mechanism: REF-eligible output scoring process

1. Area overseeing EIA

REF Team / Research Impact Team

2. Lead Officer

Research Impact & Engagement Officer

3. Date EIA started

24 Mar 2026

4. Is this a new or existing mechanism?

New

5. Does the mechanism impact on people?

Yes

6. What are the aims, objectives and purpose of the mechanism?

To fairly, transparently and inclusively undertake the process of identifying ongoing impact and engagement activities and assess their eligibility for inclusion in a REF submission. To identify strong case studies to support in developing and enhancing those case studies, and to select the strongest case studies for final submission.

7. Are there any associated objectives?

- a. To ensure we are aware of impact and engagement activities across the University, including those not eligible for REF submission

- b. To identify those impact activities that are eligible for REF submission
- c. To identify the strongest impact case studies for REF submission
- d. To provide support to potential impact case study authors to improve submission quality
- e. To raise awareness of the importance of impact and generate a culture where Impact is valued and prioritised

8. Who is intended to benefit from the mechanism and in what way?

- a. REF team – By allowing us to identify and recognise impact and engagement activities and by allowing us to assess eligibility of activities for future REF submission, which will improve our capacity to track and support these activities. By providing us with the information to identify the strongest case studies and support their development and enhancement.
- b. Research generating staff – By allowing them to have their impact and engagement activities recognised and considered for REF submission eligibility. By providing support to enhance and develop promising case studies.
- c. University – By enabling research impact recognition and monitoring, benefiting both the REF submission and the University’s culture of impact, contributing to Edinburgh Napier’s brand as the home of difference makers.

9. Is any data available about the mechanism?

As this is a new process which has not been completed, there is currently no data available about the mechanism.

10. How are you involving stakeholders/groups of interest in the EIA/development of the mechanism?

The process has been informed by:

- 1. Conversations with School Impact Leads
- 2. Feedback from REF manager
- 3. Outcomes of a REF21 ‘Reflections’ project involving staff forums, surveys and focus groups

11. What challenges have identified?

- 1. **The process is reliant on self-identification of impact and engagement activity by authors. This means there could be specific individuals or groups of individuals who do not engage with the process or declare outputs for consideration.**

Mitigation [Communications]:

- a. Send wide-ranging and regular communications to target all academic staff (including school-level emails, usage of Intranet, the Bones, RIE Newsletter, Impact SharePoint News)
- b. Reconcile Worktribe submissions with the April 2025 Impact Stocktake and proactively target non-responders
- c. Involve school impact leads and ADRIs to promote local communications and engagement with process via local forums
- d. Ensure timeline avoids periods of high leave or heavy workload.

**2. The process is reliant on a base-line understanding and awareness of research impact and engagement**

Mitigation [Communication and access to resources]:

- a. Provide access to self-help resources through Impact SharePoint
- b. Provide impact training and education at school and unit-level where possible
- c. Ensure that school impact leads are promoting impact as a priority

**3. The process is reliant on accurate assessment by Research Impact Lead and Officer**

Mitigation [Application of criteria]:

- a. Ensure that impact eligibility criteria is appropriate and applied consistently
- b. Ensure that both Research Impact Lead and Research Impact Officer review and assess each case study

**4. There is limited internal capacity / expertise to support all identified case study authors:**

Mitigation [Capacity and prioritization]

- a. Work to balance breadth and depth of support such that we are supporting a range of diverse impact case studies in a coherent and meaningful way.
- b. Support as many case studies as possible within our capacity to do so well. In the early stages we will encourage development of a range of potential case studies and work to support case study authors of varying levels of experience and seniority.
- c. Provide as many opportunities for staff to participate in impact as possible. Where possible, we will continue to support one to two more case studies than we are expecting to submit (depending on unit size) and will narrow our support as we approach submission.

1. Are there been any specific concerns about differential impact on any of the Protected Characteristic groups or other groups of interest<sup>[1]</sup>?

1. There could be groups of staff who are less likely to engage in the self-identification process because they are less likely to consider their work impactful or because they have no time to engage in the process. This could include but is not limited to females, early career staff, technicians or those on leave or those with a high workload.
2. There is also risk that impact assessors apply bias in their assessment of impact based on author characteristics or discipline-level bias.
3. There is a risk that academics engaging in impact and engagement activities do not recognise the impacts of this work and therefore do not report it. This could include but is not limited to early career staff or technicians.

## 2. What steps are being taken to mitigate concerns raised about differential impact?

### Mitigation:

- a. Send wide-ranging and regular communications to target all academic staff
- b. Reconcile Worktribe impact submissions with the April 2025 Impact Stocktake and proactively target non-responders (or those on long-term absence)
- c. Involve UoA leads and ADRIs to promote local communications and engagement with process
- d. Providing opportunities and support for those who have submitted ineligible impact and engagement activity to adjust their impacts where possible to align with eligibility criteria
- e. All impact assessors / decision makers will need to attend the University's bespoke 'EDI in research' training provision - to avoid bias and promote responsible research assessment practices

## 3. Can differential impact be justified based on positive action guidance?

In support of our University values, this process should aim to avoid differential impact by applying the mitigations.

4. The Equality Act 2010 includes a requirement to give 'due regard' to the public sector equality duty (PSED) in all functions. There is a specific duty to assess the impact of proposed new or revised policies and practices against three needs of the general duty. Use this section to outline relevant issues.

### i) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

ii) Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups

iii) Foster good relations between people of different groups

5. Date EIA Completed and date for future review of mechanism

**If the mechanism includes data collection refer to Data Protection Guidance.**

<sup>11</sup> The Protected Characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 are: Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Belief (including no belief), Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership. It is recommended that Deaf People and BSL Users be treated as a protected group. It may be that the mechanism seeks to address other groups of interest e.g. access and inclusion.