Strategic Equality Plan
2020-2024

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Values

We are committed to equal pay, treatment and opportunity, to supporting diversity and creating an open and inclusive community. (The Way Forward 2018-23)

Vision

Our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 is built on the three pillars of specific groups whom the University has a duty to work both with and for.

Our staff	Our students	The wider community
As the University creates a more inclusive culture, staff will trust the institution to treat them fairly.	A diverse student population will create a sense of belonging, and enhance both student life and the learning experience.	For the University to serve the community in a responsible manner, it will require a diverse range of voices to represent the community.

Our objectives and how we can achieve them

Objective 1: **Establish the University as one that supports an inclusive student journey through recruitment, admissions, wellbeing and learning environment**
- Make sure our admissions processes are fair and transparent for all
- Look at how we can develop an inclusive curriculum
- Make a change for the attainment and retention of students from some protected characteristic groups
- Establish an EDI strategy for Student Support and Wellbeing.

Objective 2: **Create a staff environment where we improve the diversity of our recruitment and enable our staff to progress and develop in a supportive environment**
- Show that our recruitment processes are fair and transparent for each job role across all pathways
- Continue the work led by the Equality in Reward Group on equal pay, treatment and opportunity
- Grow how we support staff career progression and development, with increased support for early career academics and researchers on fixed term contracts for staff with protected characteristics
- Add to our staff support and wellbeing provision by implementing the Staff Wellbeing and Mentally Healthy University Strategy.

Objective 3: **Create an inclusive University culture based on building and maintaining relationships**
- Establish an inclusive learning, teaching and research environment for staff and students based on a culture of trust
- Support students and staff in fostering good relations and building team dynamics
- Deal with issues, incidents and complaints in an effective way to enable an early resolution.

Objective 4: **Create an accessible physical and digital environment that is responsive and supportive to individual needs**
- Create a welcoming, accessible campus and take steps to remove barriers for people with diverse needs
- Provide a digital environment that gives all users a positive and accessible experience.

Objective 5: **Enhance our governance structures and committee membership, in addition to establishing assurance processes to support adherence to the legal, ethical and professional standards, placing equality diversity and inclusion at the centre of the decisions that we make**
- Look at how we can widen the diversity of membership across all University committees and groups
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion as a key consideration in University activities, decisions and reports.

1. Introduction

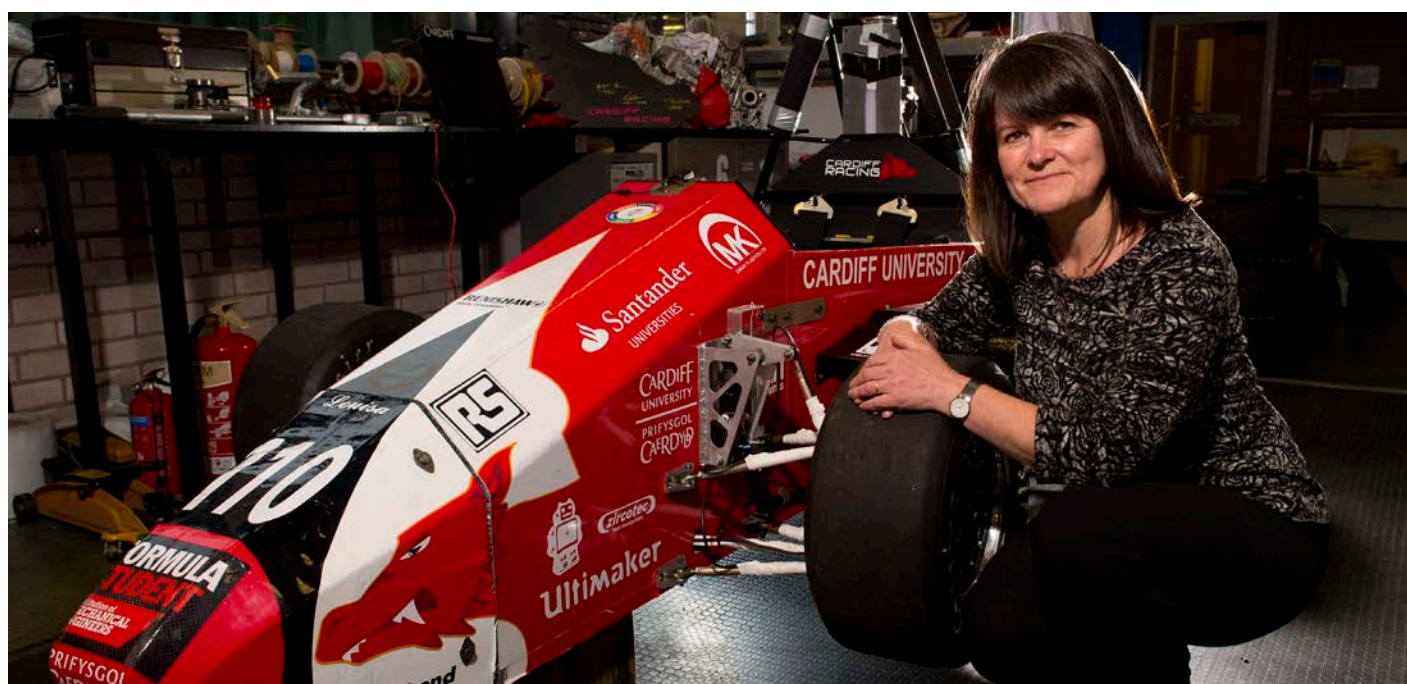**Professor Karen Holford**
Deputy Vice-Chancellor

I am proud to work for Cardiff University because of its strong commitment to inclusion and diversity.

As a female academic within the field of Engineering, traditionally under-represented by women, I have been supported and encouraged to build my career. During my career I have witnessed and contributed to a considerable improvement in gender equality within Higher Education and therefore appreciate that it will take time and effort to achieve the same progress for all the protected characteristics. I work with dedicated colleagues who are committed to breaking down the barriers to accessing Higher Education for all and to making the working environment fair, inclusive and attractive to a diverse range of employees. I am part of the senior team at Cardiff University who acknowledge that there is always more work to be done. Our aspirations are high, and I am proud that this Strategy represents a carefully considered plan which will ensure that we make the essential progress needed at a rate that is realistic and achievable.

By stating that Cardiff University needs to be more inclusive we are recognising that, although good Policies and Procedures are essential, we will not achieve success by solely imposing inclusive practice and behaviour on our staff. We will encourage and support our role-models and celebrate inclusive behaviour. We will do our utmost to encourage discussion between staff, students and society to promote a better understanding of different identities or lived experiences as well as the barriers which non-inclusive behaviour can present throughout an individual's career and studies. In an increasingly polarised society, we are determined to find ways of building bridges between all groups and individuals in order to achieve the change that we desire.

Cardiff University is in the privileged position of having influence on a wide section of society. We publish internationally valued research that is of benefit to society and we are trusted to impart skills and knowledge to enable all our students, local and international, to forge successful careers. We must also be relied upon to live, work alongside, and be a member of our local community. The Higher Education sector has many challenges ahead. These include, but are not limited to, increasing the representation and improving the experience of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff, creating an inclusive curriculum, closing the attainment (awarding) gap and improving retention across different groups of students, as well as improving the accessibility of our facilities. Our Strategic Equality Plan will show how we plan to tackle these key areas and enable us all to connect with our aim to achieve fairness for all.

2. Summary Equality Plan Objectives

Objective 1	Establish the University as one that supports an inclusive student journey through recruitment, admissions, wellbeing and learning environment.
Objective 2	Create a staff environment where we improve the diversity of our recruitment and enable our staff to progress and develop in a supportive environment.
Objective 3	Create an inclusive University culture based on building and maintaining relationships.
Objective 4	Create an accessible physical and digital environment that is responsive and supportive to individual needs.
Objective 5	Enhance our governance structures and committee membership, in addition to establishing assurance processes to support adherence to the legal, ethical and professional standards, placing equality diversity and inclusion at the centre of the decisions that we make.

3. Vision

Our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 has been built around fundamental principles that will help us achieve our aspirations.

Commitment toward equal pay, fair treatment and opportunity for all	Our vision is to become a University that delivers equal pay, fair treatment and opportunity for all. We want to create an open and inclusive community which encourages diversity. We are proud of our achievements in reducing inequality and we move forward with clear objectives building on what we have achieved.
An inclusive environment is required for diversity to thrive	The University recognises that a more diverse student body and workforce promotes a greater combination of skills, experiences, perspectives and ideas to draw upon. We can achieve the benefits of diversity and equality by establishing an inclusive work and study environment.
Created in consultation with our staff, students and the wider community	The University prioritises building trust with staff, students and the community. Our Strategic Equality Plan will be effective through engagement with all internal and external stakeholders, building an understanding of their diverse needs in developing, monitoring and reviewing our Plan accordingly. Our Strategy promotes working with students and reinforces our commitment to ensuring student input improves every aspect of the University experience.
Informed by our internal strategies	Cardiff University has several internal strategies and plans, defining goals that either overlap with or are informed by the Strategic Equality Plan. For example, our annual Fee and Access Plan must demonstrate our investment in equality of opportunity. The University will justify what we spend by ensuring the Fee and Access Plan is informed by our Strategic Equality Plan. Other strategies, including our People Strategy and Widening Participation Strategy, contain actions that either have a direct impact on equality of opportunity for disadvantaged groups or a secondary impact upon those who hold protected characteristics. The University aims to ensure that the Strategic Equality Plan informs and aligns with the other internal strategies.

4. The Purpose and Legal Context

4.1 What is the University's current status?

The University is moving on from the completion of the Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020. This plan oversaw its fair share of successes but as is the case for any long-term plan, new issues and priorities have emerged in the past four years. The Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-24 must pick up from where its predecessor ended in order to acknowledge and tackle these new priorities.

Cardiff University's final Annual Monitoring report contains a final review that will give the reader a better understanding of our current status viewed from a perspective of our previous plan's objectives. This review represents the baseline for how our future objectives will be benchmarked and success measured. It also provides an overview of what went well during the last four years, what did not go well, some highlights of University achievements over the past 4 years and finally recommendations for future plans that represent the lessons the University has learnt ahead of creating our new Strategic Equality Plan.

4.2 Why do we need this Plan?

As a public authority, under our Public Sector Equality Duty, the University is required to publish a Strategic Equality Plan which sets out and justifies equality plan objectives and explains how the University will achieve the objectives and who will benefit from them. The University publishes an annual report with information about our progress, together with equality information about our workforce and student body (reporting structures outlined in Figure 2).

Table 1. The 9 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act (definitions in Figure 1):

Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment (Gender Identity)
Religion and Belief	Sex (Gender)	Race
Sexual Orientation	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage or Civil Partnership

There are three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to which public bodies are required to have due regard:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act *and*

2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not *and*

3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

To meet these aims, equality plan objectives have been set for every protected characteristic (outlined in Table 2). Our equality plan objectives are outcome-focused, with clear and specific improvements to benefit students, staff and the community (refer to Table 3). We have used SMART methodology to ensure objectives are specific, measurable, realistic and achievable within a clear timeframe.

We have outlined objectives on a four-year basis with specific improvements and outcomes. In doing this we aim to meet both our legal compliance requirements and our wider vision - as outlined in the University's overarching strategy, 'The Way Forward' - to shape an inclusive and welcoming environment for our University Community.
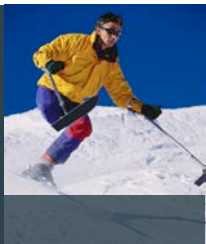
In setting objectives, the following were considered:

- Feedback from consultation on the process of setting objectives;
- Equality issues raised by students, staff and the community;
- Evidence indicating underrepresentation or differential outcomes;
- Potential for short, medium- or long-term objectives in different areas;
- Objectives that could remove barriers, promote equality, promote good relations or improve performance;
- How progress against the objectives will be measured;
- Scope for benchmarking against similar organisations.

The objectives take influence from the priorities defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the expectations of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and findings from internal, University-commissioned research, such as the BAME attainment gap task and finish group. Appendix B lists collated evidence and the gaps identified, which have been analysed and formed into equality objectives/actions. Our Plan is informed through consultation with students, staff and the wider community and is a continuation of work from previous Strategic Equality plans. Further information is contained within Appendix C.

The Plan will be published and reviewed every year in a report monitoring progress against actions. The overarching objectives will be reviewed every four years.

Figure 1.
Definitions of the 9 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act

Age

This refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 50 year old) or range of ages (e.g. 18 to 30 year old). Age includes treating someone less favourably for reasons relating to their age (whether young or old).

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Identity

The Act says that you must not be discriminated against because your gender identity differs from the gender assigned to you at birth. Gender identity refers to the way an individual identifies with their own gender, e.g. as being either a man or a woman, or in another way (e.g. non-binary), which can be different from legal sex.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage can be defined as a formal union between two people (same-sex or different-sex persons) as recognised by law. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Under the Act, pregnancy is defined as the condition of expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. Protection against maternity discrimination exists for 26 weeks after giving birth. This includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and Belief

Religion and belief includes religious convictions and beliefs including philosophical belief and lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live, for it to be included in the definition.

Sex (Gender)

Under the legislation this refers to biological sex – treating an individual less favourably on the grounds of sex.

Sexual Orientation

The Act defines this as a person's sexual attraction towards their own sex, the opposite sex or more than one sex. Since the Act was written understanding of the wide scope of sexual orientation has developed further and additional groups may be covered (e.g. asexual and pansexual).

Discrimination by Association or Perception

Seven of the 9 protected characteristics also provide protection from direct discrimination for people associated with that characteristic, or people who are perceived to have that characteristic. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

4.3 Who is this plan for?

Our Strategic Equality Plan is built on the three pillars of specific groups whom the University has a duty to work both with and for (Table 3).

Table 3.
The three pillars underpinning our Strategic Equality Plan:

Our staff	By actively promoting the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the University, staff will be more informed about issues and barriers that different groups face, helping to increase understanding of others' perspectives. This will enable our staff to create a more inclusive culture in which diversity is valued and the needs of different groups are supported. This will foster a sense of belonging across all groups within the University and enhance an environment of collaborative partnership.
As the University creates a more inclusive culture, staff will trust the institution to treat them fairly. This will enable us to attract and retain a diverse workforce.	**Link to Student Pillar** An inclusive culture and diverse workforce will have clear secondary benefits to our students. They will be taught and supported by staff who better understand the diverse needs of different groups of students. This should foster an environment that allows our students to reach their full potential. When an issue arises, a student can raise it safely and trust that the University will resolve it, with due care for their relationship with staff and fellow students.
	Link to Wider Community Pillar As the University becomes more visibly diverse and builds a reputation for being an inclusive environment, we can anticipate that the wider community will engage further. This could be a local business that wishes to collaborate with the University to mutual gain, a member of the public being more aware that our services are available to them, or our core purpose of attracting prospective students who may traditionally be underrepresented at the University.
Our students	By visibly investing in equality, diversity and inclusion we aim to increase the diversity of the student population. This will lead to a diverse range of voices contributing to, shaping and informing the University's culture and its environs. Considering EDI as part of recruitment, programmes of study, engagement with community projects and other learning experiences will enable students not only to gain an understanding of a wide range of perspectives but also to see themselves reflected, thus engendering a sense of belonging.
A diverse student population will create a sense of belonging, enhance student life and the learning experience.	**Link to Wider Community Pillar** A diverse student population will benefit the wider community as students have opportunities to engage with communities outside of the University. Acting as ambassadors will help to foster a sense that the University is a place of inclusivity and help to break down barriers. The enriching opportunities and experiences gained whilst studying with the University will help to prepare students as they enter the world of work, where they will carry with them an appreciation of the value of inclusivity.
	Link to Staff Pillar As the diversity of the student population increases the number of contributory voices will be greater. This will help to inspire new ideas for teaching and research among staff and reinforce a sense of achievement.

Table 3. continued
The three pillars underpinning our Strategic Equality Plan:

The wider community	The University's presence has a direct impact on the city and surrounding communities. It is our duty to ensure that impact is as positive as possible. This includes widening access to our services and the education we provide, the knowledge our graduates obtain to further serve our community through employment or the physical impact our activities can have on the city's environment and its citizens.
For the University to serve the community in a responsible manner, it will require a diverse range of staff voices and a student body that is representative of the community.	Both those employed and studying at the University must be respectful of their role as ambassadors of the University and the positive or negative impact any individual can have on the city's citizens. This will help to create a visibly open and inclusive environment where voices are enabled, and all contributions are welcomed.
	Link to Staff Pillar
	If the University can attract a wider group of applicants and welcome a greater diversity of students, it will directly benefit by attracting qualified and motivated students to each of our programmes. Our research and innovation initiatives that rely on collaboration with external partners within the city, will benefit from any positive impact on our relationship with local businesses and institutions.
	Link to Student Pillar
	Our students live within a community that will respond and welcome them according to the community's perception of the University. Building a positive reputation within our community will enable our students to live and study in harmony with the city's citizens. These citizens may in turn be inclined to encourage a new generation of students to apply to study in a University that is a welcome part of the city's community.

For each outcome, the University has endeavoured to consider where a direct impact upon one pillar can result in a secondary benefit to another. In doing so, we can demonstrate the holistic impact our work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion can have.

The Plan is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment (gender identity), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex (gender) and sexual orientation and to foster good relations between different groups. The plan has also been designed to ensure we provide an inclusive and fair environment to meet everyone's needs.

The Plan will complement and inform work undertaken as part of our commitment to achieving EDI awards through HE Advance programmes including Athena SWAN and the Race Equality Charter Mark.

4.4 Welsh Language Commitment

We recognise that we have a specific responsibility for the Welsh language and culture. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 made provision for a specific set of standards for the education sector - The Welsh Language Standards (No.6) Regulations 2017. These outline which of the services, operational business and policies the University conducts must be delivered bilingually and stipulate that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English. The University's Welsh Language Policies set out how the University gives effect to these principles. The University is due to publish a Welsh Language Strategy in 2020 which will ensure the Welsh language is embedded into our activities, that our provision for students is expanded and improved and the University can be seen as a demonstrably bilingual place to work and study.

Being a Welsh speaker is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act and compliance with the Welsh Language Standards is administered separately. However, the University recognises the importance and value of our commitment to Welsh language and ensuring the equal treatment of Welsh language speakers in our community.

4.5 Communication Strategy for the Plan

The Plan is the University's open commitment to equality and key to its success is effective communication to staff, students and the wider community. An awareness of the University's objectives will give visible reassurance of our work plans and provide an opportunity to feed into and guide future activities. The Plan will be published on the University's website. The communication strategy will be supported by the University's Communication and Marketing team and initial plans are to promote the Plan via internal channels such as the Senior Staff digest, Professional Services, Staff and Student news. We will also communicate via the University's social media channels, including 'StudentLifeCU' on Facebook, 'CardiffUni' on Instagram, and blogs for longer articles and updates.

4.6 Responsibility for this plan

This plan is approved at Council and is sponsored at an executive level by Professor Karen Holford, Deputy Vice-Chancellor. At an officer level, responsibility for this plan will lie with our Dean for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion with support from our staff with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion responsibilities within Assurance Services and Human Resources. These teams will also provide advice and guidance about progress against the actions in the Plan. Figure 2 provides information about the groups and networks that exist within the University to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, together with the reporting lines to senior levels.

Figure 2.
Reporting structure for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within the University
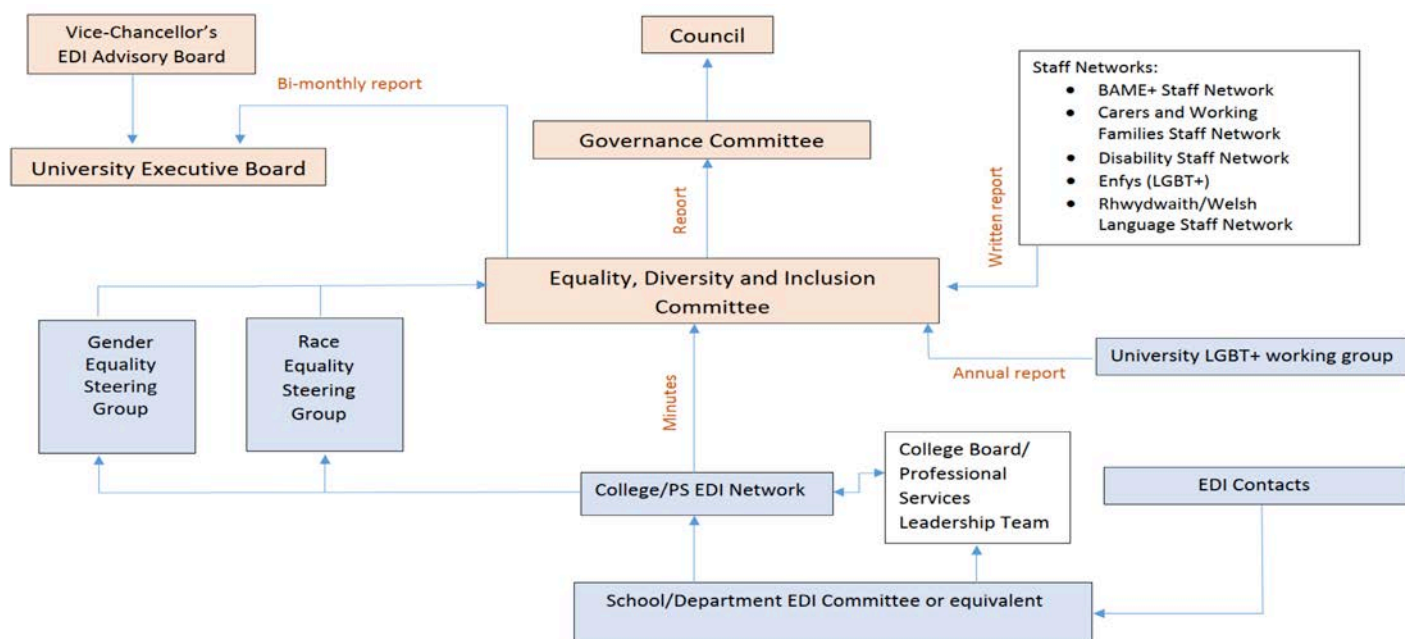
5. Equality Plan Objectives

Objective 1

Establish the University as one that supports an inclusive student journey through recruitment, admissions, wellbeing and the learning environment.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
Establish a University level consensus on development of an inclusive curriculum. This will consider the learning environment and the content of programmes and will ensure students have knowledge of the specific protected characteristics they will need to support within their profession.	**Early phase work** Build criteria for a review into existing good practice within the University for inclusive curriculum. Establish where there are challenges within specific Schools. **Medium term goals** Establish a consensus of what inclusive curriculum means for Cardiff University, to be in a position to respond to external scrutiny of our approach. Create methodology for how existing good practice can be adopted across the University. **Long term goals** Each School within the University has initiated baseline work on inclusive curriculum development against our established criteria.
Implement a fair and transparent admissions process for each course at the University, that enables entry for all potential candidates. This will include schemes to introduce diverse material in course advertisement to encourage diverse applications from students from different backgrounds.	**Early phase work** The University has recently introduced a Contextual Admissions Policy which aims to widen access and welcome applications from students from all backgrounds. The University now has access to a rich data source that we will be evaluating in 2020 to determine how successful the policy has been and to ensure there have been no unforeseen negative consequences. Improved pathways for students from Widening Participation projects through to Student Support services with an early focus on existing issues of gender imbalance, retention rate of mature students and the support available to students who have autism spectrum conditions. **Medium term goals** Outputs from this primary data analysis will inform understanding of any disadvantaged student's needs. Information will be shared with our relevant departments to tailor support for those students as needed. Develop a programme of Community Outreach activities that promote and celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion, identifying how these can link into wider university objectives (e.g. staff and student recruitment). **Long term goals** Centralised admissions process designed to reduce bias in the taught programme selection process. Evaluation of this process to determine what action(s) could be taken to reduce (any) bias within the selection process for research positions. Identification of further under-represented groups to work with through future and existing programmes.

Objective 1 continued

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
Address differential student attainment and retention for some protected characteristic groups who are less likely to attain a 1st or 2:1 degree.	**Early phase work** The University has established a BAME attainment gap task and finish group that reports into EDI committee. The task and finish group have undertaken quantitative analyses of data from across the University. The University is running student focus groups and identifying good practice within the sector in relation to the differential experiences of BAME students. **Medium term goals** Create an action plan to be applied across the University based on the findings of our initial consultation work. **Long term goals** Each School has begun to implement the action plan focusing on race equality and the University is able to demonstrate progress. The University initiates evaluation of the differential experience of students with other protected characteristics, considering intersectionality.
Establish an EDI strategy for Student Support and Wellbeing, which supports the wellbeing, retention and employability of students with protected characteristics. This should include the collection and analysis of equality data to help evaluate whether provision is supporting students with different protected characteristics.	**Early phase work** We will identify baseline data from current systems and establish additional data needs to develop robust reporting capability in the new IT support systems i.e. case and enquiry management and appointment booking systems. Review existing service developments to establish those that have a specific positive impact on students with protected characteristics and identify outcome measurements to be included in the service evaluation. **Medium term goals** Interrogate our data to identify patterns of engagement with services by students with protected characteristics to identify barriers in accessing services. Analyse existing university equality data on retention, attainment and employability and map against service engagement data to inform service developments and establish a baseline for service evaluation. **Long term goals** To be in a position where Student Support and Wellbeing's service development plan and evaluation is informed by reliable, detailed and relevant equality data to meet the needs of students with protected characteristics.

Objective 2

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

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
Ensure a fair and transparent recruitment process for each of our job roles at the University that enables accessibility for all potential applicants and supports an inclusive research culture. This will include schemes to identify barriers to recruitment and review processes to promote engagement from a diverse pool of applicants.	**Early phase work** The University will interrogate our baseline data and the experience of both our applicant pool and our local communities to identify barriers in working for Cardiff University across all protected characteristics, with an initial focus on gender and ethnicity. Feedback will inform revisions to our recruitment processes. Mandatory unconscious bias online training for all staff with monitoring to ensure uptake particularly of staff involved in recruitment. For research-only and teaching and research staff, we will ensure that the selection and interview processes are compliant with our commitment to responsible research assessment (as a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)) and an inclusive research culture. **Medium term goals** The revised recruitment approach will be piloted in certain Schools to monitor engagement with underrepresented groups across all career pathways and responsible research assessment for research-only and teaching and research staff. Full evaluation of the pilot to review impact of change and logistics for wider implementation. **Long term goals** Wider University implementation of revised recruitment process, maintaining engagement with underrepresented groups and supporting an inclusive research culture. Review of whole University data considering changes to process and engagement activities. Analysis of the impact considering applicant accessibility and diversity in pool of applicants, shortlisted candidates and those recruited to positions.
Continue University commitment to equal pay, treatment and opportunity through work led by the Equality in Reward Group.	**Early phase work** The University will undertake the 2020 Equal Pay Audit to identify and explore the causes of any pay gaps arising within grades by gender and ethnicity and identify actions for improvement led by the Equality in Reward Group that will report into EDI committee. Analysis of the intersect between gender and ethnicity will inform actions for change. **Medium term goals** The Equality in Reward Group will continue to analyse data and actions related to gender and ethnicity and will extend their review to include disability data with revised actions. **Long term goals** The Equality in Reward Group will continue to analyse data and actions related to gender, ethnicity and disability and extend analysis to include review of sexual orientation data with revised actions.

Objective 2 continued

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
Evaluate and build on existing University provision for staff career progression and development, with increased support for early career academics and researchers on fixed term contracts. Focused initiatives on gender and ethnicity leadership interventions and career development opportunities for staff with protected characteristics.	**Early phase work** The University will work with the staff community to explore different types of gender and ethnicity leadership interventions, including extending existing pilot programmes focussing on promotion from Reader to Professor to other levels of the academic career pipeline. The University will ensure that its commitment to the new *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* (2019) will enable early career academics to benefit from improved career progression and development opportunities. This will be mapped initially through a gap analysis and focus group work. **Medium term goals** Outputs from the early phase work will inform development of a programme of activity aimed at improved career development in underrepresented groups in Academic and Professional Services careers across the University and a detailed action plan for early career researchers on both research-only and research and teaching pathways. **Long term goals** The University will expand our career development opportunities with tailored initiatives to support staff based on disability, sexual orientation and gender identity and improved personal and professional development for early career academics.
Build upon the existing staff support and wellbeing provision by embedding this in our leadership and line manager programmes and implementing our Staff Wellbeing and Mentally Healthy University Strategy with further development of our Dignity and Wellbeing Contacts.	**Early phase work** The University will embed wellbeing in our leadership and management programmes, enhance our mental health and wellbeing programmes as part of our Staff Wellbeing Strategy and Mentally Healthy University Strategy and continue to mature our Dignity and Wellbeing Contacts network. **Medium term goals** Our recruitment strategy will include mechanisms to test the commitment to wellbeing from our future leaders and managers and wellbeing will be part of our University wide governance and audit process. **Long term goals** The University will implement wellness action plans to provide managers and employees with a framework to promote good mental health and review our progress against the mental health core standards from the Thriving at Work review. The University will implement local health and wellbeing surveys at School and Department level, assess impact of the programme of wellbeing training and events held across the University including the impact of wellbeing discussions and the Dignity and Wellbeing Contacts network in order to improve long term based on Staff feedback.

Objective 3

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

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
Establish an inclusive learning, teaching and research environment for staff and students based on a culture of trust that empowers and equips individuals to build and maintain relationships.	**Early phase work** Commitment from all senior staff as well as key stakeholder engagement on adopting the values and behaviours required to ensure a culture of inclusion. Work with an external provider on initial training and strategic briefing to these groups on the vision for cultural change. Establish baseline staff and student satisfaction from existing surveys on the current environment and culture to enable measurement of impact. University community behaviours aim to respect the views and opinions of others with a commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion that values difference. Line manager behaviours demonstrate leadership by example in respect of fairness, equity and inclusion in line with Transforming Services values. Follow the University's Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 approach governed by the code of practice based on the principles of inclusivity, excellence, transparency, accountability and consistency. The University REF EDI group will conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on the outlined procedures in the REF 2021 Code of Practice. **Medium term goals** Form University Relationship Approaches Working Group and Relationship Professional Network that will report into EDI Committee and underpin the framework for long-term change. Co-create a relationship policy/self-help guide for wider roll out with HR and Student Support Services. Review of University values built into PDR process for staff to identify what can support their individual needs in the working environment and personal development in alignment with organisational values. REF EDI group to review collated EIA data and analyses by protected characteristics considering intersectionality to determine any disadvantage in the research working environment/culture and/or bias in the REF process. Action plan to be developed and initiated based on recommendations made by the findings of the REF EDI group to bring about change where necessary to the research environment/culture across the University. **Long term goals** Build a University community based on partnerships between Professional Services and Academic staff. Establish reporting lines for the Relationship Professional Network to bring their findings to the wider University community. Embed practice within staff and student policy across the organisation. Review staff and student satisfaction surveys on the environment and culture to review ongoing impact against baseline data. For the University to implement actions following the REF2021 submission to ensure an inclusive research culture. To build upon the existing REF EDI training and run a course that covers the wider research environment and culture To be prepared for REF2028 to ensure that submission is all the more inclusive and to monitor the REF2028 data to help determine whether the research environment is improving for all.

Objective 3 continued

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
Equip staff and students with tools to help foster good relations and build team dynamics.	**Early phase work** Develop staff and student training options for introducing relationship approaches. Recognising the different needs of individuals, teams and Schools by providing a range of accessible resources including face-to-face training and online material to support building team dynamics. The tools will aim to promote self-reflection and consideration of individual behaviours working towards team health, enabling individuals to manage issues proactively in the work and study environment. Initial delivery targeted to line managers, personal tutors, student cases team, residence team, security team and in the student union. Pilot staff training taster sessions and tools in 3 Schools. Develop student residential relationship peer programme. **Medium term goals** Review, modify and extend staff training taster sessions across a further 5 Schools based on initial evaluation. Review, modify and extend student residential relationship peer programme based on initial evaluation. Build repository of accessible resources for staff and students. **Long term goals** Training and online resources established for all staff and students to access that provide the tools to empower individuals to build and maintain relationships and have the core value of inclusion built into their personal development in line with the wider University culture. Embed learning opportunities within curriculum to foster good relations and build team dynamics.
Deal with complaints in an effective way to enable an early resolution.	**Early phase work** Introduce relationship approaches into the University as a means to deal with complaints in an effective way while maintaining relationships and leading to early resolution. Recruit and train minimum 30 additional Relationship Practitioners. **Medium term goals** Develop a train the trainer model for Relationship Practitioners with 5 professionals able to deliver to other staff in the University. Introduction of individual supervisory meetings and a phone helpline for support in complex cases as needed to support their professional development. **Long term goals** HR to integrate the approach into staff disciplinary procedures and Student Support Services to integrate the approach into management of student cases.

Objective 4

Create an accessible physical and digital environment that is responsive and supportive to individual needs.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
The University estate is a welcoming, accessible environment that enables easy orientation and reduction of barriers for groups and individuals with diverse needs.	**Early phase work** The University will complete an accessibility audit of key buildings and develop an action plan based on the key findings. A rolling programme of actions will follow recommendations of the 'way finding project' signage report focused on main campus buildings, whilst ensuring new buildings follow recommendations for accessibility including signage. Accessible facilities will be audited across campus and areas prioritised for improvement and publish updated guidelines and reviewed policy on quiet rooms. **Medium term goals** The audit will be expanded to other University and associated buildings and a review of actions in the early phase work will provide recommendations for the next steps. Actions from audits around accessibility signage will continue. A list of accessible facilities will be available on the intranet with policy and guidance on key areas. Information on the internet / intranet on physical spaces will be reviewed to ensure it remains accurate and information circulated ahead of conferences/events will be reviewed to ensure accessibility provision is provided. **Long term goals** Complete an audit of University staff training levels around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (role appropriate) and formulate an action plan for prioritising key groups for additional training in relevant areas.
The University's digital environment is a positive and accessible experience for all users. Ongoing review of provision and content with a focus on accessibility around the University estate long term.	**Early phase work** The University will create a mobile optimised design to assist searching and viewing information on smart phones. This will be monitored to ensure improved accessibility using the quality monitoring tool SiteImprove. **Medium term goals** Development of a platform for the University to publish documents in an accessible format, updating accessibility guidance and create training for website and intranet authors. An audit of policies and procedures will be undertaken with a development programme that prioritises conversion of documents into an accessible format. **Long term goals** A development programme that explores ways to include content on accessibility around University estate on the intranet and internet with an option appraisal for improving content on accessibility around the University estate and an action plan for implementation.

Equality Plan Objectives continued

Objective 5

Enhance our governance structures and committee membership, in addition to establishing assurance processes to support adherence to the legal, ethical and professional standards, placing equality diversity and inclusion at the centre of the decisions that we make.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (A detailed action plan for 2020-21 is contained within Appendix A)
Widen the diversity of membership across all University committees and groups.	**Early phase work** Develop a process for collection and annual reporting of composition of committees disaggregated by protected characteristics. **Longer term goals** Develop guidance/recommendations for committees, including College, School and Professional Services on: • Encouraging diversity of members; • Ensuring inclusive discussions and equality of opportunities to participate in discussion.
Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in our policy creation, reporting mechanisms and decision-making processes.	**Early phase work** Revise the EIA template and training session to incorporate user feedback and ensure the template is user-friendly for key areas of work. **Medium term goals** Develop a process for EDI Committee to have oversight of progress with the Strategic Equality Plan actions, to enable the committee to be informed regularly of and able to scrutinise progress, identify and advise on any drift in achieving outcomes and/or failure to move on to next phase of the action's implementation. **Long term goals** Identify key areas of the University activity that would require an Equality Impact Assessment to be completed.

Equality Objectives 2020-2024

	Protected Characteristics									Equality Duties		
	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment (gender identity)	Religion and Belief	Sex (Gender)	Race	Sexual Orientation	Pregnancy or Maternity	Marriage or Civil Partnership	Eliminate unlawful discrimination	Advance equality of opportunity	Foster good relations
OBJECTIVE 1: Establish the University as one that supports an inclusive student journey through recruitment, admissions, wellbeing and learning environment.												
Inclusive curricula and student attainment gap	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔			✔	✔
A fair and inclusive admissions and recruitment process	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Addressing differential attainment for some protected characteristic groups					✔	✔					✔	✔
Supporting our student health and wellbeing	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
OBJECTIVE 2: Create a staff environment where we improve the diversity of our recruitment and enable our staff to progress and develop in a supportive environment.												
A fair and transparent recruitment process and support for an inclusive research culture	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
University commitment to equal pay, treatment and opportunity		✔			✔	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔
Build on existing University provision for staff career progression and development with a focus on early career academics	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔
Build upon the existing Staff support and wellbeing provision	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
OBJECTIVE 3: Create an inclusive University culture based on building and maintaining relationships.												
Establish an inclusive environment for staff and students based on a culture of trust that empowers and equips individuals to build and maintain relationships	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Equip staff and students with tools to help foster good relations and build team dynamics	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Deal with complaints in an effective way to enable an early resolutions	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Equality Objectives 2020-2024

	Protected Characteristics									Equality Duties		
	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment (gender identity)	Religion and Belief	Sex (Gender)	Race	Sexual Orientation	Pregnancy or Maternity	Marriage or Civil Partnership	Eliminate unlawful discrimination	Advance equality of opportunity	Foster good relations
OBJECTIVE 4: Create an accessible physical and digital environment that is responsive and supportive to individual needs.												
The University estate is a welcoming, accessible environment that enables easy orientation and reduction of barriers for groups and individuals with diverse needs	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔
The University's digital environment is a positive experience for all users	✔	✔								✔	✔	✔
OBJECTIVE 5: Enhance our governance structures and committee membership, in addition to establishing assurance processes to support adherence to the legal, ethical and professional standards, placing equality diversity and inclusion at the centre of the decisions that we make.												
Widen the diversity of membership across all University committees and groups	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔
Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in our policy creation, reporting mechanisms and decision-making processes	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔