



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Department	Senior Management Team (SMT)
Policy	Smart Working Policy

Description

This Equality Impact Assessment evaluates the potential impacts of the Academy's Smart Working Policy on different groups of people, ensuring compliance with equality legislation and promoting fairness and diversity in the workplace.

This policy emphasises the Academy's commitment to fostering an inclusive and innovative work environment that adapts to the evolving needs of our staff, while making the best use of our space. As part of this commitment, the Smart Working Policy is designed to provide greater flexibility, enhance work-life balance, and support productivity and collaboration, while maintaining our high standards of education, research, and service.

Whether staff members are working on site, remotely, or in a blended manner, this policy offers a framework that supports diverse working patterns. Within this a fixed, permanent office space may not be available for all employees, and instead a shared space will be provided to ensure that the demands for working space can be met. Those staff to which this applies will follow the Smart Working Policy, utilising workstations in shared spaces.

The overriding principle will be to ensure working conditions for staff that are safe and free of risks to their health, provide for their welfare, and are comfortable, in order that staff can work effectively. The policy confirms that smart working will be operated in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act, with risk assessments conducted as required.

Could the policy/project have an adverse impact on equality?

Please consider this in relation to the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage or civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

No, the policy takes consideration of individual circumstances and reasonable adjustments.

Does this policy/project provide opportunities to make a positive impact on equality?

Yes, the policy does provide an opportunity for a positive impact on equality in the following ways:

- The policy includes a specific section on 'Individual Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustments'. This recognises that having an appropriate degree of control in the workplace is identified as an important factor that contributes to the success and well-being of most employees, but that it may be of particular importance for those with health concerns or disabilities.
- The policy also recognises that an exemption from smart working could qualify as a reasonable adjustment for a member of staff who meets the criteria for smart working but requires a permanent desk on account of specific personal circumstance e.g., a member of staff who has an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or has other health or pregnancy requirements.
- The policy states that where a desk booking process/system is employed to support smart working this should take account of team members' individual circumstances so as not to discriminate against anyone on the basis of any protected characteristics.
- Staff who choose to, or because of reasons relating to their individual circumstances, engage in homeworking will be provided with training in the safe use and set up of workstations through the online training portal, SHINE. This is supported with individual advice and assistance provided by the Academy's Health and Safety Adviser, where required,

Line managers play a key role in ensuring that smart working is implemented effectively and should embrace the concept of 'managing by results' rather than 'managing by presence' and use appropriate methods to keep in contact with their team, in assessing workloads and monitoring performance, whilst being sensitive to individual circumstances.

What evidence has been considered? What consultation has been undertaken?

Consideration has given to the following legislation:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health & Safety at Work Etc Act 1974
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

What actions have been agreed as a result of this EIA?

Actions will be reviewed, and progress/completion reported to the Belonging Committee.

The Smart Working Policy has the potential to bring significant benefits in terms of workplace flexibility. However, it is important to implement appropriate measures to mitigate any negative impacts, particularly concerning accessibility and consistency for employees with specific needs.

Action	Who	Timescale	Progress
Collect and monitor employee feedback to make necessary adjustments, to measure impact on protected characteristics and to ensure no group is disadvantaged.	Line managers	Ongoing	Via the Continuous Feedback Process
Liaise with line managers to review the effectiveness of the policy.	HR	2024/25 academic year	

EIA approved: 8/10/24.