**Equality Analysis**

This form enables you to reflect on your proposed activity, and to assess the potential positive and negative impacts it might have on different members of the community. The Equality Analysis is designed to help you ensure your activities are meaningfully considered and not spending your time on an activity that will later need to be changed or disbanded due to not thinking about the practical needs of diverse communities who we are required to protect. If you have any questions about how to complete this Equality Analysis, please read the [Guidance](https://docs.uwe.ac.uk/sites/equality-and-diversity/Documents/Equality%20analysis/Equality%20Analysis%20Guidance%202019.docx) or contact the Equality and Diversity Unit: [EqualityandDiversityUnit@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:EqualityandDiversityUnit@uwe.ac.uk).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity Title** | Digital Accessibility |
| **Project Manager and Contact** | Andy Birch andy.birch@uwe.ac.uk |

|  |
| --- |
| **1. Proposed activity (change, refresh, policy, process or practice) being analysed** |
| As a public sector body, we have certain obligations to make our systems and resources accessible. This has been the case for a while, particularly where a request is made for materials or resources to be made accessible as part of a reasonable adjustment.  However, the European Union Directive on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies which became law in the UK on the 23rd September 2018, now requires us to ensure that our digital offering is accessible and that we publish, as part of this process, a digital accessibility statement.  The need for accessible web and VirtualLearning Environment based systems has been something that has been acknowledged within Higher Education for some time, but not consistently or fully acted upon.  Departments such as the Library and Student Services have often led this work, but the new legislation means that this must now be based within a robust statement of commitment and underpinned by a whole institution approach.  The whole institution approach should have two distinct strands.  First, the creation of an accessibility statement as required by law and secondly, a comprehensive audit, gap analysis and action plan to meet any gaps identified and to enhance our approach.  The action plan and statement are at draft stage. The plan will have regular review dates (including review of statement) and be managed initially by Task and Finish group and Board and then Business as Usual by Faculty.  To assist with this process, we have purchased Blackboard (Bb) ‘Ally’ software. Ally is an integrated Blackboard product that allows for three distinct activities.   1. Institutional and Faculty level. The creation of data-based reports on how accessible the content contained within Blacboard is and how this is improving over time. 2. At a teacher level. Ally provides both direct feedback to the instructor on how accessible any particular course or site within Blackboard and step by step instructions on how to make resources more accessible. The guidance is based on ahighlighted preview of the resource with inline help on how to correct the issues. 3. At a student level. The option to convert resources to a more accessible format quickly, in an impromptue way (and then that converted resource to be retained with Bb for even quicker download by other students)   Bb Ally is an integrated service within Blackboard rather than a completely new system, in effect a ’feature’ available within Bb. Specific training will be available for both accessible writing (which is the key) and the use of Ally. |

|  |
| --- |
| **2. What sources of information/data, or who have you identified to help explore potential equalities impacts?** |
| Externally  Extensive horizon scan including Blacboard and Ally national user groups, Jisc special interest groups. Association of Learning Technologists and Heads eLearning Forum. Government Digital Service.  Internally  Deputy Vice Chancellor led board and Faculty/Departmental led task and finish group. Information and Technology Services, Library, All Faculty Associate Dean Quality Teaching and Learning, Students Union, Communications, Web Transformation Team. Strategic Programmes Office. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **3. Assessing the activity from different perspectives** | | | | | | |
| Might your proposal impact people who identify with the protected groups below in the following contexts?   * Access to or participation in UWE Bristol Faculties or Professional Services? * Student experience, attainment or withdrawal? * Staff experience, representation, or progression?   Explain why you have made that assessment, and plan your response. | | | | | | |
|  | **Possible Negative or Positive Impact on Groupsi** Include relevant data if possible. | **Action Planning**: how will you mitigate negative and maximise positive outcomes?  **Please feed information from this action plan to your activity’s own planning documents e.g. action plans, risk registers, benefits maps** | | | | |
| **Actions Required** | **Responsible Person** | **Target date** | **Success indicators** | **Progress to date** |
| **All** (possible impacts affecting many groups) | No negative impacts.  Positive includes resources now accessible and available in alternative formats (positive impact on all groups/people)  Staff have access to immediate feedback on accessibility of documents via Ally  Long term staff will learn more to write accessibly rather than correct resources after authoring.  This is likely to impact on workload in that resources need to be written accessibly. This can take longer in the first and will require staff to use existing systems such as ‘Word’ or ‘PowerPoint’ in a more accessible way. Generally when staff write accessibly from the outset, the workload impact is minimal and can even be timesaving (using headings in word for instance rather than highlighting or underling allows for longer or more complicated documents to be navigated and organised more speedily).  As Ally is integrated with Backboard, it is available to anyone who accesses Blackboard either on-campus or remotely. This would benefit all people who learn or teach flexibly.  Use of Ally will not impact directly on the way people use Blackboard either for teaching or learning, rather it will enhance the experience. Ally will however have the effect of asking people to write accessibly in the first place using normal office tools such as MS Word and PowerPoint. This process will not change normal workflows, what will happen is that instant feedback via Ally will show where the document is inaccessible. This feedback is only available to staff within Blackboard.    Students will have an enhanced experience within Blackboard in that resources will be available via Ally on demand in more accessible formats. This is an entirely automatic process that does not alter the original resource. It has benefits for all students as some accessible formats, such as documents to sound or document to e-reader format allow for consumption of material in different way.    Ally is likely to lower stress and anxiety for people (equality groups) who need to access resources in other or more accessible ways. Where resources are less than accessible in the first place (such as historical documents) an accessible request process is built into Blackboard that will be triaged by InformationPoint (and tracked using their management system) | Coms and training plan in draft format.  Business as usual plans via nominated Faculty governance.  Ally itself requires almost no training as it seamlessly integrates with existing Blackboard workflows. Training for Ally will be available via the in production ‘Education Essentails’ support website and via an integrated approach with Library and Learning Development Unit.  Student engagement wil be via collaboration with Students’ Union and Marketing and Communications.  Learning Development Unit are making extra ‘writing accessibly’ sessions avaible.  The project is seeking consulation with Unions to discuss this issue (request to consult has been made via Human Resources)  The project will have a comprehensive communications and support package. In reality, the legislation is likely to impact on many, as yet, unknown areas with the University. There is little in the way of ‘lessons learnt’ as this process is new. The project is consulting with many areas within the University. Communications and training interventions will change in an agile way as the project learns. | Andy Birch  Kirtsin Barnett | Ongoing | In line with full project Project Initiation Document | Reported via Task and Finish group and Digital Experience Board |
| **Age** (older people, younger people) | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Disability**, including mental health and non-visible disabilities | In line with ‘All’ as above.  Ally is integrated seamlessly with Backboard and inherits all of its accessibility features. The ‘delivery’systems e.g. Balckboard and Ally are fully Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) AA rated. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Women and men** | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Trans and non-binary people**, including gender reassignment | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Marriage** and/or **civil partnership** | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Pregnancy** and/or **maternity**, including Adoption | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Race**, including ethnicity and citizenship | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Religion and/or belief**, including those without religion and/or belief | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Sexual orientation** | No impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Other specific group** (e.g. International or Access) | Ally allows for quick translation into 50 plus languages. There is debate as to whether this is as good as e.g. Google translate or Microsoft Immersive Reader, but it does allow whole document translation | In line with project plan decision whether to enable this feature. |  |  |  |  |

i A **positive outcome** or impact is where a person or people may experience an advantage or benefit as a result of the proposed change. This includes positive action to overcome a disadvantage, meet different needs or encourage participation. For example, increasing lighting in public spaces of campus, which increases personal safety, particularly for people from protected groups. A **negative outcome** or impact is where a person or people may experience a disadvantage compared with others, or compared with what was previously available, or planned. For example a new bus service is set up to help all students travel between campuses, but no drop kerbs or accessible buses are available. Bear in mind that some negative outcomes may be justified on the basis of a legal requirement or applicable exemption including use of positive action or where the outcome would conflict with other legislation, e.g. Health & Safety. If a negative outcome can not be mitigated due to a legal requirement, identify the legislation and considerations you have considered to reduce the negative impact and/or rationale for the decision.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **4. Project Manager Next Steps** |  | Delete or complete as appropriate | | |
| Does this Equality Analysis require consultation of 3 or 6 weeks ([chart to help you decide](https://docs.uwe.ac.uk/sites/equality-and-diversity/Documents/Equality%20analysis/Equality%20Relevance%20Chart%20for%20Equality%20Analysis%202019.docx)) | | |  | 6 weeks |
| Is further monitoring or engagement required?  (in addition to the formal Equality Analysis consultation, e.g. with the Students’ Union, Disability Services, relevant staff groups) | | | Yes |  |
| What measure / statistic / data will you use to check if the activity has had a positive, negative or neutral outcome? | Ally can provide baseline data on accessibility of resources and improvements over time (the data reporting frequency is yet to be agreed). Project is including Business as Usual Faculty ownership and planning on how this data is to be used. Early indication is that Ally has positive impact on student feedback including National Student Survey. | | | |
| When will you review this Equality Analysis? | Blackbboard and Ally are due contract renewal July 2021, it would be appropriate to review this Equalities Assessment then. | | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5. Equality and Diversity Unit Review** | | | |
| The Equality and Diversity Unit has reviewed this Equality Analysis and is satisfied that it is ready for formal consultation | | | |
| Equality and Diversity Unit representative | Vicky Swinerd | Date | 04/10/2019 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **6. Faculty/Service/ Departmental Sign off** | |
| I am satisfied with the results from investigation, consultation and analysis. The progression of this EA will continue to throughout the activity/project and I will ensure that a review is undertaken following the final implementation of the proposal, to assess its actual impact. Any actions or feedback that results as a consequence of ongoing project changes will be monitored and incorporated within the stated processes. Any negative outcomes will be resolved with the appropriate stakeholders identified. | |
| Faculty Dean / Head of Department / Head of Service |  |
| Faculty / Department / Service |  |
| Date |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **7. So what?** | |
| Consultation and engagement feedback is extremely important in Equality Analysis. Listening to student and staff voices and acting on their feedback  mean that activities become fit for purpose for diverse student and staff communities. Complete the ‘You Said, We Did’ table **before and after formal**  **consultation**, and throughout the remaining lifetime of your activity to show the impact of feedback on your activity. The Equality and Diversity Unit  will be in touch to gather examples of this feedback to share with equality stakeholders. Please add additional rows to the table as required. | |
|  |  |
| **You said** | **We did** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Please forward an electronic copy to the E&D Unit by emailing** [**EqualityandDiversityUnit@uwe.ac.uk**](mailto:EqualityandDiversityUnit@uwe.ac.uk)

**The original signed hard copy and/or electronic copy should be kept with your team for**

**actions, review, and progression of Freedom of Information requests.**