Gender Impact Assessment Procedure

Policy code:	HR2112
Policy owner:	Director, People and Culture
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Purpose

The Gender Impact Assessment procedure provides guidance to all Federation employees on when and how to complete a gender impact assessment (GIA) when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public.

This is a mandatory requirement for all defined entities* under the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020.

The Gender Equality Act specifies that a gender impact assessment must:

- **Assess** how the policy, program or service will affect people of different genders.
- **Explain** how you will design or change the policy, program or service to better meet the needs of people of different genders, and how it will address gender inequality and promote gender equality.
- **Apply an intersectional approach**, taking into consideration other aspects of identity, including Aboriginality; age; disability; ethnicity; gender identity: race; religion and sexual orientation.

The aim of gender impact assessments is to create better and fairer outcomes and ensure all people have equal access to opportunities and resources.

The benefits of gender impact assessments include:

- Improved policy making and service delivery, ensuring the needs of different cohorts are not inadvertently overlooked.

- Better use of resources through a consultative and equitable decision-making process.
- Challenging the perpetuation of gender norms within decision-making.

***Defined entities** applies to certain organisations that have 50 or more employees, including the public sector, **universities**, and local councils.

Scope

This procedure applies to any Federation policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public.

Legislative Context

- the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020

Definitions

Term	Definition
Gender	The characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles, as well as relationships with each other.
Gender identity	Gender identity refers to a person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female or neither male nor female.
Intersectionality	Gender inequality may be compounded by the 'intersection' of other aspects of a person's identity, such as Aboriginality, age, ability, gender identity, ethnicity, race, religion and sexual orientation.
Policy	For the purposes of this procedure, policies requiring a gender impact assessment will mostly be external-facing policies aimed at the general public (for example students, clients, customers). Examples might include a student complaints procedure, a recruitment policy or privacy policy. For the purposes of this procedure, 'policy' may also refer to a 'procedure, 'strategy', 'framework' or 'plan'.
Program	For the purposes of this procedure, a program is an initiative or project that has a defined duration and set of deliverables. A program is geared towards accomplishing a major goal or set of goals or outcomes. For example, development of a new student wellbeing program, building of new infrastructure or a facility refurbishment.
Public	For the purposes of this procedure, the public includes: • current, past and potential students • users, customers and/or clients of our campuses, facilities and services • partners of Federation, including research and industry partners • members of the communities in which our campuses are located. • visitors to our campuses and sites.

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Service	For the purposes of this procedure, a service includes any service that is provided to the public, for example: childcare, health care, safety, student services, libraries, recreation and other public facilities.

Procedure

1. Determine if a gender impact assessment is required

i)   The GIA decision matrix

In accordance with the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020, a gender impact assessment is required when reviewing or developing a policy, program or service with a **direct and significant impact** on the public.

Use the following matrix to determine whether a policy, program or service has a direct and significant impact on the public (including potential and current students):

FACTOR		SCORE
Target audience	Will this policy, program or service indirectly or directly impact the public and/or our students? (*Scoring: 1 = no impact, 2 = indirect impact, 3 = direct impact*)	
Number of people	How many people do you estimate will be impacted by this policy, program or service? (*Scoring: 1 = 0 – 10, 2 = 11 – 50, 3 = 50+*)	
Nature of impact	Will this policy, program or service impact on marginalized groups or a specific community/location in our area? (*Scoring: 1 = no, 2 = possibly/not sure, 3 = yes*)	
Duration / Time	What is the total duration of this policy, program or service? (*Scoring: 1 = one-off / less than a day, 2 = occasionally, 3 = ongoing*)	
Total	_____ out of a maximum score of 12.	

The table below indicates the scale to which you should conduct your gender assessment:

TOTAL SCORE	GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?	RECOMMENDATION

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4 – 5	**No**	Indirect and low impact on the public and/or our students.
6 – 9	**Recommended**	Moderately direct and medium level impact on the public and/or our students.
10 - 12	**Yes**	Direct and significant impact on the public and/or our students.

ii)   Advise the People Consultancy team of the outcome of your GIA decision matrix.

- If a gender impact assessment is **not** required for your PPS, please complete Step 1 of the GIA template and return to od@federation.edu.au
- If a gender impact assessment is **recommended** for your PPS, contact the People and Consultancy team for further advice.
- If a gender impact assessment is **required** for your PPS, follow the procedure below to assist you in completing the full GIA template.

2. Define the purpose of your PPS and challenge assumptions regarding its impact.

i)   Identify the purpose

In this step you will:

- Identify the issues that your policy, program or service is aiming to address.
- Consider how gender and intersectionality might shape your policy, program or service (PPS).

Ask yourself, why is this policy, program or service needed? Who is the target group for your PPS?

Document the purpose and target group for your PPS in Step 2, section i) of the GIA template.

ii)   Identify the potential impact and challenge assumptions

We often make assumptions about how an initiative or action will affect certain groups of women, men and gender diverse people based on gendered stereotypes. These assumptions can affect how our understanding of who might benefit from or be disadvantaged by your PPS. Accordingly, this step requires you to challenge the assumptions underpinning your PPS in terms of gender and intersectionality.

Consider for example:

- Are the people who are targeted and impacted by the PPS included in the decision-making?
- Do you think that everyone who accesses this PPS has the same needs from it?
- Do the different social roles and responsibilities that people take on affect the way people access and use this PPS?
- What additional needs might there be for people with disabilities, different cultural identities, varying socio-economic status, ages, gender identities, sexual orientations or religions?

GIA TIP: The best way to challenge gender-based assumptions is to consult with people from different backgrounds with a diverse range of professional and life experiences.

Document your purpose and points for consideration regarding impact in Step 2, section ii) of the GIA template.

3. Understand your context by collecting evidence

i)   Identify evidence needed

In this step, you will collect evidence to understand how gender and intersectional factors may shape your PPS.

To begin with, identify *what* evidence you might need, then work out *how* and *where* to obtain the evidence. Finally, document the findings from your research into potential gender-based and intersectional issues or needs that you will factor into the development or review of your PPS.

In determining what evidence or data you may need, consider:

- *Who is likely to be affected by your PPS?*

Think about the target group for your PPS and other diverse groups who are likely to be affected. What proportion of the affected population are likely to be:

• Women	• From different age groups
• Men	• Living with disability
• Other gender identities	• From differing cultural or socio-economic groups

- *What are the lived experiences of these diverse groups?*

For example, do they all have the same rates of employment, social expectations and responsibilities, education, disposable income, education, language needs, accessibility and safety needs?

- *What different impacts may be likely for different people?*

Considering the lived experiences of these diverse groups, how might this influence when, how and why they might access or use your PPS, and how might it impact their ability to access and use your PPS?

Document the evidence you have identified you need Step 3, section i) of the GIA template.

ii)   Collect evidence

Whilst you may already have existing research and data available to help you understand the context for your PPS, you may need to seek further information and evidence to assist you in completing a thorough GIA.

How you go about collecting evidence will depend on your available resources and time, as well as the reach and impact of your PPS. If your PPS is small and discrete, you may not require in-depth information in all areas.

There are three main sources of evidence:

- Internal data
- Desktop research
- Stakeholder engagement

Internal data

Consider what data is already available within Federation, for example, research reports, project evaluation reports, complaints data, customer data and consultation reports.

Disaggregated data broken down by sex, gender, race, age, ability, cultural background and / or socio-economic factors will be the most useful in helping assess the impact of your PPS.

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Desktop research

You can also search existing research online for information relevant to your PPS.

The Gender Equality Commission hosts a webpage of data sources for conducting a gender impact assessment. This includes data relating to society, economics, safety, health, sport and recreation, urban design, sustainability, education and grants and procurement.

The Gender Equality Commission also has a webpage dedicated to insights and research into the state and nature of gender inequality across Victoria's public sector.

The Victorian Women's Health Atlas is a tool developed by Women's Health Victoria as a tool to assist in the identification of gender impacts on key health areas, including socioeconomic factors and other intersectional factors such as age, indigenous status, and ethnicity.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics also has gender indicators on key economic and social indicators comparing males and females including gender pay gap and life expectancy. They also provide useful data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Australia's LGBTIQ+ population.

Federation University has a live report on our higher education student demographics which can be filtered by Institute and a range of other factors.

Federation University has a live report on our TAFE student demographics which can be filtered by Centre and a range of other factors.

GIA TIP: Your local council may also have data and resources that can help you understand the context in which your policy, program or service will be utilized by different groups within your community. Here are a few resources to get you started:

- *City of Ballarat: Intercultural Competence Trainers Manual*
- *Ballarat Community Directory*
- *Horsham Community Directory*
- *Grampians Region: Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE)*
- *Taking action to end violence against women (CoRE)*
- *City of Casey: Community resources and supports*
- *City of Casey Community Directory*
- *Women's Health in the South East (WHISE)*
- *Latrobe City Council Community Group Directory*
- *Latrobe City Council Cultural Diversity Action Plan 2020-2024*
- *Gippsland Women's Health*

Stakeholder engagement

It's important to actively seek out the knowledge, perspectives and experience of women, men and gender diverse groups on *all* PPS, not just initiatives targeted at them. Remember to consider the varying needs of your stakeholders when planning your engagement approach, to ensure that everyone is given an opportunity and support to participate.

Check with People and Culture to find out about specific gender equality groups or networks at Federation that you could consult with, such as Women in STEMM, or LGBTIQA+. You could also contact your local council for information on community groups that could be consulted, such as LGBTIQA+ advisory committees, youth services organisations or cultural associations.

Document the sources of evidence you have used in need Step 3, section ii) of the GIA template.

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iii) Document your findings

Summarise the potential gender-based and intersectional issues or needs you have identified through your research that you will factor into the development or review of your PPS.

Document your findings in Step 3, section iii) of the GIA template.

4. Analyse your options

i)   Describe your policy options

The Gender Equality Act requires you to show how your PPS will meet the needs of persons of different genders; address gender inequality; and promote gender equality.

In this step you will:

- Describe your policy options
- Describe the gendered benefits and costs of each option
- Assess the overall gender impact of each option
- Assess the intersectional impact of each option

Using the information you have gathered in the earlier steps, develop options for your PPS. For each option, describe the solution, the aim of what you are trying to achieve and the target group. If your PPS will have a major impact, identify at least two options. For smaller impacts, focus on one option.

ii) Describe the gendered benefits and costs of each option

Use your analysis and research from the previous steps to identify the gendered benefits and costs of your proposed PPS options. Consider the benefits and costs of each option, including how they may help or hinder people of all genders. All describe how each option will help to address gender inequality and promote gender equality.

iii) Assess the overall gender impact of each option

Reflect on the cost and benefit analysis for each option. Do the benefits outweigh the costs, or the costs / risks for some groups of people outweigh the benefits? Rate each option as being either negative, neutral or positive gender impact, using the table below to assist you in your rating:

Overall gender impact:

Overall gender impact		
	positive	**negative or neutral**
	Considers gender norms, roles and relations for people of different genders and how they affect access to and control over resources.	Perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing unbalanced norms, roles and relations.
	Promotes the elimination or reduction of existing gender gaps.	Privileges men over women and gender diverse people (or vice versa).

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	Addresses the causes of gender-based health inequities, including the prevention of gender-based violence.	Ignores differences in opportunities and resource allocation for people of different genders.
	Includes ways to transform harmful gender norms, roles and relations.	Does not consider intersectionality.

iv)   Assess the intersectional impact of each option

Review your analysis and research from the previous steps to identify the possible benefits and costs to other diverse groups within your community who may access or use your PPS.

Document your option(s), together with their gendered benefits and costs and a summary of their overall gender impact and intersectional consideration in Step 4 of the GIA template.

5. Make recommendations

The final step in the gender impact assessment process is to make a final recommendation based on your analysis. Provide a rationale for the proposed recommendation and include any mitigation strategies that could be used to avoid any harmful unintended outcomes.

Document your recommendation, rationale and mitigation strategies in Step 5 of the GIA form.

Supporting Documents

- Federation University Reconciliation Action Plan
- Accessibility Action Plan 2024-2026 (PDF, 1.4MB)
- Respectful and Inclusive Communities Action Plan 2024-2026 (PDF, 1.6MB)
- Policy Governance Framework Procedure

Forms.

- GIA Template (DOCX 216.2kb)

Responsibility

- Chief Operating Officer (as the Approval Authority) is responsible for *monitoring* the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this procedure.
- Director, People and Culture (as the Document Owner) is responsible for maintaining the content of this procedure as delegated by the Approval Authority.

Promulgation

- This procedure will be placed on the University's Policy Central website, under People and Culture.
- Announcement of this procedure (and subsequent updates) will be made via internal communication including FedNews, Fed Engage, staff email.
- Additional information and training sessions provided by People and Culture to stakeholders.

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Records Management

Document title	Location	Responsible officer	Minimum retention period
Gender Impact Assessment	People and Culture	Director, People and Culture	Seven years