

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

### Recording of Equality Impact Assessment

EIA Reference EIA-Goldson-Croix-9

Equality Relevance

High

Your Surname

Goldson-Croix

Your Firstname

Emmanuelle

Your Title

Mrs

Your Faculty/Service

IT Services

Your Email Address

Emmanuelle.Goldson-Croix@uwe.ac.uk

Your Phone Number

81006

1. Name of the policy or practice?

Staff Acceptable Use of SMS texting at UWE

2. What is the aim, objective or purpose of the policy/practice?

To provide guidelines to staff (interested in sending text messages to students) and existing SMS users about texting students at UWE. The purpose and scope are:- Purpose: To ensure that employees understand the guidelines governing SMS texting at UWE, in particular texting students during their course at UWE for administrative purposes. Examples given in this policy will not cover every possible situation that may give cause to send an SMS to students. It does however set out the general principles that staff should apply, and the rules that should be adhered to when texting students. Scope: The policy is a guide to administrative staff on how to text UWE current students. It outlines that Faculty Academic Registrars (FARs) have full responsibility for texting students, apart from Student Services (who have regular contacts with students on support/welfare issues). The term, 'Current students', does not include prospective students, students not yet registered, alumni, etc... 'Current students' represents all students who have a working UWE login account and who can access the myUWE portal. This policy does not cover texting members of staff.

3. Who is responsible for developing the policy/practice?

The Director of IT Services and the SMS texting system administrator, the policy group (including the Head of Marketing, the vice-president of the Student Union, the director of Graduate Development Programme, the Dean of Students, UWE solicitor)

4. Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

Staff intending to contact students by text, staff texting students and staff responsible for other members of staff involved in text messaging.

5. Who is the policy intended to benefit?

Staff texting students and students themselves.

6. What is intended to be achieved by the policy?

To give guidance and information about the way students should be contacted by text at UWE

7. How will you know if this policy has been successful?

Feedback from staff and students. Contact details have been published to both parties.

8. Do the following equality groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the intended outcomes of this policy? Please give information/evidence to support my answer.

	Yes	No	Not known - Do you need to generate sources of information?
Women, men, transgendered people	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes * From the point of view of staff and students: Need to consider	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Not Known

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	<p>women/men on maternity/paternity leave returning to work or due to start leave. Being away during transition</p> <p>* From the point of view of staff: Some members of staff depending on gender may not know or feel confident about using the SMS texting system</p>		
<b>Black and minority ethnic groups</b>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p>Content of text could be misunderstood.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Not Known</p>
<b>Disabled people</b>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> No</p> <p>Staff will use the computer to manually send text messages via the internet. Therefore, there is no impact on disabled staff as the SMS Text Platform will be compliant with assistive technology</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Known</p> <p>However, there may be some exceptions which will need to be dealt with on a one-to-one basis.</p>
<b>Younger or older people</b>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p>* From the point of view of students: Younger people may not have enough money to keep the phone. Older people maybe technophobic and not use texting</p> <p>* From the point of view of staff: Some members of staff depending on age may not know or feel confident about using the SMS texting system</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Not Known</p>
<b>People of different religion and beliefs</b>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p>Language - Content of text could be misunderstood. Texting needs to take into account the day of the week it is sent as well as time of day and religious dates.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Not Known</p>
<b>Lesbian, gay and bisexual people</b>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p> <p>There is no disproportionate impact on students and staff of different sexual orientation or transgender</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Not Known</p>

		students/staff.	
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9. Is there potentially adverse impact on the following equality groups as a result of this policy? Please give information / evidence to support your answer.

	Yes	No	Not known - Do you need to generate sources of information?
<b>Women, men, transgendered people</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes * From the point of view of staff and students: Need to consider women/men on maternity/paternity leave returning to work or due to start leave. Being away during transition * From the point of view of staff: Some members of staff depending on gender may not know or feel confident about using the SMS texting system	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Not Known
<b>Black and minority ethnic groups</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes Texting excludes international numbers. Language (cryptic, abbreviated, shorthand) - content of text may be misunderstood	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Not known
<b>Disabled people</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes Some disabled people cannot use a mobile phone due to the nature of their disability and may, therefore, be unable to receive a text message	<input type="radio"/> No Staff will use the computer to manually send text messages via the internet. Therefore, there is no impact on disabled staff as the SMS Text Platform will be compliant with assistive technology	<input type="radio"/> Not known However, there may be some exceptions which will need to be dealt with on a one-to-one basis.
<b>Younger or older people</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes * From the point of view of students: Younger people may not have enough money to keep the phone. Older people maybe technophobic and not use texting Language (cryptic, abbreviated, shorthand) - content of text may be misunderstood "Texting is making English as a foreign language"	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Not known

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	* From the point of view of staff: Some members of staff depending on age may not know or feel confident about using the SMS texting system		
<b>People of different religion and beliefs</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes Texting excludes International numbers. Language (cryptic/abbreviated/short hand) - Content of text could be misunderstood.  Texting needs to take into account the day of the week it is sent as well as time of day and religious dates.	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Not known
<b>Lesbian, gay and bisexual people</b>	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No There is no disproportionate impact on transgender or of different sexual orientation students and staff.	<input type="radio"/> Not known

10. Is the policy designed or does it have the potential to promote equality for particular groups or good relations between groups? If so, how?

Yes. It looks at alternative means of communication. It encourages communication with all. It does benefit students with hearing impairment but may discriminate against students who are older and/or students who do not own a mobile phone. These groups may not "benefit" from the instant technology which SMS texting offers.

11. Do you need to carry out a formal/ informal consultation internally or externally at this stage? Who do you need to consult?

Consultation has already taken place and the feedback has been positive.

12. What method or mechanism would be best suited for this consultation?

Email method as well as some face-to-face consultation.

13. What action could be taken to mitigate any negative impacts identified or is there an opportunity to take steps to address different needs or promote equality of opportunity more effectively? If yes, please comment and complete action plan.

Alternative methods of contacting students are suggested in the guidelines to mitigate any negative impacts. We counteract some negative impacts with staff guidelines and policy by explaining the need to use multiple channels.

14. Who will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the action plan?

The Equality and Diversity team within IT Services (composed of Steve Grive, Lee Norris, Rayhana Rahman and Emmanuelle Goldson-Croix) in collaboration with the Equality and Diversity Unit.

15. Please outline how you have revised the policy (if necessary) in light of the Equality Impact Assessment. If no change is to take place, please give reasons.

Policy to be revised (section by section)

16. Please indicate when you think this policy/practice should be reviewed next:

Annual review required.

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Please submit this form to the Equality and Diversity Unit. The Unit will provide feedback and will publish the final document.

Date of first submission

15 February 2011

Action Plan Completed

☒ Yes

☐ No

Date of final submission

☐ Yes

☐ No

## Action Plan

	Actions required	Responsible person	Resources required	Target date	Success indicators	What progress has been made?
Information / data required	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Consultation	Consultation with the Student Union and the Disability Unit	IT Services and SMS Policy Group	Emmanuelle Goldson's time	April 2011	Communication has taken place	
	Consultation with the FARs to ensure that other methods of communication are used	IT Services and SMS Policy Group	Emmanuelle Goldson's time	To be reiterated by April 2011	Communication has taken place	
Monitoring and review arrangements	IT Services and the SMS Policy Group will continue to monitor that we are meeting equality legislative requirements through the continual assessment of the likely impact of the SMS texting.	ITS and SMS Policy Group	Emmanuelle Goldson's time	Ongoing	? (Not sure) - Check with Richard Stokes	
Publication	The text message should act as a supporting reminder rather than the primary source of notification.	FARs and SMS users within Services	Emmanuelle Goldson's time	Awaiting for Policy Group and Marketing to provide the Matrix of Communication and re-publish the policy to staff	Matrix of communication has been provided and the Policy has been updated and communicated to SMS users	
	The text message must be in simple plain English	FARs and SMS users within Services	Emmanuelle Goldson's time	To be reiterated by April 2011	Policy has been updated and communicated	
Other actions	Training for staff with different technical abilities	IT Services and Txttools	Txttools (SMS provider) provides excellent telephone training on an individual basis			
	Text etiquette which is already in the policy needs to be reiterated	ITS and SMS Policy Group	Emmanuelle Goldson's time	May 2011		
	There is a risk of individual members of staff using the system in a way that may disadvantage certain groups.	FARs and SMS users	Emmanuelle Goldson's time	April 2011	Training and guidance have taken place	

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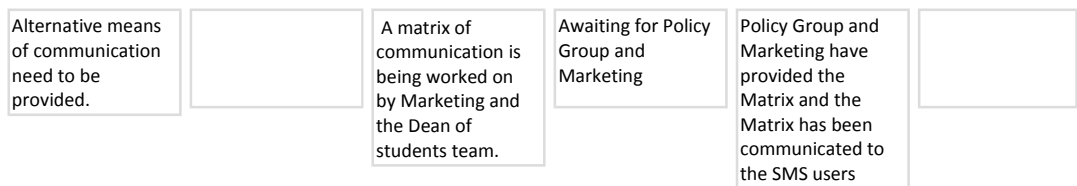


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**Please submit this action plan to the Equality and Diversity Manager**