**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/_layouts/15/download.aspx?SourceUrl=https://docs.uwe.ac.uk/sites/equality-and-diversity/Documents/Equality%20analysis/Equality%20analysis%20guidance.docx) or contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Team: edi@uwe.ac.uk.

**Activity Title: Proposed Changes to Student IT Support**

**Project Manager and Contact: Damian Gibson**

Proposed activity (change, refresh, policy, process or practice) being analysed

Enter short description of what it is, the objectives and why you are doing it. If you are amending a current activity, what changes are proposed? Please outline the ways that students, staff, visitors or contractors might experience changes in their day to day lives e.g., changes to buildings, working hours, administrative processes.

As part of the University Transformation Programme (UTP) there is a proposed digital shift in how students access IT Support.

The proposed change will mean that students will be directed to online/digital channels as the primary method of accessing IT Support, including Web Chat, our web pages and phone. There will also be, for a short time, self help touch screens at several locations to help with the transition, These will be similar to other touch screens in other areas of the university (eg Library, infopoint and Student Union).Later in 2025 we will add the ability to contact us via WhatsApp, timelines to be confirmed. Assisted support will remain as an option in the new operating model as it is recognised that human interaction may be preferred by some students, or necessary for students who are unable to effectively engage with the digital channels. This may take the form of a phone call, screen sharing or remote desktop capability. The proposal also includes provision for an appointment system for In-Person, face-to-face support where students require this due to the complexity of issue, technical problems preventing remote resolution, or communication/accessibility challenges. These appointments will work in a similar way to those offered by infopoint student advisors.

The objective is to provide a quality IT support experience to students, enabling self-service where possible, combined with person assisted support and triaged in-person appointments when required.

ITS have years of experience in providing front facing IT support and our IT Online service management system has allowed the capture a rich set of data, which has been used in the design of the new model.

As part of this shift it is proposed that the current ITS Advice Points will be closed in March 2025.

44% of queries are received via Advice Point, however, having analysed the types of query, including whether they can be serviced by on-demand knowledge articles, we estimate that 70% of these queries could be resolved via a chatbot, and their removal as part of the digital shift in front line IT Support will form part of the objective for delivering a financially sustainable, affordable and efficient service that reduces our operating costs and delivers value for our stakeholders.

What sources of information/ data, or who have you identified to help explore potential equalities impacts?

Amanda Barson

Lucy Scott

Data from IT Online

Service Desk Staff

Campus Support Staff

Info Point Staff

Library Services Staff

Student Union

Student Reps

Examples include: External or Sector data/research, Staffing Statistics, Student or Staff Networks, specific stakeholders.

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.

**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**

|  | Possible Positive Impact on Groups Include relevant data if possible | Possible Negative Impact on Groups Include relevant data if possible | Actions Required | Responsible Person | Target date | Success indicators | Progress to date |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| All (possible impacts affecting many groups) |  | There will be no ITS staff on hand to help students with Laptop Locker issues when the Advice Points close. | Put in place a process for Library Staff to log device related issues to ITS. There will need to be clear signage to advise students they can approach library staff with IT Issues, and clear guidance for library staff on how to direct the students to the correct channels. Potentially move Frenchay Lockers to 2D, this will require ample signposting and consideration given to accessibility. |  |  |  |  |
| All (possible impacts affecting many groups) |  | Chatbot software may not be accessible to all users. | Ensure software complies with UWE guidance.Should be platform agnostic.Users accessing chatbot on own device, should be able to be navigated and used by keyboard alone, not just touchscreen and/or mouse. Carry out Equality Analysis for new software or web interfaces.  |  |  |  |  |
| All (possible impacts affecting many groups) |  | Students who require in-person support may find their issues take longer to resolve due to appointment booking times.  | Provide same day appointments when applicable.Chatbot / Self Service Touch Screens need to be easy to access and give clear and accurate answers. Ensure the process for transferring a student from Chatbot to assisted support is seamless. Consider how the appointment model can be resourced to provide quick appointments for situations where there is a student experiencing difficulty in explaining the problem/issue, or a member of staff experiencing difficulty in understanding the problem/issue. |  |  |  |  |
| Age (older people, younger people) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Disability, including mental health and non-visible disabilities |  | Staff and student communication modes and preferences, neurodiversity, mental health etc may lead staff and students to be more comfortable in face to face communication. | Complete EIA with specific focus on communication modes to support those with specific preferences and needs. Speak to Martin Hoskins about how we can support students and staffTraining or buddying for staff who would benefit during the shift to the new IT support operating model.  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Staff and student communication modes and preferences, neurodiversity, mental health etc may lead staff and students to be more comfortable in a virtual communication channel. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Some disabled students may benefit by interacting with digital services. AI is recognised as helping neurodivergent people for example. <https://neurobox.co.uk/how-ai-chatbot-tools-help-neurodiverse-people>. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Some disabled students may have difficulties articulating verbally, and may require a face to face interaction to effectively communicate their IT Issues. | Easy transition between chatbot and Assisted Support. Assisted Support staff are already skilled in managing these instances.  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Self Service Touch ScreensMay be physically inaccessible for some users, including wheelchair users. Touch screen interfaces may be inaccessible to those with motor conditions or visual impairmentsAudible prompts may be inaccessible for those with a hearing impairment Visual prompts may be inaccessible to those with a visual impairmentSome users may struggle to or avoid using self service touch screens if they are in a position which is too busy or noisy. | Self Service Touch ScreensEnsure adequate signposting to request help to use the Self Service Touch Screens, and investigate wheelchair user friendly experience.Accessibility of touch screen interfaces could be factored into testing to assess the requirement for alternative devices and/or a keyboard option.Consider those with visual impairments when exploring the design of the touch screens. Eg. Size and colour of fonts used, lighting around touch screens, screen reader compatible, can the interface speak to them, are there audible prompts that may not have a visual equivalent? Is there an option for voice interaction with CoPilot intelligent bot?Videos should be captioned.Positioning of self service touch screens should vary so that some are in quieter spots.  |  |  |  |  |
| Women and men |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Trans and non-binary people, including gender reassignment |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marriage and/or civil partnership |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pregnancy and/or maternity, including Adoption |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Race, including ethnicity and citizenship |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religion and/or belief, including those without religion and/or belief |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sexual orientation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other specific group (e.g., International or Access) | **Students with English as a second language** may prefer to use digital channels as it may be less stressful to use a translator App with these channels. | **Students with English as a second language** may struggle to effectively communicate IT issues through digital channels. Advice Point staff often play a key role in de-cyphering issues.  | **Students with English as a second language.** Ensure that options for connecting students to support via a video call is still an easy option for those who require support. Appointments for face to face assistance is still an option.IT Advice and the channels within which it is available should use plain language and accessible formats in order to support groups to navigate the system and find and implement the answer they are looking for. |  |  |  |  |

Project manager next steps

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))

* 3 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?

* Data collected via ITOnline and Chatbot, feedback from Customer Support team, student surveys,

When will you review this Equality Analysis? Enter date or project stage suitable to the proposal:

* Initial review will take place after the 3 week consultation has closed in order to act on feedback received. Subsequent reviews will take place at each stage of the implementation of the proposals up until BAU has been reached.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity Team Review

The EDI Team has reviewed this Equality Analysis and is satisfied that it is ready for formal consultation

EDI representative: Vicky Swinerd Date: 30 Jan 2025

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: Alistair Sandford, Director of Operations

Faculty/ Department/ Service: IT Services

Date: 30/01/2025

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 EDI Team by emailing** **edi@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.**