



Equality and diversity ...making it happen

Full 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.

Main elements of our Equality Scheme

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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. 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 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.

1.4. 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

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
- 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 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

² See Section 3.5 for further information about equality analysis.

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 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

The OU in facts and figures⁴

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:

- Almost 174,000 students
- Around 5,600 Associate Lecturers (tutors)
- More than 1,100 full-time academic and research staff
- More than 3,500 support and administrative staff
- Around 1,000 full and part-time postgraduate research students

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. There are currently:

- Around 1,800 students in the Republic of Ireland
- Around 5,350 students in the European Union
- Around 1,200 outside the European Union
- Around 35,000 students on OU-validated programmes delivered through national and international partners

Our institution is diverse:

- We are the largest provider of higher education for disabled people – more than 21,000 studied with us in 2014/15
- Around 1,400 OU students study in prison or a secure unit
- Around 300 armed forces personnel and their dependents study with us, 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 29 and more than 30% of students are aged 25 or under
- 40% of OU undergraduates have one A level or lower qualification at entry

⁴ Data from 'The Open University in facts and figures', accessed January 2016 – the latest data is available at www.open.ac.uk/about/main/strategy/facts-and-figures/

OU mission and core values

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.

The Open University is:

Inclusive

- We play a unique role in society, making higher education open to all.
- We promote social justice through the development of knowledge and skills.

Innovative

- We lead the learning revolution, placing innovation at the heart of our teaching and research.
- We continuously seek new and better ways to inspire and enable learning.
- We create world-class research and teaching.

Responsive

- We respond to the needs of individuals and employers and the communities in which they live and work.
- We are dedicated to supporting our students' learning success.

These values provide a moral and intellectual compass for the University in a changing world.

Open entry

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.

Four nations of the UK and internationally

The Open University is the only UK-wide University with centres in all the four nations UK nations of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Through economies of scale, we are able to deliver a breadth of programmes and curriculum to each of the four nations. Higher education is increasingly distinctive and devolved – what is required in one country may not be appropriate in another. Our curriculum, learning and teaching and research strategies, and our student support services must be increasingly mindful of different needs, and we must continue to guard against Anglo-centric policy and decision-making. Particular attention is given to meeting the principle in our Welsh Language Scheme, to treat the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality in the conduct of all our public business in Wales.

As an institution that prides itself on inclusion, students, staff and partners in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and other countries should feel included and respected and will do so when we differentiate our practices where appropriate and relevant.

Widening Participation

Widening participation is at the heart of our mission, firmly embedded in our core values. Our widening access and success strategy demonstrates the University's commitment to improving access to and success in higher education for those students facing the most challenges. We offer a unique Open Degree Programme⁵ and our Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships (CICP) provides, introductory Access⁶ modules and Badged Open Courses (BOCs)⁷, and supports the development of institutional research and scholarship in the areas of widening participation, social inclusion in higher education, and curriculum development.

Across each of the four nations of the UK, collaborative partnerships and networks explore opportunities to engage individuals who would not traditionally pursue an HE qualification, working with a range of organisations including trade unions, councils and charitable trusts⁸ to develop resources to support that as they embark on their educational journey.

The importance of education in helping ex-offenders raise their aspirations, gain employment and preventing reoffending is demonstrated in a number of studies and the OU has been providing education to students in prisons and secure environments since the 1970s. The OU's Offender Learning Programme allows for greater coordination of OU learning through partnerships with a number of different Government departments and other agencies, including the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the Skills Funding Agency, and the Prisoners Education Trust. The limited access to computers and the internet in prisons is a particular challenge that the OU has been addressing through engagement in the development of a Virtual Campus⁹.

Research and scholarship

Our research underpins the teaching we deliver to some 200,000 students as the UK's largest university. It informs the high-quality free open educational resources we provide to learners worldwide. It feeds into the TV and radio programmes we make with our partner the BBC, which reach an audience of 40 million viewers annually.

Nearly three quarters (72%) of Open University research was assessed as world-leading or internationally excellent in the UK Research Excellence Framework 2014.

⁵ Further information about the Open Degree Programme is available at <http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/open-qualifications>.

⁶ Further information about the Openings Programme is available at <http://www.open.ac.uk/courses>.

⁷ Further information is available at <http://www.open.ac.uk/cicp/main/social-partnerships>; www.open.ac.uk/scotland/openpathways; <http://www.open.edu/openlearnworks/course/view.php?id=1688>; <http://www.open.ac.uk/northern-ireland/study/free-online-learning/routes-learning>; <http://www.open.ac.uk/wales/partnerships/working-community/openlearn-champions>.

⁸ Further information is available at <http://www.open.ac.uk/cicp/main/social-partnerships>; www.open.ac.uk/scotland/openpathways; <http://www.open.edu/openlearnworks/course/view.php?id=1688>; <http://www.open.ac.uk/northern-ireland/study/free-online-learning/routes-learning>;

<http://www.open.ac.uk/wales/partnerships/working-community/openlearn-champions>.

⁹ For further information about developments in the Offender Learning Programme and information about the Virtual Campus project, please see the OU Offender Learning website at <http://www.open.ac.uk/about/offender-learning/offender-learning-programme>

The Open University demonstrated world leading research excellence across all 18 units of assessment it submitted to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 as well as delivering impact assessed as 'outstanding' or 'very considerable' in terms of its reach and significance.

The OU is committed to supporting its academic staff in a full range of scholarly activity, including underpinning innovation that maintains the University's position as a global leader in distance learning, knowledge exchange and digital scholarship. Engagement features strongly in the OU's research. Industry funds important areas of OU research and technology transfer, and OU academics often advise on current issues.

Working with business and industry

Working with business and industry is part of The Open University's strategy to support individual and economic growth. We have developed modules tailored to a wide variety of professions. By working in partnership with employers in the private, public and community sectors we are improving the skills and knowledge of the UK workforce while allowing individuals to continue to contribute to the economy and to society. We also have a number of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships which create mutually beneficial relationships, helping business improve productivity and performance by providing access to academic skills and expertise.

Open educational resources

As part of our mission we are making an increasing amount of our teaching and learning resources available free of charge to anyone with access to the internet, no matter where in the world they live. The OpenLearn website makes OU educational resources available to potential students and inviting all to sample over 800 courses– for free! We were the first UK university to join iTunes U (iTunes University) and the first university in Europe to reach more than one million subscriptions through the iTunes app. Extracts of our broadcasts and teaching materials can be viewed on YouTube, along with videos on OU research and student life. More than 15,000 research publications are now freely available to view and consult through our Open Research Online portal, one of the largest university research collections in the UK.

In December 2012, the OU launched FutureLearn – a programme offering free degree-level online courses to the public. Via this programme, the OU, in collaboration with other universities and other institutions, has been offering massive open online courses (MOOCs) to students around the world. In February 2015, there were more than 200 courses available and more than one million learners.

International development

Our mission to extend learning to all does not stop at the borders of Europe. Through partnerships, around 46,000 students are studying with twenty partners in more than thirty countries, including China, India, Russia, Singapore and seven Arab countries.

We are expanding our use of new technologies to bring training and education within the reach of more and more of the developing world's workforce. Our Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) programme is Africa's largest teacher education research and development community, and extends across twelve countries. Since its launch, TESSA materials have been used to reach over 500,000 teachers. Our work in Ethiopia is helping the UK Government achieve its target of training 11,000 additional doctors, and 31,000 rural health workers. Our English in Action programme is a UK Department for International Development funded, £50 million, nine-year programme to help 25 million people in Bangladesh develop their English language skills via new mobile technologies.

We aim to promote social justice and our equality principles in all our work overseas however, we recognise that our equality strategy stems from a UK and European context, and our approach overseas requires both cultural sensitivity and negotiation.

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 by:

- maximising student success, and
- maintaining academic standards

Implementing our equality scheme will support the achievement of our strategy in the ways outlined in Box 3 below.

Box 3: How the equality scheme contributes to the University Strategy

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

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. Internal Drivers

The fundamental mission of The Open University is to promote social justice. As The Open University, we believe in making education accessible for all. Additionally, 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 and some of the benefits to be derived from good diversity and inclusion practice result in:

- The University being able to attract a more diverse student base
- The University being regarded as an employer of choice
- A committed and productive workforce
- A greater capacity for creativity and innovation
- Better all-round performance (McKinsey & Company's latest diversity report¹⁰ (January 2015) concluded that gender diverse and ethnically diverse leadership leads organisations to outperform mono-cultural organisations by around 15% and 35% respectively.

2.4. Progress in advancing equality and good relations

Equality in action

We continue to work at advancing equality of opportunity and good relations at The Open University and the following are some examples of the work we have done.

We continued to widen 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. In January 2015, The Open University received a boost from HEFCE in the form of a grant to extend the work of the Social Partnerships Network. The grant comes under HEFCE's National Networks for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) scheme and covers funding for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

We invested significantly in developing new systems to automate the production of a wider range of alternative formats for disabled students and we completed a major project to implement DAISY – digital talking books. We continue to invest in our Access Centre and bought a new Access Bus to bring assessments closer to students in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. 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.

We developed our student monitoring information so that our Programme Committees can review the participation and outcomes for different student groups more easily as part of their annual quality

¹⁰ <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters>

review process. We supported curriculum development and research that advances equality and fosters good relations through promoting understanding, across a range of characteristics, including ageing, disability, religion, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic inequalities. We developed a Code of Practice Supporting the Management of Research to ensure that the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise submission and selection process were conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

Our approach to considering equality during policy development and when managing change projects is facilitated through our Equality Analysis methodology. This ensures that we give active consideration to equality implications at an early stage and we have embedded this method in our annual unit planning process to assist with forward planning, especially to facilitate effective consultations. We developed a range of additional resources to support staff in embedding equality in their work, including a resource to support assessment with partner institutions; and a resource to strengthen equality in contracting.

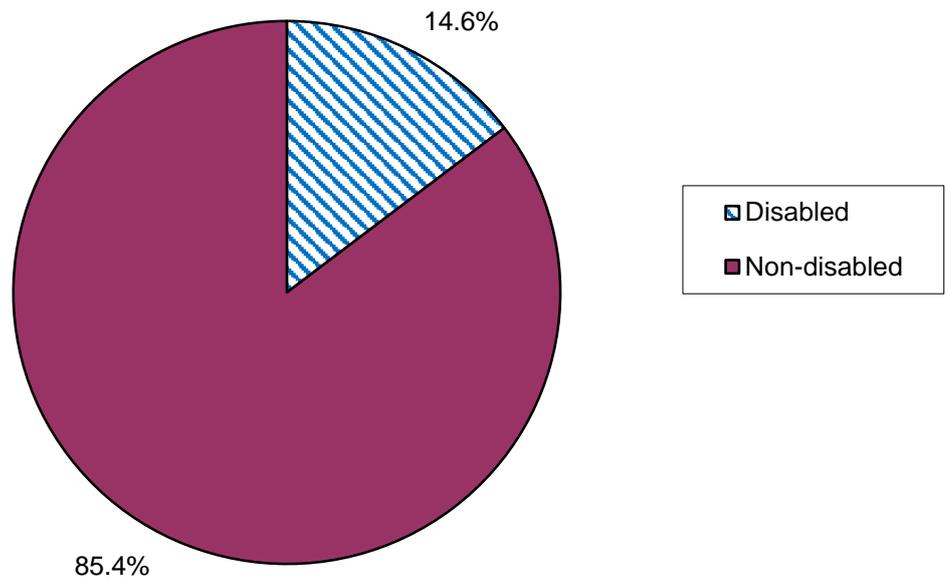
Our work to support and develop staff diversity networks continues and 2014/15 saw the successful launch of Women@OU and the rebranding of a staff disability network into the EnablingStaff@OU. This then continued with the re-launch of the BME and Sexual Orientation Networks; BME Matters@OU and LGBT@OU respectively. We supported events for Black History Month, International Women's Day and LGBT History Month. In the coming 12 months we are planning to introduce a unit level Equality, Diversity and Inclusion self-assessment framework – a tool designed to facilitate gap analysis which will, subsequently inform annual business planning so that equality, diversity and inclusion issues become more easily integral to Unit level business plans.

Our plan 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. During the 2016-2020 Scheme we are looking to renew our Athena Swan Institutional Bronze accreditation and 3 further departmental Bronze awards, together with an aspiration to be awarded the Disability Standard from the Business Disability Forum. We will continue to share our good practice across the sector through networks, equality organisations and making our equality resources freely available to other organisations.

Equality in numbers

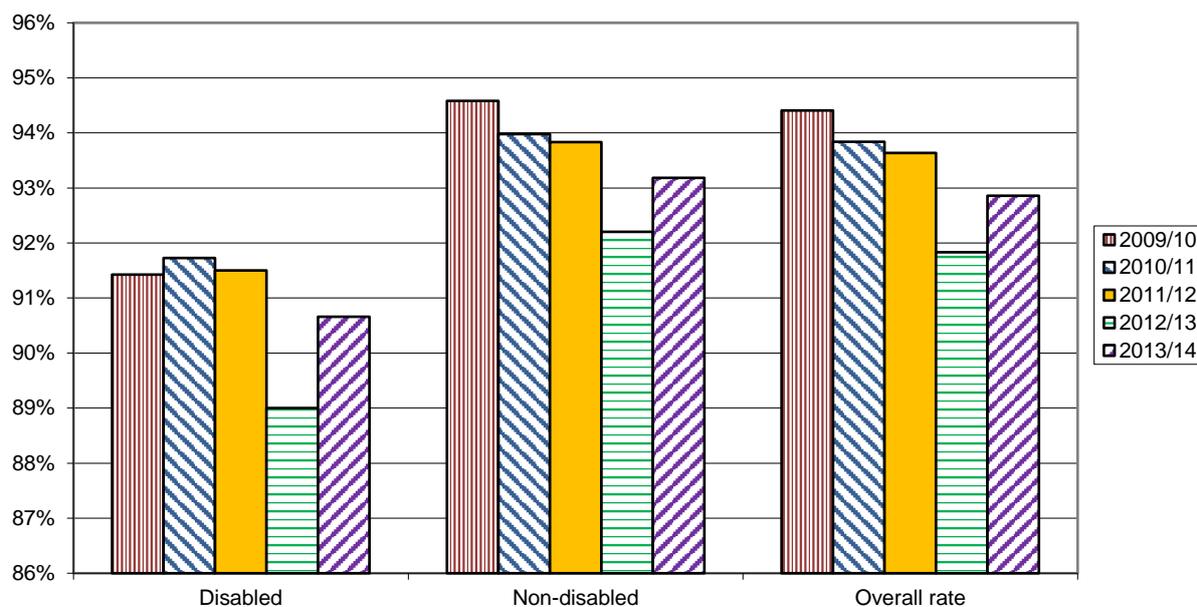
We have made an impact in reducing inequalities and the following are some examples. The data presented here are indicative of positive trends and are not intended to present a complete picture. A wide range of additional monitoring data is published as part of the University's equality and diversity annual report and can be obtained at www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity.

Chart 7: Distribution of all Undergraduate UK students by disability in 2013/14



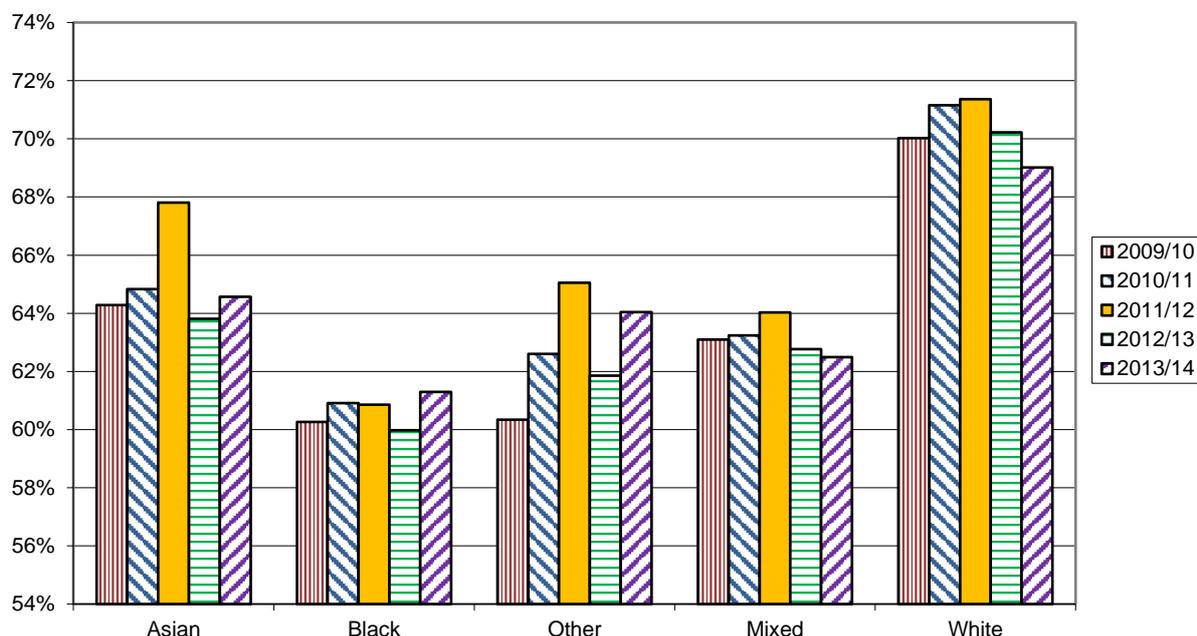
The number of new students declaring a disability increased again this year. The proportion of students that this number represents has also risen from 12.7% to 14.6% of the total UG UK population. Systems have been put in place that facilitated the capture of this information, especially as it assists the University in providing appropriate reasonable adjustments for those students requiring them.

Pass rate for students on level 1 modules, by disability, 2009/10 to 2013/14



Attainment rates increased by 1.7 percentage points for disabled students and 1 percentage point for non-disabled students. The gap in attainment between these groups has decreased to 2.5 percentage points compared to 3.3 last year.

Completion rate of students by grouped ethnicity, 2009/10 to 2013/14



Percentage difference between course completion rate for all UK undergraduate ethnic minority and white students. Whilst the trend is encouraging, part of this is owing to the fact that there has been a decline in the proportion of white students completing since 2011/12. White student completions rose from 70% in 2009/10 to 71.4 in 2011/12 and then have reduced down to a five year low of 69% in 2013/14.

We are challenging occupational gender segregation.

Senior staff composition, by gender, 2010-2014

	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	total	% of total								
Female	94	34.9%	91	34.7%	80	33.6%	89	35.5%	84	36.1%
Male	175	65.1%	171	65.3%	158	66.4%	162	64.5%	149	63.9%
Total	269	100%	262	100%	238	100%	251	100%	233	100%

There has been a small but steady increase in the percentage of Women in Senior Management. Senior staff include Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Professors and Heads of Units. In 2014, 36.1% (84) of staff within this category were female and 63.9% were male. A contributory factor to this improvement was the 8% reduction in senior posts occupied by men compared to a 4% reduction in similar posts occupied by women during the same period.

2.5. External drivers

Inequalities in education and employment in the UK

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. Participation in higher education has dramatically diversified, with 1 in 5 students today from an ethnic minority, a continuing increase in the number of disabled students and women now ahead of men in many aspects of educational success. However, in some ethnic and religious groups there are large numbers of people without any qualifications at all. Educational attainment continues to be strongly associated with socio-economic background, but ethnicity, gender and disability are also key determinants and there continues to be strong subject segregation. Adults with more prior education are much more likely to access learning opportunities in later life. In Wales, more adults are disadvantaged by low skills and qualifications than in most other parts of Britain¹¹.

In Northern Ireland, the proportion of disabled people entering higher education has increased substantially in the last decade. There are differences in educational destinations and attainment between Protestants and Catholics, with Protestants being less likely to enrol in third level education, however, other differences are more marked. Male students are less likely to continue on to third level education and more likely to leave with no qualifications¹².

Many barriers within employment are breaking down, for example, a growing proportion of managerial and professional positions are taken by women and there has been steady growth in the proportion of ethnic minority people in employment. However only 1 in 4 Muslim women work, while Black people and disabled people in their early 20s are twice as likely not to be in employment, education or training as White people and non-disabled people. Occupational segregation and the large proportion of women in part-time jobs continue to feed pay differences. Lesbian, gay and bisexual adults are around twice as likely as other employees to report experiencing unfair treatment or discrimination at work¹³ and evidence suggests that the workplace remains a stressful and difficult place for some groups, specifically transgender people and irregular migrant workers.

Demographic and social change

It is a time of enormous and accelerating demographic and social change:

- people are living longer and are remaining economically and intellectually active for longer; the removal of the default retirement age will require better management of succession planning and clearer performance management frameworks
- economic migration is changing the structure of the education and labour market
- there is massive change in ethnic and religious diversity
- economic, social and health inequalities are widening
- there is more openness in society and a growing awareness that it is socially unacceptable to be intolerant toward aspects of individual difference

¹¹ Source of this paragraph – Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) *How fair is Britain? The first triennial review*.

¹² Source of this paragraph – Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (2010) *Inequalities in Education: Facts and Trends 1998-2008*.

¹³ In contrast, at the OU, staff survey results show that the experience of lesbian, gay and bisexual employees is broadly similar to that of straight staff.

Impact of funding and fees changes

This equality scheme is written at a time when higher education continues to be affected by changes in government public funding policy in England, requiring efficiencies to be made and new areas of work to be developed that will accelerate income from non-government sources. As a result, we are undergoing a period of rapid and unprecedented change, having introduced student fee increases and a greater emphasis on qualifications. The resultant impact is that there has been a reduction in the part time student market. Official figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency showed a 7% reduction in part time undergraduate study in 2013/14 compared to the previous year. “These figures confirm [that this] should be a significant concern for policymakers and the higher education sector as a whole,” said Les Ebdon, director of the [Office of Fair Access to Higher Education](#).

Within such a period of change, there is a risk that issues of equality, diversity and inclusion may be overlooked, while individuals and teams come under increasing pressure to deliver more with less resource. However a focus on equality will clearly help us to stay true to our mission and to achieve our business strategy, as emphasised in Section 2.2.

Immigration rules

Changes to immigration rules have resulted in new challenges to universities, as educators and employers, in recruiting talented learners and staff from overseas. The changes have included the introduction of a new minimum pay requirement for skilled workers, tightening of existing work placement restrictions, the introduction of Highly Trusted Sponsor Licences for institutions, and the introduction of limits on the time that can be spent studying at degree level. Additionally, post the 2015 general election, immigration rules have been further tightened for tier 4 international students; with rules around academic progression being tightened so that students may only extend studies at the same academic level and the time limit for further educational study will reduce from the current 3 years down to 2 years.¹⁴

Equality law

Following the major overhaul of equalities legislation with the passing of the Equality Act 2010, the manner in which public authorities establish their equality objectives is specified to a greater or lesser extent by secondary equality legislation. Legislation in England, Scotland and Wales resulted in different ‘specific duties’ and the University works to the following principles to guide our response to devolution:

- a) Recognising our role in supporting the different Governments of the UK to address equality priorities determined through the democratic process in each country, *we will comply with all of the duties in each country*, regardless of whether or not we are legally bound by them. We will deviate from this position only where such an approach would be disproportionate.
- b) Recognising the need to develop procedural arrangements that can be easily understood and implemented by the majority of OU staff, *we will adopt a universal approach wherever possible*. We will deviate from this position only where there is a significant difference between the duties in different nations, or where applying a universal principle would be disproportionate.

Information about the new specific duties in England, Scotland and Wales, as they relate to setting equality objectives, is detailed in Appendix 1.

¹⁴ Further information about UK Immigration Rules are available on the UK Border Agency website at <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/policyandlaw/immigrationlaw/immigrationrules/>.

The major regulatory/legislative changes that have come into being since the launch of the current scheme are:

a) The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013)

Whilst couples may still enter civil partnerships, should they so desire, this Act permits same sex couple to be lawfully married. Religious institutions still retain the right not to conduct same sex marriages in their official religious premises. Under the Act, same sex couples not in an existing legal marriage or civil partnership can marry. The first marriages of same sex couples in England & Wales took place on Saturday 29 March 2014.

b) The extension of the right to request flexible working (June 2014)

In June 2014, the right to request flexible working was extended to all eligible employees; previously the right applied only to the parents of children under 17 (or 18 in the case of parents of disabled children) or to those caring for an adult.

c) Consultation on Welsh Language Standard (November – December 2014)

The University responded to the consultation which, in the words of the then First Minister of Wales, have been drafted with the aim of:

- *improving the services Welsh-speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh*
- *increasing the use people make of Welsh-language services*
- *making it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language*
- *ensuring that there is an appropriate degree of consistency in terms of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.*

d) The introduction of shared parental leave (December 2014)

Whereas previously, mothers could claim up to 12 months maternity leave, new regulations came into force on 1st December 2014 which permits parents whose children were born on or after 1st April 2015 to decide (subject to certain conditions) how they allocate parental leave in the first year following the birth/adoption of their child. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills estimated that as many as 285,000 working couples will have been eligible to share leave from April 2015. The Department also stated that the “changes in how maternity leave can be used will kick start a culture change in workplaces where fathers feel more confident in taking time off for childcare.”

The introduction of the Equality Act 2010 has transformed equality law in Great Britain. The first phase became law in October 2010 and in broad terms it harmonised, updated and amended previous anti-discrimination legislation, providing greater protection from discrimination and harassment for all individuals across a wide range of protected characteristics. The second phase became law in April 2011 and enacted a new *Public Sector Equality Duty*, which amended and expanded the previous duty to cover a wider range of characteristics. The duty requires us to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, in the exercise of all our functions¹⁵.

The manner in which public authorities meet the Public Sector Equality Duty is specified by secondary equality legislation called the *specific duties* and legislation in England, Scotland and Wales has

¹⁵ See Annex A for a quick start guide to the Equality Act.

resulted in somewhat different requirements. The Open University must meet the legal requirements in England only. We recognise the importance of supporting the different Governments of the UK to address equality priorities determined through the democratic process in each country and we therefore aim to comply with the requirements in Scotland and Wales¹⁶.

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 of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without. These are commonly referred to as the nine equality categories. We are also required by the same Act to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group¹⁷.

The Human Rights Act 1998 came into force in 2000 and incorporates the European Convention of Human Rights into domestic law. Several articles are relevant to and have implications for staff and student policy and practice. Individual rights and responsibilities have been incorporated into the Principles in Section 1.2 and under Your Responsibilities in Section 1.4 of this scheme. Additionally, the UK has ratified a significant number of United Nations Conventions that aim to eliminate discrimination and protect rights.

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.

Equality legislation continues to provide context and direction for our equality scheme, but we will continue to develop our scheme beyond the requirements of legislation.

Further information about equality law is outlined in Annexes A to E.

¹⁶ See Annex D for further information about the specific duties in England, Scotland and Wales.

¹⁷ See Annex E for a list of the requirements under Section 75.

3. Arrangements for managing and embedding equality

3.1. Leadership

Strong, visible leadership is an essential component of this equality scheme. Members of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) have sponsored individual objectives and will continue to promote equality and diversity through strategic decision making, management responsibility and influence through committees and steering groups.

The 2016 – 2020 Equality Scheme will be managed against clear lines of responsibility and accountability, with the Vice-Chancellor sponsoring the Equality Scheme, and appointing VCE level Champions for all protected characteristics and related Objectives.

An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, chaired by University Secretary, 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. The programme is delivered by a significant number of different offices, and through several mainstream business processes, demonstrating the extent to which equality and diversity learning is integrated across the University. The equality and diversity staff learning and development programme is evaluated by the Head of Learning and Organisational Management, reporting to the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Group.

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

Equality and Diversity Staff Learning and Development Programme

Who needs to know?	What?	For what purpose?	How will they learn?
Line managers	How to recruit and manage a diverse workforce	To utilise staff diversity; to respond positively to individual needs and circumstances; to promote staff satisfaction and success; to prevent unlawful discrimination	Disability and employment website Effective recruitment and selection course Employment law for managers 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	Research seminars provided by the Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships Sharing good practice through the Securing Greater Accessibility group (SeGA)

Equality and Diversity Staff Learning and Development Programme			
Who needs to know?	What?	For what purpose?	How will they learn?
		proactively; to reduce bespoke costs	Online resources linked to the Curriculum approval process Advice from faculty Accessibility Specialists Resources and advice from central specialists and on the OU 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

OU study

Staff can study a range of OU modules and the following modules and qualifications (available at time of writing) address issues of equality, diversity and inclusion directly¹⁸. This list is not exhaustive and many other modules address issues of equality and diversity within the module content.

Continuing Professional Development

- Equality, participation and inclusion: learning from each other (E214)
- Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning¹⁹

Undergraduate

- Equality, participation and inclusion: learning from each other (E214)
- Introducing religions (A217)
- Religion today: tradition, modernity and change (AD317)

Postgraduate

- Accessible online learning: supporting disabled students (H810)
- Business, human rights law and corporate social responsibility (W822)
- Certificate in Human Rights and Development Management (C96)

3.3. Accessible information and services

The OU's unique open-entry policy and style of distance learning enables students to learn in their own time, at home or wherever they choose – reading, watching or listening to material, with regular support provided by their tutor. The OU is ideal for people who may have difficulty attending a campus-based university for a wide variety of reasons. We are mindful of the fact that our students and prospective students cover the broadest spectrum of ages and we provide communications using formats and language appropriate to our audiences.

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.

Support for disabled students and staff

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 needs²⁰. We also assess and provide reasonable adjustments for our disabled staff to enable individuals to perform effectively in their roles. This is supported by the staff network EnablingStaff@OU.

Support for learning in English

¹⁸ Further information about the modules listed here is available in the online prospectus at <http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/>.

¹⁹ This online module is provided by the Centre for Inclusion and Curriculum and can be accessed at <http://cic.oucpld.com/>.

²⁰ For further information, see the Services for Disabled Students website at <http://www.open.ac.uk/disability/>.

Our open access policy means that individuals with English as an additional language or with limited academic English can register with us without needing to take an English proficiency test. However, we teach and provide our advice and guidance primarily in English, and poor English language skills will make study more difficult and time consuming. We provide online activities and diagnostics for enquirers to help individuals assess whether they meet the required competency standard. We also provide an online study module *English for academic purposes online (L185)* which aims to develop the communication skills needed for successful academic study in English.²¹

Computer use

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 library²².

Online delivery and website accessibility

We use websites extensively to deliver modules and communicate with our students, staff, alumni and members of the public. The Open University websites aim to conform to our own web accessibility guidelines²³ (which are based on the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Content Accessibility guidelines²⁴). We include a variety of accessibility features from the outset, and provide guidance to our website users to enable individuals to utilise web technologies. Some of our websites require further development to bring them in line with W3C accessibility standards and we are working to enhance accessibility with each new software release²⁵.

Freedom of information

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 Act²⁶.

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.

²¹ Further information about English for OU Study is available on the Study at the OU website at

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/students/skillsforstudy/english/index.php?pid=1>

²² 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>.

²³ OU Web accessibility guidelines available at <http://www.open.ac.uk/about/web-standards/standards/accessibility-standards/accessibility>

²⁴ Web Content Accessibility Guidelines available at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>

²⁵ Further information is available at <http://www8.open.ac.uk/about/main/admin-and-governance/policies-and-statements>.

²⁶ Further information is available on our Freedom of Information website at <http://www.open.ac.uk/foi/>.

It is our intention to consult as widely as possible when we are reviewing our equality scheme or when the matter to be consulted on is likely to have a very significant impact on a large number of people. For matters that are relevant to specific groups or smaller numbers of people, 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. We will ensure information is accessible and will offer alternative formats to meet individual needs. We will not make assumptions about individual needs but will ask individuals to tell us about needs they have to enable them to participate.

For each consultation, we will establish a consultation period that is appropriate to the scale, impact and complexity of the matter we are consulting on. Consultations may be for a period of between 3 weeks and 3 months to reflect this, but will normally be for a period of 3 months. 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.

We will consider and respond to feedback from any person with a legitimate interest in the affairs and policies of the University, regardless of whether a consultation has been held or whether a consultation has closed.

We will provide feedback to individuals and other consultees in a timely manner, which may be through a consultation report or a copy of a final Equality Analysis template if applicable, or more directly to groups or individuals, depending on what is appropriate for the method of consultation that was used.

It is a requirement of the Section 75 equality duty that a list of persons to be consulted on matters relevant to Section 75 is included in the equality scheme. Appendix 5 contains our current consultation list as relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland. This list is not exhaustive. We welcome enquiries from any person or organisation wishing to be added to the list.

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; 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.

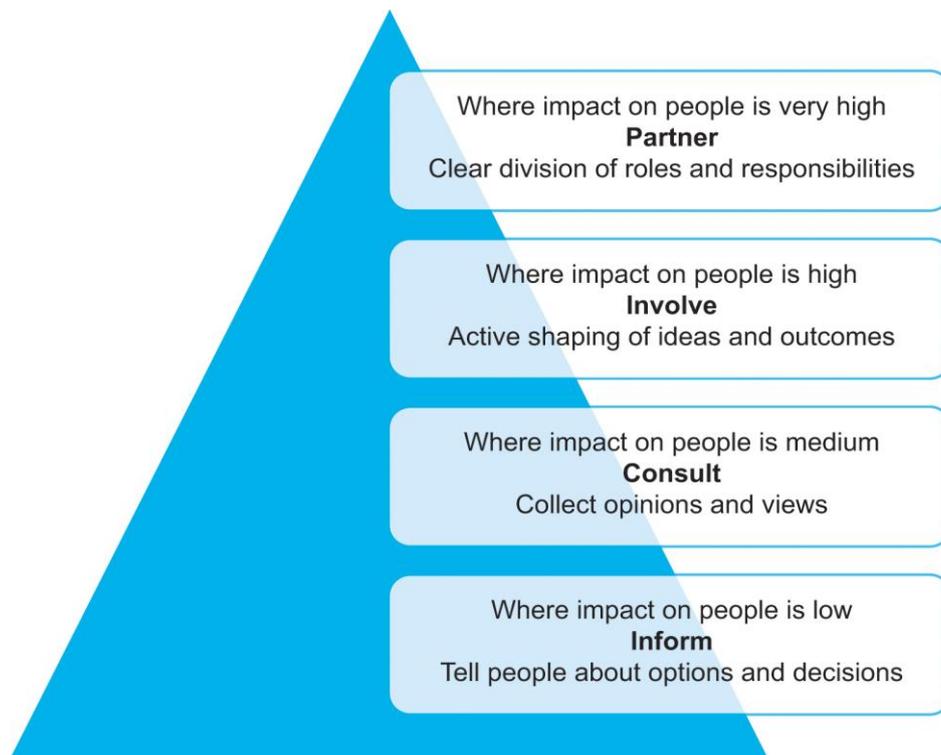


Figure 6: Pyramid of engagement

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. 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.

The OU method relies on robust evidence-based decision-making. It includes all of the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. Changes being proposed through policy, strategy, business plans, committee papers, project management or other methods are required to be analysed from an equality perspective and the results considered *before* decisions are made. Where negative impacts are identified, consideration needs to be given to mitigating these. The findings of analysis are documented and reported to a relevant committee, steering group or management group and that body is responsible for taking the information into account before making decisions.

In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

We have developed detailed guidance and a template to support staff in applying the method in their work, and these are available to staff on the equality and diversity intranet. Each equality analysis will identify the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy and the impact on good relations, stating whether these are major, minor or none for all the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. They will also identify opportunities for promotion and advancement of equality of opportunity and good relations for the same characteristics. A completed equality analysis template will state the aims of the policy to which the analysis relates and give details of any consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact of that policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity, and the decisions that have been taken. In addition to the guidance and template, we provide training and coaching to develop staff knowledge and competencies.

Where policy relates to any of our functions in Northern Ireland, additional requirements need to be met. We are required *to consult* on the impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted, *to publish* the results of our equality analysis, and *to monitor* the impact of policies. Where policy affects our functions in Northern Ireland, the consultation arrangements in relation to our statutory equality duties set out under Section 3.4 apply. We will publish our equality analysis templates, as specified in Section 3.7, and we will ensure that appropriate monitoring is in place as part of each equality analysis. Our monitoring and reporting arrangements set out in Section 3.6 will also enable us to monitor any adverse impacts of our policies.

Figure 7 shows an outline of our equality analysis steps.

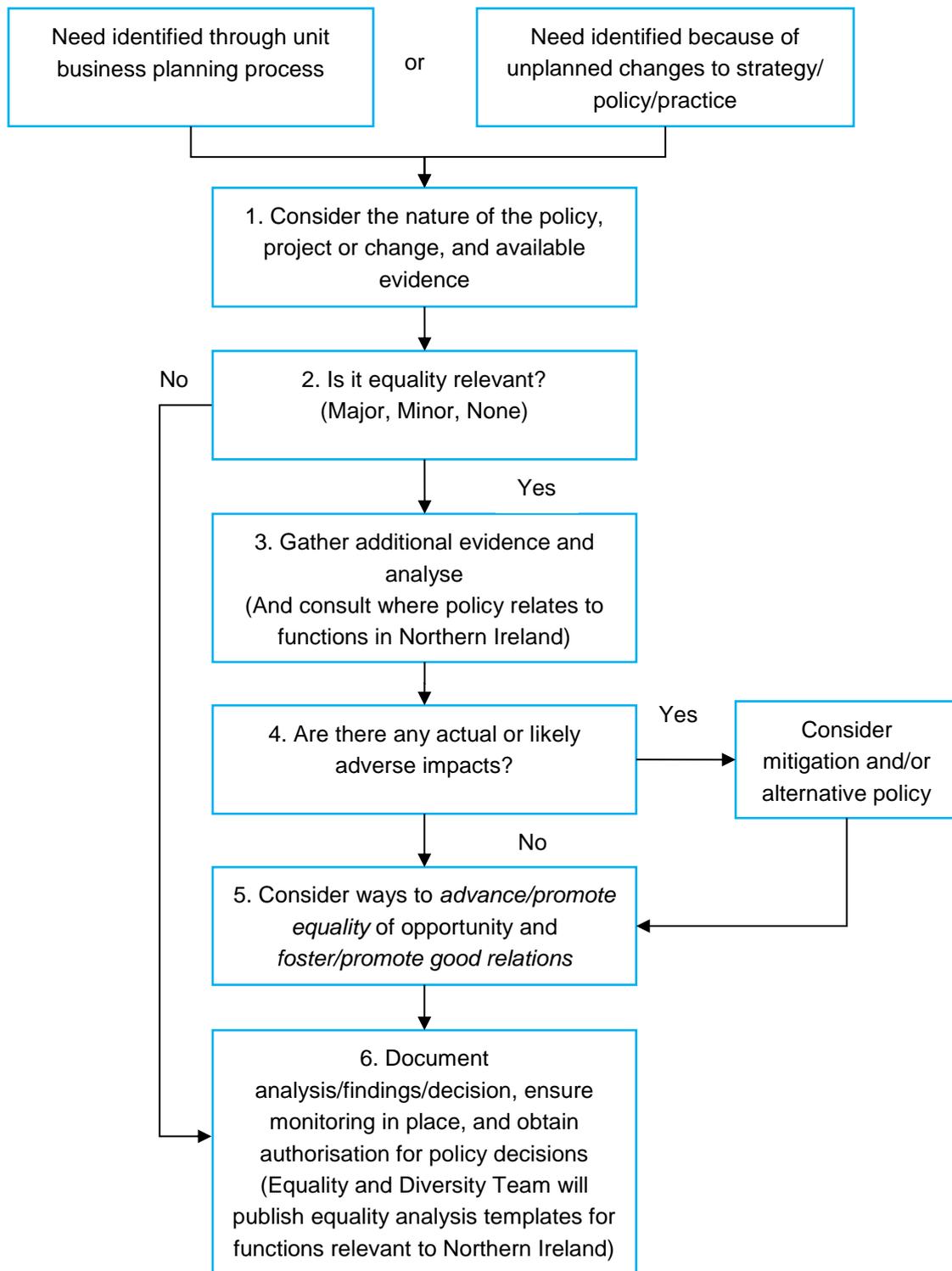


Figure 7: Equality analysis steps

3.6. Monitoring and reporting

We will monitor closely the progress against the key performance indicators agreed for the objectives in this equality scheme. In addition, we will analyse a wide range of equality monitoring data and act on it, including revising our objectives where appropriate. Our annual monitoring and reporting arrangements consist of a cycle whereby we analyse different information in different years. We have staggered our monitoring in this way so that the information we produce is always put to good use. Additionally, we are planning to introduce, during the course of the 2016-2020 equality scheme, a unit level Equality, Diversity and Inclusion self-assessment framework which will inform ongoing equality action planning.

All of the characteristics protected by the Public Sector Equality Duty in Great Britain and the Section 75 duty in Northern Ireland are included in the scope of our monitoring strategy.

Under the 2016-2020 Scheme we will:

- a) Continue our drive to monitor of religion or belief, and sexual orientation for our staff and students. This was introduced in the 2012-16 scheme and we are committed to encouraging greater levels of self declaration
- b) Maintain paper-based monitoring of community background for our staff in Northern Ireland
- c) Encourage students with caring responsibilities to self declare and to update information as and when circumstances change.
- d) Develop a robust method for collating data related to maternity/parental leave and returners
- e) Continue to implement and develop our LGBT action plan

As previously, we do not intend to introduce monitoring for gender identity. We have a legal duty to protect the privacy of individuals who have fully transitioned and we will not retain any records relating to gender change. Our approach to understanding and addressing transgender equality is to rely on qualitative information derived from engagement and research. We will, however consider introducing an “Mx” category alongside Mr, Miss, Mrs and Ms in our monitoring to assist those who identify as non-binary for gender purposes.²⁷

The table below sets out the indicators we will monitor each year for the next five years, and takes into account the information we have analysed and published in previous years.

These monitoring arrangements will help us to assess any adverse impacts arising from our policies.

Equality Monitoring Schedule					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Undergraduate and postgraduate UK students	Participation, completion and academic attainment				
Postgraduate research students	Participation and withdrawal				

²⁷ The label may be used by individuals wishing to identify as falling outside of the gender binary without being any more specific about the nature of their gender.

Equality Monitoring Schedule					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Non-UK/ Overseas students²⁸	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 ²⁹	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
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

²⁸ Domicile and geographic area is used instead of ethnicity, as ethnic classifications used in the UK are meaningless for non-UK students.

²⁹ 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
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)
- An annual report showing progress against our equality objectives, and a summary of our equality analysis work,
- 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 needs, 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.

We have identified the following areas of focus:

- Gender: To increase the proportion of women in senior roles
- Disability: Increase the satisfaction of disabled staff and students to reduce the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students
- Sexual Orientation: Ensure that our workplace and services are inclusive
- Race: To reduce the ethnicity attainment gap; to improve the perception and satisfaction with the OU.

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.

3.9 Self-organised staff networks

We will continue to encourage and support self-organised staff diversity networks as a vehicle to assist staff in developing their careers and take on an important role as subject matter experts for the purposes of consultation on equality, diversity and inclusion issues.

Information about staff networks is currently available to staff on the Equality and Diversity pages of the OU's intranet site.

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 Annexe 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 Programme³⁰ 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

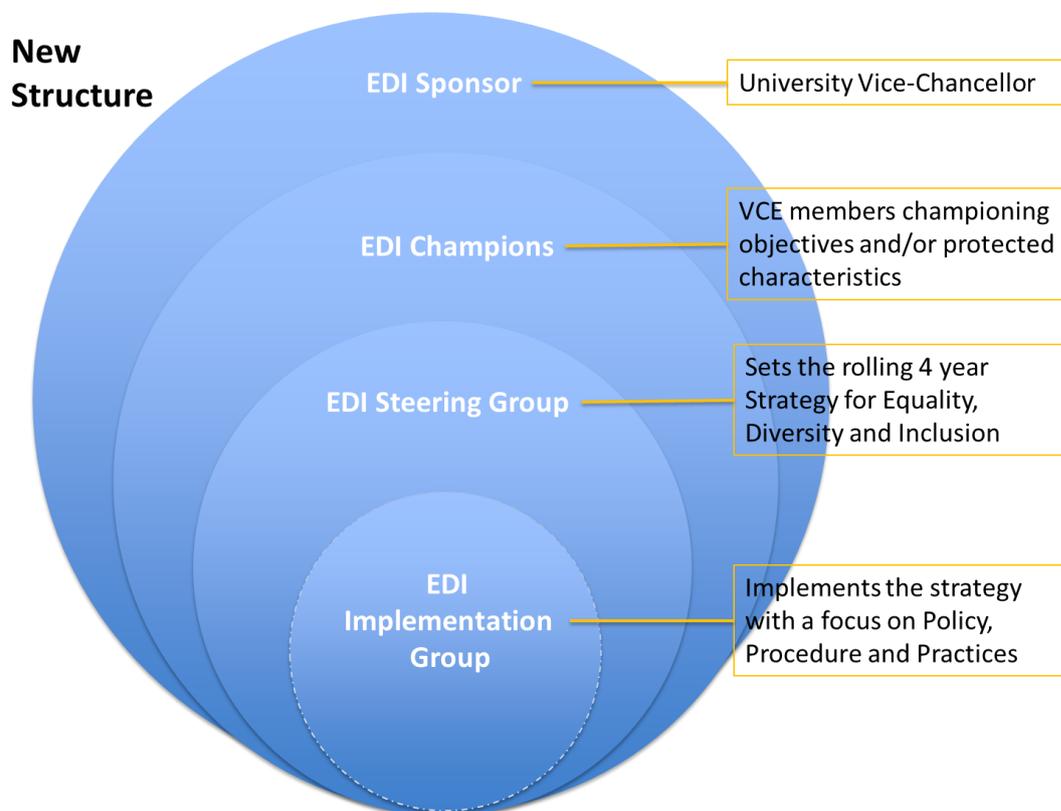
We are committed to the fulfilment of our Public Sector Equality Duty and our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our work.

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

³⁰ 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.

best practice. The University's Equality, Diversity and Information Rights team will continue as the point of expertise and will 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.

The revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion management structure is outlined in the diagram below:



The Vice Chancellor, as the sponsor of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) will appoint champions from the Vice-Chancellor's Executive, which each person championing one or more of the Protected Characteristics.

The Champions will then act as custodians for any defined equality objectives falling under their respective Protected Characteristic(s). Champions will be accountable to the Vice-Chancellor for reporting progress under the relevant objectives.

The Steering Group will be responsible for setting the rolling 4-year strategy which will drive the aims and objectives for the equality scheme with input from the Champions as required.

The Implementation Group will have responsibility for identifying and driving existing work projects and developing new actions/interventions required for the successful delivery of objectives and the KPIs.

In addition to this scheme, the University produces a set of objectives (Appendix 1) which include performance indicators against which we will measure progress.

An annual review of progress and delivery against objectives is coordinated by the Equality, Diversity and Information Rights Team on behalf of EDI Steering Group. The review is aligned with the University's normal business planning cycle. Issues arising from the annual review and progress against the objectives and key performance indicators are reported to the EDI Steering Group at its

regularly scheduled meetings and directly to the Vice Chancellor in his regular meetings with the Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights.

We plan to publish a range of information regularly which demonstrates our progress and performance, as outlined in Section 3.7.

The appropriateness of the objectives and key performance indicators in Appendix 1 will be reviewed after two years and the scheme will be reviewed in full within a period of four years. We will implement an appropriate consultation and engagement strategy during these reviews.

In year 4 of the 2016-2020 Scheme, we will review and evaluate the effectiveness of our scheme in relation to the achievement of our equality objectives, the implementation of our Public Sector Equality Duty and the implementation of our Section 75 duty. In undertaking any review in relation to our functions in Northern Ireland, we will follow guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and we will liaise closely with the Commission to ensure progress is maintained. Our review report will be sent to the Commission and published on our equality and diversity website.

The table below summarises our review arrangements.

Frequency of review	Scope of review	Responsibility for review
Quarterly meetings	Ensure compliance and promotion of good practice; address non-compliance	Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Implementation Group
Annual	Progress review and updating of action plans Production of equality monitoring information Production of annual report Production of annual report to Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	All University departments Various internal data providers Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights Assistant Director, the Open University in Ireland
Every 2 years	Full review of objectives and key performance indicators	EDI Implementation Group.
Every 4 years	Full review of equality scheme	EDI Steering Group with input from the EDI Implementation Group and in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor's Executive

4.3. Feedback and complaints

We welcome any questions, feedback or complaints 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; we would recommend that these are presented in writing.

Complaints in relation to the provision of a programme of study or related to academic or administrative services, or appeals in relation to a decision taken by an individual or academic body charged with making decisions on students' progression, assessment and awards should not be sent to the Equality and Diversity Team³¹.

If you are unable to send your complaint in writing, we will be pleased to accept your complaint in a format that meets your needs. If you require any kind of support to make your complaint, please contact us to discuss your needs. We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days and respond to it within ten working days of our acknowledgment. Where we need to pass your complaint to another office, we will tell you and inform you of any delay in responding that may occur as a result.

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.

If your complaint concerns alleged discrimination or other prohibited conduct under the Equality Act 2010, you can use the *Questions and Answers Forms* devised by the Government Equalities Office to obtain information from the University, as is your right under Section 138 of the Equality Act 2010. Requesting information may help to resolve matters without the need for formal or legal proceedings. Use of the form is voluntary for both parties, however the questions and any answers are admissible as evidence in proceedings under the Act and a court or employment tribunal may draw an inference from a failure to reply or from evasive or misleading answers³².

If your complaint relates to how we operate in Northern Ireland, and we do not resolve your complaint to your satisfaction or within a reasonable timeframe, you can take your complaint to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland³³. The Open University will cooperate fully with any investigation carried out by the Equality Commission and make all efforts to implement recommendations arising from any such investigation.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) operates an independent student complaints scheme under the Higher Education Act 2004. The service is free to all OU students, based anywhere in the UK or overseas. Please bear in mind that the OIA will insist that you exhaust the University's internal complaints procedure before they will agree to investigate your complaint³⁴.

³¹ Details of the complaints and appeals procedures in relation to these issues are detailed on the Concerns, Complaints and Appeals website at: <http://www2.open.ac.uk/students/complaints/>

³² The forms and guidance notes are available from the Home Office website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/equality-act-publications/complaints-Equality-Act/>.

³³ Commission staff are available to offer free confidential advice and assistance. You can speak to a Discrimination Advice Officer by telephone, text-phone or face-to-face by appointment. Further details are available at <http://www.equalityni.org/sections/default.asp?secid=2>.

³⁴ Further information is available from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator website at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>.

Annexes

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

What is the Equality Act?

The Equality Act is applicable in England, Scotland and Wales. The main provisions of the Act were implemented in two phases:

The first phase became law on 1 October 2010 and in broad terms it harmonises, updates and amends previous anti-discrimination legislation, providing greater protection for *all individuals* across a wide range of 'protected characteristics'.

The second phase became law on 5 April 2011 and enacts a new 'public sector equality duty', which amends and expands the existing duty to cover a wider range of characteristics.

What University functions are covered by the Act?

The Act covers all of our functions including education, employment, services and other public functions (e.g. broadcasting), associations, contracting and partnerships.

What are the 'protected characteristics'?

There are nine characteristics explicitly protected, as follows: age, disability, gender reassignment (transgender), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex (gender), and sexual orientation. Care/dependency is also indirectly covered – see below.

What is 'prohibited conduct' under the Act?

Direct discrimination and *indirect* discrimination, continue to be prohibited, but are now extended across all of the characteristics, with the exception of pregnancy and maternity.

Pregnancy and maternity now has specific protection for the duration of pregnancy and up to 26 weeks after birth. Students are explicitly protected from less favourable treatment if breastfeeding.

Protection from *harassment* is extended to all characteristics with the exceptions of pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.

Individuals are protected from *victimisation*, where a person makes an allegation or brings proceedings under the Act, and suffers a detriment as a result.

Discrimination by *association* is extended to cover all the characteristics, with the exception of pregnancy and maternity. For example, carers are protected because of their association with someone with a protected characteristic, such as a disabled person or an older person.

Similarly discrimination because of *perception* is extended to the same characteristics. This means that individuals who are treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a characteristic are protected, even though they don't have that characteristic.

It continues to be unlawful not to make a *reasonable adjustment* for a disabled person and a disabled person no longer has to show that their impairment affects a capacity, such as mobility or manual dexterity. It continues to be lawful to treat a disabled person *more favourably* than other people.

It is now unlawful to ask disability or health-related questions during a selection process, with some exceptions, and HR has already provided detailed guidance to managers on this provision.

A new protection, *discrimination arising from disability*, has been introduced. It means that unfavourable treatment because of something connected with a person's disability is unlawful, for example, refusing to allow a student to use a recording device in a tutorial. In practice, providing that reasonable adjustments are made, discrimination should not arise from disability.

What are the positive action provisions?

The positive action provisions in the Equality Act replicate those in previous equality legislation. Where we reasonably think that people who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage, have different needs, or have disproportionately low rates of participation in an activity, we may take action to overcome or minimise this, providing any action taken is proportionate. This provision applies to all functions, including employment and education, and we have and will continue to use these provisions where appropriate. However, the provisions are complex and you should seek advice from the Equality and Diversity Team if you are considering using them.

What is the 'public sector equality duty'?

The University, in the exercise of its functions, is required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity, which involves removing or minimising disadvantage, taking steps to meet needs and encouraging participation.
- Foster good relations, which involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

How does the duty apply to me?

In carrying out your work, in making decisions, in developing, approving or implementing policy and procedures, you must give due regard to the three aims of the equality duty, outlined above. Due regard means that the weight you give to equality needs to be proportionate to its relevance and some roles and functions have greater equality relevance than others. This means being vigilant to anything that you may do that may lead to unlawful discrimination, or anything you could do that would help to prevent the 'prohibited conducts' described earlier. It also means being proactive in identifying ways of advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations through the work that you normally do.

Are some provisions of the Act not being implemented?

Plans to introduce a public sector duty regarding socio-economic inequalities were shelved prior to the first phase implementation. However, The Open University aims to reduce socio-economic inequalities and it is an included characteristic in this equality scheme and in our Widening Participation strategy.

Plans to introduce protection from combined discrimination (dual characteristics) were shelved in the budget announcement in March 2011.

Additionally, we have taken the decision not to implement the voluntary positive action provision in recruitment and promotions, which allows employers to consider underrepresentation or disadvantage when faced with making a choice between two or more candidates who are of equal merit. HR has issued specific guidance to managers on this subject. In practice, we have decided that this provision can easily be misunderstood and any small gains to be made are far outweighed by the risks.

Can I be held personally liable?

Yes, an employee or agent is personally responsible for their own acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out during their employment.

The University will not be liable where it can show that it has taken all reasonable steps to prevent employees from discriminating, harassing or victimising someone.

Annex B: Definition of protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Definition
Age	This includes a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).
Caring and dependency	This includes people with responsibilities for caring for children, dependent adults and disabled people.
Disability	A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Gender reassignment	The process of transitioning from one gender to another. The Equality Act 2010 uses the term "transsexual" to refer to people undergoing gender reassignment.
Marriage and civil partnership	Marriage is defined as a union between a man and a woman. Same-sex couples can have their relationships recognised as 'civil partnerships'. The Equality Act 2010 protects married and civil partnered couples equally. People not in a legal relationship, and people not in a relationship, are not protected. In Northern Ireland, marital status is protected, and therefore individuals who are single, separated, divorced or widowed are protected.
Political opinion	Members/supporters of any political party, and supporters of no political party.
Pregnancy and maternity	Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this explicitly includes not treating a woman less favourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	This includes a person or group of people defined by their race, colour, caste, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origin.
Religion or belief	Religion means any religion; belief means any religious or philosophical belief including lack of belief e.g. Atheism. Generally, a belief should affect life choices or the way someone lives for it to be included in the definition.
Sex	A man or a woman (often referred to as 'Gender').
Sexual orientation	Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex, both sexes, or neither sex (asexual, which is not the same as celibacy).

Who is protected?

- People who have one or more protected characteristics.
- People who are **perceived to have** any protected characteristic³⁵.
- People who are **associated with** someone who has any protected characteristic³⁶.

³⁵ Where adverse treatment of a person/people occurs by someone who simply thinks that that person or people have (or do not have) a Protected Characteristic. For example, not considering women for a new project manager secondment because you think she is pregnant.

³⁶ Where adverse treatment of an individual occurs because of their association with another person or people who have association with someone who has a Protected Characteristic. For example, unreasonably denying flexible working to a person has made a request to be able to look after his disabled daughter.

Annex C: Definition of prohibited conducts

People are not allowed to discriminate, harass or victimise another person because they have any of the protected characteristics.

- **Direct discrimination** means treating one person worse than another because of a protected characteristic. Direct discrimination is always unlawful, with the exception of age, which can be objectively justified in rare circumstances³⁷.
- **Indirect discrimination** means putting in place a rule or policy or way of doing things that has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one, when this cannot be objectively justified.
- **Harassment** includes unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or which creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone with a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by association** means treating a person less favourably because of their association with a person who has a protected characteristic. For example, not agreeing to a reasonable adjustment such as slightly varying working patterns for a person who needs to care for their disabled husband.
- **Discrimination by perception** means treating a person less favourably because you think they have a protected characteristic.
- **Victimisation** is treating someone unfavourably because they have taken (or might be taking) action to claim their entitlements or legal rights or supporting somebody who is doing so.

³⁷ For example, universities are not required to admit students under a certain age to a particular course of study, where there is a justifiable age requirement for a particular profession.

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

The English, Scottish and Welsh Governments have introduced separate, though broadly similar, specific duties which are intended to help public authorities to meet the general public sector equality duty (see Foreword). The Open University is required to meet the legal duties in England only however, as a UK-wide public authority, we have agreed the following principles:

- A) Recognising our role in supporting the different Governments of the UK to address equality priorities determined through the democratic process in each country, *we will comply with all of the duties in each country*, regardless of whether or not we are legally bound by them. We will deviate from this position only where such an approach would be disproportionate.
- B) Recognising the need to develop procedural arrangements that can be easily understood and implemented by the majority of OU staff, *we will adopt a universal approach wherever possible*. We will deviate from this position only where there is a significant difference between the duties in different nations, or where applying a universal principle would be disproportionate.

The table below summarises the full set of duties for each country.

Public Sector Specific Duties in England, Scotland and Wales			
Duty	England	Scotland	Wales
Equality objectives, outcomes and plans	Prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable objectives	Publish equality outcomes, informed by evidence base Include all protected characteristics or state reason for any gaps Publish an equal pay statement	Publish strategic equality plan, which includes objectives, timeframe and how progress will be monitored, informed by evidence base Specifically consider need for pay objective(s) Include all protected characteristics or state reason for any gaps
Review	Review objectives every 4 years	Review outcomes every 4 years	Review strategic plan every 4 years
Monitoring	Gather information about employees and other persons affected by policies and practices	Gather and use information about composition, recruitment, development and retention of employees	Gather information on employees and other persons affected
Consultation/ involvement		Take reasonable steps to involve people when developing outcomes	Engage people when developing strategic plan, objectives, assessing equality information and impact of policies

Public Sector Specific Duties in England, Scotland and Wales

Duty	England	Scotland	Wales
Publishing	Publish annual monitoring information on employees and other persons affected by policies and practices	Publish progress report and report on mainstreaming equality every 2 years, to include employment monitoring data and pay gap information Publish the results of Equality Analyses	Publish annual report, including monitoring information
Equality analysis	There is no specific duty, but public authorities must consider the three aims of the general duty when developing and reviewing policies, procedures, practices and/or decision	Assess the impact of new or revised policy or practice	Use evidence base to assess impact of policies and practices
Procurement	[There is no specific duty, but public authorities must consider the three aims of the general duty when procuring goods and services.]	Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to procurement	
Staff training			Staff must be made aware of and understand the general and specific duties
Accessibility of published information	Must be accessible to the public	Must be accessible to the public	Must be accessible to the public

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

Preventing discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations in Northern Ireland is not the sole responsibility of staff in the OU. Many strategies, policies and services are developed centrally but cover functions in Northern Ireland, including curriculum, teaching and research strategies, student services, employment, partnerships and procurement. Staff, wherever they are based, need to consider the impact of their work on equality in Northern Ireland. That is why we have fully embedded the requirements of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act into this equality scheme and no longer maintain a separate scheme for Northern Ireland.

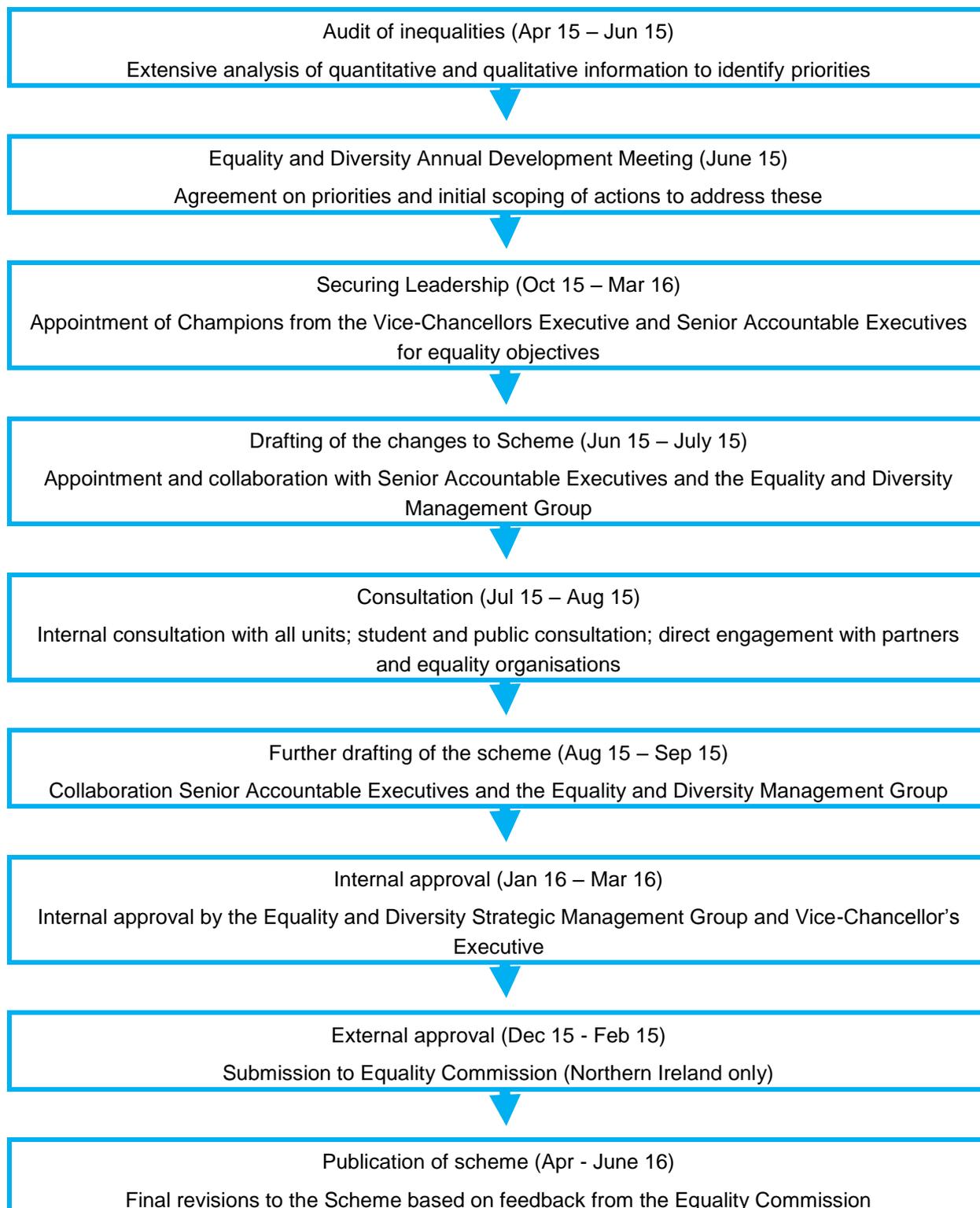
Schedule 9 of the Act specifies requirements in relation to the content of equality schemes. An equality scheme must contain these elements in order to be approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The table below sets out the different paragraphs of Schedule 9 that relate to scheme content and maps these requirements to the relevant sections of this scheme.

How our scheme meets the Section 75 duty in Northern Ireland		
Schedule 9 paragraph	Content requirement	Section of this scheme
4(1)	An equality scheme shall show how the public authority proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to the relevant functions.	This Annex and the Foreword
4(2)(a)	An equality scheme shall state the authority's arrangement for assessing its compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for consulting on matters to which a duty under that section is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted).	Consultation and engagement (s.3.4) Assessing compliance, evaluation and review (s.4.2) Appendix 5
4(2)(b)	An equality scheme shall state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity.	Equality analysis (s.3.5) Consultation and engagement (s.3.4)
4(2)(c)	An equality scheme shall state the authority's arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.	Equality analysis (s.3.5) Monitoring and reporting (s.3.6)
4(2)(d)	An equality scheme shall state the authority's arrangements for publishing the results of such assessments as are mentioned in paragraph (b) and such monitoring as is mentioned in paragraph (c).	Equality analysis (s.3.5) Publishing (s.3.7)
4(2)(e)	An equality scheme shall state the authority's arrangements for training staff on issues relevant to Section 75 statutory duties.	Staff learning and development (s.3.2)

How our scheme meets the Section 75 duty in Northern Ireland		
Schedule 9 paragraph	Content requirement	Section of this scheme
4(2)(f)	An equality scheme shall state the authority's arrangements for ensuring, and assessing, public access to information and to services provided by the authority.	Accessible information and services (s.3.3)
4(3)(a)	A scheme shall conform to any Guidelines as to form or content which are issued by the Commission with approval of the Secretary of State.	Scheme developed based on the Guide for Public Authorities (Apr 2010) and the Model Equality Scheme (Nov 2010)
4(3)(b)	A scheme shall specify a timetable for measures proposed in the scheme.	Appendix 4
4(3)(c)	A scheme shall include details of how the scheme will be published.	Inside front cover Publishing (s.3.7)
5	Before submitting a scheme, a public authority shall consult with representatives of persons likely to be affected by the scheme and such other persons as may be specified in directions given by the Commission.	How our scheme and our equality objectives were developed (Annex F)
8(3)	A scheme must include a commitment to conducting a review of the scheme within five years of its submission to the Commission or the scheme's last review, and to forwarding a report of this review to the Commission.	Assessing compliance, evaluation and review (s.4.2)
9(1)	In publishing the results of such an assessment as is mentioned in paragraph 4(2)(b), a public authority shall state the aims of the policy to which the assessment relates and give details of any consideration given by the authority to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact of that policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity; and alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.	Equality analysis (s.3.5) Publishing (s.3.7)
9(2)	In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, a public authority shall take into account any such assessment and consultation as is mentioned in paragraph 4(2)(b) carried out in relation to the policy.	Equality analysis (s.3.5)
10	A scheme must include the authority's arrangements for dealing with complaints arising from a failure to comply with the scheme.	Feedback and complaints (s.4.3)

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

Developing our 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 being 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 being 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 The 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	Disability Race Sex Sexual Orientation	Assistant Director, Learning & OD
		1b. 95% of executive and senior managers to have taken at least two of the IATs by 2020		
		2a. 80% of line managers to have undertaken unconscious bias training by 2020	All	
		2b. Line managers engaged post-training to capture impact of any action taken as a result of learning		
		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			

Developing our objectives

Audit of inequalities

We have an annual equality monitoring and reporting cycle that includes data and survey analysis and internal reporting. This annual process ensures our approach is evidence-based, and ensures we assess progress and performance regularly and are able to identify and respond to key inequalities.

In preparing the current scheme, a review of a wide range of information was carried out to identify continuing and new priorities. Information was analysed from the following sources:

- Data reports on student participation, completion and attainment rates
- Reports on student experience and satisfaction, from end of module surveys, withdrawal surveys and national student surveys
- Reports on student complaints and appeals
- Data reports on workforce composition and a wide range of other workforce indicators, including recruitment, promotion rates, leaving rates, access to learning and development, grievance and disciplinary cases
- Data reports on the composition of the main governance bodies, Senate and Council
- Reports from all units of the University on the progress made against agreed equality action plans
- Benchmarking data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency. Findings from benchmarking exercises with Opportunity Now (gender), Race for Opportunity and Stonewall (sexual orientation)

Much of the information used in our audit is included in monitoring reports, published alongside our Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2011. These monitoring reports can be viewed on our equality and diversity website at <http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/>

Based on the findings of this audit, the Equality and Diversity Management Group agreed nine new priority objectives for this equality scheme at its annual development meeting in 2015. These objectives are detailed in our consultation document published in July 2015 and can be found at the following link: <http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/equality-scheme-objectives>

Importantly, the absence of an equality issue within the nine objectives does not mean that the issue is not important, nor that we will ignore that issue, rather that we intend to focus our effort and resource in addressing the most significant inequalities identified by our current evidence base.

The detailed objectives are published at Appendix 1.

Individual Faculties, departments and geographical locations will have specific issues that they want to address in addition to the agreed institutional objectives. Actions to address these issues are included in the action plan published at Appendix 2.

Appendices

Information about the appendices

Documents in the appendices are updated regularly and are therefore published as separate documents. Appendices 2 and 3 are resources provided for staff and are published on the staff intranet only.

Appendix 1: Equality objectives

This appendix sets out our specific and measurable outcome-focused equality objectives. It includes details of the objectives, key performance indicators, accountabilities and our approach to furthering each objective.

Appendix 2: Equality resources for staff

This appendix is for staff use and is published on the intranet only. It provides a list of equality-related resources, with links directly to those resources.

Appendix 3: People and teams that can advise staff

This appendix is for staff use and is published on the intranet only. It provides the names of individuals and teams that can provide advice to staff on a range of equality-related matters.

Appendix 4: Timetable for measures and consultation list for functions in Northern Ireland

This appendix contains a timetable for measures proposed by this equality scheme and a list of consultees for functions relevant to Northern Ireland. These are requirements for Equality Schemes in Northern Ireland. The measures outlined in the timetable are incorporated into our business planning processes.

Appendix 1: Objectives and KPIs

THEME 1

Putting Students First

Objective 1a: Improve awareness of the OU among ethnic minority potential students

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 ethnic minority students from 10.6% to 11% by 2020
VCE Champion(s)	Race
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Debbie Britton, Director, Marketing
Rationale	<p>Data collected reveals that:</p> <p>At Q3 2015 (based on rolling 4 quarter data),</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31% of white (potential) students compared to 20% of ethnic minority students considered the OU as their first or only choice of university • New part time undergraduate ethnic minority student registrations were 10.6% for the OU compared with 13.8% for the sector.
Sector performance	Ethnic minority students accounted for 13.8% of UK part-time first degree undergraduate registrations in 2013/14.
Recent progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little progress was identified during the term of the previous Equality Scheme as it was identified that the measure originally being considered was being compared to full time students and only reflected a 'snapshot' at given points of time
Challenges	it is not clear what the real issue and perception/consideration drivers are relating to this objective
Our approach	Under this Scheme we will benchmark against the part time market and introduce a rolling measure that will provide better trend information

Objective 1b: Reduce the degree awarding gap experienced by disabled and ethnic minority students as compared to non-disabled and white students respectively

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close the gap between the proportion of black students and white students awarded a 'good pass'³⁸ on undergraduate modules at levels 2 and 3 from 30.6% to 25.0% by 2022/23³⁹ 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
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Disability, Race
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	David Knight, Director, Access, Careers, Teaching Support
Rationale	<p>Analysis has revealed that the greatest gap exists between black students and white students by a significant margin. In addressing this gap the overall gap between ethnic minority students and white students will close considerably.</p> <p>Assessment on modules at undergraduate levels 2 and 3 determines the overall degree classification. The degree awarding gap at the OU in 2013/14 was nearly 31% for black students and nearly 5% for disabled students respectively.</p>
Sector performance	<p>The degree awarding gap was also highest between white and black students, where the difference stood at 24.33% in 2012/13.</p> <p>The disabled student awarding gap stood at 1.7%</p>
Recent progress	<p>The latest data comes from the Equality and Diversity Annual Monitoring Data report 2015: student participation, completion and attainment, which goes up to 2013/14. The gap is currently 30.6%, a deterioration from 28.7% in 2009/2010</p> <p>We are aiming to reduce the gap so that, as a minimum, we are at parity with the sector.</p>
Challenges	<p>There is still a need for greater clarity around understanding the drivers behind the ethnic minority degree awarding gap. A number of approaches have been tried with varying (generally not very satisfactory) success rates</p>

³⁸ A '1st or an Upper Second Class (2.1) are defined as good degrees

³⁹ The timeframe to deliver the KPI has been extended by one year, recognising that the interventions are unlikely to show a significant impact before this time.

	<p>Previous interventions included a 45 minute session in awareness raising around unconscious bias for Associate Lecturers. This was part of the University's contribution to the Great Expectations project funded by the Higher Education Academy. It was felt that this intervention did not yield the desired results due to its limited size and scope</p> <p>Care is needed when communicating the degree awarding gap so that any negative expectations are not reinforced</p> <p>Initiatives that may have a higher impact, such as student mentoring, are costly to fund</p>
<p>Our approach</p>	<p>We will continue to look at how we support lecturers/tutors to minimise any unconscious bias</p> <p>We will look at how we can better support black and disabled students, through piloting a student peer mentoring programme</p> <p>We will consider Level 2 results both at the mid-point and at the end of the 2016-2020 scheme in order to evaluate progress and estimate likelihood of the success for 2022/2023 award of good degrees</p>

Objective 1c: Improve equality declaration data for students

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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% by 2020 3. Improve student declaration of Caring and Dependency status from 7.2% to 15% by 2018 and to 20% by 2020
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Caring & Dependency, Religion & Belief, Sexual Orientation
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Nicholas Macarte, Director of Operations, Student Recruitment and Fees
Rationale	<p>Improved monitoring data will allow us to measure participation and outcomes for students across a wider range of characteristics and circumstances. This will help ensure that all individuals, especially those who have not declared status under the categories considered within this objective, feel able to access and participate in their learning experience with the OU.</p>
Sector performance	<p>Of the students in the 47% of HEI institutions that monitored religion and belief and sexual orientation in 2013/2014, 36.9% of students provided information about their religion or belief and 34.4% of students provided information about their sexual orientation.</p> <p>Currently, Caring and Dependency is not a protected characteristic under the equality Act 2010 and therefore, Sector performance data is not available. Caring and Dependency is included in the Open University's list of protected characteristics as it is, amongst other things, part of our inclusion and Widening Access and Success agenda. Additionally, Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act includes "persons with dependents and persons without". In one of its fact sheets about the Care Act 2014, the Department for Health describes a Carer as, "...someone who helps another person, usually a relative or friend, in their day-to-day life. This is not the same as someone who provides care professionally, or through a voluntary organisation."</p>
Recent progress	<p>In the last update report (May 2015) student declaration for both Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation stood at 28%</p> <p>Carers' data has been collected for only 2 years at the time of writing and that revealed declaration rates of only 8% in both years</p>
Challenges	<p>Staff and students may perceive risks associated with declaring sensitive information</p> <p>Staff and students may not be satisfied with the classifications offered under new questions</p> <p>Students do not always register updates when the caring and dependency status changes</p>

	<p>Student data for religion and belief, caring and dependency and sexual orientation is not currently collected at registration but via the University's <i>Student Home</i> page, post registration</p>
<p>Our approach</p>	<p>Raise awareness of the benefits of declaring equality data and of how data is protected; encourage students and staff to update information regularly</p> <p>Adjust classifications as far as is feasible to take account of student feedback</p> <p>HRD and Strategy and Information Office are looking to move to a Data Factory system which ought to make data extraction and analysis faster and easier</p> <p>Work more closely with the Open University Student Association Chair and/or Vice Chair(s) to consider how we can encourage more existing students to self-declare</p>

THEME 2

Leadership and Institutional Commitment

Objective 2a: Increase the representation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled staff in senior roles

Key performance indicator(s)	<p>1. Increase the proportion of women in senior professorial roles⁴⁰ from 27.6% to 40% by 2020</p> <p>2. Increase the proportion of ethnic minorities from 7.1% to at least 10% of senior roles by 2020</p> <p>3. Increase the proportion of disabled individuals from 2.6% to 4% of senior roles by 2020⁴¹</p>
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Disability, Race, Sex (Gender)
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Jenny Stewart, Head of University Secretary's Office
Rationale	<p>The proportion of women at senior academic and professorial services levels is still substantially lower than the proportion of men in academic and professional services roles indicating barriers to women's progression.</p> <p>Ethnic minority and disabled staff across the university represented only 9% and 5.1% respectively</p>
Sector performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11.8% of male staff were in senior contract levels, nearly three times the proportion of female staff (4.3%). • Women were most starkly underrepresented at the head of institution level: only 20.1% of all heads of institutions were women • The proportion of staff disclosing as disabled increased from 2.2% in 2003/04 to 3.9% in 2012/13 • The proportion of UK black staff who were professors (4.0%) was lower than for any other ethnic group⁴²
Recent progress	<p>At December 2014</p> <p>Whilst the proportion of OU women professors had increased to 35.6% across all professorial bands, in the two most senior bands (2 & 3) they accounted for only 27.6%. It was this under-representation, rather than disparity between men and women in like for like work, which contributed to the gender pay gap.</p> <p>No progress has been made with disabled staff as the proportion of disabled staff in senior roles declined from 2.8% to 2.6%</p>

⁴⁰ Senior professorial roles are OU professorial bands 2 and 3

⁴¹ Senior job roles include Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Professors, Deans, Directors and Heads of Units.

⁴² Information drawn from the 'Equality in higher Education: Statistical Report 2014

	The proportion of ethnic minorities in senior roles increased from 6.2% (2013) to 7.1%. This is still not representative of UK demographics.
Challenges	Turnover rates for senior level roles are small. The KPIs will be particularly challenging at a time when the university will be restructuring in the early part of the 2016-2020 Scheme
Our approach	<p>Develop our talent pipeline, especially through encouraging those from under-represented groups who have been disadvantaged through historical conscious and unconscious bias</p> <p>Consider specific interventions and Positive Action Programmes to address the imbalance</p>

Objective 2b: Increase the leadership potential of women, ethnic minority and disabled staff

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 25% of attendees from Aurora to have achieved career related moves⁴³ 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
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Disability, Race, Sex (Gender)
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Penny Bennett, Assistant Director, Learning and Innovation
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from the last REF 2014 submissions showed that publications from black students, in particular, were poorly represented • We are now entering year three of our participation in the Aurora Programme and we need to monitor and track the progress of women coming through the programme both in academic and professional services roles • We made some progress in increasing the number of women professors during the 2012-2016 scheme, but there is a long way to go to get to parity
Sector performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Aug 2015 The Higher Education Funding Council for England reported that black and Asian UK academics were significantly less likely than their white counterparts to be included in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework. The research showed that only 35% of black staff we selected compared with 56% of white staff.
Recent progress	<p>The Aspire Programme has been reviewed and is to be launched during 2015.</p> <p>15 places were awarded onto the Aurora Programme in 2015</p> <p>Only 20% of eligible black academic staff were represented in the 2014 REF submission, compared to 38% of eligible white academics.</p>
Challenges	<p>Generally, recruitment has taken place on the basis of past experience and expertise. The challenge will be to introduce methods to encourage recruitment on the basis of potential</p>

⁴³ This includes career related moves involving exiting the University

	At the time of the last REF submission, black academic staff accounted for only 1% of the University's academic staff population.
<p>Our approach</p>	<p>Develop a Leadership Scorecard featuring equality and diversity metrics to enable staff to establish a baseline and monitor progress</p> <p>Monitor career progression and introduce interventions where progress is not being made</p> <p>Investigate and evaluate barriers faced by the target groups and develop interventions to assist in overcoming them</p> <p>Career related moves constitute lateral moves or secondments of six months or more for development purposes, as well as promotions or "Acting up" positions</p>

Objective 2c: Increase the diversity of the University's Council and governance committees

Key performance indicator(s)

1. 1. All University committees will always be comprised of at least 40% women and 40% men.
2. 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. 3. At least one third of Council will always be comprised of members aged 55 or under.

Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Age, Race, Sex (Gender)
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Tony O'Shea-Poon, Director Academic Policy and Governance
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council membership is currently around 30% female, but this is not necessarily reflected in committee structures • The University recognises that it is still under-represented by ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. • Currently 74% of Council members are aged 56 and above. • We are looking to have a better spread of age bands which will then allow better succession and continuity amongst Council members • ECU research showed (2009) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the age of most governors in the sample was within the 50 – 59 year band • 30% of members were women of whom 17% were Chairs • No information was available on the representation of ethnic minorities or disabled people • (2013) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32% of governing bodies in the UK were women.
Sector performance	<p>The latest available research sponsored by the <i>Equality Challenge Unit</i> and the <i>Leadership Foundation for Higher Education</i> was conducted in 2009. In that report it was found that, "The age of most governors within the sample is within the 50-59 year band. 30% of members are female and 17% of chairs are female.</p> <p>"A major theme to emerge from the interviews was a perceived tension between skills and diversity of current and potential governors, rather than seeing diversity as an integral part of the value which governors bring."</p>
Recent progress	The OU joined the 30% club in August 2015, committing to an aspiration of women to represent 30% of governing bodies and committees.

Challenges	As numbers of Council members are finite, just one person joining or leaving can result in a big fluctuation in proportionality
Our approach	Evaluate the current demographics and devise strategies to attract the right calibre of person from the whole spectrum of Protected Characteristics

Theme 3: A skilled and committed workforce

Objective 3a: Develop a more diverse academic, teaching and research workforce with a more diverse age profile

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the proportion of academic and research staff aged under 36 from 13% to 15% by 2020 and to 17% by 2022 2. Increase the proportion of Associate Lecturers aged under 40 from 13.1% to 16% by 2020 3. At least one third of eligible black academic staff to submit in the next Research Excellence Framework Submission (expected in 2020)
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Age
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Helen Fisher, Director, Research, Academic Strategy
Rationale	At the end of 2010, 12% of OU academics (including research staff) were aged 35 and under. Analysis of recruitment data shows that a high proportion of academic job applicants are aged 35 and under, but these applicants are significantly less likely to be shortlisted than older applicants. When younger applicants are shortlisted and interviewed, they are as likely as older applicants to be appointed.
Sector performance	The latest available figures (2012/13) indicated that around 28% of academic staff were aged 35 and under, and academic staff aged 56 and above was 18.7%.
Recent progress	<p>The proportion of academic staff aged 35 and under increased to 13.8% by the end of 2014</p> <p>A project reviewing the impact of recruitment procedures has concluded with recommendations to revise job descriptions and person specifications, revise guidance on shortlisting criteria and strengthen policy and guidance on the composition of selection panels</p> <p>Video assets have been created to promote the contribution of younger academics and the partnership between younger and older academics</p> <p>Development and consultation has commenced for a new placement scheme</p>
Challenges	<p>Abolition of mandatory state retirement age</p> <p>Reduction in staffing levels in Faculties and low level of external recruitment</p> <p>Academics aged 35 and under are more likely to be on fixed-term research contracts so proportionality could fluctuate as funding finishes. However we have seen a fairly constant trend over the last 4 years</p>

	<p>Unconscious bias by selection panel members</p> <p>IT has been argued that professional and vocational curriculum requires significant experience</p>
<p>Our approach</p>	<p>Development of a placement scheme which effectively engages those in the target age group to apply to the OU</p> <p>Further develop the Academic Professional Development Framework</p> <p>Implementation of changes to recruitment guidance and processes</p> <p>Continue to promote positive attitudes towards younger academics</p> <p>Develop and promote clearer career paths for younger academics</p> <p>Promote schemes for flexible retirement to create openings for staff in the 26-35 age band</p> <p>Monitor proportion of academic, teaching and research staff in age bands commencing at age 56</p>

Objective 3b: Improve the selection prospects of staff across protected characteristics

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 25% of ethnic minority applicants are shortlisted for all roles by 2018 2. At least 35% of ethnic minority shortlisted applicants are selected (based on ability/potential to do the job) by 2020 3. At least 35% of disabled shortlisted applicants are selected (based on ability/potential to do the job) by 2020
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Disability, Race
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Satvinder Reyatt, Head of HR Support Services
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although disabled applicants were more likely to be shortlisted than non-disabled applicants in 2013 (34.6% disabled applicants compared to 26.7% non-disabled) shortlisted applicants with a declared disability were subsequently less likely to be appointed when compared to non-disabled applicants. (29.7% disabled applicants compared to 36.1% non-disabled applicants) • Ethnic minority applicants continue to be less likely to be shortlisted (19.8%) in comparison to staff from a white ethnicity (29.6%). A similar pattern can be seen in relation to the percentage of shortlisted applicants being appointed, where shortlisted applicants from an ethnic minority background are less likely to be appointed (29.7%) as compared to applicants from a white ethnic background (37.6%) • At December 2013, 6.2% of senior job roles were filled by ethnic minority staff, while 8.6% of internal staff were ethnic minorities
Sector performance	The 2011 Equality Challenge Unit report entitled 'The experience of black and minority ethnic staff in higher education in England' reported concern expressed by ethnic minority staff about unequal access to and control of resources, position, decision-making and power. Ethnic minority staff were less likely to be in leadership and management positions.
Recent progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Aspire~</i> and <i>Aspire~ Plus</i> development programmes have been highly successful, with around 20% of participants making a career related move • The proportion of ethnic minority people working at the OU continues to be below the proportionality detailed in the 2011 Census outputs which reported that. "White was the majority ethnic group at 48.2 million in 2011 (86.0 per cent). Within this ethnic group, white British¹ was the largest group at 45.1 million (80.5 per cent)" By deduction that gives a minority ethnic population of 14%.
Challenges	Concerns have been expressed that targets can lead to appointing people who may not be 'fit' to do the role. In practice, these concerns are hypothetical, especially as all recruiters are required to undergo appropriate training

	In view of some major organisational changes being considered, there may be fewer promotion opportunities likely in the next few years
Our approach	Consider broader use of positive action programmes, particularly around the areas of training in application writing and interview techniques Resume the Aspire~ and Aspire~ Plus programmes with appropriate support from Executive and Senior managers

Objective 3c: Improve the satisfaction of staff across the protected characteristics

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close the satisfaction gap between disabled and non-disabled staff from 4% to 2% by 2020 2. Close the satisfaction gap with unit management between disabled and non-disabled internal staff from 10% to 5% by 2020 3. Close the satisfaction gap between ethnic minority and white staff from 5% to 2% by 2020
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	Disability, Race
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Nigel Holt, Director of HR
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest Associate Lecturer staff satisfaction survey showed a significant difference on the respect, recognition and status scale compared to non-disabled staff. • The findings of three staff surveys between 2008 and 2010 identified significant differences in overall satisfaction and a higher intention to leave amongst ethnic minority staff
Sector performance	The 2011 Equality Challenge Unit report entitled 'The experience of black and minority ethnic staff in higher education in England' reported concern expressed by ethnic minority staff about unequal access to and control of resources, position, decision-making and power. Ethnic minority staff were less likely to be in leadership and management positions.
Recent progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The difference in job satisfaction rates between disabled and non-disabled staff reduced from 6% in 2010 to 4% in 2014 • The difference in intention to leave between white and ethnic minority staff reduced from 14% in 2010 to 9% in 2014 • The University developed and launched a) new Agile Working policy, and b) guidance for all staff, emphasising the benefits in retention and progression of disabled staff
Challenges	In a climate where the University is considering undergoing significant structural/organisational change in response to the dramatic decline in the part time student market, achieving the desired improvement will prove to be challenging.
Our approach	<p>We will benchmark our targets to the better performing Higher Education Institutions in the Sector</p> <p>Identify gaps in satisfaction and address the biggest gaps first.</p> <p>Continue to support and engage the Enabling Staff Network</p> <p>Develop and deliver a new Valuing Difference workshop for line managers</p>



Objective 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

Key performance indicator(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 50% of executive and senior managers⁴⁴ have taken at least two of the IATs⁴⁵ by 2018 b. 95% of executive and senior managers to have taken at least two of the IATs by 2020 2. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 80% of line managers to have undertaken unconscious bias training by 2020 b. Line managers engaged post-training to capture impact of any action taken as a result of learning 3. Line managers improve their skills in developing all staff, ⁴⁶especially those with protected characteristics as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 4. Reduce the difference in satisfaction rates of ethnic minority staff with line managers to within 2% of other staff by 2020 5. Reduce the difference in satisfaction rates of disabled ALs and Internal staff with line managers to within 2% of other staff by 2020
Proposed VCE Champion(s)	VC (3c.1) All (3c.2) Race (3c.3) Disability (3c.4)
Proposed Senior Accountable Executive	Steph Broadribb, Assistant Director, Learning and OD
Rationale	The recommendations of the 2014 OU black Staff Experience report suggested a review of training to ensure that line managers have full appreciation of unconscious bias as well as understanding of the law and legal obligations. Over time, we anticipate that this objective will then address the gap in representation in senior levels of the University.
Sector performance	Statistics issued by the Equality Challenge unit and provided by the Higher Education Statistics agency have highlighted that there is still a significant gap in the representation of people from a range of protected

⁴⁴ Senior job roles include Pro-Vice Chancellors, Professors, Deans, Directors and Heads of units

⁴⁵ Harvard Implicit Association Tests for Race, Disability, Sex (Gender) and Sexual Orientation

⁴⁶ In addressing skills required to develop under represented staff line managers will also be able to develop all of their staff.

	<p>characteristics, notably (but not exclusively) Gender, Race, and Disability. For example, in its 2014 report, The Equality Challenge unit stated that, “the proportion of UK Staff who were ethnic minority was markedly lower among managers, directors and senior officials on academic contracts (2.6%).</p>
Recent progress	<p>Staff surveys have highlighted dissatisfaction with Line management and Unit Management, noted particularly by staff who identified themselves as disabled and/or ethnic minority</p>
Challenges	<p>As with most sectors, there is an attitude that the nature of an HEI means that those working in them are immune from the effects of unconscious bias. Research, however, shows that bias blind spots do not allow us to necessarily recognise our own unconscious biases, regardless of who we are⁴⁷</p>
Our approach	<p>All executive and senior managers to have development in unconscious bias and such development to be refreshed at 3 yearly intervals</p> <p>To review current delivery methods and the design of development activities to ensure maximum reach and impact.</p> <p>To introduce personalised follow-ups to support line managers in developing the potential of their staff, especially those who are under-represented at senior levels, in line with the L&OD approach of putting line managers at the heart of their people’s development. Thereby enhancing the emphasis on developing our diverse workforce</p>

⁴⁷ **Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People**, Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald

The Open University Equality Scheme 2016 - 2020

Appendix 2: Equality resources for staff

Appendix 2 is intended to alert staff to existing resources which might help them in their work and is divided into six sections to facilitate identification of relevant resources.

- Section one: resources for all
- Section two: resources to support embedding equality into University activities
- Section three: resources to help staff support disabled students
- Section four: other resources to help tutors support students
- Section five: resources for faculties
- Section six: resources related to employment

Section one: resources for all

Equality Scheme, objectives and action plan

The University's equality scheme brings all our equality schemes and policies into one place under a shared vision. The revised Equality Scheme 2016-2020 is expected to be published in April 2016.

The University has developed specific and measurable outcome-focused equality objectives for the period 2016 to 2020. The equality objectives document includes details of the objectives, key performance indicators, accountability and information about how we developed the objectives.

An action plan is produced each year documenting actions to be taken across the University in support of the University's Equality Scheme.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/equality-scheme-objectives>

Brand guidelines

The brand must be an expression of our mission and values. It is not about visual and stylistic preferences. The brand guidelines explain the reason for each rule and approach.

The Communicators' Asset Bank has been developed to give staff across the university immediate access to pre-approved communications tools and resources including student and employer case studies, key brand messages and approved copy, guidelines relating to our new creative style, images and logos.

- <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/communications/main/business-and-finance/brand>
- If you need access to the full guidelines or require any further information please contact the brand mailbox: Brand-Enquiries@open.ac.uk

Language and Image Guide

This guide provides practical guidance on the use of accessible language, appropriate terminology when referring to different groups of people and guidance on how to avoid forms of bias such as omission and stereotyping.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/diversity-curriculum>

Religious Calendar & Guide

This resource provides information about the most significant festivals relating to the major religions represented in the UK: Festival dates for 2014 - 2017, an assessment of each festival's impact on staff and student activities, and a flag indicator identifies dates you should avoid when planning OU activities.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/religion-or-belief>

Section **two**: resources to support embedding equality into University activities

Equality Analysis

Guidance and templates to support individuals involved in developing strategy, policy and practice or in managing programmes and projects that will bring about change.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/equality-analysis>

Equality and contracting

Equality and contracting goods and services tendering for contracts

Information to help you complete equality-related questions in tender documents and funding applications.

The guidance document is for people with responsibility for creating and approving contracts using tendering procedures (note it is not necessary to consider this guidance when using the 'quotation' procedure for purchasing).

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/equality-contracting>

Equality, Diversity and Partnerships

This self-assessment template has been developed for use by partners, including Approved Institutions, to carry out a self-assessment of performance in the area of equality and diversity. The aim is to support partners in reflecting on their current practice and performance and to support a culture of continuous improvement.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/partnerships>

Equality, diversity, widening access and success (EDWAS) planning

Equality, Diversity, Widening Access and Success (EDWAS) planning is fully integrated within the unit business planning process, with the EDWAS guidance and template available on the Unit planning SharePoint intranet site.

<https://intranet7.open.ac.uk/collaboration/equality-diversity-planning-and-reporting/SitePages/Home.aspx> (Sharepoint site available to staff)

Section **three**: resources to help staff support disabled students

Accessibility

Accessibility information for OU staff

From SeGA (Securing Greater Accessibility)

This website contains information about a range of accessibility topics to support staff delivering accessibility to make our teaching inclusive of disabled students. It also provides information about the Securing Greater Accessibility (SeGA) plan, accessibility contacts, guidance and resources for module teams and access, and accessibility case studies.

<http://learn3.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=300276>

Learning and Teaching Solutions (LTS) Accessibility Policy
(under revision 2012/13)

In addition to the policy, this webpage provides a number of links to a range of internal and external accessibility resources.

http://intranet.open.ac.uk/lts/production/download/1100_accessibility.htm

Preparing accessible documents

<http://kn.open.ac.uk/workspace.cfm?workspacepageid=6861>

PDF accessibility problems

<http://kn.open.ac.uk/workspace.cfm?workspacepageid=6968>

Disability guidelines

Part of the Disabled Student Services intranet site, the disability guidelines provide guidance on a variety of disabilities, conditions and specific learning difficulties.

<http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/student-services/main/learner-support-services/disability-advisory-service>

Services for disabled students

This website provides students with information about the support services and facilities provided by the University to enable disabled students to succeed in their studies, including advice about funding and arrangements for tutorials, examinations and residential schools, and the provision of equipment.

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/study/support/disability/orientation>

Tutor resources to help support disabled students

This TutorHome website provides videos that highlight different types of disability including medical conditions as well as tips on supporting disabled students' learning needs. In addition there are links to other online resources related to supporting disabled students:

- The Supporting Open Learners (SOL) reference guide, including frequently asked questions.
- Services for disabled students.

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/tutors/disabled-students/>

Section four: other resources to help tutors support students

Cultural Competence and Muslim Students

A resource to help tutors address issues of race and ethnicity at work.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/sites/www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/files/files/ecms/web-content/cultural-competence-and-teaching-OU-students.pdf>

Developing Academic English

This website will assist tutors in helping their students in their use of English for academic study. The website focuses particularly on how to develop student writing skills.

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/tutors/developing-academic-english>

Supporting students in prison booklet

This resource to help tutors support students who are in prison explores what it means for students to study within the prison context, and the impact this has on teaching and support.

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/tutors/students-in-prison-or-secure-units>

Supporting younger students

This website aims to raise awareness about the growing number of younger OU students and to assist tutors in providing their support.

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/tutors/younger-students>

Section five: resources for faculties

Self-Assessment Checklist

A tool to determine the extent to which the faculty gives active consideration to student diversity within current faculty practices.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/partnerships>

Whose W.O.R.D.D. counts?

This is a tool to help you critically assess the extent to which diversity is embedded in your course content. W.O.R.D.D is an acronym which stands for:

- W – Writing with the audience in mind.
- O – Opportunities for exchange of experiences.
- R – Representation through different lenses.
- D – Drawing on different student experiences.
- D – Diversity as the subject matter.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/diversity-curriculum>

Section six: resources related to employment

Disability

Disability and employment

The 'Disability and employment' website is a two-part online resource that includes a general disability awareness resource (video 'Who are you?') and information ('Fair and Square') about disability for managers and supervisors that covers key aspects of the recruitment, employment and support of disabled people. This resource will be useful for the induction and training of new staff, and the ongoing development of existing staff.

<http://intranet.open.ac.uk/Human-resources/Disability/>

Other disability related resources

Some resources listed under section three 'resources to help staff support disabled students' might be useful to staff such as preparing accessible documents and disability guidelines.

Diversity Compliance e-learning module

All members of staff are expected to complete the Diversity Compliance e-learning module as part of their induction into the University, to learn about their responsibilities and key legislation in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales including the protected characteristics.

<https://learn3.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=300293>

The Open University Equality Scheme 2016-2020

Appendix 3: People and teams that can advise staff

Appendix 3 is intended to inform staff about people and teams that can advise staff on specific aspects of equality.

- Section one: equality and data
- Section two: equality and employment
- Section three: equality and faculties
- Section four: equality policy, planning and reporting, guidance and resources
- Section five: equality and student services

Section one: equality and data

Information Office

Provision of institutional-level OU student equality statistics.

[Bart Kaes](#)

Senior Statistical Programmer

bart.kaes@open.ac.uk

Tel: (01908 8) 58414

Human Resources

Provision of staff equality-related statistics and reports.

[Simone Russell](#)

Human Resources Manager, Admin, MI & Systems

simone.russell@open.ac.uk

Tel: (01908 6) 54102

Student Statistics and Survey Team

Provision of OU student equality statistics at faculty, programme and module level.

[Anne Slee](#)

Project Officer – Student Statistics & Quality Assurance

anne.slee@open.ac.uk

Tel: (01908 6) 52615

Section two: equality and employment

Associate Lecturer Services Team, Student Services

Embedding equality of opportunity and preventing unintended discrimination in employment policy and practice.

[Bruce McGowen](#)

Assistant Director, Associate Lecturer Services
bruce.mcgowen@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 61306

Associate Lecturer Support and Development Team, Student Services

Design and delivery of equality staff learning and development for Associate Lecturers.

[Pat Atkins](#)

Director, Associate Lecturer Projects, Student Services
pat.atkins@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 59342

Human Resources

- Embedding equality of opportunity and preventing unintended discrimination within employment policy and practice, including policy and practice delegated to units.

[Hazel Jenner](#)

Head of Human Resources for Strategy and Policy Development
hazel.jenner@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 55873

[Kath Huth](#)

Human Resources Adviser Policy Development
kath.huth@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 52849

- Design and delivery of staff learning and development opportunities in response to the priorities of the University's equality scheme and requirements of legislation, including the Diversity Compliance eLearning module.

[Paul Smith](#)

Head of Learning and Organisational Development
paul.smith@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 53064

Section three: equality and faculties

Centre for Inclusion and Curriculum Partnerships

- Staff development for academic units on equality, diversity, inclusion and widening participation in the curriculum, and research on inclusion and widening participation.

Liz Marr

Director, Centre for Inclusion and Curriculum
liz.marr@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 58294

Wendy Fowle

Research, Evaluation and Information Manager
wendy.fowle@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 54126

Faculty Accessibility Contacts

Central Academic Units have appointed Accessibility Specialists to support further embedding of accessibility for disabled students in the design, development and production of modules. Details of faculty based *Accessibility Specialists* and *Associate Dean* strategic leads are published on the Equality and Diversity intranet site.

<http://intranet.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/groups/accessibility.shtml>

Institute of Educational Technology

Consultancy to faculties on accessibility in curriculum, learning and teaching for modules in planning and production, including usability and accessibility testing and evaluation of materials and websites.

Anne Jelfs

Senior Learning & Teaching Development Manager
anne.jelfs@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 54579

Chetz Colwell

Learning and Teaching Development Team (Accessibility)
chetz.colwell@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 55772

Section four: equality policy, planning and reporting, guidance and resources

Equality, Diversity and Information Rights Team, University Secretary's Office

The Equality, Diversity and Information Rights Team is a small team with specialist knowledge that includes equality, diversity and human rights issues. The EDIR team leads on the following equality functions:

- Management and Policy.
- Compliance.
- Planning and Reporting.
- Advice Service.
- Representation and Benchmarking.
- Change Projects.

Jiten Patel

Interim Head of Equality and Diversity
jiten.patel@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 8) 55833

Simone Arthur

Senior Project Manager Equality Charters and Benchmarking
simone.arthur@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 8) 58027

Sally Medway

Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator
sally.medway@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 52867

Angela Schröer

Equality and Diversity Assistant
angela.schroeer@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 52566

Team mailbox: strategy-equality@open.ac.uk

Section five: equality and student services

Student Services

Disabled Student Allowances (DSA) Office

Administration of DSAs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. DSAs in Scotland are administered by the Students' Awards Agency for Scotland and guidance for students based in Scotland can be obtained from the Open University in Scotland.

Elizabeth Bassett

Centre Manager DSA
elizabeth.bassett@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 54849

Disabled Student Services

- Services and support for Disabled students including support at residential schools, alternative formats and specialist equipment and assistance.

[Jennie Augustyniak](#)

Manager, Disability Resources Team

jennie.augustyniak@open.ac.uk

Tel: (01908 6) 53035

- Specialist advice, guidance and training to central services, regional and national centres and other Student Services functions directly supporting Disabled students.

[Julie Young](#)

Manager, Disability Advisory Services

julie.young@open.ac.uk

Tel: (01908 6) 52255

Residential Schools Team

Embedding equality of opportunity and preventing unintended discrimination in employment policy and practice and learning at residential schools.

[Karen Walton](#)

Manager, Residential Schools Team

Karen.walton@open.ac.uk

Tel: (01908 6) 52018

The Open University in Ireland

Ensuring compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and annual reports to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

[John Addy](#)

Assistant Director, Student Services, The OU in Ireland

john.addy@open.ac.uk

Ext: 72137 or 028 9024 5025

The Open University in Scotland

Relationships with the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council in respect of equality-related strategy.

[Lucy MacLeod](#)

Deputy Director (Students)

lucy.macleod@open.ac.uk

Ext: 71129 or 0131 226 3851

The Open University in Wales

Relationships with the Welsh Government and Funding Council for Wales in respect of equality-related strategy.

[Michele Looker](#)

Assistant Director, Planning and Resources

michele.looker@open.ac.uk
Ext: 70125 or 029 2026 2725

Widening Participation and Offender Learning

- Development, implementation and evaluation of the Widening Participation Strategy, the Access to Success Route and Community Partnerships Programme and widening participation relationships with funding councils.

[Michala Robertson](#)

Assistant Director, Widening Access and Success Services
michala.robertson@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 52994

- The Offender Learning Programme aims to enhance the delivery of OU courses to offenders in prison, secure units and those released on licence through ensuring that delivery is appropriately resourced, high quality, consistent, safe and accessible.

[Helen Maxwell](#)

Offender Learning Programme Manager
helen.maxwell@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 53143

[Melanie Miller](#)

Student Services Manager (Offender Learning)
melanie.miller@open.ac.uk
Tel: (01908 6) 55741

The Open University Equality Scheme 2016-2020

Appendix 4: Timetable for measures and consultation list for functions in Northern Ireland

Updated: September 2015

As specified by guidance from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, equality schemes must contain a timetable for measures proposed in the scheme and a list of consultees. As we aim to update these annually, they are contained in this separate Appendix.

A) Timetable for measures proposed in the equality scheme

<i>Measure</i>	<i>Lead responsibility</i>	<i>Timetable</i>
Develop summary scheme	Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights	June – July 2016
Communicate the equality scheme	Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights	August – December 2016
Review and revise action plans	Heads of Units	January – March annually
Review monitoring information and access to information and services	Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights	April – June annually
Review timetable for measures and list of consultees	Assistant Director, The Open University (Ireland)	April annually
Review progress towards equality objectives	University Secretary and the Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group	March and September annually
Section 75 progress report	Assistant Director, The Open University in Ireland	August annually
Evaluate implementation and effectiveness of training	Head of HR Development	September annually
Publish monitoring information	Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights	September annually
Publish report on Progress against Objectives	Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights	December annually
Assess compliance and promote best practice	Equality and Diversity Management Group	Ongoing, quarterly meetings
Publish equality analysis templates (where policy is relevant to functions in Northern Ireland)	Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights	Ongoing, as completed

Review appropriateness of equality objectives	EDI Implementation Group	March 2020
Review of full equality scheme	Project team appointed by Equality and Diversity Management Group	Completed by September 2020

B) List of consultees for functions relevant to Northern Ireland

This list is not exhaustive. We welcome enquiries from any person or organisation wishing to be added to this list. See Section 3.4 of our equality scheme for further information about our consultation arrangements.

Organisations that we have formal or informal partnership arrangements with

- ASDA
- Ballybeen Women's Centre
- Coiste
- Communication Workers Union
- Condition Management Programme
- Derry Central Library
- EPIC (NI)
- Falls Women's Centre
- Forum for Adult Learners Northern Ireland (NICVA)
- Four Seasons Health Care
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Northern Ireland Committee
- NIACRO
- NIPSA
- North West Regional College
- Public and Commercial Services Union
- Sainsbury's
- Salvation Army, NI
- Shankhill Women's Centre
- Tar Anall
- Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers
- UNISON
- Waterside Library

Other organisations that have a specific interest in equality of opportunity and good relations

- Age NI
- Alliance
- Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium
- British Deaf Association
- Cara Friend
- Carers Association Northern Ireland
- Coalition on Sexual Orientation
- Committee on the Administration of Justice
- Democratic Unionist Party
- Department for Employment and Learning
- Disability Action
- Embrace NI
- Equality Coalition
- Equality Commission for NI
- Equality unit, Office of First minister and Deputy First Minister
- Irish Traveller Movement
- MENCAP
- Bryson Intercultural (formerly Multi-Cultural Resource Centre)
- NI21
- Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)
- Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
- Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (NIHEC)
- Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
- Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum
- Rainbow Project
- Action on Hearing Loss (RNID)
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- Rural Community Network
- Sinn Féin
- Social Democratic and Labour Party
- The Green Party
- Traditional Unionist Voice
- UK Independence Party
- Ulster Unionist Party
- Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland
- Women's forum Northern Ireland
- Women's Resource and Development Agency