



**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
PRELIMINARY SCREENING**

Department	Academic Administration and Support
Date	22 nd February 2013

Name of Policy¹
Discretionary and Childcare Discretionary Funds

What are the aims, objectives & projected outcomes?	
Aims & Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">to provide financial support to those UK domiciled students who are struggling financiallyto assist student parents with formal childcare costs Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">to alleviate financial hardship experienced by those students who successfully apply to the Discretionary Fundto alleviate financial hardship experienced by those students who successfully apply to the Childcare Discretionary Fund	
This is a new policy	N
This is a change to an existing policy	N
This is an existing policy	Y
Will the policy have an impact on students, staff or members of the public?	Y
Are particular communities or groups likely to have different needs, experiences and/or attitudes in relation to the policy?	Y
Are there any aspects of the policy that could contribute to equality or inequality?	Y

Senior Manager sign-off	N/A
Date	

¹ The term 'policy' incorporates all Conservatoire procedures, processes and guidance documents & practices

FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Department	Academic Administration and Support
Date	22 nd February 2013

Name of Policy
Discretionary and Childcare Discretionary Funds

What are the aims, objectives & projected outcomes?
Aims & Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to provide financial support to those UK domiciled students who are struggling financially• to assist student parents with formal childcare costs Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to alleviate financial hardship experienced by those students who successfully apply to the Discretionary Fund• to alleviate financial hardship experienced by those students who successfully apply to the Childcare Discretionary Fund

1 SCOPING THE EIA

1.1 Scope of the EIA work

This is the first EIA to be carried out relating to this policy and associated practices. Due consideration has been given to any associated written documents and related procedures/practices.
The current Procedure relating to the Discretionary and Discretionary Childcare Funds was drawn up by the Registrar.
No specific E&D data are currently gathered in this area.

2 COLLECTING DATA

2.1 What relevant quantitative and qualitative data do you have?	
Race	Applications to the Discretionary Fund are received from students from a variety of racial backgrounds. There is no section on the application form for a student to indicate their racial background and while we hold this data on our Student Records System we would not typically look at the system during panel meetings
Religion or belief & non-belief	It is normal procedure that if an applicant does not have an interest free overdraft on their student account they are advised to investigate getting one to ease their financial burden. If an applicant did not wish to do this on religious grounds then the panel would take this into account and would do everything in its power to ensure that this was not detrimental to their application.
Disability	The Discretionary Fund has provided assistance with travel costs to students with disabilities.
Gender	none
Gender Identity	none
Sexual Orientation	none
Age	The Discretionary Fund attracts applicants from the age of 16 and over. Every effort is made to ensure that fair consideration is given to young and mature students alike.

2.2 What are the overall trends/patterns in this data?

Data presented above is primarily anecdotal.
 Consideration will be given to the value of collecting equality related data in future.
 SAAS dictate that priority must be given to lone parents.

2.3 Please list the specific equality issues and data gaps that may need to be addressed through consultation and/or further research?

Publicity

The Discretionary Fund is advertised to all students by email on a regular basis and posters are displayed around the Conservatoire. The Discretionary Fund is advertised as widely as possible. No alternative format advertising is currently undertaken.

Application Form

Application form is currently available as hard copies or electronically. It is not currently available in alternative formats.

Application Process & Selection Procedure

Applications are made via a panel made up of Conservatoire staff (Assistant Registrar (International and Student Experience), Administrator (International and Student Experience) and two members of teaching staff (one from each School.) The panel is always made up of two men and two women.

The beneficiaries of these Discretionary Funds are students who meet the eligibility criteria, i.e. UK students who have taken out the maximum amount of student loan they are entitled to, and who can evidence their financial hardship and/or formal childcare costs. The stakeholders are the staff involved in the decision making process – Assistant Registrar (International and Student Experience), Administrator (International and Student Experience) and a selection of teaching staff from the School of Music and the School of Drama, Dance, Production and Screen. Other stakeholders are Debbie McLean who is responsible for the financial administration of the Discretionary Funds.

It is recognised that there is potential for discrimination at point of fund allocation. Due consideration will be given to the potential benefits of gathering equality related data. Efforts will be made to embed a non-discriminatory ethos in all related written documentation and staff training.

The Registrar, Suzanne Daly, conducts the appeals process. If a student wishes to appeal against a decision they must state their case in writing and address it to the Registrar who will conduct an independent review. If a student with dyslexia was struggling to formulate their case in writing the student would be referred to Jane Balmforth, Counsellor and Disability Advisor, for support. Outside of the appeals process it would be the Assistant Registrar (International and Student Experience) who would offer to assist a dyslexic student with their writing, however, in the appeals process this would involve a conflict of interest.

3 INVOLVING AND CONSULTING STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 Internal consultation and Involvement:

Considered non beneficial in this context at the moment.

3.2 External consultation and involvement:

Considered non beneficial in this context at the moment.

4 ASSESSING IMPACT

4.1 Assessment of the impact

- There needs to be wider advertising of the Discretionary Fund to students and staff.
- Consideration of provision of alternative publicity material & written documents associated with this area
- The Discretionary Fund positively discriminates in favour of lone parents as a result of the regulations laid down by the Scottish Government via the Student Awards Agency for Scotland.
- The potential risk for discrimination caused by the make-up of the decision panel is fully appreciated and is intended to be male/female.
- The decision may be taken to gather quantitative data in the future

5 ACTION PLANNING AND SIGN OFF

Date of completion of EIA	27/02/2013
Compiled by	Sarah Ward, Assistant Registrar (International and Student Experience)
Senior Manager sign-off	Maggie Kinloch, Vice Principal
Date to E + D Officer	05/04/13
Date of EIA publication	April 2013
Review date	March 2014

ANNEX B - Consolidation of Royal Conservatoire Equality Impact Assessment Report – April 2013

ACTION / ACTIVITY	OWNER AND INTERESTED STAKEHOLDERS	DEPENDENCIES / RISKS / CONSTRAINTS	COMPLETION DATE	PROGRESS UPDATE
Establish procedure how to make related documents available in alternative formats on request	Institution-wide concern re general lack of procedure for provision of alternative formats for all RCS documents.	Staffing implications which may be met by a Conservatoire-wide approach to similar barriers	asap	
Develop & deliver wider advertising strategy of the Discretionary Funds (incl. alternative formats)	Assistant Registrar (International & Student Experience)		Sep 2013	
Consider including an E&D ethos statement into written documentation relating to panel make-up and selection criteria	Assistant Registrar (International & Student Experience)		asap	