Equality and diversity
...making it happen

Summary 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
Main elements of our Equality Scheme

The following areas are covered in detail in the full version of the Equality Scheme (available on the OU website at: http://tinyurl.com/h9j6ybu)

**Vision**
- Vision
- Principles
- Scheme aims
- Your responsibilities

**Review**
- Dealing with discrimination and harassment
- Assessing compliance, evaluation and review
- Feedback and complaints

**Context**
- About the OU
- OU strategy
- Internal drivers
- Internal drivers
- OU progress in advancing equality
- External drivers

**Annexes**
- Equality law
- Specific duties in England, Scotland and Wales
- This scheme and the Section 75 duty, Northern Ireland
- How we developed our scheme and objectives
- Summary of themes, objectives and KPIs

**Arrangements**
- Leadership
- Staff learning and development
- Accessible information and services
- Consultation and engagement
- Equality analysis
- Monitoring and reporting
- Publishing

**Appendices**
- Detailed Objectives
- Action plan
- Resources and advice for staff
- Section 75 timetable for measures and consultation list
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**

We adhere to 5 core equality and diversity principles:

1. Unlawful discrimination in all its forms represents a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity for self-fulfilment.

2. We recognise that patterns of under-representation and differences in outcomes at The Open University can be challenged through positive action programmes.

3. 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.

4. 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 Ireland.

1. **To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

2. **To promote and advance equality of opportunity**

3. **To promote and foster good relations between people**

1.4. **Your responsibilities**

The scheme outlines the responsibilities of everyone who is part of our University community as they have responsibilities under this equality scheme. This includes the following:

- Treating all members of our University community with dignity and respect for their rights and beliefs
- Challenging or reporting incidents of discrimination and bullying
- Responding positively and inclusively to individual differences
- Anticipating and responding positively to different needs and circumstances of members of our University community

1 The full set of responsibilities is available in the full version of the Scheme; [http://tinyurl.com/h9j6ybu](http://tinyurl.com/h9j6ybu)
2. Arrangements for managing and embedding equality

2.1. Leadership

Strong, visible leadership is an essential component of this equality scheme. The 2016 – 2020 Equality Scheme will be managed against clear lines of responsibility and accountability, with the Vice-Chancellor sponsoring Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and appointing VCE level Champions for all protected characteristics and related Objectives.

A Steering Group will set the rolling 4 year The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. The Senior Accountable Executives will lead on equality objectives and will implement the strategy with a focus on policy, procedure and practices.

2.2. 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.

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.

A range of equality and diversity learning and workshop options are available.

2.3. 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 these services. We adhere to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation and we monitor all our functions to ensure that everyone has equal and fair access to information and services, including:

- Support for disabled students and staff
- Support for learning in English
- Online delivery and website accessibility at W3C accessibility standards and we are working to enhance accessibility with each new software release².

In addition to the wide range of information we publish on our websites, any member of the public can request information from the University through a freedom of information enquiry. So far as is possible, The Open University aims to provide members of the public with any information it holds, on request, providing this is not sensitive data as defined by the Data Protection Act³.

2.4. Consultation and engagement

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.

² Further information is available at http://www8.open.ac.uk/about/main/admin-and-governance/policies-and-statements.
³ Further information is available on our Freedom of Information website at http://www.open.ac.uk/foi/.
Our aim is for engagement to take place at the bottom of the pyramid (see below) 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 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.

![Pyramid of engagement](image)

**Figure 6: Pyramid of engagement**

### 2.5. Equality analysis

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

- to identify potential discrimination and remove or reduce this as far as possible,
- to consider how policy might support the promotion and advancement of equality of opportunity, and
- to consider how policy might help to promote and foster good relations.

Equality analysis makes good business sense. It helps us to make better quality decisions and helps us reduce cost by not having to revisit policy that is not fit for purpose.

Detailed guidance, a template and training is available to support staff in conducting equality analysis, to assess whether there is major, minor or no significance for all the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.
## 3. Summary of Themes, Objectives, and KPIs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>KPI(s)</th>
<th>VCE Champion(s)</th>
<th>Senior Accountable Executive</th>
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</table>
| **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  
2. Increase the proportion of new UK undergraduate minority ethnic students from 10.6% to 11% by 2020 | Race | Director, Marketing |
|       | 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  
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 | Race | Director, Access, Careers, Teaching Support |
|       | 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  
2. Improve student declaration of religion and belief status from 28% to 50% by 2018 and to 65% 2020  
3. Improve student declaration of caring and dependency status from 7.2% to 15% by 2018 and to 20% by 2020 | Sexual Orientation | Director of Operations, Student Recruitment and Fees |
| **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  
2. Increase the proportion of ethnic minorities from 7.1% to at least 10% of senior roles by 2020  
3. Increase the proportion of disabled individuals from 2.6% to 5% of senior roles by 2020 | Sex | Head of University Secretary’s Office |
|       | 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  
2. At least 25% of attendees from Aspire to have achieved career related moves within 2 years of completing the respective programme  
3. Introduction of a Leadership Scorecard featuring equality and diversity metrics for all managers at Grade 8 and above by August 2018 | Sex | Assistant Director, Learning and Innovation |
|       | 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.  
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  
3. At least one third of Council will always be comprised of members aged 55 or under. | Sex | Director, Academic Policy and Governance |

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<td><strong>A skilled and committed workforce</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3a: Develop a more diverse academic, teaching and research workforce with a more diverse age profile</strong></td>
<td>1. Increase the proportion of academic and research staff under 36 from 13% to 17% by 2022</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Director, Research, Academic Strategy</td>
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<td>2. Increase proportion of Associate Lecturers aged under 40 from 13.1% to 16% by 2020</td>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>3. At least 33% of eligible black academic staff to submit in the next Research Excellence Framework submission (expected in 2020)</td>
<td>Race</td>
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<td><strong>3b: Improve the selection prospects of staff across protected characteristics</strong></td>
<td>1. At least 25% of ethnic minority applicants are shortlisted for all roles by 2018</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Head of HR, Support Services</td>
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<td>2. At least 35% of ethnic minority shortlisted applicants are selected (based on ability/potential to do the job) by 2020</td>
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<td>3. At least 35% of disabled shortlisted applicants are selected (based on ability/potential to do the job) by 2020</td>
<td>Disability</td>
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<td><strong>3c: Improve the satisfaction of staff across the protected characteristics</strong></td>
<td>1. Close the satisfaction gap between disabled and non-disabled staff from 4% to 2% by 2020</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Director of HR</td>
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<td>2. Close the satisfaction gap with unit management between disabled and non-disabled internal staff from 10% to 5% by 2020</td>
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<td>3. Close the satisfaction gap between ethnic minority and white staff from 5% to 2% by 2020</td>
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<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>1a. 50% of executive and senior managers have taken at least two of the Harvard Implicit Association Tests (IATs) by 2018</td>
<td>Disability Race Sex Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Learning &amp; OD</td>
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<td>1b. 95% of executive and senior managers to have taken at least two of the IATs by 2020</td>
<td>Race</td>
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<td>2a. 80% of line managers to have undertaken unconscious bias training by 2020</td>
<td>All</td>
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<td>2b. Line managers engaged post-training to capture impact of any action taken as a result of learning</td>
<td>Disability Race Sex Sexual Orientation</td>
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<td>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</td>
<td>Disability Race Sex Sexual Orientation</td>
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<td>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</td>
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<td>4. Reduce the difference in satisfaction rates of ethnic minority staff with line managers to within 2% of other staff by 2020</td>
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<td>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</td>
<td>Disability</td>
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