Sheffield Hallam University

Equality Priorities

2014-2020

Mission	To deliver excellent outcomes for all our students, enabling to succeed in a diverse and complex world	**Values**

Vision	To be recognised as a University that adds value to the futures of all our students, staff, and partners by leveraging their unique and diverse talents	Academic Ambition

An excellent and inclusive educational experience

Objectives:

- To improve the outcomes for, and experience of, BME students
- To widen access to STEM subjects and STEM careers for women
- To effectively anticipate and manage reasonable adjustments
- To raise awareness of the LGBT student experience

Attract, retain, support and develop a diverse workforce

Objectives:

- To encourage disclosure in all equality monitoring activity
- To ensure that attraction and recruitment activity is inclusive
- To improve engagement and recognising everyone's contribution to University life
- To provide development which enables our staff to recognise their responsibilities and contribution to equality and diversity

Integrate and embed equality into our business processes

Objectives:

- To ensure due regard is given to equality, diversity, and inclusion in all University activity including policy development, planning, corporate change projects, procurement, and decision-making processes through the implementation of robust and systematic processes.
- To evaluate our practice and profile externally and act to improve our performance in comparison to external exemplar organisations

An inclusive and supportive University culture

Objectives:

- To raise the profile of the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda, making clear the responsibilities at all levels of the University
- To support faculties, academic departments, and services to integrate and implement equality priorities into their local plans
- To effectively communicate the outcomes from the monitoring of equality information to faculties, departments and services

Values:

- Academic Ambition
- Supportiveness and Inclusion
- Being Practical and applied
- Collaborative Flexible, and Innovative Thinking
- Honesty, Integrity and Professional Standards

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

Equality Priorities 2014-2020

The Equality Priorities 2014-2020 were approved by the Board of Governors at the meeting on the 10th February 2015.

Introduction

Sheffield Hallam University is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, experience and outcome; ensuring that students and staff realise their full potential. This is reflected through the University's values of inclusion and supportiveness, with equality, diversity and inclusion acting as key enablers to the University Strategy.

Vision

To be recognised as a University that adds value to the futures of all of our students, staff and partners by drawing on their unique and diverse talents and providing an environment that allows everyone to flourish and succeed.

Values

The University sets out its values in the University Strategy. This states that inclusion and supportiveness are key values for the University and that they are integral to the future sustainability of Sheffield Hallam University. The refreshed Sheffield Hallam Equality Priorities aim to demonstrate the University's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion incorporating the values of:

- academic ambition;
- inclusion and supportiveness;
- being collaborative, flexible and innovative in our thinking;
- honesty, integrity and high professional standards.

Priorities

1. **An excellent and inclusive educational experience**
   - Improve the outcomes for, and experience of, BME students.
   - Widen access to STEM [1]subjects and STEM careers for women.
   - Effectively anticipate and manage reasonable adjustments for disabled students.
   - Raise awareness of the LGBT student experience.

2. **Attract, retain, support and develop a diverse workforce**
   - Improve the diversity of the workforce.

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[1] Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM)

- Improve engagement and staff experience outcomes for staff with protected characteristics.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can contribute to a diverse and inclusive culture.
- Improve progression to more senior roles where particular groups are under-represented.
- Encourage disclosure in all equality monitoring activity so that we fully understand the composition and needs of our diverse workforce.

3. **Integrate and embed equality into the business processes of the University**
- Evaluate our practice and profile and act to improve our performance in comparison to external exemplar organisations.
- Ensure due regard is given to equality, diversity and inclusion in all University activity including policy development, planning, corporate change projects, procurement, infrastructure development and decision-making processes through the implementation of robust and systematic equality analysis.

4. **Develop an inclusive and supportive University culture**
- Monitor information on our staff and student population in line with our obligations under the public sector equality duty.
- Support faculties, academic departments, and services to integrate and implement equality and diversity actions into their local plans.
- Raise the profile of the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda, making clear the responsibilities at all levels of the University.

Priority 1: An excellent and inclusive educational experience

Objective 1: Improve the outcomes for, and experience of, BME students
Targets:
- Reduce the current BME attainment gap firstly to bring it in line with the sector average before working to eliminate it.
- Increase the number of students disclosing their ethnicity.
- Increase the NSS satisfaction rate of BME students particularly within the areas of academic support, assessment and feedback.
- Support the future prospects of BME students by making year-on-year increases in the percentage of BME students who undertake work placements, internships or participate in graduate schemes.
- Support improvements in BME attainment by identifying whether there are patterns in BME student withdrawal and implementing interventions to increase the retention rate for BME students.
- Increase the numbers of BME students in schools who are engaged by the University via outreach activities to ensure we raise the aspirations of students and continue to encourage applications to the University from BME students.

Objective 2: Widen access to STEM subjects and STEM careers for women
Targets:
- Increase the number of girls in schools and colleges engaged in outreach activities around STEM subjects and careers.
- Through targeted recruitment activities increase the numbers of female students studying STEM subjects.
- Support the transition of women in STEM into jobs in related industries by increasing the numbers of women undertaking STEM placements, internships or graduate schemes and ultimately increasing the numbers of female students who enter a STEM graduate job.

Objective 3: Effectively anticipate and manage reasonable adjustments for disabled students
Targets:
- Increase the number of students disclosing a disability so that adjustments can be anticipated and managed.
- Decrease in the numbers of formal complaints relating to disability.
- Increase satisfaction rates relating to disabled students in the area of academic support.

Objective 4: Raise awareness of the LGBT student experience
Targets
- Increase the disclosure rate for sexual orientation amongst students and staff.
- Maintain the University's Gay by Degree league table score of 10 out of 10.

Priority 2: Attract, retain, support and develop a diverse workforce

Objective 1: Improve the diversity of the workforce
Targets:
- Change the workforce composition to bring it in line with sector benchmarks for diversity in the workforce.
- Increase recruitment success rates for staff in under-represented groups.
- Improve recruitment success rate for BME applicants so that is it the same as non-BME applicants.
- Maintain the number of graduate entry routes into the University in order to diversify the age profile of the University.

Objective 2: Improve engagement and staff experience outcomes for staff with protected characteristics
Targets:
- Ensure that the variation in the results for all staff and those with protected characteristics in the Employee Opinion Survey is not significant.
- Increase the percentage of staff who agree that "'people at the University treat each other with fairness and respect".
- Improve satisfaction and engagement rates for LGBT, BME and male staff.

Objective 3: All staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can contribute to a diverse and inclusive culture
Targets:
- Ensure all staff complete the online diversity module.
- Increase the percentage of staff who agree that "the University shows through its actions that it is committed to being an equal opportunities employer".
- Increase the percentage of staff who are "clear about their part in delivering the University's Equality Priorities".
- Increase the percentage of staff who "know what to do if they observe inappropriate behaviour within the University community".
- Increase the percentage of staff with protected characteristics who agree they feel they are a valued member of the University community.

Objective 4: Improve progression to more senior roles where particular groups are under-represented
Targets:
- As measured by the Employee Opinion Survey, ensure that the variation in the results for all staff and those with protected characteristics is not significant for the percentage of staff who agree they have "equal access to promotion and secondment opportunities".
- Increase the proportion of Professors who are women.
- Achieve a University Athena Swan Silver Award by 2016.
- Increase in the number of BME staff in senior roles.

Objective 5: Encourage disclosure in all equality monitoring activity so that we fully understand the composition and needs of our diverse workforce
Targets:
- Increase the percentage of staff who disclose information on protected characteristics.

Priority 3: **Integrate and embed equality into the business processes of the University**

Objective 1: Ensure due regard is given to equality, diversity and inclusion in all University activity including policy development, planning, corporate change projects, procurement, infrastructure development and decision-making processes through the implementation of robust and systematic equality analysis.

Objective 2: Evaluate our practice and profile and act to improve our performance in comparison to external exemplar organisations

Targets:
- Increase in the number of corporate projects (process improvement, infrastructure developments etc) which have equality analysis built into their business case.
- Increase the percentage of tenders awarded to organisations who have an equality and diversity policy.
- Achieve a University Athena Swan Silver Award by 2016.
- Increase our position in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index year on year.
- Increase our position in the Race for Opportunity benchmarking exercise.

Priority 4: Developing an inclusive and supportive University culture

Objective 1: Raise the profile of the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda, making clear the responsibilities at all levels of the University

Objective 2: Support faculties, academic departments and services to integrate and implement equality and diversity actions into their local plans

Objective 3: Monitor information on our staff and student population in line with our obligations under the public sector equality duty

Targets:
- Increase the percentage of staff who have undertaken unconscious bias development.
- Ensure all staff complete the online diversity module.
- Increase the percentage of line managers who have undertaken equality and diversity training.
- Increase awareness of the University's membership of Stonewall, Race for Opportunity and the Athena Swan Charter.
- Increase the number of senior leaders and managers who have equality and diversity integrated into their annual appraisal objectives.
- Ensure all faculty and directorate plans include objectives to advance equality, diversity and inclusion.

Implementation of the Equality Priorities

Roles and Responsibilities
The University's corporate responsibilities, together with the responsibilities of individual members of staff to deliver the Equality Priorities, are set out below.

The **Board of Governors** is legally accountable for compliance with equalities legislation and its role is to:
- assure itself that mechanisms are in place through which the Equality Priorities can be delivered;
- receive reports of the University's performance against the Equality Priorities.

The **Vice-Chancellor** has executive level responsibility for ensuring that the University complies with relevant equality legislation, who will:
- ensure that the University has in place Equality Priorities that are communicated to all staff, students and visitors;
- ensure that appropriate structures, systems and processes are in place to support the implementation of the Equality Priorities and associated equality and diversity policies and procedures.

The role of the **Secretary and Registrar** is to:
- provide leadership in strategic matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- oversee the development and implementation of the Equality Priorities.

The role of the **Equality and Diversity Board** is to:
- provide governance and management support to the implementation of the Equality Priorities;
- advise and make recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor and Board of Governors;
- oversee institutional compliance with relevant equality legislation;
- consider, advise and act upon recommendations by faculties and directorates that require strategic direction;
- promote good practice, innovation and flexibility in the delivery of the Equality Priorities through all University functions and activities.

The **Equality and Diversity team** provides a central point of legal and policy advice on equality, diversity and inclusion and has the responsibility to:
- support the development and implementation of the Equality Priorities;
- provide a policy development and an advisory service covering the legal and business aspects of the equalities agenda to the University;
- anticipate and respond appropriately to legislative requirements that will impact on the University;
- facilitate the incorporation of equality and diversity into strategic thinking and day-to-day business activity.

As the most senior managers in their respective faculties and directorates, **Pro Vice-Chancellors and Directors** will act as Equality Champions and have responsibility to:
- provide leadership and monitor equality and diversity activity locally;
- ensure University equality policies are disseminated to staff and students and are effectively and consistently implemented;
- champion equality in order to establish an inclusive working and learning environment;
- embed equality activity and actions in faculty/directorate plans.

Heads of Academic Department/Services will have the responsibility to:
- ensure University equality policies are disseminated to staff and students and are effectively and consistently implemented;
- champion equality in order to establish an inclusive working and learning environment;
- embed equality activity and actions in local plans.

Line Managers are expected to:
- disseminate information to ensure staff are aware of their equality and diversity responsibilities;
- work to promote equality and diversity as an integral part of the service(s) they provide and the policies and procedures they develop and implement;
- support the individual needs of staff so they can participate and perform effectively;
- ensure staff recruitment and appraisal activity is carried out fairly, transparently and consistently.

Faculty/Directorate Equality Co-ordinators will:
- undertake projects and, where appropriate, lead on activity to promote equality and diversity;
- contribute to consultation on the development of University policy and good practice guidelines;
- promote equality and inclusion across the faculty/directorate through cascading information/communication and contributing to University-wide events;
- signpost managers, staff and students to appropriate sources of guidance and support.

Academic staff are expected to:
- disseminate information to ensure students are aware of their equality and diversity responsibilities;
- support the individual needs of students so they can participate and perform effectively;
- understand and fulfil their responsibilities in relation to disability, reasonable adjustments and learning contracts;
- ensure student recruitment and assessment procedures are fair, transparent and consistently applied.

All staff are expected to:
- take personal responsibility for familiarising themselves with the Equality Priorities and adhering to the University's equality policies;
- treat other members of staff, students and visitors fairly, with dignity and respect;
- respond positively to the different needs and circumstances of members of the University community;
- encourage practices that foster equality, diversity and inclusion, and report any incidents of behaviour that fail to comply with the University's equality policies and equality legislation.

All students are expected to:
- familiarise themselves with and adhere to the University's equality policies;
- treat members of staff, other students and visitors fairly, with dignity and respect;
- encourage practices that foster equality, diversity and inclusion and report any incidents of behaviour that fail to comply with the University's equality policies and equality legislation.

Supporting Policies and Frameworks

The following policies and frameworks are in place which will support and inform the implementation of the Equality Priorities:

- University Access Agreement
- University Admissions Policy
- Learning Teaching and Assessment Framework
- Student Support Framework
- Chapters B1 and B8 QAA Quality Code
- Dignity at Work Policy

Reporting against the Equality Priorities

The implementation of the Equality Priorities will be overseen by the Equality and Diversity Board. This Board will receive updates on progress from those with assigned actions, supported by a cycle of equality information and analysis to monitor the indicators outlined within the plan.

Equality and Diversity statements will be developed by faculties and directorates which will set out how they will implement and who has responsibility for local equality priorities. These will also set out the responsibilities and reporting arrangements for equality and diversity within each faculty and directorate.

The Equality and Diversity Board will report to the University Executive Group and the Board of Governors annually in July each year on progress towards the implementation of the Equality Priorities including any significant positive or negative changes to the indicators and measures within the plan. The plan will be reviewed and refreshed annually in September each year.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR THE EQUALITY PRIORITIES

The following document summarises the internal and external data and research that was considered as part of the development of the Equality Priorities. This is designed to provide background information on the issues faced by the University and explain why, in the context of the sector and wider environment; these issues have been chosen as priority for the University.

1. An excellent and inclusive educational experience

BME student success

There have been a number of key changes in the external environment which will have an impact on, or have relevance to this issue. These include the publication of the QAA Quality code for Higher Education and the intention of Government to provide the public with information to challenge public bodies on their performance against the requirements of the Equality Duty. Furthermore, BIS[2] in their policy document putting students at the heart of the system referred to 'informed' students who will be looking at how much value they are deriving from their educational experience particular in the current environment and the fees and funding regime in the UK.

In April 2014 HEFCE published the results of a new study which evaluated the achievements of 130,000 students from universities and colleges across England up to August 2011. The study found that there is significant variation in degree outcome for students with different ethnicities. 72% of white students who entered higher education with A-level grades of BBB gained a first or upper second class degree. This was in comparison to 56% for Asian students and 53% for Black students entering with the same A-level grades. The attainment gap between BME students and their White peers is also a key challenge identified by HEFCE, the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) and the Higher Education Academy (HEA).

The relative attainment gap in the 'good honours' outcomes for black and minority ethnic students at Sheffield Hallam University by comparison to their white student peers is currently 21% compared to the sector average of 18%.

Internal research into this issue has found that, at an institutional level, there is a statistically significant difference between the marks awarded for white students compared to ethnic minority students and, although there was some variation between specific ethnic groups, all groups had a statistically significant difference, with Pakistani and Black African ethnic groups showing the largest negative difference in attainment with the white majority.

Research to analyse the relationship between performance and ethnicity alongside other potential factors including gender, mode of attendance, socioeconomic status and low groups with low participation in higher education has also been conducted. This research, supported by findings in the sector as a whole, concluded that the variables examined only accounted for a limited amount of the variance in marks between white and BME students. Exploring previous educational attainment as a factor also concludes that previous educational achievement only partially accounts for differences between BME and white students.

This research has led to increased awareness of the issue within the University and the development of an action plan to address the BME attainment gap.

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[2] Governmental BIS rather that Sheffield Hallam's Business Improvement Services department

Promoting women in Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM)
The UK Government recently published a report entitled 'Women in Scientific Careers' which highlights a gender talent gap which will have a significant impact on the ability of the UK to fill the 820,000 STEM vacancies which will need to be filled over the coming years. Currently 13% of STEM jobs are occupied by women, highlighting the impact of the loss of female talent at various stages of the STEM career pipeline. Universities have an important role to play in narrowing the gender gap in STEM careers which the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) identified in its Equality Scheme 2012-2014 where the focus was on widening access to STEM subjects for women. Furthermore, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) has recently announced that it will provide a £200 million capital investment fund which will be matched by universities on at least a 1 to 1 basis, to boost the national university infrastructure and allow science and engineering departments to provide world-class facilities and teaching for students. The competition for these funds will also act to support the aim of getting more women to take science and engineering at degree level by requiring evidence of a commitment to equality and diversity.

The University is positioned to address the challenge and opportunity presented by these changes in the external environment due to its participation in the Athena SWAN programme. The University holds a bronze award at University level and has been awarded a number of departmental awards over the past two years. The Department of Biosciences has achieved notable success and was awarded a silver award in 2012. The organisational learning which has occurred from taking part in the programme can be seen as a capability which will enable the University to achieve further success in its ambition to achieve silver award status for the University.

The Sheffield Hallam University Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WISET) team has, as part of its commitment to gender diversity, undertaken a number of outreach activities to promote the participation of female students in STEM subjects over the past year. Approximately 500 girls in local schools and colleges have taken part in the University's outreach events which aim to address the underrepresentation of women in areas such as Engineering and Maths. Where an underrepresentation of male students is found in certain subject areas for example Psychology, action is taken to ensure that male students are represented in outreach activities to provide an appropriate gender balance. Furthermore, students and staff of both genders in STEM departments have been encouraged to register as STEM Ambassadors and a network for female students in STEM disciplines at Sheffield Hallam has also been created. Activities involve talks from alumni and placement students about their experiences, career planning workshops and company visits to enhance student employability.

Anticipating and managing reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities
The prospect of informed students is also relevant to the disabled student experience, as Government plans to increase challenges via the process of judicial review as part of its review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), could suggest that disabled students will also be questioning the value of their HE experience. The OIA [3]stated in its annual report for 2012 that there had been a 25% increase in the number of complaints it received, and that there remain a high number of complaints received by OIA from disabled students. They suggested there is still room for improvement with respect to the ways in which university deal with complaints relating to the communication and application of procedures to implement reasonable adjustments and extenuating circumstances relating to disability.

A report was presented to the University's Equality and Diversity Board in June 2013 detailing the key challenges for the University with respect to the implementation of

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[3] Office of Independent Adjudication

reasonable adjustments. Key legislative changes have had a significant impact on the University's capability to respond to requests to put reasonable adjustments in place. The introduction of a new form of prohibited conduct 'a detriment arising from disability' has proved particularly challenging and the co-ordination of activities associated with implementing reasonable adjustments in a timely and effective way is an important factor to consider.

The government announced on 7th April 2014 its plans to make changes to the Disabled Students Allowances which are available to Higher Education students from England. The changes will apply to all full-time, full-time distance learning, part-time and postgraduate students applying for DSA for the first time in respect of an academic year beginning on or after 1 September 2016, with changes to equipment and/or computers taking place from April 7 2015. The University is currently considering how it will respond to these changes.

Exploring the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) student experience
The Gay by Degree Guide 2013 which is published annually by Stonewall stated that Sheffield Hallam scored 5 out of 10, which is a reduction of 2 points compared to the previous year. There is a risk that prospective and current LGBT students could have a lower perceived value of the Sheffield Hallam brand, which in turn could have an impact on the numbers of LGBT students who apply to study at the University. The retention of LGBT students and the support that they receive whilst undertaking a course of study at Sheffield Hallam is also significant. The delicate balance of promoting good relations on campus and managing competing rights is also a challenge for the University.

Note: Since this initial analysis was undertaken to support the development of the Equality Priorities work has been done to improve the web materials for prospective LGBT students and our score for the Gay by Degree has increased to 10 out of 10 - a position we now wish to retain.

Research by the Equality Challenge Unit relating to the LGBT student experience has shown that from a sample of 2,704 students studying at an UK university the majority of those students 'came out' at University (90.2%). 15% of those students, as a result of 'coming out', fear that they risk losing the financial support of their parents and 4.9% said that they had been denied financial support as a result of becoming openly gay. LGBT students also reported significant levels of negative treatment (bullying or harassment). Student survey respondents cited the source of the negative treatment as 49.5% from fellow students, 10.4% from tutors/lecturers, and 10.6% of this treatment came from other areas of the HEI. Furthermore, 20% of LGBT student survey respondents said that they had taken time out of University as a result of this negative treatment, and 22.6% of transgender student survey respondents said that they had experienced negative treatment (bullying or harassment). As a result of this negative treatment the likelihood of high rates of attrition are probable.

The University's Stonewall Diversity Champion membership status is a positive step in overcoming some of the potential challenges, however this will require the University to develop and embed particular capabilities in to its culture. In 2014 the University made its first Stonewall Workplace Equality Index submission, the outcome of which will be communicated to the University soon and will include a score and position within the Stonewall Top 100.

2. Attract, retain, support and develop a diverse workforce

Our workforce comprises a diversity of talents, skills and experience. As we adapt and respond to the increasing diversity of our students and their needs we must ensure that staff are engaged in roles where those talents are used to deliver exceptional teaching, research

and services to students and colleagues. Our aim is to maintain an environment that values difference and ensures individual talents are fully utilised to achieve the University's goals.

We aim to create a welcoming working environment in which:
- people can achieve their potential and perform well;
- there is no bullying, harassment or discrimination;
- there is equality of opportunity;
- all decisions are based on merit.

We will do this by:
- providing support, information, training and guidance for all staff;
- taking appropriate actions to redress any gender, racial or other imbalances in the workforce;
- dealing with issues of harassment and bullying promptly;
- developing effective processes for monitoring and reviewing equality data;
- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and that they take action to challenge inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour.

The Equality Priorities focus on a number of key areas that support our need to attract, retain, support and develop a diverse workforce.

Workforce Diversity

The University has greatly improved the quality of management information about the workforce that is available and published via The Source. This is enabling us to better understand the composition of the workforce and start to identify their needs.

The data we currently have provides key information about our workforce and the most reliable information is for gender, age, race and disability. It also enables us to identify appropriate comparators within and outside the HE sector. So for example we know that the majority of the workforce is female and that they are employed predominantly in administrative, professional and technical roles. However we have only a very small number of female Professors. In addition we know that the majority of our workforce is over 30 years of age and that 3% have disclosed that they have a disability.

Where ethnicity is disclosed we know that the workforce is predominantly white with around 6% of the workforce of BME origin. This is lower than the University of Sheffield (9.2%), Sheffield City Council (11.4%) and the 2011 Sheffield census (19.2%). We also know that more staff from a minority ethnic origin work in academic areas than in professional and support roles.

In the 12 months to 31 July 2013 the University advertised 634 vacancies and received 7215 applications. We monitor the diversity of the applicant pool and track their progress through the selection process. In the main the composition of the applicant pool reflects that of our workforce generally with the exception of race where, when ethnicity is disclosed, 17% of applicants are from a BME background.   In 2012/13, the percentage of BME applicants who successfully progress between application, shortlisting and appointment stages decreases from 17% to 10% to 6% respectively.

The University has already started work to improve its profile as an employer will encompasses the recent launch of e-recruitment, revised recruitment and employment internet pages and a recruitment service that will provide more focussed and specialist advice and support to managers across the University. Our aim will be to ensure that our external employer profile and advertising reflect our diverse staff and student community, and that our approach to selection and assessment enables candidates to do their best. Where appropriate we will consider specific initiatives to recruit people from under-represented groups for example creating graduate entry routes into both academic and professional roles.

Engagement

The tri-annual Employee Opinion Survey is the University's main indicator of employee engagement and satisfaction. The last survey took place in November 2014 and the upcoming results will enable the University to understand how our employees feel about working at the University and identify any trends by comparing data with previous surveys in 2008 and 2011. Our staff fulfil a wide variety of roles and analysis of the Employee Opinion Survey data is completed in various ways to segment the workforce and this includes by protected characteristic.

Outcomes from the 2011 Employee Opinion Survey showed that the majority of staff were proud to work at the University, found their work interesting and enjoyable in a friendly working atmosphere. The outcomes also showed that some staff groups had a less positive view of the University including those with the protected characteristics of disability, race and sexual orientation.

The University's staff networks have a key role in providing a forum for staff in specific groups to meet and engage with issues that affect them. Our aim is to develop, empower and support these groups so they can be proactive and influential.

Development

The University already expects all staff to complete the mandatory online equality and diversity module to ensure that all staff have basic levels of awareness of issues and their responsibilities. It is proposed that this is enhanced by specific development on unconscious bias and more effective embedding of equality and diversity practice into a wider range of development programmes and events. Targeted bespoke development for groups and teams will also be offered as needs arise.

Specific events and CPD activity such as those for International Women's Day also increase engagement and awareness. The University has recently launched ASPIRE to support female academics who seek to become Professors and this approach could be extended to support other groups. The University is committed to the LFHE Aurora development programme and expect that more women will benefit from the opportunity to attend in future.

3. Integrate and embed equality into our business processes

As part of our ambition to create an inclusive and supportive culture we recognise the need to have processes, systems and structures in place to support this, taking a whole organisation approach. Research by Deloitte (2012) suggested that alignment of systems,

processes and practices was essential in order to successfully deliver sustainable diversity programmes.   Furthermore research commissioned by the Equality Challenge Unit (2012), which resulted in the publication of the report 'Mainstreaming: equality at the heart of Higher Education' recommended that university 'link the mainstreaming initiative to core strategy and policy to make it part of the agenda across the institution. Include an equality dimension in existing processes and procedures rather than creating new 'bolt-on' activities'

To realise this priority we will ensure that due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion is given in within the planning process, corporate change projects, infrastructure procurement and policy development. This will be supported by the process of equality analysis for the changes being planned or proposed. We will also evaluate our practice and profile externally and act to improve our performance in comparison to external exemplar organisations. The University has recently retained its bronze Athena Swan award and has set an ambitious target to achieve an institutional silver award by 2016. Work to address issues impacting on women in STEM is firmly on the University's agenda for the future and the scheme is gaining increasing recognition within and outside the sector. In addition the University is committed to completing the Race for Opportunity Benchmarking Survey 2014 and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index 2015 and will use these benchmark exercises to inform further areas for improvement.

4. An inclusive and supportive University culture

To date, the University has approached equality and diversity from a compliance perspective and as a consequence we can see and understand trends but there has been limited action to bring about a change in culture to support long-term change. We will effectively communicate and use data to inform and support what we do with the key emphasis on activity which will have impact across broader sections of our staff and student community.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that we work in an environment that is inclusive and free from discrimination. However, the University does not currently describe the equality responsibilities that should be associated with specific roles or institutional boards and committees. As part of the Equality Priorities a document outlining these roles and responsibilities has been developed and further work will be undertaken to ensure that they can be embedded throughout the University at the same time as the Equality Priorities are disseminated. However, embedding roles and responsibilities will also require commitment to ensure that everyone in the University community is aware of their personal responsibility and conducts themselves appropriately at all times.

Part of this commitment will be to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in all aspects of University activity - through the delivery of the University Strategy, planning, processes, projects and policy development - and that staff and students understand the implications for themselves and other University visitors and partners.

Disclosure rates for most of the protected characteristics are high and this enables us to be confident about the information we have. It is important that staff and students feel that they can disclose their personal information and that we encourage them keep it up to date. We will use this information together with other data sources such as the Employee Opinion

Survey to understand the experience of different staff groups and take appropriate action wherever possible.