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**Equality Impact Assessment**

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| **Question** | **Response** |
| 1. **Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed** | Change of UKRI training grant terms and conditions to enable recruitment of international students, up to 30 % of the total in any academic year for most UKRI training grants. |
| 1. **Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event** | To provide an updated position on the eligibility of international students for UKRI support now that there is no separate position for EU students.  To allow Research Organisations to use UKRI funding to attract and support the most able international students, but with a 30 % limit to ensure continuity of support for home students too. |
| 1. **What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)* | The policy change was agreed at UKRI Executive Committee. The implementation details have been developed by the Research Careers Network (RCN) and tested with the Research Organisation Consultation Group. |
| 1. **Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?** | Students looking for UKRI support for doctoral work and Research Organisations who hold UKRI training grants. |
| 1. **What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?** | Collection of information on students through the Je-S students portal and through Research Councils’ annual monitoring. A review is proposed in 2022-2023. |

**Measures in the policy implementation**

This policy revision opens up more UKRI funding for doctoral students to international students, setting a limit of 30 % in most cases. It builds on the position where Councils set their own limits.

Currently, EU students may be supported with fees only, but with this policy revision, they will be included under the provisions for international students and receive support for both fees and stipend.

For some Councils, including for EPSRC which funds the largest number of doctoral students, the new limit of 30 % international students will be similar in terms of numbers to the current position of 10 % open eligibility and fees-only for EU students.

UKRI will only support fees at the home level. Research Organisations may not use UKRI funding to pay the higher international student fees, but Research Organisations can top up fees from the UK to the international level using other sources of funding, including from the student. Alternatively, the international level fee could be waived.

**Summary of issues that may lead to disadvantage**

Overall, this policy change is more inclusive, providing the opportunity of UKRI funding for students from all over the world. However, there are many international doctoral students in the UK already and we are unsure how this policy change will impact on the students supported and not supported with UKRI funding.

The new element is the potential need for students to find international student fees and the potential for Research Organisations to see benefit in having international students bringing in international-level fees to provide more income.

There may be disadvantage to international students who cannot pay the top-up to international fees, or UK students who do not receive UKRI funding because Research Organisations prefer to recruit international students where higher fees are paid. We have set out in the Training Grant Terms and Conditions that the ability to pay the international fees must not be part of the recruitment decision.

Given the uncertainty over the impacts, we recommend that UKRI carries out a detailed review of the impact on equality, diversity and inclusion after two intakes of students (Autumn 2021 and Autumn 2022).

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| **Protected Characteristic Group** | **Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?** | **Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used** |
| **Disability** | Positive | Disabled Students Allowance is available to Research Council supported students. This change allows for international students to also be supported through the DSA framework. |
| **Gender reassignment** | None identified |  |
| **Marriage or civil partnership** | Negative | There may be possible issues with international relocation of a student’s partner. |
| **Pregnancy and maternity** | Negative | Possible issues for international students in relation to maternity leave provisions and visa regulations. |
| **Race** | Need to monitor | Possible advantage with more international students now eligible to benefit from UKRI funding but would need to monitor to check that UK minority ethnic students are not disadvantaged. |
| **Religion or belief** | Positive | The UK provides a more inclusive legal environment than some countries. |
| **Sexual orientation** | Positive | The UK provides a more inclusive legal environment than some countries. |
| **Sex (gender)** | Negative | Top-up funding for international fees potentially less likely to be available for women students if their culture is not supportive of women continuing into doctoral education |
| **Age** | Positive | More opportunity for students later in their careers. |

**Evaluation:**

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| **Final Decision:** | **Tick the relevant box** | **Include any explanation / justification required** |
| 1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will **proceed**. |  |  |
| 1. You can decide to **stop** the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups |  |  |
| 1. You can **adapt or change** the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias | X | UKRI has included that the ability to pay international student fees must not be part of the recruitment decision.  Given the uncertainty of the impacts of this change, detailed monitoring is recommended. |
| 1. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to **proceed with caution** with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision. |  |  |

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| **Will this EIA be published\* Yes/Not required**  (\*EIA’s should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events: | **Yes** |
| **Date completed:** | **17 September 2020** |
| **Review date** (if applicable): |  |

**Change log**

| **Name** | **Date** | **Version** | **Change** |
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| RCN | When published | 1 |  |