

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy, practice, process or service title:	Revalidation of BA(Hons) Rural Business Management
Policy, practice, process or service lead/ owner:	Rural Business Management PTLs
Others involved in EqlA assessment group	RBM Qualification Design Team
Policy, practice, process or service implementation date:	Semester 1, 2024

1 Framing the policy, practice, process or service

1.1 Briefly describe the outcomes, aims and purpose of the policy, practice, process or service:

Academic programme covering SCQF levels 9 & 10.

The proposed revalidated Rural Business Management degree is designed specifically to develop well-rounded, entrepreneurial and sustainability-focussed graduates on successful completion of all aspects of the curriculum. In this review, the programme team has designed an approach to encourage graduates to practise ethical and responsible global citizenship.

The revalidated programme will retain the existing formula which enables students to access it in the traditional manner i.e. progressing straight on from a Rural Business Management or other relevant SRUC HND qualification, but also through the recognition of relevant industry experience; thus broadening the accessibility for mature learners. The programme taps into the need for sustainable and ethical business practices, the importance of equality and diversity in a business context and the value of rural entrepreneurship. The programme can be completed on a part time basis and spread over four years rather than the traditional two to further enhance accessibility.

Students will study a range of modules which encompass real world applications and will gain specialist knowledge through their learning experience by acquiring specific skills relevant to the subject area, in addition to valuable academic and work-related skills. This will include critical analysis of information, and encourage self-reflection throughout the learning journey, leading to enhanced personal development and employability. Honours year students will carry out an in-depth independent research project.

1.2 Is the policy, practice, process or service new or being changed, reviewed or stopped?

Revalidation of existing programme of study.

1.3 Who is affected by this policy, practice, process or service?

Students and delivering staff.

1.4 Are there any other SRUC policies that may be affected by this policy, practice, process or service?

This programme on its own will not affect other SRUC policies as it is the same format as preceding and other existing provision. There are policies that affect may this programme, particularly relating to the student experience. Examples include fees and funding, digital accessibility, mitigating circumstances and fitness to study.

2 Evidence relevant to the policy, practice, process or service including consultation

The information you gather in this section will:

- help you to understand the importance of your policy, practice, process or service for different equality groups,
- inform the depth of equality impact assessment you need to do (this should be proportional to the potential impact on equality groups), and
- provide justification and an audit trail behind your decisions, including where it is agreed an equality impact assessment is not required.

2.1 Evidence: Set out in the table what you know about the experiences of people in terms of each equality group. Consider the diversity within each group (e.g. experiences of people from different religions or faiths) as well as the differences between groups. There may also be cumulative barriers experienced by people when you look at more than one group together (e.g. experiences of women of different minority ethnic groups, so the intersectional impact of sex and race).

You can add more rows to present the evidence if required.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
Age	Admissions figures Resulting Reports	<p>The vast majority of students enrolling at the Aberdeen and Edinburgh campuses fall within the traditional undergraduate age brackets. Since provision has expanded to the Ayr and Barony campuses there has been a significant increase in mature students enrolling. The increase in mature students does mean a significant increase in students balancing their studies with employment.</p> <p>Flexible entry requirements promote inclusivity and equal opportunities, with the programme an attractive option not just for school-leavers but for those in industry looking to upskill. This can give benefits across all equality groups.</p>
Disability	SRUC Education Manual Admissions figures Resulting Reports	<p>No major issues. Students with a diagnosed disability currently make up over 50% of the RBM degree level students. A consistent feedback theme is that student support is excellent. Assistive technology is provided for all students through the VLE. Education manual makes allowances for learning adjustments and mitigating circumstances.</p>
Race	SRUC Data	<p>Programme does not require any cultural knowledge and therefore no direct impact based on race. There is currently low representation of BAME students.</p>
Sex	SRUC Data	<p>The programme currently has a heavily skewed female to male gender balance (70:30) with male students marginally more likely to withdraw.</p>
Gender Reassignment		<p>This has not been experienced to date for cohorts on current provision. Deferral time is factored into the programme which would allow for gender reassignment surgery if required. Student pronouns are available via Unit-E and Staff Advantage.</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
Sexual orientation		No impact of sexual orientation.
Religion or Belief	SRUC Data	Data on religion is not collected but no evidence arisen of impact as of yet.
Pregnancy or maternity	SRUC Data Education Manual	Specific risk assessments generated on an individual basis specific to student need. Education manual provides opportunity to defer studies. Excellent completion rate for students who have fallen pregnant during studies.
Marriage or civil partnership		No impact.

2.2 Consultation and stakeholder involvement: Speaking to people who will be affected by your policy, practice, process or service can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups. Describe below what you learned from the consultation/ involvement. Consultation can take time so make sure that you build this into your policy, practice, process or service review/ development timeline.

Relevant evidence was used existing SRUC data and policies, from student feedback and from previous experience the RBM programme.

2.3 Record here if you need to undertake a full equality impact assessment based on your evidence above.

Outcome of Step 2 following initial evidence gathering and relevance to equality characteristics	Yes/ No (Y or N)	Next steps
There is no relevance to equality	N	Proceed to sign off (step 5) to agree with decision makers that no EqIA is required based on current evidence
There is relevance to some or all of the equality groups	Y	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA
It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all of the equality groups	Y	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA

3 Impact on equality groups and changes to policy, practice, process or service

You must consider the three aims of the general duty for each protected characteristic. The following questions will help:

- **Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?** How will this be mitigated?
- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved?
- **Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved?

3.1 Does the policy, practice, process or service have any impacts (whether intended or unintended, positive or negative) on any of the equality characteristics? In the tables below, record the impact of the policy, practice, process or service, as it is planned or as it operates, might have on each equality characteristic and describe what changes in policy, practice, process or service or actions will be required to mitigate that impact or to take advantage of a positive impact.

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
Age	Potential for discrimination			X	Flexibility of entry requirements removes some barriers for older students and flexibility of study options allow for better compatibility with employment, which may be the norm for older students. Colleagues in the South West structure their timetables slightly differently; opting to use condensed campus days to allow older students to balance employment. Potential to foster good relations and better awareness of the management of age diverse teams and issues of ageism in the workplace as part of Employment Law when delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Disability	Potential for discrimination			X	No active barriers in place currently. Ensure guidance on evidence required for interruption to study is in line with Education Manual and Fitness to Study. Ensure guidance on evidence highlights that any documentation is confidential between the student and SRUC.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					Ensure campus field trips are regularly assessed per cohort requirements, ensuring full accessibility. Assessments to be constructed using clear, accessible language with Moodle pages designed for maximum accessibility.
Race	Potential for discrimination			X	Application information could potentially leave room for unconscious bias. However, there are entry criteria and the general admissions to the programme will be based on academic credentials. Potential to foster good relations through discussion of the management of diverse teams and eradicating discrimination in the workplace as part of Employment Law when delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Sex	Potential for discrimination			X	Already part of the guidance but ensure neutral language throughout programme documentation and advertising. Explore staff menopause & menstruation policy and adjust for RBM students. Potential to foster good relations through discussion of the management of diverse
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					teams and eradicating discrimination in the workplace as part of Employment Law when delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules.
Gender Reassignment	Potential for discrimination			X	Potential to foster good relations through discussion of the management of diverse teams and eradicating discrimination in the workplace as part of Employment Law when delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules. Staff to ensure class lists are checked for preferred pronouns prior to teaching.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Sexual orientation	Potential for discrimination			X	Potential to foster good relations through the discussion of the management of diverse teams and eradicating discrimination in the workplace as part of Employment Law when delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Religion or Belief	Potential for discrimination		X		Ensure that timetabling of mandatory events, including social events, do not occur at times of religious significance (e.g. Ramadan) and ensure dietary requirements are adhered to. Potential to foster good relations through the discussion of the management of diverse teams and eradicating discrimination in the workplace as part of Employment Law when
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules.
Pregnancy or maternity	Potential for discrimination			X	Ensure field trips to be assessed for accessibility/safety in the event of a student pregnancy. Potential to foster good relations through the discussion of the management of diverse teams and eradicating discrimination in the workplace as part of Employment Law when delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)	Potential for discrimination			X	Potential to foster good relations through the discussion of the management of diverse teams and eradicating discrimination in the workplace as part of Employment Law when delivering the Law and Business Ethics modules.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

3.2 Think about and describe below how your assessment impacts on your policy, practice, process or service review or development timeline including but not limited to:

No major impact as a result of this.

3.3 Record the outcome of this assessment below having considered the potential or actual impacts of your policy, practice, process or service on equality groups. Choose from one of the following (mark with an X or delete as appropriate):

Note: You must take action to remove barriers or take advantage of positive opportunities BEFORE the policy, practice, process or service goes live.

Please select (X)	Implications for the policy, practice, process or service
	No major change: Your assessment demonstrates that the policy, practice, process or service is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.
X	Adjust the policy, practice, process or service: You need to take steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality of to foster good relations. You have set actions to address this and have clear ways of monitoring the impact of the policy, practice, process or service when implemented.
	Continue the policy, practice, process or service: The policy, practice, process or service will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. You have justified this with this assessment and shown how this decision is compatible with our obligations under the public sector equality duty. When you believe any discrimination can be objectively justified you must record in this assessment what this is and how the decision was reached.
	Stop and remove the policy, practice, process or service: The policy, practice, process or service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.

4 Monitoring the policy, practice, process or service impact and further actions

It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your policy, practice, process or service on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. Your monitoring information will also inform a future review of the policy, practice, process or service.

4.1 Record in the table below how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy, practice, process or service on equality groups. In the table below you should:

- list the relevant measures,
- Identify who or which team is responsible for implementing or monitoring any changes
- Where the measure will be reported to (e.g. committee, ELT, Board) and how often.

Measure	Lead department/ individual	Reporting (where/ frequency)
EDI data across student lifecycle	RBM PTLs	Report as part of mandatory AMR process

4.2 Record further actions or changes required after the policy, practice, process or service is implemented in the table below. Make it clear if there are no outstanding actions.

Action	Lead department/ individual	Action target date
Review guidance on recruitment including neutral Language and explore application of menopause & menstruation policy at a student level.	RBM PTLs	01/09/2025

5 Sign off and future review

Equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Head of Service/ Department, even where an EqlA is not required. Also note here when you plan to review the policy, practice, process or service and accompanying EqlA which should be no later than 5 years from policy, practice, process or service implementation.

5.1 Senior Responsible Owner/ Committee sign off.

Job/ Committee title: Agriculture and Business Management Board of Studies

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

5.2 Equality impact assessment review date.

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Important: You must send the final version of this equality impact assessment to:

- **the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Lead.**
- **the Communications team for publication on SRUC's equality page on the external website.**

Document control		
Document control:	V0.1	
Date policy, practice, process or service live from:	[DATE]	
Review/ Approval Group:	[project board if relevant or delete]	
Last reviewed:	Date	
Review cycle:	[No more than three years]	
Document change log		
Version/ Author	Date	Comment
V0.1		