



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Equality Outcomes 2021-2025



Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The University of Edinburgh has a strong and long-standing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and to promoting a positive environment, which ensures fairness, challenges prejudice, and celebrates difference. Our staff and students are our greatest strength and inspiration and all members of the University community should expect to be able to excel, to be respected and valued for their unique perspectives and contributions. We promote equity and social justice, seeking to remove structural barriers, eliminate discrimination and create an inclusive culture. We do this through visibly mainstreaming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all that we do and encourage all staff and students to engage in these efforts.

The University is a proud holder of an AdvanceHE Athena SWAN Institutional Silver award, the first and only University in Scotland to hold this level of award, which recognises our work to address gender equality in higher education. We are committed members of the AdvanceHE Race Equality Charter, and we have an ambitious action plan to progress race equality and anti-racism throughout our institution. We are also recognised as a Stonewall Diversity Champion and a Carer Positive Employer, and have many active equality-related staff/student networks and committees.

This document sets out the University's Equality Outcomes for the period 30 April 2021– 29 April 2025. These Outcomes align with the University's Strategy 2030 and reflect the University's priorities with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Outcomes will form part of, and be supported by, a full and bold action plan with the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee taking responsibility for its development, monitoring and review on behalf of the University Executive.

Context

Under the Equality Act 2010, the University is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and must – in all its activities – have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The 'protected characteristics' defined by the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The PSED is underpinned by additional, devolved, specific duties. The Scottish specific duties came into force in May 2012 and require the University to publish equality reports every two years from April 2013, and a set of equality outcomes every four years. Equality Outcomes are broad results that will be achieved as a consequence of targeted actions to improve equality. The University published its previous set of Equality Outcomes in April 2017 covering the period 2017-2021 and reported progress in achieving these in April 2019.

Development of the Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

Our Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 have been identified and shaped by:

- Review of the previous set of Equality Outcomes 2017-2021 and progress;
- A desk-based research and evidence review, including consideration of: responses to staff and student surveys; statistical equality data; recommendations from Thematic and other internal reviews; and external research and reports on persistent inequalities and discrimination in the Higher Education sector;
- Priority-setting consultation with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee;
- Cognisance of national priorities such as tackling gender-based violence and racial harassment;
- Alignment with University strategic priorities, the Scottish Funding Council Outcome Agreement, and existing initiatives/activities across the University;
- Guidance from Equality & Human Rights Commission, and Advance HE on developing equality outcomes.

The Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 were developed in consultation with the University EDI Committee, and approved by University Executive on 23 March 2021 and University Court on 26 April. The set of outcomes cover all of the protected characteristics and all three needs of the PSED, and are underpinned by targeted actions and measures to achieve the outcomes and evaluate their impact.

Outcome 1: Our staff and students feel confident and are supported to report harassment, hate crime and gender-based violence.

Protected characteristics: All

Evidence includes: UUK report *'Changing the Culture'*, EHRC report *'Tackling Racial Harassment in UK Universities'*, Thematic Review of Support for BME Students, staff and students' complaints data, and the Taskforce on Tackling Sexual Violence.

Actions

We will:

- Embed the Report & Support platform for the reporting of gender-based violence, expand this to encompass reporting of racial harassment and work to include to all protected characteristics.
- Better understand the experiences of everyday discrimination and harassment of our BAME staff and students including through a dedicated survey.
- Review the adequacy of relevant policies, procedures and provision of support to those who have been subject to harassment, hate crime and gender-based violence.
- Improve awareness and understanding of the University's zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harassment and hate crime.
- Develop initiatives to prevent harassment and hate crime, including gender-based violence.

Success measures include:

Increase in staff and students who feel supported to report harassment, hate crime and gender-based violence (measured through Report & Support).

Increase in direct interventions in response to such reporting (measured through Report & Support).

Increase in engagement of men in preventing gender-based violence (impact of White Ribbon Campaign).

Reduction in percentage of staff who report harassment and bullying in our staff experience survey
 Increase in uptake of related EDI training and use of resources.

Outcome 2: Improve access to education, and reduce retention, progression, and attainment gaps for different groups of learners

Protected characteristics: All

Evidence includes: EHRC *'Is Scotland Fairer?'* report, EDMARC *'Undergraduate ethnicity'* Spotlight report, Sense of Belonging Task Group report *'Fostering a Sense of Belonging at our University'*, Disability Services Review.

Actions

We will:

- Undertake and improve our systematic monitoring of relevant data for different equality groups, with an initial focus on disability and race/ethnicity.
- Embed EDI within the programme of Curriculum Transformation, alongside work to improve inclusivity and accessibility of the learning environment, approaches to assessment, and the student learning experience.
- Develop a strong sense of belonging among our students, embedding the guidance from the Sense of Belonging Task Group.
- Advance equality of experience for disabled students through continuous improvements to the physical and digital estate, infrastructure, and the implementation of learning adjustments.
- Attract students from a wider range of backgrounds including through scholarships and financial assistance.

Success measures include:

Reduction in identified access, retention, progression and attainment gaps (EDMARC reports and spotlights).

Strategy and action plan to mainstream EDI in process of Curriculum Transformation.

Increase in inclusivity and sense of belonging (student surveys).

Improvement in experience of disabled students (student survey).

Increased diversity in student body from current baseline (EDMARC reports).

Increase in scholarships for different equality groups.

Outcome 3: Increase the diversity of staff, including at senior grades, in leadership roles and on key decision-making bodies.

Protected characteristics: All

Evidence includes: EDMARC Staff reports, Equal Pay Audits.

Actions

We will:

- Increase staff disclosure of protected characteristics through awareness raising, improved communications and the introduction of self-service for employee personal data.
- Undertake and improve our systematic monitoring of staff data for different equality groups,
- Publish biennial Equal Pay Audits reporting pay gap by gender, ethnicity and disability.

- Improve information and guidance to managers on achieving diversity in recruitment process.
- Advance the use of positive actions to promote diversity in our staff.
- Review the adequacy of executive search frameworks for promoting diversity.
- Seek opportunities to promote the University as an employer of choice to underrepresented groups, including our local communities.
- Improve diversity on key decision making bodies through positive actions and leadership development.

Success measures include:

Increase in staff disclosure through self-service employee personal data (EDMARC reports; People and Money audit)

Reduction in gender, ethnicity, disability pay gaps (biennial reporting)

Increase in diversity amongst newly recruited staff (HR data review)

Increase in diversity of members of key decision making bodies at different levels.

Outcome 4: Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is actively promoted throughout pandemic recovery and negative impacts are mitigated.**Protected characteristics:** All

Evidence includes: COVID-19 strategic Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), Staff Surveys June & Dec 2020, EqIAs in the ART groups and other evidence gathering (e.g. focus groups with ECRs conducted by ART Research); student surveys; educational outcomes.

Actions

We will:

- Support Early Career Researchers negatively impacted by COVID-19 to maintain career momentum.
- Support PhD students negatively impacted by COVID-19
- Ensure the academic promotions process takes cognisance of COVID-19 impacts on productivity, workload and personal circumstances.
- Develop a hybrid working model which meets the needs of all staff across all protected characteristics.
- Ensure future hybrid learning and teaching is accessible to all.
- Enhance support for student and staff mental health and wellbeing.

Success measures include:

No disadvantage to ECRs or PhD students with protected characteristics in retention or progression (HR data).

No disadvantage to staff with protected characteristics through promotions process (HR data).

Future working and education practices support inclusion and accessibility (staff and student surveys).

Increase in availability and uptake of mental health and well-being support.

Increase in positive staff and student experience (staff and student surveys).

How we will deliver on our Equality Outcomes

The Outcomes will be supported by a full action plan, measures to achieve these outcomes and an evaluation of their impact. The University's EDI Committee will oversee development, monitoring and review, reporting progress to the University Executive. Specific actions will be held by relevant budget holders across the institution.

To deliver on our Outcomes we will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in all that we do.

We will:

- Publish annual statistical reports, and provide access to data to support the progression of equality, diversity and inclusion across the institution.
- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion principles are embedded in our governance, strategic planning, and day-to-day activity.
- Promote understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the University community by expanding provision and improving take-up of training, learning opportunities and range of resources.
- Promote the effective use of Equality Impact Assessment in governance, decision-making, policy and practice across the University.
- Publish a progress report by 30 April 2023, and review our outcomes no later than 30 April 2025.

References

Is Scotland Fairer?, Equality & Human Rights Commission 2018

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www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2016/changing-the-culture.pdf

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www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thematicreview2018-19-bme-students-finalreport.pdf

Undergraduate ethnicity Spotlight report, The University of Edinburgh Equality Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee (EDMARC) 2020

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/edmarc_ethnicity_spotlight_report.pdf

EDMARC Staff reports

www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/reports/edmarc

The University of Edinburgh Equal Pay Audits

www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/reports/equal-pay

www.ed.ac.uk

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