

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy, practice, process or service title:	SRUC School of Veterinary Medicine. Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSci) Programme
Policy, practice, process or service lead/ owner:	Head of School
Others involved in EqIA assessment group	Assessment group included: Head of School Head of Veterinary Education BVSci Programme Director
Policy, practice, process or service implementation date:	01/10/2023

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 at SQF level 7-11. This programme delivers undergraduate veterinary surgeon training at SRUC.

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

New

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

Directly; BVSci Students, SVM staff

Indirectly; Other SRUC staff and students, general public, veterinary professionals

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

SVM BVSci Admissions Policy
BSc (hons) Veterinary Nursing Programme
HNC/HND Rural Animal Health Programme

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	Expert group views, opinions and discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No age specific equality as proposed. • The graduate fee structure has made the programme more appealing and affordable for mature/return to study students. • Variety of pathways into BVSci appeal to range of age groups • SVM plans to collect equality data throughout the lifecycle and this will be monitored as part of the routine performance analysis of the programme.
Disability	Expert group views, opinions and discussion SRUC education manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to have awareness of RCVS requirements and the physical/practical nature of the course and profession Fitness to Practise - A Guide for UK Veterinary Schools and Veterinary Students - Professionals (rcvs.org.uk) • Higher Education Occupational Practitioners https://heops.org.uk/guidance/ • Learning Adjustments Policy in Education Manual sets out SRUC's approach to reasonable adjustments to support studies. However, on a case by case basis there may be adjustments that cannot be enacted. Adjustments are possible for many disabilities however some may preclude participation in core activities which are essential for progression.
Race	RCVS data Expert group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme does not require cultural knowledge so no direct impact based on race. • Evidence suggests that lack of role models in the veterinary profession dissuades diversity in applicants. • School mission to train vets to work in rural and remote areas may have impact on race

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).
	views, opinions and discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be difficulty for students of different ethnicities on certain placement types • RCVS Diversity and Inclusion Group Strategy - Professionals • Scotland Census: Ethnicity https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results/at-a-glance/ethnicity/
Sex	Expert group views, opinions and discussion. RCVS data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General female bias in veterinary student populations and veterinary profession • Programme content should not directly impact based on sex • May be some issues including discriminatory language and inappropriate contacts, on certain placements related to sex of student • Frontiers A cross-sectional study examining perceptions of discriminatory behaviors experienced and witnessed by veterinary students undertaking clinical extra-mural studies (frontiersin.org)
Gender Reassignment	Expert group views, opinions and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme should not directly impact based on gender identity • May be some issues on certain placements related to gender identity of student • Interruption policy and student support systems would include time away from studies for gender reassignment and support. (SRUC Education Manual Policy: D1.7 Fitness to Study)https://scotrural.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/EducationManual/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=

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).
	discussion.	{5ECF4456-4BA2-4A32-9CC0-433FCEEFCCBA}&file=D1.7 Fitness to Study.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1
Sexual orientation	Expert group views, opinions and discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not relevant but may be some issues on certain placements, such as discriminatory language, related to sexual orientation of student • Frontiers A cross-sectional study examining Frontiers A cross-sectional study examining perceptions of discriminatory behaviors experienced and witnessed by veterinary students undertaking clinical extra-mural studies (frontiersin.org)
Religion or Belief	Expert group views, opinions and discussion. RCVS data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some aspects of the programme may challenge certain religious beliefs. Where possible alternatives will be sought for core teaching. • May be some issues on placements related to religious clothing but all partner practices and placement providers will be provided with the RCVS Religious clothing document when appropriate.
Pregnancy or maternity	Expert group views,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some aspects of the programme may have increased risks for pregnancy. Where possible adjustments will be put in place, but interruption will be supported if unable to complete core teaching.

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).
	opinions and discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some evidence of difficulties returning to study and study with young children so may require additional support. • May be difficulties with placements and rotations.
Marriage or civil partnership	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

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.

British Veterinary Equality and Diversity Society (July 2023)– importance of role models for veterinary undergraduates from diverse backgrounds. Supporting students on placements and rotations by making providers aware of religious clothing/food requirements, inclusivity policies etc.

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	N	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			Alternative pathways to BVSci and the graduate funding model make BVSci more accessible and affordable. Admissions policy which heavily weights on experiences is also beneficial for mature students, however the requirement for 'recent and relevant' experience should not discriminate on younger applicants.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations			X	
Disability	Potential for discrimination		X		RCVS requirements require certain physical capabilities as well as safe ability to work with large animals in outdoor settings which may be inaccessible to some disabled people. Where possible adjustments will be made however key activities essential for progression cannot be avoided. The physical requirements will be made clear to prospective students on our website. Ensure guidance regarding evidence of disability is commensurate to requirements. Ensure guidance on confidentiality is available What to expect from us (sruc.ac.uk) . Adjustments on account of a non-physical disability are supported via Student Support
	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. (SRUC Education Manual Policy: D. Learner Support)
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
Race	Potential for discrimination		X		Requirement for EMS placements may discriminate based on background or race however making use of peer supported placements and SRUC campuses should make attainment of these requirements easier. All staff will undergo unconscious bias training. SVM will seek out clinical role models for our students
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Sex	Potential for discrimination		X		Participation in EMS placements may lead to discrimination based on sex however making use of peer supported placements and SRUC campuses should make attainment of these requirements easier. All staff will undergo Equality and Diversity training to better support students
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Gender Reassignment	Potential for discrimination			X	
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations			X	
	Potential for discrimination		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	
Sexual orientation	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			Participation in EMS placements may lead to discrimination based on sexual orientation however making use of peer supported placements and SRUC campuses should make attainment of these requirements easier. All staff will undergo Equality and Diversity training to better support students
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Religion or Belief	Potential for discrimination		X		Participation in EMS placements may lead to discrimination based on religion or belief however making use of peer supported placements and SRUC campuses should make attainment of these requirements easier. Some aspects of the BVSci may conflict with religious belief ie. Abattoir visits. Where possible we will seek out establishments in line with beliefs (eg. pre-stunned Halal). All staff will undergo Equality and Diversity training to better support students
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Pregnancy or maternity	Potential for discrimination		X		There can be serious health implications for pregnancy with some aspects of the BVSci. Where possible adjustments will be in place
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			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	
	Potential to foster good relations			X	however interruption of studies may be advisable. Support offered to students so awareness of risks is understood. (SRUC Education Manual Policy: D1.3 Pregnancy and maternity – guidance for students)
Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)	Potential for discrimination			X	
	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:

- Procurement criteria: do you need to include specific equality criteria as part of the technical specification?
- Communication plan/ products: do you need to communicate with people affected by this policy, practice, process or service in a specific format (e.g. audio, subtitled video, different languages)?
- Cost: do you propose any actions because of this assessment which will incur additional cost?
- Resources: do the actions you propose require additional or specialist resource to deliver them?

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)
SRUC admissions and progression data	SVM Recruitment and Admissions Committee	Head of School and SMT, RCVS Annually

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 consider best practice for blinding applications.	Admission Committee	31/12/2023
Ensure alternative abattoirs available for visits that align with other faiths/beliefs/culture. Ie. Pre-stun Halal	Programme Team	01/09/24
Development of policies and procedures for EMS placements (in line with RCVS guidance)	EMS Lead	01/09/24
Develop student support 'teams' to include academic tutor, practice mentor and students support services	Programme Team	01/09/24
Develop peer support network and training for all students in supporting peers	Programme Team	01/09/24

5 Sign off and future review

Equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Head of Service/ Department, even where an EqIA is not required. Also note here when you plan to review the policy, practice, process or service and accompanying EqIA 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: L&T – [REDACTED]
Deputy Head of School VMB - Accreditation
Date: 13th October 2023

5.2 Equality impact assessment review date.

Date: October 2026

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:	V0.2	
Date policy, practice, process or service live from:	[DATE]	
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