



Equality and diversity ...making it happen

Abbreviated version of The
Open University Equality
Scheme 2016 -
2020

We are creating an inclusive university community
and a society

- where people are treated with dignity and respect,
- where inequalities are challenged, and
- where we anticipate, and respond positively to,
different needs and circumstances,

so that everyone can achieve their potential.

Version 1.1 - June 2017



This scheme is available in a range of formats including full and abbreviated version documents published on our website in Word and PDF formats and abbreviated version in print. The scheme, or sections of it, can also be requested in plain text, in large print, in Braille, comb-bound or audio format. If you would like to request the scheme in a particular format to meet your needs, please contact the Equality, Diversity and Information Rights Team.

This document is the full version of our UK Equality Scheme. It incorporates our Equality Scheme for Northern Ireland.

All of the content in this document, including the Foreword, constitutes our equality scheme.

It is intended that the scheme, including the Annexes will be reviewed and updated after 4 years. Information that will be reviewed and updated more frequently is published in separate Appendices. Appendix 1 and 2, the equality objectives and equality action plan, are particularly important to the effective implementation of this equality scheme.

The abbreviation 'the OU' is often used for 'The Open University' throughout this document.

Further information about equality and diversity at The Open University is available on our website at www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity.

Comments or questions about this equality scheme should be sent for the attention of the Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights. For complaints, please see Section 4.3.

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Foreword



Baroness Lane-Fox of Soho
Chancellor, The Open University



Peter Horrocks CBE
Vice-Chancellor, The Open University

The Open University is open to people, places, methods and ideas. We promote educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality education to all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential.

The Open University is innovative, responsive and inclusive. We deliver world-class, part-time education to people across the four nations of the

UK and worldwide. We make a significant contribution to employability and productivity, strengthening the UK economy.

Since 1969, we have promoted educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality education to all those who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential. More than 2 million people have experienced this life-changing learning through their study with us.

We are committed to developing an inclusive university community and contributing to an inclusive and just society. This commitment is expressed in the vision and principles set out in this scheme.

Discrimination arising from individual characteristics and circumstances is not only unlawful, but a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity, preventing individuals, organisations and societies from achieving their growth potential.

Our mission is to be open to people, places, methods and ideas and this means that a commitment to equality is embedded in all that we do. We celebrate diversity and the strengths that it brings, we challenge under-representation and differences in outcomes and we commit resources to specific positive action programmes.

As a public body, we also have a number of statutory duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires us to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations between groups of people (see box 1).

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires us to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across a range of characteristics (see box 2).

In this equality scheme we set out our arrangements for how The Open University will meet these duties.

We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to make sure that we comply with our statutory duties and that our equality scheme is implemented effectively, and on time.

We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our compliance with the statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress.

We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that

all our staff and governors are made fully aware of our equality scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it.

We, the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor of The Open University, are fully committed to ensuring that the University fulfils its statutory equality duties effectively across all functions, including education and related services, employment, partnerships and procurement.

We realise the important role that our students and the public have to play to ensure our statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our equality scheme demonstrates how determined we are to ensure there is active engagement, so that people affected by our work can influence and shape our organisation.

On behalf of The Open University and our staff we are pleased to support and endorse this equality scheme which has been drawn up in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and guidelines provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in ensuring compliance with our statutory duties and working towards the achievement of our equality vision and objectives.



Baroness Lane-Fox of Soho
Chancellor



Peter Horrocks CBE
Vice-Chancellor

Box 1: The Public Sector Equality Duty in Great Britain

The Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

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

The relevant protected characteristics are-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

People with caring responsibilities are also protected from discrimination by virtue of their association with people with protected characteristics.

Box 2: Section 75 in Northern Ireland

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires The Open University, in carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to *promote equality of opportunity* between

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- Men and women generally
- Persons with a disability and persons without
- Persons with dependants and persons without

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland, we must have due regard to the desirability of *promoting good relations* between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

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1. Our vision, principles, scheme aims and responsibilities

1.1. Our vision of a fair and just society

We are creating an inclusive university community and a society:

- where people are treated with dignity and respect,
- where inequalities are challenged, and
- where we anticipate, and respond positively to, different needs and circumstances,

so that everyone can achieve their potential.

1.2. Our equality and diversity principles

1. We value diversity and we recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture, and that this difference, when nurtured appropriately, brings great strength.
2. We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on individual characteristics and circumstances, such as age; disability; caring or dependency responsibilities; gender or gender identity; marriage and civil partnership status; political opinion; pregnancy and maternity; race, colour, caste, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sexual orientation; socio-economic background; trade union membership status or other distinctions, represents a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity for self-fulfilment.
3. We recognise that patterns of under-representation and differences in outcomes at The Open University can be challenged through positive action programmes.
4. We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs. We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile or degrading to others.
5. We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in working towards the achievement of our vision.

1.3. Scheme aims

The aims of our equality scheme are aligned to the Public Sector Equality Duty in Great Britain and the Section 75 duty in Northern Ireland¹.

¹ See the Foreword for a description of the duties as they apply to The Open University. Also see Section 2.4 (Equality law) for a summary of equality law, and Annexes A to E for further detail.

1. To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation involves:

- Ensuring there is no less favourable treatment for people
- Ensuring no factors give rise to discrimination

2. To promote and advance equality of opportunity

Promoting and advancing equality of opportunity involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantage suffered by people
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people that are different to the needs of other people
- Encouraging people to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

3. To promote and foster good relations between people

Promoting and fostering good relations involves:

- Tackling prejudice
- Promoting understanding between people

1.4. Your responsibilities

Everyone that is part of our University community has responsibilities under this equality scheme. Responsibilities for different groups of people are set out below. Section 3.2 of this scheme provides information about the equality and diversity learning and development programme that supports staff in meeting these responsibilities.

As a **student**, you should:

- Treat all members of our University community with dignity and respect for their rights and beliefs
- Challenge or report incidents of discrimination and bullying
- Respond positively and inclusively to individual differences
- Apply equality and diversity principles through everyday activities
- Keep knowledge of University equality and diversity policy up to date
- Undertake the Online Equality Training on joining the University and at least once every 24 months, thereafter (Employees only)

As an **employee, consultant or agent**, you should do all the above, and:

- Anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances of members of our University community

As a **line manager or manager of consultants or agents**, you should do all the above, and:

- Ensure the University's equality vision and scheme are communicated to potential

employees and new staff through the recruitment and induction processes

- Disseminate accessible information to ensure employees, consultants and agents are aware of their responsibilities
- Identify and respond to equality and diversity staff development needs
- Support individual needs and circumstances of staff so they can perform effectively
- Set appropriate equality related objectives for your staff

As a **Head of Unit**, you should do all the above, and:

- Where relevant, include equality and diversity development actions in the unit's business plan
- Ensure that *equality analysis*² is carried out for changes to strategy, policy, procedure and practice
- Assess and report progress against agreed equality action plans

As a member of the **Vice-Chancellor's Executive**, you should do all the above, and:

- Champion, sponsor and promote equality and diversity
- Ensure institutional compliance with equality legislation

As a member of **the governing body**, you should:

- Satisfy yourself that the University is fully compliant with its equality duties
- Request further information from University staff where you require assurance

As an **academic staff member developing or acquiring teaching and assessment materials**, you should:

- Anticipate and respond to the needs of students with different impairments and from different backgrounds when developing learning outcomes and materials
- Develop materials with your audience in mind, recognising the full diversity of the student body

As an **academic or research staff member, engaged in research activity**, you should:

- Apply equality and diversity principles to all those associated with your research, and treat individuals with dignity and respect
- Ensure that your research activity adheres to equality and diversity principles and ethical research standards

As a **research leader**, you should:

- Ensure that *equality analysis* is carried out for all new research activity in accordance with the University's arrangements. Promote equality and diversity in all aspects of the management of research, including the recruitment and career management of researchers in accordance with the principles of the Concordat to

² See Section 3.5 for further information about equality analysis.

Support the Career Development of Researchers³

As a **staff member developing strategy and policy**, you should:

- Ensure that *equality analysis* is carried out for all new and revised strategies and policies, so that strategy and policy is inclusive, and does not unintentionally discriminate or lead to unintended outcomes

As a **Chair of a University Committee, management group or steering group**, you should:

- Ensure that *equality analysis* has been carried out for changes to University strategy, policy, procedure and practice, and that the findings are taken into account before decisions are made at the committee, management group or steering group that you Chair

As a **partner, or provider of goods and services**, you should:

- Comply with equality laws in the countries in which you operate
- Have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote and advance equality of opportunity, and promote and foster good relations
- Subscribe to the vision and principles of our equality scheme

³ The Concordat sets out the expectations and responsibilities of researchers, their managers, employers and funders. Further information is available at <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/vitae-concordat-vitae-2011.pdf>

2. Context of our scheme

2.1. About the OU

Since the OU's launch in 1969 almost 1.9 million people worldwide have achieved their learning goals by studying with us.

The OU is the biggest university in the UK with more than 170,000 students, around 5,600 Associate Lecturers (tutors), more than 1,100 academic and research staff, and more than 3,500 support and administration staff.

Most modules are available throughout Europe and some are available worldwide directly from the OU. Many more are available through our partners and accredited institutions.

Our institution is diverse:

- We are the largest provider of higher education for disabled people – around 21,000 studied with us in 2014/15
- Around 1,400 OU students study each year in prison or a secure unit
- Around 300 armed forces personnel and their dependents study with us each year, some while on active duty
- Around 11% of our UK students are from ethnic minorities
- Around 76% are in work while studying
- 59% of our students are female
- We have students taking OU modules alongside A levels and we have students in their 90s – the average age is 31 and more than 31,000 students are aged under 25

- More than 50% of OU undergraduates have one A level or lower qualification at entry

The Open University's mission is to be open to people, places, methods and ideas. The University was founded to open up higher education to all, regardless of circumstances or location. The OU has developed and embodies a set of core values that make it the most distinctive institution in higher education – we are inclusive, innovative and responsive. These values provide a moral and intellectual compass for the University in a changing world.

We have no minimum entry requirements for admission to most undergraduate qualifications. We teach primarily at a distance through a system of supported open learning which includes the provision of high-quality print and multimedia teaching materials, together with personalised tuition, learning feedback and support. Personalised tuition takes the form of online and face-to-face tutorials, online forums, telephone and email tuition, and residential and day schools, depending on the module and qualification being studied.

Further contextual information about the OU is provided in the full version of this scheme, covering the following topics; four nations and Europe, widening participation, research and scholarship, working with business and industry, open educational resources, and international development.

2.2. The University Strategy

Our strategy is to *secure the mission* and thrive as a University by delivering a step change in how effectively we help students achieve their study goals maximising student success, and maintaining academic standards:

Maximising Student Success:

Maintaining Academic Standards

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of a market-leading enquirer experience by attracting and retaining increasing numbers of students from diverse backgrounds • Support a study experience that maximises students' chances by responding positively to individual needs and circumstances and addressing barriers to success • Support journeys from informal to formal learning by promoting diversity and inclusion through open media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support research and scholarship that is externally recognised for excellence and impact by leading research and scholarship in social justice and inclusion • Support people and a culture that enable us to deliver high performance, by attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, by promoting equality through all our people processes, and by drawing on the creativity, skills and experience of our diverse workforce • Support flexible, integrated and robust systems by embedding accessibility in procurement and systems development • Support financial sustainability by preventing unnecessary costs by considering different needs and circumstances from the outset
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The University is currently in the process of developing a new institutional strategy which will build on the existing strategy, with an even sharper focus on putting students first. This strategy is being developed with input from students, staff and other stakeholders and is expected to be finalised by summer 2016.

2.3. Progress in advancing equality and good relations

We continue to work at advancing equality of opportunity and good relations at The Open University.

A major focus continues on widening participation to higher education for people living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage, through a national programme of community partnerships and through our work in prisons and our work to provide effective study support to carers. Complementing the significant work done in developing new systems to automate the production of a wider range of alternative formats for disabled students.

We developed new study skills booklets to provide effective advice for students across a number of the most common impairments and new resources for our Associate Lecturers (tutors) to ensure

consistent study support for students with mental health impairments.

Our extensive Securing Greater Accessibility programme is now well established and aims to ensure that the learning accessibility needs of disabled students are anticipated at an earlier stage. This allows us to reduce the additional time and costs associated with retrospective adjustments.

Our plan for making greater use of our Staff Diversity Networks and for achieving equality charters and benchmarking exercises is now well underway. In May 2015, the University won the coveted title of Diverse Company – Education Sector, 2015 at the Excellence in Diversity Awards. In June 2015, the University became the first HEI in Scotland to be awarded the Carer's Scotland Kite Mark.

2.4. Internal and External Drivers

It is important that we capitalise on the skills and strengths that every member of

staff brings to the workplace. The business case for diversity is well documented as are the benefits to be derived from good diversity and inclusion practice result in:

A wealth of evidence shows that education is a key determinant of life chances. As well as being a right in itself, education is an enabling right, allowing individuals to develop the skills, capacity and confidence to secure other rights and economic, social and cultural opportunities.

Following the introduction of the Equality Act in 2010, legislation continues to be revised and updated. The Act does not apply in Northern Ireland, where Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 already places a duty on the University to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons across a wide range of equality categories, and to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Working in different countries presents both opportunity and challenge. Staff must develop their knowledge of the specific legal, cultural and political contexts in which they operate, and must comply with specific equality laws in different countries. Where we teach overseas students directly, those students have the same protections under equality law as students based in the UK.

Further information about equality law is contained in the full scheme, particularly Annexes A to E.

3. Arrangements for managing and embedding equality

3.1. Leadership

Strong, visible leadership is an essential component of this equality scheme. The Vice-Chancellor is the Institutional Sponsor for Equality Diversity and Inclusion and he has appointed VCE level Champions for all protected characteristics and related objectives.

An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, chaired by the Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law, will set the rolling 4 year strategy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

The University Secretary will continue to hold the portfolio responsibility for ensuring compliance with equality legislation and promoting best practice across the institution.

Senior Accountable Executives will lead an *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Group* responsible for implementing the strategy with a focus on policy, procedure and practices.

3.2. Staff learning and development

As an educational institution, the OU has a strong commitment to providing learning and development opportunities for staff to

enable them to be effective in their roles and to fulfil their potential.

Everyone working at the OU needs to know something about equality and diversity. Staff working directly with students need to be able to respond to a wide range of needs and circumstances. Staff who develop learning materials need to know how to create inclusive and accessible resources. Managers need to know how to manage a diverse workforce effectively. Some staff need more specialist equality knowledge, such as those involved in advising others.

All staff need to know about their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty (Great Britain) and the Section 75 duty (Northern Ireland) and our core training for all staff, the Diversity online module, provides full details of institutional and individual responsibility.

In 2014 a programme of equality training was developed called the Equality Expert Series. The three courses currently in the series are:

- Conducting Equality Analysis
- Deconstructing Stereotypes
- Valuing student and staff difference

Equality and diversity staff learning and development programme

The table below documents our continuous equality and diversity staff learning and development programme. Learning and development is targeted to different staff groups depending on what they need to know:

Equality and Diversity Staff Learning and Development Programme			
Who needs to know?	What?	For what purpose?	How will they learn?
All staff	Rights and responsibilities under equality law, and responsibilities under our equality scheme	To achieve dignity and respect for all; to promote staff satisfaction; to prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment and other prohibited conduct	Diversity Compliance online module Promotion of Valued Ways of Working framework through staff appraisal process Written briefings from the E&D Team E&D intranet resources Equality Expert training on Deconstructing Stereotypes and Valuing Student and Staff Difference
Associate Lecturer staff	Where to find information and University policy and practical strategies in responding to different needs and circumstances	To respond effectively to needs of students, promote engagement, student satisfaction and success	Resources on Tutor Home website Support from Staff Tutors, Module teams and faculty Accessibility Specialists Regional and national staff development days
Contractors and consultants	Rights and responsibilities under equality law, and responsibilities under our equality scheme	To achieve dignity and respect for all; to prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment and other prohibited conduct	Equality and contracting goods and services guidance document Equality and contracting: tendering for contracts guidance document Standard equality-related clause in all contracts Equality built in as a core requirement in contracts where relevant Consultants provided with copy of summary equality scheme
Line managers	How to recruit and manage a diverse workforce	To utilise staff diversity; to respond positively to individual needs and circumstances; to	Disability and employment website Effective recruitment and selection course Employment law for managers

Equality and Diversity Staff Learning and Development Programme			
Who needs to know?	What?	For what purpose?	How will they learn?
		promote staff satisfaction and success; to prevent unlawful discrimination	course Equality expert training: Valuing Student and Staff Difference and Deconstructing Stereotypes Briefings from HR Managers and Advisers
Staff providing advice and guidance to students	University policy and precedent in responding to particular equality-related circumstances	To meet needs of students, promote engagement, student satisfaction and success	Training for Student Registration and Enquiry Service staff Training for Curriculum Support Teams Regional briefings for advice staff Staff operating procedures
Disability advisers	Understanding of a wide range of different needs and University policy and precedent in responding	To meet needs of disabled students, and promote student satisfaction and success	Induction for new advisers Disability and Additional Requirements regional meetings Online resources Annual conference Advice from specialist advisers
Research student supervisors	University policy and precedent in responding to particular equality-related circumstances	To meet needs of students, promote engagement, student satisfaction and success	Advice from specialists in the Research Career Development and Research Degrees teams; Supervisor training events; Supervisor handbook
Principal Investigators and Directors of Research	How to recruit and manage a diverse research team	To utilise staff diversity; to respond positively to individual needs and circumstances; to promote staff satisfaction and success; to prevent unlawful discrimination	Effective recruitment and selection course Briefings from HR and Research School Managers
Staff developing curriculum, and teaching methodologies and tools	Good practice in developing an inclusive and accessible curriculum and learning experience	To create inclusive curriculum that increases student engagement, retention and satisfaction; to anticipate barriers and address these proactively; to reduce bespoke costs	Research seminars provided by the Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships Sharing good practice through the Securing Greater Accessibility group (SeGA) Online resources linked to the Curriculum approval process Advice from faculty Accessibility Specialists Resources and advice from central specialists and on the OU

Equality and Diversity Staff Learning and Development Programme			
Who needs to know?	What?	For what purpose?	How will they learn?
			website
Staff creating materials and assets	Good practice in developing accessible materials and assets	To anticipate barriers and address these proactively; to reduce bespoke costs	Accessibility training provided to media teams Advice from faculty Accessibility Specialists Resources and advice from central specialists and on the OU website
Staff developing strategy and policy	How to assess the impact of strategy and policy on people	To develop inclusive strategy and policy; to meet the public sector equality duty and Section 75 duty	Equality Expert training; "Conducting Equality Analysis" Sharing exemplars; coaching. Equality Analysis Guidance and template on OU external site
Staff developing, commissioning or procuring websites and systems	Good practice in developing accessible websites and systems	To anticipate barriers and address these proactively; to ensure systems are accessible to staff and students; to reduce bespoke costs	Briefings on accessibility standards and processes by Communications and IT
Staff developing partnerships, in the UK and internationally	Understand the importance and value of cultural sensitivity	To build and maintain successful partnerships and relationships	Widening Participation Network
Staff leading on equality planning and reporting for their unit	University equality priorities and approaches to tackling inequalities	To develop effective interventions to address inequalities	Oral briefings and meetings with the E&D Team
Members of the Equality and Diversity Management Group	Equality law and sector good practice	To develop informed equality strategy and policy	Oral briefings from the E&D Team; email subscriptions to the Equality Challenge Unit and the Government Equalities Office
Staff with specialist equality-related roles	Interpretation of equality law and case law, good practice within and beyond the sector	To support the development of informed equality strategy and policy; to advise other staff	Sector conferences; briefings and mailings from equality organisations; research reports; internal networks, external specialist networks

3.3. Accessible information and services

We are committed to ensuring that our services are fully accessible to everyone who is eligible or has a legitimate interest in accessing our services.

For disabled students or students with health conditions that affect their ability to study, to attend residential school or to take examinations, we provide a wide range of alternative formats, services and reasonable adjustments and have our own access centre to assess student needs⁴. We also assess and provide reasonable adjustments for our disabled staff to enable individuals to perform effectively in their roles

Using computers and the internet to enhance study is an essential part of learning at higher education level. Students need regular and reliable access to a computer and the internet to take full advantage of our online services, including module learning materials, forums, and the library⁵. The Open University websites aim to conform to our own web accessibility guidelines⁶ (which are based on the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Content Accessibility guidelines⁷. standards and we are working to enhance

⁴ For further information, see the Services for Disabled Students website at <http://www.open.ac.uk/disability/>.

⁵ Further information is available at the Study at the OU website at <http://www8.open.ac.uk/study/explained/what-is-distance-learning/what-are-the-course-materials-like>.

⁶ OU Web accessibility guidelines available at <http://www.open.ac.uk/about/web-standards/standards/accessibility-standards/accessibility>

⁷ Web Content Accessibility Guidelines available at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>

accessibility with each new software release⁸.

3.4. Consultation and engagement

Consultation in relation to our statutory equality duties

We recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties and we will consult on our equality scheme, equality objectives, action plans, and other matters relevant to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Section 75 duty. We will specifically consult on the impact of our policies where relevant to any of our functions in Northern Ireland.

We will seek views from a wide range of people who have a legitimate interest in the matter for consultation, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest. Where appropriate we will take a more targeted approach to consultation, while ensuring we include organisations on our consultation list for functions relevant to Northern Ireland.

We will use consultation methods that are appropriate to the circumstances, ensuring that everyone who has an interest in participating is able to do so.

Where we are required to implement a change immediately, and it is beyond our control, we may consult after implementation, in order to ensure that any negative impacts of our policy are considered and acted upon.

⁸ Further information is available at <http://www8.open.ac.uk/about/main/admin-and-governance/policies-and-statements>.

Engagement principles for governance, policy and service development

We recognise that engagement with students, alumni, staff, partners, and the wider University community, in governance and institutional development, will greatly enhance the quality of our decision-making. Engagement will support our vision of creating an inclusive university community. Engagement with our students and potential students, in particular, will help us to remain student-centred and position students as active participants in their learning and study experience.

We have a well-established, participatory model of engagement, which includes for example: representation of students on governing bodies; student surveys and research; market research groups; student consultation forum; external academic engagement through appointment of external examiners, critical readers and contributors to the curriculum;

staff surveys, and wide consultation on strategy development. Engagement takes a variety of forms, increasingly utilising online communication channels such as YouTube, Twitter and our community website – Platform, and dedicated online forums, podcasts and wikis. These online methods are not suitable for every purpose and will not reach every audience, but they do offer the potential to build engagement that is practical, affordable and capable of engaging a much greater number of individuals than other channels allow.

The pyramid of engagement (see Figure 6) represents four different levels of engagement, from information giving at the bottom representing the lowest quality of engagement, to partnership at the top, where decision making is shared, representing the highest quality of engagement.

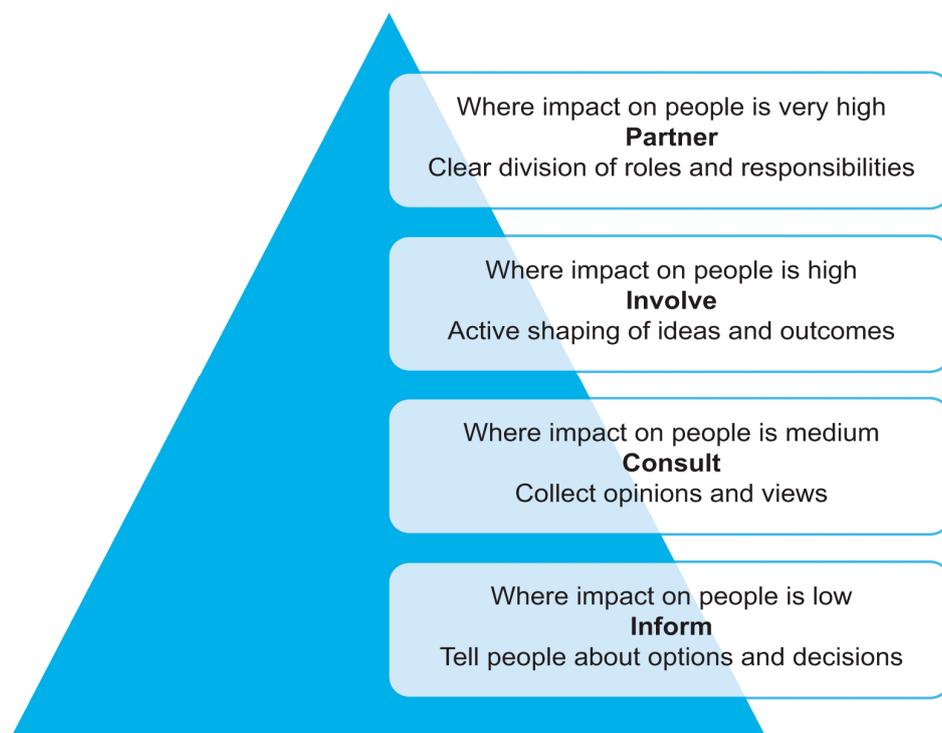


Figure 6: Pyramid of engagement

Engagement should take place at the bottom of the pyramid as a minimum for

the majority of our activities. In other words, where changes are relatively minor

or where we must implement a change such as one required by Government, individuals should be told about changes that are likely to affect them. Where activities have a medium impact, effort should be made not only to provide information, but also to consult with individuals. Where activities have a high impact, meaningful involvement should also be undertaken. Where activities have a very high impact, a partnership approach should be undertaken along with the other types of activities. Importantly, we recognise that engagement at the lowest level represents the lowest quality of engagement and we aim to achieve above this level wherever possible. In summary, engagement should always involve the lowest level of the pyramid, and the impact of the activity should influence the extent that other types of engagement are necessary and beneficial.

The key challenge from an equality perspective is ensuring that engagement is representative of a wide variety of individual characteristics.

3.5. Equality analysis

We all want to experience dignity and fairness, so we can easily understand that everyone else has the same expectation. However, we are all limited by our own experiences, so it is all too easy to make decisions that do not take account of different needs and circumstances and may result in unintended consequences.

Equality analysis, formerly known as equality impact assessment, is the method used by the OU to give due regard to equality when developing and revising policy. Policy is broadly defined and means any proposed, amended or existing strategy, policy statement, project plan, procedure or practice, which is often, but not necessarily, a written document.

The need for equality analysis is identified through the annual business planning process or when unplanned change to policy is required.

3.6. Monitoring and reporting

The table below sets out the indicators we will monitor for each of the next 5 years

Equality Monitoring Schedule					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Undergraduate and postgraduate UK students	Participation, completion and academic attainment	Participation, completion and academic attainment	Participation, completion and academic attainment	Participation, completion and academic attainment	Participation, completion and academic attainment
Postgraduate research students	Participation and withdrawal	Participation and withdrawal	Participation and withdrawal	Participation and withdrawal	Participation and withdrawal
Non-UK/ Overseas students⁹	Participation	Participation	Participation	Participation	Participation
All students	Complaints and appeals Student survey data	Complaints and appeals Student survey data	Complaints and appeals Student survey data	Complaints and appeals Student survey data	Complaints and appeals Student survey data
Senate and Council governing bodies	Composition		Composition		Composition
Associate lecturer staff	Workforce composition by location and faculty Reasonable adjustments Recruitment Leavers	Workforce composition by location and faculty Grievances, bullying and harassment, disciplinary Development Pay gap Staff survey data ¹⁰	Workforce composition by location and faculty Reasonable adjustments Recruitment Leavers	Workforce composition by location and faculty Grievances, bullying and harassment, disciplinary Development Pay gap Maternity leave return Staff survey data	Workforce composition by location and faculty Reasonable adjustments Recruitment Leavers

⁹ Domicile and geographic area is used instead of ethnicity, as ethnic classifications used in the UK are meaningless for non-UK students.

¹⁰ Our ability to publish staff survey data in any given year is dependent on when the previous survey took place. A comprehensive survey is not undertaken every year.

Equality Monitoring Schedule					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Internal staff	Workforce composition by location, unit, job category, grade band and mode Reasonable adjustments Recruitment Leavers	Workforce composition by location, unit, job category, grade band and mode Grievances, bullying and harassment, disciplinary Promotions Development Pay gap Staff survey data	Workforce composition by location, unit, job category, grade band and mode Reasonable adjustments Recruitment Leavers	Workforce composition by location, unit, job category, grade band and mode Grievances, bullying and harassment, disciplinary Promotions Development Pay gap Maternity leave return Staff survey data	Workforce composition by location, unit, job category, grade band and mode Reasonable adjustments Recruitment Leavers
Agency temporary staff	Workforce composition		Workforce composition		Workforce composition
Consultants		Workforce composition		Workforce composition	
Residential schools staff	Recruitment		Recruitment		Recruitment

3.7. Publishing

As a public authority, the OU is required to publish information about its employees and other persons affected by its policies.

We have published our equality scheme, action plans, annual report and a significant range of data on our employees, students, and governance bodies annually for many years.

It is our intention to publish the following:

- This equality scheme
- Our outcome-focused equality objectives (Appendix 1)
- Our Welsh Language scheme
- Completed equality analysis templates (for functions relevant to Northern Ireland)

- Annual monitoring reports based on the table in Section 3.6 of this scheme
- Our annual report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
- Any report produced following a full review of this scheme

All of the above information will be published on our website at <http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity>.

Our equality scheme is published and available in a variety of formats as described on the inside front cover of this document. We will provide information in other formats to meet individual need(s) and aim to do so within 10 working days of receiving a request.

We will publicise the availability of our equality scheme through a wide range of media to ensure it reaches our students and alumni, staff, partners, providers of goods and services, individuals and organisations that responded to our consultation, and other individuals and organisations with a legitimate interest in the University.

We will email a link to our approved equality scheme to the consultees on our consultation list. Consultees without email will be notified by letter that the scheme is available on request.

3.8 Charters and Benchmarking

The University has been aiming towards attaining equality charter awards. Our participation in these awards places the OU in good stead to demonstrate its ability to be held to external scrutiny in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Committing to plans of action for treating with existing gaps/unequal representation is a part of the Charter process that is projected to change culture and attitudes within OU member departments and institutions.

Thus far, the University has been awarded an Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze award and two Departmental Bronze awards for its work and commitment to improving the proportion of women in senior roles in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). The University has been working towards achieving the Disability Standard awarded by the Business Disability Forum; featuring in Stonewall workplace index for its work on sexual orientation and intends to participate in the Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) Race Equality Charter.

4. Discrimination, compliance, review and complaints

4.1. Dealing with discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation

We will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment. Examples include unwanted physical contact, personal insults or name-calling, sexual innuendo, coercion, constant unfounded criticism, unwanted intrusion, persistent patronising or exclusion, and derogatory comments. This is not an exhaustive list and further examples are included in the two bullying and harassment codes of practice, one for students and the other for staff. These provide guidance on dealing with bullying and harassment, and information on the informal and formal options available to staff and students to tackle occurrences. Staff and students are encouraged to address issues immediately so that these can be resolved informally wherever possible and are not allowed to escalate.

Discrimination, harassment or victimisation, whether direct, indirect, by association or perception, (see Annex B for definitions) based on any of the individual characteristics or circumstances covered by this equality scheme are included within the scope of the bullying and harassment codes. All staff and students have a right to raise a concern in relation to decisions that they believe have been made based on their individual characteristics and which result in negative consequences or differential treatment. We will give added weight to the seriousness of such cases. Malicious allegations made under the bullying and harassment codes will be treated as serious disciplinary offences.

For staff, the Employee Assistance Programme¹¹ is a support and counselling service provided by PPC Worldwide and covers a wide range of issues, including responding effectively to bullying and harassment. Serious cases can be raised through the grievance or disciplinary procedures and, where proven, may be treated as acts of gross misconduct, which could lead to dismissal. Serious student cases are dealt with under the Code of Practice for Student Discipline and, where proven, could result in temporary or permanent exclusion from the University.

4.2. Assessing compliance, evaluation and review

We are committed to the fulfilment of our Public Sector Equality Duty and our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our work.

Under this scheme, responsibility for the effective coordination and implementation of this equality scheme lies with the Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights, who is accountable to the Vice-Chancellor as the Sponsor of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the University Secretary as Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group responsible for ensuring compliance and best practice. The University's Equality, Diversity and Information Rights team will continue as the point of expertise and will

¹¹ Further information about the Employee Assistance Programme, including the Freephone telephone number and website resources, are available in the Policies section on the HR intranet.

take on a much stronger role as consultants in supporting the University to achieve the objectives under the three key themes and the related key performance indicators.

4.3. Feedback and complaints

We welcome any questions, comments or feedback you may have regarding our

equality scheme. These should be addressed to the Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights. Contact details are provided on the inside front cover of this document.

You can make a complaint if you believe that you have been directly affected by our alleged failure to comply with our equality scheme or if you believe we have discriminated unlawfully against you.

Further information about complaints is provided in the full version of this scheme.

Annexes and Appendices

The following additional annexes are contained in the full equality scheme:

Annex A: A quick start guide to the Equality Act 2010 (Great Britain)

Annex B: Definition of protected characteristics

Annex C: Definition of prohibited conducts

Annex D: Public sector specific duties in England, Scotland and Wales

Annex E: How our scheme meets the Section 75 duty in Northern Ireland

Annex F: How our scheme and our equality objectives were developed

The following appendices will be published as separate documents, as they are reviewed and updated more frequently than this document:

Appendix 1: Equality objectives

Appendix 2: Equality action plan

Appendix 3: Equality resources for staff (available on the staff intranet only)

Appendix 4: People and teams that can advise staff (available on the staff intranet only)

Appendix 5: Timetable for measures and consultation list for functions in Northern Ireland

Appendix 1 and 2, the equality objectives and equality action plan, are particularly important to the effective implementation of this equality scheme.

Annex G: Summary of themes, objectives and KPIs

Theme	Objective	KPI(s)	VCE Champion(s)	Senior Accountable Executive	
Putting Students First	1a. Improve awareness of the OU among ethnic minority potential students	1. Close the gap between the proportion of ethnic minority and white potential students spontaneously aware of the OU from 16 percentage points to 12 percentage points by 2020	Race	Director, Marketing	
		2. Increase the proportion of new UK undergraduate minority ethnic students from 10.6% to 11% by 2020	Race		
	1b: Reduce the degree awarding gap experienced by disabled and ethnic minority students as compared to non-disabled and white students respectively	1. Close the gap between the proportion of black students and white students awarded a 'good pass' (i.e. a 1st or 2.1) on undergraduate modules at levels 2 and 3 from 30.6% to 25.0% by 2022/23	Race	Director, Access, Careers, Teaching Support	
		2. Close the gap between the proportion of disabled students awarded a 'good pass' on undergraduate modules at levels 2 and 3 from 4.8% to 3% by 2022/23	Disability		
	1c: Improve equality declaration data for students	1. Improve student declaration of sexual orientation status from 28% to 50% by 2018 and to 65% by 2020	Sexual Orientation	Director of Operations, Student Recruitment and Fees	
		2. Improve student declaration of religion and belief status from 28% to 50% by 2018 and to 65% 2020	Religion & Belief		
		3. Improve student declaration of caring and dependency status from 7.2% to 15% by 2018 and to 20% by 2020	Caring and Dependency		
	Leadership and Institutional Commitment	2a: Increase the representation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled staff in senior roles	1. Increase the proportion of women in senior professorial roles from 27.6% to 40% by 2020	Sex	Head of University Secretary's Office
			2. Increase the proportion of ethnic minorities from 7.1% to at least 10% of senior roles by 2020	Race	
3. Increase the proportion of disabled individuals from 2.6% to 5% of senior roles by 2020			Disability		
2b: Increase the leadership potential of women, ethnic minority and disabled staff		1. At least 25% of attendees from Aurora to have achieved career related moves within 2 years of completing the respective programme	Sex	Assistant Director, Learning and Innovation	
		2. At least 25% of attendees from Aspire to have achieved career related moves within 2 years of completing the respective programme	Race Disability		
		3. Introduction of a Leadership Scorecard featuring equality and diversity metrics for all managers at Grade 8 and above by August 2018	Disability Race Sex		
2c: Increase the diversity of the University's Council and governance committees		1. All University committees will always be comprised of at least 40% women and 40% men.	Sex	Director, Academic Policy and Governance	
		2. All University committees with 10 or more members (including co-opted members) will be comprised of at least 20% of people with a declared minority characteristic (disabled, ethnic minority, religious minority or lesbian, gay, bisexual) by 2020	Disability Race		
		3. At least one third of Council will always be comprised of members aged 55 or under.	Age		

Theme	Objective	KPI(s)	VCE Champion(s)	Senior Accountable Executive
A skilled and committed workforce	3a: Develop a more diverse academic, teaching and research workforce with a more diverse age profile	1. Increase the proportion of academic and research staff under 36 from 13% to 17% by 2022	Age	Director, Research, Academic Strategy
		2. Increase proportion of Associate Lecturers aged under 40 from 13.1% to 16% by 2020	Age	
		3. At least 33% of eligible black academic staff to submit in the next Research Excellence Framework submission (expected in 2020)	Race	
	3b: Improve the selection prospects of staff across protected characteristics	1. At least 25% of ethnic minority applicants are shortlisted for all roles by 2018	Race	Head of HR, Support Services
		2. At least 35% of ethnic minority shortlisted applicants are selected (based on ability/potential to do the job) by 2020	Race	
		3. At least 35% of disabled shortlisted applicants are selected (based on ability/potential to do the job) by 2020	Disability	
	3c: Improve the satisfaction of staff across the protected characteristics	1. Close the satisfaction gap between disabled and non-disabled staff from 4% to 2% by 2020	Disability	Director of HR
		2. Close the satisfaction gap with unit management between disabled and non-disabled internal staff from 10% to 5% by 2020	Disability	
		3. Close the satisfaction gap between ethnic minority and white staff from 5% to 2% by 2020	Race	
	3d: Improve the ability of line managers to support the needs and talent development of all staff, especially those who are in minorities in their particular field of work or location	1a. 50% of executive and senior managers have taken at least two of the Harvard Implicit Association Tests (IATs) by 2018 1b. 95% of executive and senior managers to have taken at least two of the IATs by 2020	Disability Race Sex Sexual Orientation	Assistant Director, Learning & OD
		2a. 80% of line managers to have undertaken unconscious bias training by 2020 2b. Line managers engaged post-training to capture impact of any action taken as a result of learning	All	
		3. Line managers improve their skills in developing all staff, especially those with protected characteristics as follows: a. 50% of line managers will have an objective to demonstrate how they will improve their skills in developing staff who are under-represented by 2018 b. 100% of line managers will have an objective to demonstrate how they will improve their skills in developing staff who are under-represented by 2020	Disability Race Sex Sexual Orientation	
		4. Reduce the difference in satisfaction rates of ethnic minority staff with line managers to within 2% of other staff by 2020	Race	
		5. Reduce the difference in satisfaction rates of disabled Associate Lecturers and Internal staff with line managers to within 2% of other staff by 2020	Disability	