

Equality Impact Assessment

Guidance on completing Equality Impact Assessments can be found on the intranet in the equality and inclusion section

Document:	Equality Outcomes 2021-2025
Executive Summary:	<p>The following EIA highlights the local and national evidence of the inequalities experienced by various protected characteristic groups. This evidence, along with staff and student consultation, will shape our equality outcomes and resulting actions for the Public Sector Equality Duty reporting cycle 2021-2025.</p> <p>Given that our Equality Outcomes address all protected characteristics we expect to see positive impact for each of these groups throughout the duration of the PSED cycle.</p> <p>Across all Protected Characteristics: There has been an increase in the number of hate crime charges in 2019-20 yet disclosures of hate crime remain low for staff and students at Borders College. We are aware of two disclosures from students in 2019-20 and 0 staff disclosures during the same period. From our consultations it is apparent that individuals are often unaware of what constitutes a hate crime, aren't aware they can report their experiences to the college, or would choose not to tell someone.</p> <p>Figures from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service show that racial crime remain the most commonly reported with an increase of 4% compared to 2018-19. Sexual orientation aggravated crime is the second most commonly reported type of hate crime with an increase in 24% of charges in 2019-20. There was an increase of 24% in religiously aggravated charges and an increase by 29% in disability aggravated charges. Charges with an aggravation of transgender identity increased by 2.5%.</p> <p>Actions: Develop robust hate crime and harassment reporting procedures. Launch Harassment and Hate Crime reporting procedure and deliver associated training.</p>

By law we must meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 including the Public Sector Equality Duty. Please give due regard to the following when completing an EIA;

- 1: Does the policy/practice eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?
- 2: Does the policy/practice promote equality of opportunity?
- 3: Does the policy/practice promote good relations?

Protected Characteristic	Commentary
<p>Age <i>Someone belonging to a particular age, or range of ages</i></p>	<p>Social and financial impacts of Covid-19 are likely to have an impact on 24+ age group.</p> <p>Research has shown that young adults are more likely to report stress arising from the pandemic than the population as a whole with 18-24 year olds most likely to report hopelessness, loneliness and suicidal thoughts and feelings.</p> <p>Suicide is currently the biggest killer of men under the age of 45, with men aged 40-49 having the highest suicide rates in the UK. As shown in the table below, the most common reason for withdrawal in the past 3 years for over 24s has been mental health or poor physical health/poor attendance.</p> <p>The impact of the pandemic on young people, including curtailed education, reduced job prospects and less contact with friends, has meant this is a period of especially high risk for experiencing mental health issues. The volume of referrals received by Borders College mental health and wellbeing services made by young people correlates with the apparent rise in young people experiencing mental health issues.</p> <p>Action: Continue to raise awareness for mental health with specific focus on addressing the issues surrounding men's mental health</p> <p>Barriers to learning exist in terms of access to digital services. This issue is likely to affect some groups more than others. For example, older people are less likely to have access to the internet and more likely to lack the skills and confidence to use digital tools or to engage meaningfully with online learning.</p> <p>Action: Review accessibility of services and facilities for protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected</p>

	<p>characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Marriage/Civil Partnership <i>Married couples and civil partnership should be treated the same on a wide range of matters</i></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Race <i>Refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins</i></p>	<p>Around 4% of the adult population in Scotland is from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community. Figures at Borders College show that 4% Borders College staff identify as is BME or unknown. This suggests the BME community is under-represented within our workforce.</p> <p>BME individuals in the UK are less likely to secure employment, and less likely to gain promotion. 1/8 of the working-age population in the UK is from a BME background, yet only 1/16 top management positions are held by BME individuals. There are an extremely low number of BME staff on our workforce and currently no BME staff occupy positions in management at any level.</p> <p>Action: Review recruitment processes to identify barriers to recruitment of staff from protected characteristic groups</p> <p>Retention and success is lower for BME students. Evidence has shown that a student’s race and ethnicity can significantly affect their outcomes. For example, White students are 13% more likely to achieve a first- or upper-second-class degree than BME students.</p> <p>Actions: Provide relevant equalities training for staff. Develop guidance to provide staff with the knowledge and confidence to support a diverse group of students. Review curriculum for any forms of racial bias. Develop curriculum that reflects the experience of minority groups.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>

<p>Sexual Orientation <i>A persons sexual and/or romantic attraction to other people, or lack thereof</i></p>	<p>Estimates suggest that around 2.6% of the population in Scotland identify as LGB. 1% of staff at Borders College identify as LGB. It is evident that this group is under-represented in our current workforce.</p> <p>Research shows that many LGBT employees in the UK don't feel comfortable enough to disclose their identity at work. Fear of discrimination has been cited as the most significant barrier.</p> <p>At Borders College, retention and success for LGB students is consistently lower than heterosexual students. LGBT+ students are more likely to experience mental health issues.</p> <p>LGBT+ students across Scotland have also reported more barriers to home learning with some students sharing that they need to hide who they are around their families.</p> <p>84% of LGB young people experience mental health problems, and 50% LGB young people experience suicidal thoughts and behaviours. 94% LGB young people said bullying had negatively affected their education and 63% LGB young people said it had negatively affected their attainment. 9% LGB young people reported leaving education as a result of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the learning environment.</p> <p>Actions: Embed lived experience of people with protected characteristics, or their representatives, into all planning. Review accessibility of services and facilities for protected characteristic groups with particular focus on LGBT. Provide relevant equalities training for staff. Develop guidance to provide staff with the knowledge and confidence to support a diverse group of students. Develop curriculum that reflects the experience of minority groups.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Disability <i>A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effective on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities</i></p>	<p>Disabled people are under-represented in our workforce (8% disclosure compared to the 14.9% of the working age population who have a disability).</p> <p>Actions: Review recruitment processes to identify barriers to recruitment of staff from protected characteristic groups. Review and critically appraise organisational culture. Address unconscious bias through delivery of training and awareness raising activities. Deliver equalities training for all line managers, including targeted support for LGBT and disability awareness.</p>

Disabled people face growing inequalities because of the pandemic. For example, certain conditions and impairments can put disabled people at greater risk from the virus, and barriers and inequality make disabled people more likely to face digital and financial exclusion and food insecurity.

At Borders College, retention and success is lower for disabled students than non-disabled students. Of all disabilities, mental health conditions have the biggest impact on retention and success.

Disabled people at Borders College have stated that rurality is a barrier to accessing support. Poor transport links and lack of anonymity (particularly in relation to MH and drug/alcohol addiction services) in small rural communities can affect the accessibility.

Barriers to learning exist in terms of access to digital services. This issue is likely to affect some groups more than others. For example, disabled people are less likely to have access to the internet and more likely to lack the skills and confidence to use digital tools or to engage meaningfully with online learning.

Student feedback suggests access to College support services are a barrier to students, in particular those who are disabled. A BCSA survey of 264 students showed that 55% respondents disclosing mental health issues had not engaged with Student Services, 31% of respondents who had issues contacting the student finding team had disclosed a disability, 50% of respondents who had issues contacting the ISLT team had disclosed a disability and 43% respondents disclosing a learning disability have not been in touch with the learning support team.

Actions: Review communication strategies leading to the promotion of inclusive, accessible communication for all. Embed lived experience of people with protected characteristics, or their representatives, into all planning. Review accessibility of services and facilities for protected characteristic groups with particular focus on disability and LGBT, including renewed accessibility audits of all college campuses. Develop curriculum that reflects the experience of minority groups.

Positive Impact

The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.

Gender identity/ reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another (can include changing names, pronouns, dressing differently, medical intervention and living in their self-identified gender)

NHS cited a population estimate of 0.5% transgender people. There are no disclosures of transgender or non-binary identity within our workforce. It is evident that this group is under-represented at Borders College.

LGBT+ students across Scotland have reported more barriers to home learning with some students sharing that they need to hide who they are around their families.

96% of transgender young people had experienced mental health problems, 63% of transgender young people experienced suicidal thoughts and behaviours. Nearly all respondents (95% transgender young people) said bullying had negatively affected their education and 68% transgender young people said it had negatively affected their attainment. 27% transgender young people reported leaving education as a result of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the learning environment.

Research shows that many LGBT employees in the UK don't feel comfortable enough to disclose their identity at work. Fear of discrimination has been cited as the most significant barrier.

Actions: Review communication strategies leading to the promotion of inclusive, accessible communication for all. Embed lived experience of people with protected characteristics, or their representatives, into all planning. Review accessibility of services and facilities for protected characteristic groups with particular focus on disability and LGBT, including renewed accessibility audits of all college campuses. Provide relevant equalities training for staff Develop guidance to provide staff with the knowledge and confidence to support a diverse group of students. Continue to raise awareness for mental health. Develop curriculum that reflects the experience of minority groups.

Across Scotland subject choices continue to show differences based on gender stereotypes, with likely implications for career pathways in later life. The persistence of gender stereotyping in rural communities often leads young men and women to make career choices based on 'traditional jobs' for their gender.

There is a gender balance of >75% across Construction, Creative Industries, Health and Social Care, Sport and Outdoor Activities and STEM

Students enrolled on courses traditionally dominated by one gender have expressed for a more gender-inclusive environment.

Actions: Curricular areas to put in place marketing, role models and outreach to address gender segregation. Curricular areas to

	<p>be reviewed to mitigate and remove gender bias. Take positive action in recruitment to attract gender minority applications to curricular areas and support services.</p> <p>Some staff and students are unaware of what constitutes GBV and there is evidence to suggest that instances of gender-based bullying while on campus can go unchallenged.</p> <p>The Scottish Governments ‘Equally Safe Strategy’ highlights that 79% of domestic abuse incidents had a female victim and a male perpetrator, one in five children in the UK will experience domestic abuse by the time they reach 18, and 95% of rapes or attempted rapes recorded by the police where gender known had a female victim.</p> <p>According to a 2019 NUS report on ‘Sexual Violence in Further Education’, experiences of unwanted sexual behaviour is commonplace for women in further education. In a survey of 544 UK-based further education students, 75% of respondents had experienced an unwanted sexual experience, 28% had been pressured into establishing an unwanted sexual or romantic relationship, one in three experiences of sexual harassment took place at college and only 14% of those experiencing unwanted sexual behaviour had reported it. A third of respondents reported that the experience(s) had affected their mental health, and disabled students were significantly more likely to experience sexual misconduct than non-disabled respondents.</p> <p>Locally, Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre have recorded significantly more incidents of GBV and domestic abuse this year compared to last which is understood to be a combination of improvements in recording and monitoring of information and an increase in survivor disclosure.</p> <p>Actions: Develop robust hate crime and harassment reporting procedures. Launch Harassment and Hate Crime reporting procedure and deliver associated training. Develop and Equally Safe action plan to address violence against women and girls.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Pregnancy/maternity <i>Refers to being pregnant and the period after birth (linked to maternity)</i></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics.</p>

<i>leave in the employment context)</i>	
Religion or Belief <i>Religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief (atheism)</i>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
Sex <i>Gender assigned at birth</i>	<p>Across Scotland subject choices continue to show differences based on gender stereotypes, with likely implications for career pathways in later life. The persistence of gender stereotyping in rural communities often leads young men and women to make career choices based on ‘traditional jobs’ for their gender.</p> <p>There is a gender balance of >75% across Construction, Creative Industries, Health and Social Care, Sport and Outdoor Activities and STEM</p> <p>Students enrolled on courses traditionally dominated by one gender have expressed the need for a more gender-inclusive environment.</p> <p>Actions: Curricular areas to put in place marketing, role models and outreach to address gender segregation. Curricular areas to be reviewed to mitigate and remove gender bias. Take positive action in recruitment to attract gender minority applications to curricular areas and support services.</p> <p>Consultation with students has revealed that where some individuals have flourished in an online environment, others have encountered significant barriers to learning from home. Students lacking space found managing responsibilities around childcare, home-schooling and learning particularly difficult. This is likely to have a more significant impact on students living in areas of deprivation. Some of these issues are likely to have a disproportionate impact on female students.</p> <p>Action: Embed lived experience of people with protected characteristics, or their representatives, into all planning. Provide relevant equalities training for staff. Develop guidance to provide staff with the knowledge and confidence to support a diverse group of students.</p> <p>Of those receiving ongoing support for mental health through Borders College counselling services, only 36% were male. This correlates with data showing that only 36% of referrals to NHS talking therapies are for men. Societal expectations, traditional gender roles and lower levels of emotional literacy play a role in why men are less likely to get help for mental health problems.</p>

	<p>Action: Continue to raise awareness for mental health with specific focus on addressing the issues surrounding men’s mental health</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Employment or Trade Union Membership</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified. This is no a PC therefore there is no legal requirement to report on this within our EOs.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Past Criminal Convictions</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified. This is no a PC therefore there is no legal requirement to report on this within our EOs.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Poverty or Deprivation</p>	<p>Consultation with students has revealed that where some individuals have flourished in an online environment, others have encountered significant barriers to learning from home. Students lacking space found managing responsibilities around childcare, home-schooling and learning particularly difficult. This is likely to have a more significant impact on students living in areas of deprivation.</p> <p>Food insecurity has long been challenge with a reported 9% of adults across the UK concerned about running out of food. Despite significant government investment to tackle this issue, it continues to be a concern for many with a reported 61% increase in foodbank use across the Trussell Trust network.</p> <p>Barriers to learning exist in terms of access to digital services. This issue is likely to affect some groups more than others. For example, people facing poverty are less likely to have access to the internet and more likely to lack the skills and confidence to use digital tools or to engage meaningfully with online learning.</p> <p>A recent survey of 206 students showed that 42% of respondents were unaware of discretionary funding.</p>

	<p>Action: Develop initiatives to combat issues that have a disproportionate impact on particular groups i.e. food insecurity and digital poverty. Review communication strategies leading to the promotion of inclusive, accessible communication for all. Embed lived experience of people with protected characteristics, or their representatives, into all planning.</p> <p>Positive Impact The report has related actions to advance equality eliminate discrimination and foster good relations across all protected characteristics. All actions have been included in our Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2021-2025.</p>
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Owner:	Amy Brydon	
Date initiated:	02/11/2020	
Consultation:	Borders College students, Borders College staff, Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre, Equalities Committee.	
	Evidence sources: Scottish Government, LGBT Youth, Stonewall, EHRC, Advance HE/ECU, CIPD, National Records of Scotland, Glasgow Disability Alliance, Borders College Students' Association, National Union of Students, Mental Health Foundation, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service,	
Signature (Owner)	Amy Brydon	Date 26/01/21
Signature (Equalities Officer)	Amy Brydon	Date 26/01/21

Please return the completed Equality Impact Assessment to the Equalities Officer (abrydon@borderscollege.ac.uk)