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Equality Framework 2016-2026

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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I am very pleased to write the foreword to this new Equality Framework for the University of Liverpool.

The need to consciously consider diversity and equality in a University such as Liverpool is clear when you walk around our campus. We are an outward looking University with a significant international community; we are very successful in helping to overcome barriers to higher education through our widening participation initiatives; and we are working to encourage women and men to consider careers in areas which have traditional been male or female dominated.

The only way we can ensure that the University of Liverpool is an inclusive organisation, an organisation where your ability to succeed is not hindered by obstacles, is to work tirelessly to ensure that diversity and equality is at the core of everything we do.

This starts with the clear leadership of our University Council, with me and the Senior Executive Team, and includes each and every member of staff, and members of our student community.

This new Framework is an important document in identifying the areas of diversity, equality and inclusion we intend to focus on over the coming 10 years, and it helps to frame the type of organisation we are aiming to be.

I invite you all to work towards this goal.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Janet Beer

Vice Chancellor
2. Introduction

At the University of Liverpool we are committed to the principles of equality of opportunity for all, of fairness and of inclusion. We are committed to providing an environment within which we recognise and value people’s differences, and aim to capitalise on the strengths that these differences bring to the institution. We support all staff and students in the pursuit of the fulfilment of their potential to succeed.

We believe that every individual in our University community should be treated with dignity and respect and be part of a working and learning environment that is free from barriers.

This commitment is specifically made in relation to the 9 legally defined Protected Characteristics of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including ethnicity, ethnic and national origins, nationality and colour)
- Religious belief, philosophical belief and non-belief
- Sex (Male or Female)
- Sexual Orientation

This commitment is made in relation to all activities of the University, but with specific reference to our obligations as a:

- Provider of Higher Education
- Employer
- Provider of Goods and Services to members of the public

Our University values of respect, wellbeing, professionalism and transparency are at the heart of everything we do as we strive together for academic excellence.

The Framework

We have developed this Framework in accordance with our Public Sector Duty to identity one or more Equality Objectives with the aim to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010,
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don’t share it,
- promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don’t share it;

Further details about these legal obligations are outlined in Appendix 1.

In addition, this Framework has been developed to support the delivery of the University of Liverpool’s Strategy 2026 (our strategic plan) and its three supporting themes, the:

- **Education**,  
- **Research and Impact**,  
- **Professional Services**.

Table 1 (below) summarises Strategy 2026 and further information about the enabler strategies is included in the section ‘Operational Implementation’.

The ultimate aim of this Framework is to demonstrate how we aspire to go beyond our legal duties and translate our values of respect and inclusiveness throughout our culture, activity and day-to-day organisational practice.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy 2026</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>University Mission</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“For advancement of learning and ennoblement of life since 1881”.

**University Vision**

“To be a connected, global university at the forefront of knowledge leadership, recognised by being in the top 100 worldwide”.

**University Core Objectives and Prioritise**

- Global knowledge leadership  
- Graduate prospects  
- Educational experience  
- Business excellence  
- Global reach and performance  
- National and international profile

**University Values and Ethics**

- **Principle 1** – We will put ethics and integrity at the heart of our decision-making  
- **Principle 2** – We will work in partnership with our students to ensure their interests and aspirations inform our activities.
• **Principle 3** – We will deploy our resources creatively and with care, to maximise our positive impact locally, nationally and internationally.

• **Principle 4** – We will develop a staff framework which sets out clearly the employment offer and expectations for all our employees.

• **Principle 5** – We will work in partnership with our collaborators to ensure their interests and aspirations inform our activities.

See: [Strategy 2026](#)

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**Who is the University of Liverpool?**

The development of this Framework has taken into account the current staff and student profile\(^1\) of the University in order to provide a current baseline and to support the formulation of the Strategic Objectives.

We have intentionally not included extensive statistical information within this document in order to keep it short and clear. However, below is a snapshot of who the University’s staff and students were at the time of its drafting:

**Students**

Of the 22,526 standard students in the academic year 2014-2015 (inclusive of Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research students), their profile was:

- **Age on entry**: 66% 0-20; 20% 21-25; 14% 26+
- **Disability**: 7% had declared a disability
- **Ethnicity**: 61% White; 34% BAME; 5% Unknown
- **Gender**: 55% Female v 45% Male
- **Nationality**: 66% United Kingdom; 4% European Union; 30% Overseas

*Of the 23,774 none Standard Students (UG, PGT, PGR) based on the main Liverpool campus only and excluding the Centre for Lifelong Learning:*

- **Dependants**: 1% had dependants; 36% No dependants; 63% Unknown
- **Gender Identity**: 0.5% different than birth gender; 37% Same; 62.5% Unknown
- **Religion**: 11% Christian; 11% No Religion; 8% Other Religion; 70% Unknown
- **Sexuality**: 34% Heterosexual; 1.7% LGB; 64% Unknown

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\(^1\) Further statistics can be found on the [diversity and equality website](#), in the annual diversity and equality reports, staff can access data directly or via their department administrator from the University’s data warehouse ‘Explorer’, or data can be requested by contacting the Diversity and Equality Team on [equality@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:equality@liverpool.ac.uk).
Staff

Of the 5,890 staff posts in November 2015 their profile was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>3% had declared a disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White British</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAME</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Religion</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Religion</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGB+</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of this Framework

In this Framework document you will find:

- Our Equality Objectives
- Information on our underpinning policies and commitments
- Information on the governance and management arrangements supporting delivery of the objectives
- Information on individual roles and responsibilities for delivering the Equality Framework and responsibilities to diversity and equality.

A summary of the University’s responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation is provided in Appendix 1.

Supporting the delivery of the Strategy

The Diversity and Equality Team in Human Resources is the centre for policy development and expert advice on diversity and equality at the University of Liverpool. It is responsible for:

- supporting the University, including Faculties and Central Professional Services, to embed and implement the objectives identified within the Framework,
- ensuring the University meets its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010,
- assisting the University to implement inclusive practice through the development of appropriate policies, guidance and support.

Further expert advice is provided by Student Administration and Support on student disability, mental health, and international issues; by Facilities, Residences and Commercial Services on building and campus accessibility requirements; and by Legal and Governance on legal compliance responsibilities.
Partnership working and engagement

The University supports a number of staff equality networks, the trade unions, and the Liverpool Guild of Students, and recognises the key role they play in promoting equality and inclusion-related activity across campus.

We will continue to support the development and visibility of the staff networks, which currently include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black, Asian &amp; Minority Ethnic Staff Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Support Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carer’s Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled Staff Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endometriosis Support Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Early Career Researcher Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual &amp; Trans Staff &amp; Postgraduate Student Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool Women in Science and Engineering Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menopause Support Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans and Non-Binary Peer Support Network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We will continue to work in partnership with the networks, trade unions, the Diversity Champions Forum, the Disability & Dyslexia Contacts, the Conflict Resolution Advisor Network, and working groups and committees, to implement the Equality Framework, the Diversity & Equality of Opportunity Policy, and Equality Objectives and action plans.

Publishing and reporting

The Framework will be published on the University Internet and Intranet to ensure the university and wider community is aware of our commitment and our objectives.

Progress in implementing this Framework and supporting activity will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team and the University Council (and other relevant committees and groups), at a minimum through the Annual Diversity and Equality Report. Additionally
supporting statistical information and reports will be published on the Diversity and Equality website.

Further information on the operational oversight of this Framework is outlined in the section on Operational Implementation.
3. Our Strengths and Successes

The University has made significant progress over the last 5 years in embedding and developing our approaches to diversity and equality. Key Achievements have included:

- In recognition of our commitment to **gender equality**, the awarding on an Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze Award in 2010 and 2013; and the successful awarding of 6 School/Institute Athena SWAN Bronze Awards and 4 Silver Awards.

- **New facilities** have been launched which have included the opening of a purpose built Muslims Prayer Room (Liverpool Campus), a multi faith room (London), a Staff Milk Expression Room, Gender Neutral Toilets (Guild), a Carers Car Park, and building of some of the most accessible disabled student accommodation in the country.

- In recognition of our commitment to **Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual equality**, the University was ranked on the Top 100 of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in both 2013 and 2014.

- Significant commitment and leadership has increased the overall proportion of staff that have completed **diversity and equality training** from 20% in 2010 to 73% in 2016. Excluding Zero Hour staff this figure increases to 80%. New training programmes on Mental Health First Aid and Unconscious Bias have also been introduced and are being rolled out.

- The **racial diversity** of the student population has increased from 26% Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) student in 2010/11 to 36% in 2014/15. A key feature of this being the University’s relationship with Xian Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) whereby the number of overseas Chinese student increased from 1758 in 2010/11 to 4072 in 2014/15.

- Following the appointment of a new provider, the University’ **Children’s Centre** has been recognised by OFTED as ‘Good’ following improvements, and now provides greater flexibility for staff/students including offering a free creèche facility for staff working open days and graduations.

- New staff policies and services have been improved or introduced including an Employee Assistance programme offering staff counselling services 24 hour a day; and enhanced Flexible Working, Shared Parental, Foster/Adoption, and Surrogacy Leave entitlements.

- **Chaplaincy services** have been improved with the development of a Chaplaincy Agreement between the University, LJMU and Faith Express; and had seen the appointment of an Associate Jewish Chaplain and an Anglican Lay Chaplain for Students expanding the available services.

This Framework aims to build on these strengths and successes over the next 10 years.
4. **Equality Objective Drivers and Enablers**

In the development of this Framework we have recognised that there is already a substantial amount of existing good practice, initiatives and projects, governance drivers, and internal enablers which will provide the main mechanism through which key parts of this Strategy will be delivered.

As a result, this Framework does not seek to replace or reform the good practice that already exists, but to build on that expertise and provide a new set of strategic objectives which will inform their activity.

**Drivers: Pre-existing Statutory and Governance Expectations**

We have defined a Driver as an external sector driven diversity and equality expectation, target or audit mechanism which the University is required to take into consideration. The key external drivers are:

**Enablers: Pre-existing Strategies and Frameworks**

Internal Enablers and Frameworks are mechanisms which the University previously decided to use as a way of focusing our activity and receiving external recognition for our achievements.

Experience has shown that these mechanisms have been a central driver of change at the University. We have seen significant progress, buy in and culture change as a result of using these tools, in particular around Athena SWAN.

We have created an extensive knowledge base amongst staff from across the institution which we intend to continue to use and capitalise on moving forward.

The key internal enablers are:

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2 See [Appendix 2](#) for further detail about each driver
Further details and explanation about each of these internal drivers can be found in Appendix 3 Internal Enablers and Charter Marks.

3 See Appendix 3 for further details about each enabler
5. Our Equality Vision

Acknowledging our achievements over the past 5 years, we also recognise that we still have work to do, and can continue to have a significant impact on the life experiences and outcomes of our staff and students.

Our vision is to be a University where diversity, equality and inclusion are embedded and recognised by our stakeholders as being embedded in everything that we do.

We want to build a strong and lasting culture:

- Which truly values the diversity of experiences, ideas and backgrounds of everyone in our community
- Which values and enhances the ability or potential to succeed in an environment of support and respect
- Where opportunities and experiences are open to everyone
- Where we take personal and professional responsibility for our actions, and for our behaviour towards one another
- Which is recognised by our peers as a sector leader in the field of equality
6. **Equality Strategic Objectives:**

Over the past 5 years the University has continued to be a sector leader in widening participation; we have developed sector leading accessible student accommodation; we have continued to welcome an ever growing number of international and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students; and we have worked to address the gender imbalance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths (STEM) subjects.

We will continue to build on these successes and work to be ever-more inclusive and supportive of a diverse student population. In order to achieve this we have identified 6 key Student Objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Make significant and sustained improvements in the participation rates for the most disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, and in the diversity of the student population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Improve student retention and progression rates for the most disadvantaged and underrepresented groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Improve degree attainment outcomes and reduce any unexplained degree gap differentials for different student groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> Improve progression to postgraduate study for people from disadvantaged groups and narrow the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> Reduce inequalities in graduate level employment outcomes from different groups and narrow the gap in employment outcomes between advantaged and disadvantaged groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> Foster good relations between different communities by providing opportunities to come together, learn and understand one another</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Over the past 5 years the University has made considerable advances in the support and development of a diverse staff population. We have made considerable progress in gender equality; introduced and extended services such as the Children’s Centre; made significant progress in staff training; and provided a stronger system for the support of disabled staff.

We will continue to build on these successes and work to be an ever more attractive employer of choice. In order to achieve this we have identified 6 key Staff Objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Objectives</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Make significant and sustained improvements in the recruitment (application and appointment) rates for the most underrepresented groups in the workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Make sustained improvements in the retention and progression rates of underrepresented groups in the workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Make sustained improvements in the diversity of the University’s Management and Governance boards by ensuring fair, transparent and equitable processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To be a sector leading employer of choice for underrepresented groups within the workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To be a sector leading Family Friendly employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Embed the principles of diversity and equality leadership practices, and to improve the diversity of our people in leadership positions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Areas of Priority

The University has identified the following key areas of activity aimed to achieve our strategic objectives. These have been identified through the review of our management information, and through consultation with our staff. These objectives and priority areas will be operationally prioritised through the development annual action plans which will include agreed SMART targets and indicators of progress.

Student Objectives

1. Make significant and sustained improvements in the participation rates for the most disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, and in the diversity of the student population

   1.1. We will work to address the significant underrepresentation of women and men on relevant undergraduate programmes.
   1.2. We will work to address the significant underrepresentation of relevant UK/Home Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students, and on those undergraduate programmes which have a significant underrepresentation
   1.3. We will work to address the recruitment of underrepresented UK/Home students with specific types of disabilities, and on programmes where their participation is significantly low.
   1.4. We will work to increase the opportunities we provide Mature and Part Time students
   1.5. We will work to increase the accessibility of the University Campus for disabled people.

2. Improve student retention and progression rates for the most disadvantaged and underrepresented groups

   2.1. We will work to reduce the proportion of BAME students who repeat their undergraduate 1st year.
   2.2. We will work to review the Inclusivity of our curriculum to ensure that it is aligned with our diversity principles and international agenda
   2.3. We will work to support and build the cultural understanding between students, in particular between home and international students and those joining us from XJTU in second year.
   2.4. We will work to create a culture of mutual respect and dignity, and a culture that challenges bullying and harassment

3. Improve degree attainment outcomes and reduce any unexplained degree gap differentials for different student groups
3.1. We will work to reduce the degree attainment gap between BAME Students and White Students
3.2. We will work to reduce the degree attainment gap between Male students and Female students
3.3. We will work to reduce the degree attainment gap between Disabled students and Non-Disabled students, in particular those with disabilities which disproportionately impact on their outcomes.
3.4. We will work to reduce the degree attainment gap between Mature on Entry students and 18-21 Year old on Entry students

4. Improve progression to postgraduate study for people from disadvantaged groups and narrow the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged groups

4.1. We will work to increase the proportion of underrepresented groups recruited onto Postgraduate Taught Programmes
4.2. We will work to increase the proportion of underrepresented groups who are successfully appointed onto Postgraduate Research Degrees
4.3. For 4.1 and 4.3 with specific reference to Women, BAME and Disabled students to address the ‘leaky pipeline’

5. Reduce inequalities in graduate level employment outcomes from different groups and narrow the gap in employment outcomes between advantaged and disadvantaged groups

5.1. We will work to ensure that career development opportunities, such as working abroad and exchange programmes, are available to all
5.2. We will work to prepare our students for the international job market
5.3. We will work to challenge career choice stereotypes by celebrating success, promoting opportunities and role modelling achievements.

6. Foster good relations between different communities by providing opportunities to come together, learn and understand one another

6.1. We will provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds, nationalities and faith to come together and build successful relationships.
6.2. We will work to build mutual cultural understanding and respect that supports our increasing international community
6.3. We will continue to encourage and support Freedom of Speech on campus within the confines of relevant legislation; it is important for our students to learn to disagree well and we will support events which encourage this. Where there are
concerns about an event, we will work with all relevant parties to build understanding of those concerns and wherever possible to identify mutually agreeable approaches to ensuring debate.

**Staff Objectives**

1. **Make significant and sustained improvements in the recruitment (application and appointment) rates for the most underrepresented groups in the workforce**

   1.1. We will work to address proportion of women and men in the relevant career pathways and grades where they are underrepresented
   1.2. We will work to address the underrepresentation of UK/Home Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff within our workforce
   1.3. We will work to address the underrepresentation of people with disabilities within our workforce.

2. **Make sustained improvements in the retention and progression rates of underrepresented groups in the workforce**

   2.1. We will work to a support and develop women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths (STEM), senior academic positions, and senior leadership/management positions
   2.2. We will work to retain and develop UK/Home BAME staff
   2.3. We will work to retain and develop disabled members of staff
   2.4. We will work to create a culture of mutual respect and dignity, and a culture that challenges bullying and harassment

3. **Make sustained improvements in the diversity of the University’s Management and Governance bodies by ensuring fair, transparent and equitable processes**

   3.1. We will work to increase the diversity of the University Council to be reflective in composition of our community and/or have experience and skills working with diverse communities
   3.2. We will work to develop and increase the proportion of underrepresented groups on senior positions (Grade 9 and Grade 10 posts).
   3.3. We will work to improve the competencies of senior leaders to driver the equality agenda

4. **To be a sector leading employer of choice for underrepresented groups within the workforce**
4.1. We will work to create a disability inclusive culture where staff feel able to seek support and where that support is in place
4.2. We will work to support an Internationalised workforce and ensuring that barriers present in other countries (such as disability support) do not adversely impact on our staff members careers.
4.3. We will work to tackle the stigma around mental ill-health and create a supportive and understanding culture

5. **To be a sector leading Family Friendly employer**

5.1. We will work to normalise part time working and flexible working as a valid career option for both men and women
5.2. We will work to become a sector leader in the support we provide for working families

6. **Embed the principles of diversity and equality leadership practices, and to improve the diversity of our people in leadership positions**

6.1. We will work to build the capacity of our leaders to understand and manage diverse staff groups and student communities
6.2. We will work to increase the leadership opportunities and leadership development opportunities available underrepresented staff groups.
Our commitment to diversity and equality is operationalised through our policies, procedures and services. Key policies are summarised below:

**Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy**

This policy outlines the University’s commitment to diversity and equality and its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The policy provides a detailed summary of the meaning of the 9 protected characteristics and forms of unlawful discrimination.

*Open Document*

**Dignity at Work and Study Policy**

This policy and the procedures detailed in this document are designed to support staff and students who feel they have suffered from bullying and/or harassment. The policy applies to bullying and harassment by a member of staff against another member of staff, a student against another student, a member of staff against a student and a student against a member of staff. This policy also protects members of staff from harassment by third-parties such as external contractors and agencies working for the University.

*Open Document*

**Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech**

This Code of Practice states that any individual or body of persons shall be free, within the law, to hold meetings or engage in such other activities that are specified on the premises of the University (including premises occupied by the Guild of Students), regardless of the beliefs, views, policies or objectives of that individual or body.

*Open Document*

**Student Charter**

The purpose of the Student Charter is to set out our partnership in learning. Jointly created by the University and the Liverpool Guild of Students, it represents our shared commitment to the values of the University and to develop and maintain a stimulating, diverse and supportive environment that is conducive to learning.

*Open Document*
7. Roles and Responsibilities

These roles and responsibilities relate to the implementation of this Framework specifically and should be read in conjunction with the roles and responsibilities outlined in the Diversity & Equality of Opportunity Policy, University Role Profiles and Expectations and the Terms of Reference for committees and working groups.

University Council
The role of the Council, as the ‘Responsible Body’ under the Equality Act 2010, is to:

- hold ultimate accountability for ensuring that the University complies with all duties placed on it by legislation,
- ensure that this framework and related policies, strategies, and procedures are implemented,
- assure itself that mechanisms are in place through which the University’s Equality Framework and associated action plans can be delivered,
- receive and actively review regular reports on diversity and equality compliance,
- consider equality and diversity within all aspects of its Governance role.

Vice Chancellor
The Council delegates executive responsibility for ensuring that the University complies with relevant anti-discrimination legislation to the Vice-Chancellor, who will:

- ensure that the University has in place a robust Diversity & Equality of Opportunity Policy that is communicated to all staff, students and visitors,
- ensure that appropriate structures, systems and processes are in place to support the implementation of the Equality Framework and associated policies and procedures.

Pro-Vice Chancellors, Executive Pro-Vice Chancellors and the Senior Leadership Team
The role of the Pro-Vice Chancellors, Executive Pro-Vice Chancellors and the Senior Leadership Team is to:

- provide leadership in strategic matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion,
- oversee the development and implementation of the Equality Framework and Policy across the University,
- to receive and consider appropriate reports of the progress of this Framework.

Heads of Schools and Institutes, Directors of Professional Services
Heads of Schools/Institutes/Central Professional Services will act as local Equality Champions and have the responsibility to:
• provide leadership to ensure the principles of this Equality Framework and its Strategic Objectives are implemented within their area of responsibility,
• monitor the activity and progress of the School/Institute/ Central Professional Service in meeting the Strategic Objectives,
• ensure University equality policies are disseminated to staff and students and are effectively and consistently implemented,
• champion equality to establish and maintain an inclusive working and learning environment.

Heads of Department (Level 1)

Heads of Departments (Level 1 Managers) will act as Department Equality Champions and have the responsibility to:

• provide leadership to ensure the principles of this Equality Framework and its Strategic Objectives are implemented within their area of responsibility,
• monitor the activity and progress of the Department in meeting the School/Institute/Central Professional Services Strategic Objectives,
• effectively and actively manage equality and diversity within their immediate areas of responsibility, specifically ensuring that recruitment, annual review, professional development review (PDR), complaints and disciplinary processes, reasonable adjustments, and leave/return processes work effectively,
• ensure University equality policies are disseminated to staff and students and are effectively and consistently implemented,
• champion equality to establish and maintain an inclusive working and learning environment.

Line Managers and Programme Directors

Line managers are expected to:

• disseminate information to ensure staff and students are aware of their equality and inclusion responsibilities,
• work to promote equality and inclusion 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 and students so they can participate and perform effectively,
• ensure staff and student recruitment and selection procedures are fair, transparent and consistently applied.

Governance and Management Committees

University and Faculty Governance and Management Committees, within the scope of their remits, are expected to:

• be responsible for embedding the principles and strategic objectives of this Equality Framework within their activity,
• have consideration for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010,
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don’t share it; and,
- promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don’t share it.

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee provides strategic oversight of the Equality Framework and has responsibility to:

- oversee the implementation and monitoring of the University Equality Framework, action plans and associated activity,
- ensure that named individuals and committees identified within the Framework and associated action plans implement their activities and report progress,
- ensure that cross University activity is implemented and monitored,
- make recommendations to amend key objectives and actions in accordance with progress and changes to priorities or legislation,
- submit regular progress reports to the governance committees and University management.

**Diversity and Equality Team (Human Resources)**

The Diversity and Equality Team provides a central point of policy advice and guidance on diversity, equality and inclusion and has the responsibility to:

- lead the implementation of the Equality Framework,
- provide a policy development and advisory service to the University and its faculties, schools/institutes and professional services,
- anticipate and respond appropriately to legislative requirements that will impact on the University environment,
- ensure that equality and inclusion are incorporated into both strategic thinking and day-to-day activity,
- to lead on the drafting of progress reports on the implementation of this Framework.

**All Members of Staff**

All staff are expected to:

- take personal responsibility for familiarising themselves with and adhering to the principles of the Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy and the Dignity at Work and Study Policy,
- 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,
- actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidents of behaviour that fail to comply with the Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy.
All Students

All students are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with and adhere to the principles of the Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy and the Dignity at Work and Study Policy,
- treat members of staff, other students and visitors fairly, with dignity and respect,
- actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidents of behaviour that fail to comply with the Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy.
8. Operational Implementation

This 10 year Equality Framework supports Strategy 2026, the University’s Strategic Plan. Furthermore, this Framework supports the core objectives and prioritise of the underpinning:

- **Education Strategy,**

  “To support our students as they become creative and culturally rich graduates, with the capacity to find employment that will enable them to be agents for change in a connected world”

- **Research and Impact Strategy**

  “To be world-leading in specific research areas and globally recognised in all our research and impact activities”

- **Professional Services Strategy**

  “To advance our University, and its staff and students, through our people, place and culture of leadership”

This framework has identified 6 student and 5 staff Strategic Objectives which contribute to the achievement of Strategy 2026. 37 ‘Areas of Priority’ have also been identified which the University will work on over the duration of this Framework.

**Annual Action Planning**

The ‘Areas of Priority’ will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Diversity and Equality Team and the Equality Working Group and proposals will be submitted to the relevant committees (for example the Education Committee) to approve an Annual Action Plan.

These annual action plans will focus activity onto different areas of concern each year enabling the University to manage the delivery of this Framework. This however should not be read to mean that no other activity will or can take place or departments cannot take into consideration the areas of priority in their work.

Although activity will continue to occur each year that is not listed within these annual action plans (for example through the broader work of the working groups, charter marks and department plans), we will not aim to act of each of the priority areas simultaneously, but over the 10 year period.
Monitoring and Review

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee is responsible for the overseeing the implementation of this Framework in the first instance. The overarching Framework will run from 2016 to 2026 and progress will be annually reviewed and monitored.

A more in-depth review of the Strategic Objectives and the Areas of Priority will take place at Year 3, Year 6 and Year 9 to ensure that the Framework remains flexible and relevant, and to ensure our compliance with the review cycle set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Standing Committees and working groups

Further to the roles and responsibilities previously outlined, the University will continue to operate a number of standing committees and working groups which work to operationally manage and implement aspects of this Framework. These committees have key responsibilities in the delivery of enabling activity including the Access & Participation Plan and Athena Swan Principles.

Key committees and working groups are:

**Athena Swan Steering Group**

The University Athena Swan Steering Group provides strategic oversight for the development and implementation of University level Athena Swan applications and action plans. This is complemented by School/Institutes Athena Swan Self-Assessment Committees which work to implement Athena Swan objectives locally.

**Race Equality Steering Group**

The University Race Equality Steering Group provides strategic oversight for the development and implementation of University level Race Equality Charter application and action plan.

**Widening Participation Working Group**

The Widening Participation Working Group provides operational oversight for the development and implementation of the University’s Access Agreement and other widening participation initiatives.

*All committees and working groups are subject to change over the period of this Framework*

Further Reading

- Appendix 1: Legislative Context
- Appendix 2: External Enablers
- Appendix 3: Charter Mark & Pledges
Appendix 1: Legislative Context

The Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy and the Equality Framework 2016-2026 specifically aim to implement the University’s obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there are a number of different laws which reference aspects of diversity, equality and inclusion. These are referred to below.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 is the primary piece of legislation within the UK governing the University’s anti-discrimination responsibilities. The Act provides a single point of reference defining the Protected Characteristics of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religious belief and non-belief, Sex, and Sexual Orientation. The Act sets out the forms of discriminatory behaviour and tools with which to promote equality. For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the University is an employer, an education provider, and a provider of goods, services and facilities to the public. It has a statutory obligation to fulfil the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

What is the Public Sector Equality Duty?

All public bodies (including universities) have a statutory duty to ensure that they consider the needs of all individuals in their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees. The Equality Duty is designed to reduce bureaucracy while ensuring public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

The General Equality Duty

The Equality Duty has three aims and requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don’t share it; and
- promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don’t share it

The Specific Equality Duties

In addition, the Equality Duty is underpinned by specific duties. These are aimed to help public bodies perform better in meeting the general Equality Duty and require the University to publish:

- monitoring information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually
- equality objectives, at least every four years
The University publishes equality information on its staff and student population on an annual basis, and this is used in a variety of ways, for example, as a tool to understand the representation and diversity of staff and students across campus, or to provide evidence to support the identification of activity to improve the student and staff experience.

**Other pertinent legislation**

- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**
  
  Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015\(^4\) imposed a General Duty on the University to have due regard of the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

- **Education (No.2) Act 1986 – Freedom of Speech**
  
  Section 43 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986\(^5\) creates a duty on the University to

  1. Protect the Freedom of Speech (within the law) of students, staff, members and visiting speakers.
  2. ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the use of University premises are not denied to any individual or body of persons because of their beliefs or views, the policy or objectives of that body.
  3. issue and keep up to date a code of practice

- **Education Reform Act 1988 – Academic Freedom**
  
  Chapter 40, Section 202 of the Education Reform Act 1988\(^6\) requires the University to have regard for the need to ensure that academic staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at their institutions.

- **Employment Rights Act 1996**
  
  The Employment Rights Act 1996\(^7\) (as amended) is the primary source for the family friendly leave entitlements of Adoption Leave and Pay, Flexible Working, Maternity Leave and Pay, Paternity Leave and Pay, Parental Leave, Shared Parental Leave, Unfair Dismissals relating to the previous leave rights and Age/Retirement.

- **Human Rights Act 1998**
  
  The Human Rights Act 1998 codifies into UK law the Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the European Convention of Human Rights. Rights include: Article 6 Right to a Fair Trial,

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Article 9: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion and Article 14: Prohibition of discrimination.

The University needs to have regard for the Human Rights Act, since it may be a public authority for certain purposes (a Functional Public Authority) and because the UK courts are obliged to interpret UK law in accordance with the Act.

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Whereas the Equality Act specified harassment in employment, education and in the provision of goods and services on the equality grounds, the Protection from Harassment Act 1997⁸ is the primary source of legislation for protection from harassment in general, and in public places.

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Appendix 2: External Drivers

1. HEFCE Annual Monitoring

Annually HEFCE audits the University on the following areas which it has identified as sector level equality and diversity challenges:

- Diversity of Governing Bodies (The University Council)
- Diversity of Senior Staff
- Staff Disability and Disclosure rates
- Student attainment gaps between equality groups
- Student participation gaps between equality groups

2. RCUK Expectations for Equality and Diversity

RCUK expect those in receipt of Research Council funding to:

- promote and lead cultural change in relation to equality and diversity
- engage staff at all levels with improving the promotion of equality and diversity
- ensure all members of the research workforce are trained and supported to address disincentives and indirect obstacles to recruitment, retention and progression in research careers
- provide evidence of ways in which equality and diversity issues are managed at both an institutional and department level

Research Councils recommend that the evidence includes:

- participation in schemes such as Athena Swan, Project Juno, Investors in People, Stonewall Diversity Champions and other similar initiatives to demonstrate departmental level action
- input prepared for the Research Excellence Framework research environment at unit of assessment level
- appropriate benchmarking data (e.g. HEIDI+ equality reports from HESA data)
- evidence of the application of the ‘Every Researcher Counts resource’ to support this work
- other available and pertinent management information

RCUK will:

- review the overall effectiveness of the approach at a Departmental / Institutional level through its Audit and Assurance Programme
- discuss equality and diversity at Institutional visits
- reserve the right to introduce more formal accreditation requirements for grant funding should significant improvement not be evidenced.

3. Professional Bodies Conditions of Education

Professional Bodies which regulate professions such as Nursing, Medicine, and Radiography etc. have a series of professional standards and expectations relating to diversity and equality. These standards may direct the training of these student cohorts and the policies of the Schools/Institute which deliver these programmes.
Appendix 3: Internal Enablers - Charter Mark & Pledges

1. Access & Participation Plan

Access and Participation Plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

They include:

- the provider’s ambition for change
- what it plans to do to achieve that change
- the targets it has set
- the investment it will make to deliver the plan.

The OfS considers underrepresented groups to include students with the following characteristics:

- Students from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups
- Some black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students
- Mature students
- Disabled students (those in receipt of disabled students allowance (DSA) and those who have declared a disability but are not in receipt of DSA)
- Care leavers.

In addition, there is a wider set of student groups where the national data indicates there are particular equality gaps and support needs that can be addressed in access and participation plans. These are also included in the OfS definition of underrepresented groups:

- Carers
- People estranged from their families
- People from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Refugees
- Children of military families.

See: Access & Participation Plans
2. Athena Swan / Gender Charter

The Athena Swan Charter is a national charter mark aimed at achieving gender equality in Higher Education. The charter covers women (and men where appropriate) in:

- academic roles in Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine (STEMM); and Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business and Law (AHSSBL);
- professional and support staff
- trans staff and students

In relation to their:

- representation
- progression of students into academia
- journey through career milestones
- working environment for all staff

See: Awards, Applications and Action Plans

The Athena SWAN Awards are the responsibility of the Athena Swan Steering Group and the School/Institute Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Teams.

3. Project Juno (Institute of Physics)

The aim of Juno is to recognise and reward Physics departments that can demonstrate they have taken action to address the under-representation of women in university physics and to encourage better practice for both women and men.

Project June is the responsibility of the School of Physical Sciences Diversity and Equality Committee.
4. Disability Confident

Disability Confident is a government charter to promote and support disabled people in the workplace. The 5 commitments are:

1. Ensure your recruitment process is inclusive and accessible
2. Communicate and promote vacancies
3. Offer an interview to disabled people
4. Anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments as required
5. Support any existing employee who acquires a disability or long term health condition, enabling them to stay in work

The Disability Confidence charter is the responsibility of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

6. HR Excellence in Research Award (VITAE)

The HR Excellence in Research Award recognises the commitment of the University to implement the 7 Principles of The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers:

1. Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.
2. Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation’s human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.
3. Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.
4. The importance of researchers’ personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.
5. Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.
6. Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.
7. The sector and all stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK.
7. Stonewall Diversity Champion

Stonewalls Diversity Champions programme is Britain’s leading best-practice employers’ forum for sexual orientation and gender identity equality, diversity and inclusion.

**Workplace Equality Index** – this benchmarking tool assesses the University’s progress on LGBT equality against Stonewalls best practice and others in the sector.

The Stonewall Workplace Equality Index is the responsibility of the **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee**.
# Document Record

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<td>Approved by:</td>
<td>University Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renewal Date:</td>
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<tr>
<td>V2</td>
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<td>Minor amendments to titles, addresses, and links.</td>
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