

Cardiff
University
Strategic
Equality Plan
Annual
Report

March 2022

For the reporting period of March 2020-21

This document is available on-line at: [Annual monitoring report - Public information - Cardiff University](#)

It is also available in alternative formats, e.g., hard copy, Braille, large print, audio on request. Should you or someone you know require this in an alternative format, please contact Compliance and Risk on 02920 870230, email Complianceandrisk@cardiff.ac.uk

If you have any questions or feedback relating to the information contained in this report, please contact complianceandrisk@cardiff.ac.uk

A Welsh version of this document is also available.

Contents

Section 1 – Introduction		3
Section 2 – Identifying, collecting and using relevant information		4
Section 3 – Progress with Our Objectives		10
Objective 1	A University that supports an inclusive student journey through recruitment, admissions, wellbeing and learning environment.	11
Objective 2	Creating a staff environment where we improve the diversity of our recruitment and enable our staff to progress and develop in a supportive environment.	15
Objective 3	Creating an inclusive University culture based on building and maintaining relationships.	18
Objective 4	Creating an accessible physical and digital environment that is responsive and supportive to individual needs.	19
Objective 5	Enhancing governance structures and committee membership, in addition to establishing assurance processes to support adherence to the legal, ethical and professional standards,	20

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Progress on Strategic Equality Plan actions
- Appendix 2 Student data
- Appendix 3 Staff data

Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report

1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 Introduction and background

Under the Specific Duties for Wales of the Equality Act 2010 the University (as a public body) is legally required to develop a Strategic Equality Plan and produce an annual monitoring report by 31st March each year for the previous year.

The annual monitoring report must contain progress statements including:

- the steps taken to identify and collect relevant information.
- how the institution has used the information.
- the reasons for not collecting any relevant information.
- a statement about the effectiveness of the arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information and the steps taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives.
- the progress that the institution has made to fulfil each of its equality objectives.
- a statement on the effectiveness of the steps that the authority has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives.
- specified employment information, including information on training and pay (unless it has already published this information elsewhere).

Cardiff University's Strategic Equality Plan outlines its Objectives and Action Plan for achieving the equality objectives for the period of 2020-2024. This report gives an overview of the progress for the legal reporting period of 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021 on actions set out in the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020-24.

Some of the progress reported against actions also relates to the current academic year (2021-22). The Strategic Equality Action Plan is presented in Appendix 1, providing more detailed information on progress with actions.

Section 2 - Identifying, collecting and using relevant information

2.1 The steps taken to identify and collect relevant information

Monitoring data for the diversity profile of both staff and students are collated on an annual basis and form part of the University's Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report.

Following a data gap analysis during a previous Strategic Equality Plan (2012-16) the University developed data reports for the protected characteristics of religion or belief and sexual orientation in addition to existing reports on age, sex, ethnicity and disability. Top level data are also included for gender identity. This does not however provide the same level of data as the other protected characteristics due to lower numbers and the need to ensure that individuals are not identified.

The University's Business Intelligence Team currently supports production of the Student Data for the Annual Monitoring Report as well as providing reporting for Advance HE applications.

Data included in the student monitoring report is based on data downloaded from SIMS and provided to HESA. This is a count of all active registered students unless otherwise stated. All student numbers are rounded to the nearest 5, in order not to identify individual students. The Full Person Equivalent (FPE) figure is used which is different from the Full Time Equivalent where part-time or part year (sandwich etc) students are adjusted, the FTE is often quoted in publications and will be published in HESA open data in spring 2022.

Where possible and meaningful comparator or benchmarking data derived from 2019/20 HESA Open data and HEIDI Equality data has been included. This is the most up-to-date data available. Where three-year trends are visualised, where possible and/or meaningful these are given against the comparator group, benchmark data or, for Welsh Measures other universities in Wales.

Questions on the protected characteristics of staff are incorporated within the e-recruitment system and CORE HR, the University's Management Information System. Staff/employment data reports are produced on an annual basis.

The University acknowledges the importance of collecting staff and student equality monitoring data and has taken a number of steps throughout the monitoring period to encourage disclosure, in particular amongst staff through focused communication with line managers and revision of local induction practices to encourage staff to make declarations.

In order to complement student and staff data reports, the University also reviews disaggregated feedback from staff and student surveys e.g., the National Student Survey (NSS) and the 'Staff Survey'.

2.2 How the institution has used the information;

Staff and student monitoring data are used in a variety of ways to inform progress in line with the equality action plan and to shape additional or new actions as required. Monitoring data reports are also used to inform equality impact assessments and College/School level action plans where appropriate.

Monitoring data reports are reviewed by the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on an annual basis, alongside additional updates throughout the academic year.

Monitoring data reports are also used for the University's Charter Mark applications for example Athena SWAN, Race Equality Charter Mark and the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index applications as a required part of the application process and in order to identify relevant issues of underrepresentation and potential for positive action.

2.3 How we are developing our monitoring and access to our EDI data

The Business Intelligence team have been given an opportunity to work with colleagues experienced in the societal and legal context to EDI data to deliver relevant information and insight to institutional decision makers. The Annual Student Data report provides a high-level annual overview of the institutional and sector landscapes. However, we recognise it is not suitable as a tool for regular progress review or 'deep dives' into the reasons behind institution level trends. Reporting for Advance HE applications provides some 'deep dive' capability but is limited in scope. To address this gap, a suite of new reporting has been specified in agreement with the Dean of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, EDI Committee and colleagues in the University Secretary's Office. This new reporting suite, or EDI Dashboard, aims to provide accurate, relevant, timely information to inform decision making and monitor strategy implementation. It will ensure we meet the baseline information required for our Statutory reporting duties, but it will also allow our Cardiff Data Professionals to access granular data, specific to their needs. Cardiff Data Professionals is a group with members across the University who are in roles or have a professional interest related to data collection or analysis and are all required to undergo specific data protection training before they can access data.

2.4 Data Analysis - Full statistical reports for staff and student data are included in Appendices 2 and 3.

Summary of Student Data

Cardiff is the 11th largest university in the UK and the largest in Wales.

There were 33,508 active students registered at Cardiff University in the academic year 2020/21 (headcount). This equated to 21,070 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE).

UG students consistently and heavily outnumber postgraduate students at the University.

The majority of students are on full-time courses. Cardiff's percentage of part-time students continues to reduce, as do UK and Welsh universities.

Student numbers continue to rise slowly, despite the impact of Covid-19.

The proportion of UG students being awarded First Class Honours at the University has increased year on year, from 19% in 2011/12 to 35% in 2019/20 (1.4). It remains at 35% in 2020/21.

Cardiff has significantly more female than male students, however there are fewer female students undertaking postgraduate research courses.

White students remain the predominant UK group, although this is slowly decreasing. There is a high level of Asian students undertaking PGT, but the majority of these are international students.

The BAME awarding gap is calculated for UK students only and was 10.8% in 2019/20.

HEFCW analysis 2019/20 shows the percentage of students claiming Disabled Student allowance is 4th in Wales, and above both Welsh and UK average. The number of those identifying as disabled was previously low but it is hoped that improved recording will address this differential in 2020/21. It is very positive that the retention of students in receipt of DSA is the best in Wales and above UK average.

Cardiff University has a predominantly young age profile for students, with the majority of UG students being in the under 20 age group.

The percentage of leavers in graduate employment is above Welsh and UK averages and is the highest in Wales.

Staff Data Summary

Sex:

- Of the 7,499 members of staff in post as of 31st March 2021, 56% of all staff were female and 44% male. The proportion of female staff has increased by 1% when previously it had remained at 55% between 2014- 2019.

Ethnicity:

- 9% of all staff identified themselves as being BAME, 81% as White, 2% preferred not to say and 10% had not made a disclosure.
- When nationality is taken into consideration, our international workforce continues to show an increase each year.
- When considering job role 5% of those with a Professional and Support Services role are from a BAME background compared to 13% of those on an Academic contract.

Disability:

- 6% of all staff recorded themselves as being disabled. 12 % selected 'prefer not to say' and 13% were unknown.
- Declaration of disability is lower amongst Academic staff (5%) compared to P&S staff (7%).

Age:

- 33% of all staff fall within the 35-44 age group.
- There is a larger percentage of females to males at the younger age ranges, and a slightly larger percentage of males to females at the older age ranges.

Sexual orientation:

- 58% of staff have recorded their sexual orientation as heterosexual, 1.5% as Bisexual, 2.6% as a Gay/ Lesbian and 0.4% as Other. A further 22.3% preferred not to say.

Religion and Belief:

- Of those who did declare a religion, 11.5% stated that they were Christian, 0.7% stated they were Muslim, 2.1% followed a religion or belief not listed and 11.7% stated that they had no religion. 11.9% of staff had not yet declared religious beliefs, and 11.2% of all staff preferred not to give this information

Reasons for not collecting any relevant information identified but not held

A review of data was carried out in 2013 (this is now reviewed every reporting year) and the following reasons identified for non-collection:

Gender Reassignment

Advice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission indicated that

particular care needs to be taken when monitoring for gender identity and that there are particular problems in relation to the use and publication of this data due to low numbers.

Data relating to Gender Reassignment has been collected from 2014, however only very limited data has been included in the annual report due to the very low numbers involved.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Statistical data in relation to pregnancy and maternity for students is not currently collected. It is recommended that other ways of measuring impact of pregnancy and maternity are sought e.g. via qualitative information.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

It is not recommended that data in relation to marriage and civil partnership are collected for students as this is not a protected characteristic for the further and higher education provisions and therefore does not extend to cover students.

2.5 The effectiveness of the arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information and the steps taken to fulfil each equality objective;

Over the implementation period of the previous Strategic Equality Plan (2012-16), significant efforts were made to collect the relevant equality information following guidance from HEFCW and the Equality Challenge Unit (Advance HE). This resulted in a large amount of data being made available and work is ongoing to ensure that data sets are available to all who need them throughout the University in a format which is meaningful in order to inform a variety of activities. Discussions are also taking place to refine the information which we collect and analyse. For this reporting period, student data sources have been aligned with those used to gather Athena SWAN management information, which will help to improve consistency going forward.

Information on the steps taken to fulfil each of the equality objectives are contained within the action plan updates and annual monitoring reports and are summarised in Section 3.

Section 3 – Progress with Our Objectives

3.1 A summary of initiatives and activities undertaken to progress the overall objectives of the Strategic Equality Plan is given below. A full progress report is included in Appendix 1.

This update provides an overview of progress on meeting actions and Objectives during the first to final year of the 2020-2024 Strategic Equality Plan. A full report of progress with the Action Plan and Objectives is included in the Annual Monitoring Report 2021 that is published on the University's website: [Annual monitoring report - Public information - Cardiff University](#)

3.2 Summary of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activity in response to the COVID pandemic

At the outset of the pandemic, the Vice-Chancellor established a task force to oversee all aspects of re-opening the University and its day-to-day business during the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

At an early stage, the taskforce acknowledged that the pandemic could have a disproportionate impact upon groups who share protected characteristics. The taskforce supported an institutional approach to the completion of Equality (and Welsh Language) Impact Assessments (EIA) with regard to the policy and process decisions being made in response to the pandemic. This has not only ensured that assessments have been carried out but that they have been conducted by senior officers directly involved in the decision-making groups put together in response to the pandemic. This has enabled the groups to establish common issues across the different areas of the University. An EIA database has been set up to ensure officers can access existing assessments to ensure that issues and mitigating action that were established and resolved in some of the earliest assessments, have been quickly picked up in meetings or in later/ongoing assessments.

The University also initiated a project, 'Our Stories, a Listening Project: equalities impacts of COVID-19', to explore the impact of the pandemic on staff, taking account of intersectionality and looking at how they could be supported. The project initially called for staff to share their stories for the University to listen and understand their experiences in order to help develop outcomes and ways in which staff can be supported. The information will be used to develop toolkits and enhance processes and procedures although it is acknowledged that other activities may be introduced as analysis is undertaken.

The pandemic has had a significant impact upon the University's ability to deliver our Action Plan 2019-20 and 2020-21. However, the Equality Impact Assessments captured how much work the University has put into ensuring the safety and well-being of all students and staff, and to ensure that students have not been disadvantaged by COVID-19, and able to carry on or complete their studies. This has resulted in work that has improved Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the University but that would not have been foreseen when our Action Plan was published.

The following summary provides information about progress against each Objective and also includes relevant work that has been carried out in response to the pandemic.

3.3 Objective 1:

A University that supports an inclusive student journey through recruitment, admissions, wellbeing and learning environment.

For the majority of the actions set, progress has been made with achieving the outcomes despite the significant impact of work arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following work has been carried out in 2020/21:

Widening participation – The evaluation plan developed for 2020/21 activity continued to be developed for 2021/22 activity.

Although many community events have been 'on hold' due to the pandemic, the Widening Participation Team continued to run programmes where possible and adapted the formats of events to use an online format where this was possible.

Live Local learn Local ran 10 courses with 91 learners attending and a new project will be launched in Grangetown in 2022. "Parent Power" aims to empower parents to make changes to support their children's future and ensure their children have a fair chance in education and their future careers. Grangetown was chosen to be the focus in order to develop our understanding of the barriers to HE for certain Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups.

Specialist transition support was provided through the Evolve programme to students from the Discovery programme who enrolled at Cardiff University and a new podcast has been developed: University, Autism and You.

Cardiff University continues to be a sponsor of the Iris Prize.

Two new roles have been created within the Widening Participation team in order to further develop previous work on the Widening Participation Strategy. UEB have recently approved the plan to appoint a WP Manager for Diversity and Inclusion. The successful role-holder will take a lead on developing outreach, recruitment and transition support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups.

The Widening Participation Strategy and Evaluation Manager will be working with the Admissions and Marketing teams to develop a Widening Participation data dashboard, which will include actions relating to promoting gender equality, Work is ongoing to develop Widening Participation data as part of the Widening Participation strategy.

Recruitment and Admissions – Due to the impact of the pandemic and changes to the level 2 and 3 awards process, full analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the current contextual admissions policy, which was implemented in 2019, is not possible. This is as a result of decisions made to temporarily change grades and awards to prevent disadvantage to students as a result of the COVID pandemic.

The contextual admissions policy is currently in the scoping stage of a full review. Interim reviews have not indicated any issues with the current policy, but the Admissions

team are committed to a regular review cycle.

Inclusive Curriculum – Significant work has been carried out to recognise and respond to specific requirements, particularly in complying with social distancing.

Progress against actions was slower than anticipated due to the impact of implementing changes due to COVID 19 restrictions and resource shortages within the Cardiff Learning and Teaching Academy, however progress has been made with the following:

- A curriculum Development Officer for Inclusive Curriculum was recruited in May 2021.
- An academic Lead role for Inclusive Curriculum was recruited in September 2021
- A new institutional strategic project on Inclusive Curricula was launched at the start of the 2021/22 academic year. Phase one of the project is focused on scoping and encompasses eight workstreams designed to gain a comprehensive picture of the state of play internally in the University, identifying both areas of good practice and priorities for enhancement, as well as an external search of the sector to help inform and shape thinking (see appendix 1 for an outline summary of the 8 workstreams). An operational group has been established to drive this scoping exercise forward.
- As part of one of the workstreams in the scoping exercise, two pilot projects are currently underway utilising different approaches to enhance the way in which inclusivity is embedded within curriculum design:
 - 1) Maximum Effort is a collaboration between the Learning Academy's Curriculum Design Officer for Inclusivity, and Student Engagement Manager and School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, scoping existing levels of inclusivity across school habitus which impact curriculum design.

- 2) Methods for Inclusive Constructive Alignments (MICA) is a collaboration with a range of new and senior staff in the School of Psychology. The Inclusive Curriculum Design Officer has developed a research/ evidence-based method to aid lecturers with augmenting learning delivery to support student engagement with sensitive material and enhance overall engagement.

Addressing differential student attainment and retention – Progress has been made with the University’s actions relating to attainment and retention in line with the Strategic Equality Plan actions. Although the actions were marked as complete in 2020, work has continued to be developed further in this area in 2021/22. The ‘Senior Staff Engagement: An Active Approach to Race Equality’ task and finish group was delivered in July 2021. Cardiff University is in the process of developing its Cardiff University Race Equality Action Plan which will be underpinned by the School Level Action plans currently under development.

The ‘Race Access and Success’ project took place from February 2021 - November 2021. This is a HEFCW funded enhancement project run in partnership with Advance HE aimed at ensuring the progression of an anti-racist future in higher education in Wales. The project is being led across all Welsh HEIs and the lead facilitator is resourced by Cardiff University. All universities taking part have either signed up to the Race Equality Charter Mark or have proposed timeframes to apply.

Supporting the wellbeing of students with protected characteristics –

Providing support services to students in response to COVID-19 and pivoting services to remote delivery have continued to be a priority in 2021. Additional challenges during this period were the implementation of the new case management system in June 2021 and the occupation and transition into the Centre for Student Life.

Additional services were provided for students since December 2020 which included the Cardiff Aspire Scheme, which awarded disabled students a grant of £350 to spend on additional study resources. The scheme was resourced from additional HEFCW COVID

funding. Student Life also established a Support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students working group in 2021-22. The group will share plans and collaborate on developing support for ethnic minority students. The evaluation of the LGBTQ+ and Allies accommodation for first year accommodation in halls of residence was deemed as a success and this has been extended to 2021/22 and will be available in subsequent years.

3.4 Objective 2:

Creating a staff environment where we improve the diversity of our recruitment and enable our staff to progress and develop in a supportive environment.

Staff Recruitment -

Significant progress has been made with Objective 2 in spite of the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on recruitment. Recruitment controls have only recently been lifted and this has meant that work in this area has not yet been able to meet the specific outcomes agreed for each action. In particular, actions 14 and 15 focus on analysis of applicant data but this has been limited during the period of the period of recruitment controls. However, work has continued to be undertaken, particularly with regards to ensuring the diverse composition of interview panels.

The Race Equality Steering Group with support from the ED&I Committee and UEB, has introduced an initiative to encourage recruiters to think more about the ethnic diversity of their interview panels. A pilot programme in Spring 2021 found 41% of panels reporting that their composition contained at least one ethnically diverse panel member. A University-wide initiative is planned for 2021/22.

UEB, at a meeting on 16 November 2021 approved the sign up to the Cardiff Jobs Community Compact which will ensure that Cardiff and locally based residents have raised awareness of job/career opportunities at the University. Specific engagement events are also possible as part of this initiative which will follow similar lines to that previously used to support potential applicants.

As of November 2021, 64% of the University community have completed Unconscious Bias training, an improvement of 4% on last year.

Equal Pay and Pay Gap – A 2020 Equal Pay Audit has been completed and shared with Equality in Reward and Trade Unions. The audit was approved at University Executive Board and has now been published, with a further review scheduled for 2023.

Staff Progression and Development - In partnership with Bath, Bristol and Exeter Universities in January 2021 we launched a new programme for BAME females called Elevate. This is externally facilitated and aimed at professional services staff from grades 3-7 and academic staff from grades 5-8. The first cohort have reported finding the programme incredibly beneficial and have provided feedback to senior colleagues on incorporating their learning into the University's work on race and ethnicity.

The University signed up to the revised Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers in November 2020. Over the course of the 2020-21 academic year, we conducted a gap analysis of current institutional provision, practice, and policy against the requirements of the revised Concordat. This gap analysis was also based on feedback from the researcher community, collected through multiple fora and surveys, and was led by the University's Researcher Pathways Working Group. Having conducted our gap analysis, we revised our 2020-22 Concordat Action Plan, and this was approved by Council at its meeting on the 24th November. We have also committed to developing a clear vision for addressing the more systemic and structural issues that affect our research staff population. This will form part of our medium-long term institutional Research Culture strategy and will inform subsequent shorter-term Concordat action planning.

3.5 Objective 3:

Creating an inclusive University culture based on building and maintaining relationships.

Progress against this objective has been significantly impacted by the COVID pandemic. The majority of the actions were dependent on the successful procurement of an external provider to support the action for an Inclusive Culture with experience in the

delivery of Relationship Approaches. The impact of COVID-related disruption paired with turnover of action leads (Dean and DVC) has impacted on a number of actions originally included under Objective 3. A review of these actions will therefore be carried out in the academic year 2020-2021 and revised actions will be identified.

A number of alternative initiatives to promote a positive culture have been implemented during 2020-21 including a number of equalities talks by internal and external Equality Diversity and Inclusion professionals and representatives championed by University Executive Board members and the Vice Chancellor's Office and a review of the governance and support structures for Equality Diversity and Inclusion resulting in actions being planned for improved connectivity and a senior lead role for Equality Diversity and Inclusion

Progress has been made on our Equality Impact Assessment data analyses for outputs relating to Rolling Research Excellence Framework and Mock Research Excellence Framework exercise. Key findings have been made in particular around the disadvantages staff with a disability face in the research environment as well as clear differences in eligible female researchers, aged 25-34 and working part-time achieving high-quality outputs compared to males of the same age and work pattern. An action plan will be created by a Research Excellence Framework Equality Diversity and Inclusion working group to attempt to resolve these and any other equality issues identified.

3.6 Objective 4: To improve accessibility and inclusivity of University estates and facilities

Physical Environment -

Progress has been made towards ensuring the campus is a safe and accessible space for all. Accessibility audits have now been completed for the entire University estate (excluding Residences) and a business case is to be developed for submission to UEB to request funding for an annual programme of accessibility projects.

We became Members of the Business Disability Forum in 2021 which is assisting us in progressing Disability equality work.

The Students' Union's Disability Officer and Vice President for Welfare sit on the Disability Steering group which was formed in 2021 and are supporting the formation of the action plan which includes objectives around accessibility and mapping of the estate as an area of priority. The Vice President for Education and relevant Student Union Officers (e.g. Women's Officer, LGBT+ Officer and BAME Officer) will be involved in interviews for the scoping exercise which was identified under Workstream 1 of the Inclusive Curriculum project.

Digital Accessibility -

A mobile-optimised version of the staff intranet was released in July 2021 and 69 improvements were made to the accessibility of the public-facing website in 2021. A solution has been designed and built-in order to allow the publication of documents as web content rather than files in accordance with government guidance on publishing accessible documents

As a result of COVID-19 there have been difficulties in engaging with staff and students to input into web content. The University's Communications Department will continue to identify and prioritise accessibility issues and continue to look for engagement opportunities in 2021/22.

3.6 Objective 5:

To promote and develop an inclusive (internal) culture and governance by addressing diversity of decision-making committees

Despite the impact of the COVID pandemic over the last two years, progress has been made with actions relating to promoting a more inclusive approach to decision-making committees. This includes progress on developing monitoring data for Council, creating a guidance document on ensuring accessibility and inclusion within meetings and updating the Committees cover sheet to prompt paper authors to consider the equality, diversity and inclusion implications or impacts of their proposals and policies with a specific requirement for ensuring an equality impact assessment is completed for relevant papers. In addition, EDI training has been provided to Council members.

We have also made progress with respect to actions designed to improve staff disclosure of protected characteristics. This is a matter Human Resources has been making a substantial effort on for a number of years and there a clear improvement can be seen within our staff data report.

Relevant work carried out in response to COVID

Our planned actions to improve our processes around carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and raising awareness of the importance and legal duty to do so have been effective in achieving an improved completion rate for Impact Assessments. A new template and guidance have gone live on our Staff Intranet within the reporting period. As reported above, the COVID pandemic has created a situation where Equality Impact Assessments were essential to ensure our staff and students were kept safe and experienced as little detriment as possible due to the changes in work and study environment.

Some arrangements that promote inclusive approaches to employment and learning during COVID will be continued going forward - including more flexible working approaches ('better ways of working' project) and continued use of electronic platforms where these have proven to be more accessible/inclusive.

A full progress report on actions which support each of the Objectives is contained in Appendix 1.

