



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



EQUALITY SCHEME 2016-2020

ADVANCING EQUALITY, VALUING DIVERSITY





CONTENTS

Foreword	4
Our commitment to equality	5
Our context and values	6
Our equality work to date	7
Developing our equality objectives for 2016–2020	8
Inclusion	10
Attainment	12
Flexibility	14
Embedding	16
Responsibilities	18
Monitoring, reporting and publishing	18
Contacts and further information	19

Foreword

I am delighted to present the University of Birmingham's Equality Scheme, 'Promoting Equality, Valuing Diversity 2016-2020'. The Equality Scheme is integral to the University's bold Strategic Framework 'Making Important Things Happen', and our aspiration to be amongst the very best international centres of education and research.



Creating an environment in which all members of our diverse community can thrive is at the heart of our mission to promote the growth and spread of knowledge, unlock potential, and develop intellectual capital that impacts on our city, region, nation, and the world.

The Equality Scheme sets ambitious challenges for the University. It identifies areas where we can and must do better and sets clear objectives in relation to inclusion, attainment, flexibility, and the embedding of equality and diversity. Many of the issues identified in the Scheme are complex, long-standing and present challenges

throughout the HE sector. Addressing them will require persistence, innovation, and the confidence to take risks. We are committed to the achievement of the Equality Scheme's objectives and the continued championing of equality and diversity at the University of Birmingham.

The Equality Scheme has been developed through consultation with our students and staff and I am grateful for their support and engagement on this vital issue. I look forward to the successful implementation of the Equality Scheme and the achievement of our objectives.

**Professor Sir David Eastwood,
Vice Chancellor and Principal**

The creation of a new Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Equalities reflects the commitment and determination of the University Executive Board and Council to develop a sustainable and effective agenda which allows all of our community to succeed.



Our students and staff are the key to achieving excellence and to delivering the objectives outlined in the Strategic Framework 2015-2020. I believe we must encourage each and every person to flourish whilst removing barriers to success. Equality is central to our core mission to be a global force in teaching and research. Our talented community will only realise its full potential if we recognise that diversity enriches our campus; participation will only be possible if we hear the voices of our students and staff and support them in all aspects of their careers.

Our Equality Scheme 2016-2020 recognises that progress has been brisk at the University over the last few years, but that we still need to do more to promote equality for our staff and students. In particular, we need to increase the gender and ethnic diversity of our leadership and senior academic staff, increase ethnic diversity amongst our Professional Services staff and address student attainment gaps and completion rates. I am committed to ensuring that significant, measurable progress is made on these issues and that, as a University, we remain fully receptive to long-term cultural change.

**Professor Una Martin,
Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equalities**

Our commitment to equality

The University of Birmingham was established on an equal opportunities ethos in 1900 to admit women and men of all religious backgrounds on equal terms. Today, that commitment to equality is at the heart of our vision and mission as a modern, global university. We are committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive learning and working environment, where equality is promoted, diversity is valued and discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.

The Equality Scheme sets out how we will put these values into practice, our equality objectives for 2016-2020 and the actions we will take across our activities to promote equality, prevent discrimination and promote greater understanding between different groups of people. The Scheme considers equality and diversity in relation to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender identity, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex, religion or belief and sexual orientation, and has been developed within the context of our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the University's Strategic Framework 'Making Important Things Happen, 2015-2020.'

We are committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive learning and working environment, where equality is promoted, diversity is valued and discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.

The Equality Scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis and reports on progress against objectives published at <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/equality>



Our context and values

The University of Birmingham is a global university based in the thriving, multi-cultural city of Birmingham. Our 32,000 students and 7,400 staff are recruited internationally, nationally and locally, creating a university community of over 150 nationalities.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY...

Equality - the fair and lawful treatment of students and staff and the promotion of equality of opportunity between different groups

Diversity – the characteristics and experiences that make us who we are

Inclusivity – learning and working cultures that recognise and are welcoming of equality and diversity and reflect this in their structures and practices

Many factors shape the identities and experiences of our university community, including:

- Sex and gender
- Ethnicity and nationality
- Physical and mental disabilities, including learning difficulties
- Sexual orientations
- Combining a career or studying with caring responsibilities
- Being transgender
- Age
- Religious and other beliefs

We believe the diversity this range of perspectives and experiences brings is a source of institutional strength and vitality that underpins the exchange of ideas, innovation and debate at the heart of our academic mission and from which all members of our community benefit.

The University's Strategic Framework 'Making Important Things Happen, 2015-2020', sets out a clear vision for the University, based on the values of excellence, leadership, a pioneering spirit, purposefulness and pragmatism. We recognise that creating an environment in which all members of our diverse community can flourish and achieve their full potential is integral to this vision and to our future success.

In developing and implementing our Equality Scheme we recognise that promoting equality means encouraging participation and engagement, recognising and responding to different needs and addressing structural barriers to achievement. Organisational culture plays a key role in creating an inclusive environment, and we will strive to ensure that the promotion of equality is embedded at all levels of our institution.

The **Equality Act 2010** requires that the University has 'due regard' of the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We will use our Equality Scheme to drive forward equality, diversity and inclusion, meet our statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010, enhance our work with external bodies such as OFEA, HEFCE, QAA and REF and support our continued success as a global university.



Our work to date

The University has made significant progress under our 2010-2015 Equality Scheme. The equalities agenda is supported by a team of 3 Diversity Advisers and overseen by an Equality Executive Group, chaired by the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Equalities. The promotion of equality is further supported by a committed network of staff Equality and Diversity Leads in each of our Colleges, Schools and Budget Centres.



Key equality activities and achievements include:

Students:

- Sector-leading BME and LGBT employability mentoring schemes have given students opportunities to network and express their identities when making the transition from higher education to the workplace
- Developing an inclusive curriculum, including a dedicated website resource and staff development workshops, to enhance teaching staff's understanding of student diversity
- A BME ambassador project that was created to address the ethnicity attainment gap, challenge stereotypes and promote equality in University has been widely cited across the UK HE sector as an example of good practice in engaging and listening to BME students
- Work undertaken with the Guild of Students to develop online resources that support the needs of mature students
- Launch of the "It's Not On" campaign to address sexual harassment on campus
- An online equality training module for students has been initiated

Staff:

- Mandatory equality training for staff on recruitment and selection panels was delivered to 500 staff in 2015
- Embedding equality training in staff induction via an online training module
- 18 of our 21 STEMM Schools and Institutes hold Bronze or Silver Athena awards in recognition of their activities to address female under-representation
- Delivering the Aurora leadership development programme for women; 41 have completed the programme and another 14 will start in February 2016
- Delivering the Emerging Leadership Programme; 65 staff members have completed it of which 27 were women
- Delivering the Senior Leadership Programme; 114 academic and professional staff members have completed it of which 39 were women
- The University is recognised by Stonewall as one of the UK's Top 100 employers for LGB staff
- The 'Year of Advancing Equality in Employment' in 2014, culminating in a University-wide conference
- Providing a dedicated staff disability service, which saw 150 clients in 2014-2015
- Unconscious bias training was delivered to 320 senior staff in 2015
- Equality & Diversity Leads were established in each School and Budget Centre
- College Equality and Diversity Leads were established on College Boards and the Equality Executive Group to support the cascading and embedding of equality initiatives
- Active networks for disabled, LGBT and single parent staff
- Financial support was put in place for academic maternity returners to allow relief from teaching and administration so that research can be re-established
- A wide range of national history months and interfaith events have been celebrated

Our commitment to equality has been recognised nationally. We are a Stonewall Top 100 employer and our year of Advancing Equality in Employment in 2014 was recognised as nationally outstanding in the UK's HR Excellence Awards.

Our 2016-2020 Equality Scheme will both build on the foundation provided by our current programme and re-focus our activities on key areas.

For more information about equality and diversity activities and support: <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/equality>



Developing our Equality Objectives for 2016-2020

Whilst proud of our achievements to date, we recognise that there is still much to be done. Our staff and student data indicates that there are still challenges for the University regarding our staff diversity, particularly at senior levels, academic attainment between different groups of students and the drive to create a more inclusive curriculum.



As part of the development of our equality objectives, we have consulted with our students and staff about the one key action the University should take to improve equality. We received 1,122 responses to this question, which coalesced around the following areas:

Students responses:

- Improve flexibility and support for mature students and those with caring responsibilities
- Create a campus culture that is inclusive of age-diversity, socio-economic diversity, LGBT, trans and non-binary identities and those with disabilities
- Improve campus accessibility for disabled students
- Establish a policy of zero tolerance of harassment and 'lad' culture
- Create an inclusive curriculum that reflects our diversity
- Address differences in academic attainment between different groups, such as BME
- Improve gender and ethnic diversity of senior staff
- Counter religious prejudice and promote good relations
- Raise the profile and awareness of equality issues
- Improve support for international students

Staff responses:

- Improve gender and ethnic diversity at senior levels
- Ensure commitments and policies translate into management practice
- Improve flexible working and family-friendly provision
- Recruit a diverse workforce, particularly in relation to local recruitment
- Improve awareness of disability issues - including mental health and accessibility
- Raise the profile and awareness of equality issues

We have developed our equality objectives for 2016-2020 using the priorities identified from this consultation, analysis of data trends from our annual reports and benchmarking against sector best practice and innovation. We have identified 4 themes that encapsulate what we want to achieve:

2016-2020 equality themes

- **Inclusion:** we provide an environment that is accessible and welcoming
- **Attainment:** everyone can flourish and succeed to the best of their abilities
- **Flexibility:** we support different ways of working and learning
- **Embedding:** the active promotion of equality informs our culture and behaviour



We have also identified key data that will be used to measure our performance and against which we want to see significant improvements:

2015 UoB benchmarks

- Female Professors: 21%
- Female Senior Lecturer/Reader grade: 36%
- BME Professional Services staff: 13%
- BME Senior Staff (Professional Services grades 9, 10, Senior Lecturers, Readers and Professors): 10%
- BME student attainment gap: 11.2%; HESA data 2013/14
- Numbers of female and BME staff in leadership positions and on key decision making committees



Inclusion

We provide an environment that is accessible, welcoming and safe

2016-2020 OBJECTIVES:

- We are inclusive of and address the needs of our diverse community
- Accessibility is a key component of all campus developments
- We have a zero tolerance culture in relation to discrimination and harassment
- We host a vibrant programme of activities to underpin our equalities agenda

Making Important Things Happen: Inclusion

The University aims to produce graduates who understand and are able to thrive in a global economy. Central to this aim is embedding an inclusive learning and working culture, which recognises, reflects and responds to the needs of our diverse community

Objective 1. We are inclusive of and address the needs of our diverse community

We shall continue to work to promote greater inclusion across all of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability (physical and mental), gender identity, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Consultation with students has also highlighted the importance of inclusion by socio-economic background, in addition to those characteristics protected by law.

We will also continue to develop and implement our innovative work around the inclusive curriculum, so that our teaching resources, the way we teach and curriculum content are reflective of the different backgrounds and experiences of our students. The inclusive curriculum explores how inclusivity, in its widest possible sense, might be more effectively embedded within the curriculum, and staff better supported to address diversity and enhance all aspects of the student learning experience. The inclusivity agenda includes disability, ethnicity, international, part-time and mature students, parents and carers, socio-economic status, gender, religion, and sexual orientation. Examples of this approach are the work on how lecture capture improves the experience of international and dyslexic students and working towards an LGBTQ inclusive curriculum.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Developing and promoting trans-inclusive practices, including gender neutral facilities and the recording of personal information, and developing activities to improve understanding amongst our wider community of trans issues
- Working with student and staff disability and wellbeing services to create a 'good mental health' strategy
- Identifying and developing support for young adult carers; to include a student carers' group, a student support agreement for carers and identifying student carers at Registration
- Re-launching our staff LGBT, Disability and Single Parent Networks and investigating support amongst staff for a BME Network
- Continuing to support and encourage understanding and collaboration between faiths and those of no faith by holding an annual interfaith event, working with the Chaplaincy, the Good Campus Relations Group and the local community to support dialogue, cooperation and collaboration
- Investigating ways to ensure that students from poorer socio-economic backgrounds feel included and address marginalisation
- Delivering College workshops for the LGBT inclusive curriculum project to disseminate good practice locally
- Supporting student ambassadors to work with key academic staff to develop a more diverse curriculum
- Developing activities via the Inclusive Curriculum Working Group to support disability inclusion
- Ensuring the use of Canvas and resources in Library Services are accessible to all groups of students and promoting the use of lecture capture

Objective 2. Accessibility is a key component of all campus developments

The challenges of creating a physically accessible campus have been highlighted by students and staff in the Equality Scheme consultation as a key priority for the University. Our Estates team have undertaken significant work to improve accessibility across campus, and this remains a key consideration in the refit of older buildings and the development of new projects. Going forwards, greater consultation and communication with disabled students and staff about projects and priorities is a key area for development. Students and staff also want us to do more to consider and accommodate the needs of different groups in the development of our estate, such as providing gender-neutral toilets, spaces for prayer and quiet reflection, breastfeeding rooms and child-friendly spaces.



During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Instigating an Estates-led consultation group as a forum for raising accessibility issues, consulting with disabled students and staff about campus developments and ensuring campus developments consider the diverse needs of our community
- Working with the Director of Estates on a campus-wide audit of accessibility

Objective 3. We have a zero tolerance culture in relation to discrimination and harassment

Providing a safe campus environment, where all members of our community are treated with respect, is absolutely key to our promotion of equality and our institutional values. Staff and students should be aware of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and feel confident in challenging and reporting such behaviour should it occur. The initiatives set out in this scheme are intended to support the creation and maintenance of a zero tolerance culture.

In addition to these activities, during 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Instigating a working group to address sexual harassment on campus and working closely with the Guild, halls of residence, student services and the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Student Experience
- Working with external consultants to map the extent of sexual harassment on campus
- Working with the Guild of Students to develop and deliver resources to address sexual harassment on campus and challenge 'lad' culture, including online consent training as part of student induction, targeted sexual consent workshops for sports teams and halls of residence and delivery of an on line reporting system as part of the 'It's Not On' campaign, launched in March 2015.
- Working with the Guild to develop a code of practice for sports clubs and societies and to address harassment in all its forms

Objective 4. We will host a vibrant programme of activities to underpin our equalities agenda

The University is uniquely placed to facilitate understanding between different groups of people. We will continue to seek opportunities to support an inclusive and welcoming environment, by developing events throughout the University calendar that encourage dialogue between different groups, building on our established celebrations of LGBT and Black History Months and our interfaith celebrations. Students and staff have also emphasised to us the importance of promoting a wide range of role models to challenge expectations and stereotypes and highlight different routes to success.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Celebrating and promoting Black History Month, LGBT History Month, Focus on Disability and International Women's Day and identifying further high profile events that embrace a wide range of equality characteristics
- Continuing the programme of events that underpins our Athena SWAN awards and encourage cross-University delivery and sharing of good practice
- Focusing on religious inclusion and using our established inter-faith events as a springboard for developing dialogue and understanding between people of different faiths and those without religious beliefs
- Identifying opportunities across our activities to identify role models that are representative of the diversity of backgrounds and experiences of our community
- Hosting events to highlight the issue of sexual harassment on campus
- Hosting Stonewall's national LGBT Allies Conference in May 2016 and developing the concept of 'allies' across the equality characteristics
- Working with the Guild and their societies to promote equality and diversity

Success measures

We will measure our success by the development, implementation and evaluation of initiatives to provide a welcoming and accessible environment. Key measures that we will use to determine our success are:

- Staff and student satisfaction rates by equality characteristic, as demonstrated through the staff and student surveys
- Attendance and evaluation of inclusive curriculum workshops
- Evidence of diversity in the curriculum
- Attendance at staff group and network events
- Impact of disabled student and staff input on campus development plans and priorities
- Evidence of a diverse range of role models in key University initiatives
- We continue to be a Stonewall Top 100 employer in recognition of our support of our LGB and trans staff
- Number of equality and diversity related activities and celebrations on campus and their attendance rates
- All students feel valued and that they belong regardless of their socio-economic background, as demonstrated through staff and student surveys
- All students feel safe, as demonstrated through staff and student surveys and ongoing research by external consultants



Attainment

Everyone can flourish and succeed to the best of their abilities

2016-2020 OBJECTIVES:

- Reduce student attainment gaps and differences in degree completion rates
- Increase the proportion of women in senior academic posts
- Increase the proportion of BME staff in senior academic and Professional Services posts

Making Important Things Happen: Attainment

As stated in the University's Strategic Framework 2015-2020, our staff and students are our greatest resource: their success is our success. A key goal for the University is to continue to attract outstanding, inspirational and talented people and to support them to succeed.

Objective 1. Reduce student attainment gaps and differences in degree completion rates

Removing barriers that prevent members of our community reaching their full potential is crucial to our pursuit of excellence and our aim of unlocking talent. The University has been taking action to address the degree attainment gap (i.e. the difference in percentage terms in those gaining a first or upper second class honours degree) between white and BME students under our earlier equality scheme.

The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)'s Equality in Higher Education Statistical Report 2015: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-higher-education-statistical-report-2015/> utilises HESA student record data for the purpose of attainment gap analysis, covering the whole of the UK higher education sector. We can replicate that analysis since we have access to the data for the years 2009/10 to 2013/14 (2014/15 sector data will become available in March 2016). It is important to note that HESA data covers UK-domiciled first degree undergraduate qualifiers and does not take account of entry tariff. The university 2013/14 gap is 11.2% (reduced from 21.2% in 2009/10) compared with the Russell Group average of 9.2%. If unclassified degrees such as medicine are included the gap narrows considerably to 7.8% (2013/14) compared with the Russell Group average of 6.6%.

We are currently undertaking work locally to further understand the ethnicity attainment gap by different ethnic groups and the impact of other variables, such as entry tariff, on the overall figure. For example, for 2015 we noted that a students' entry tariff can mean that for a minority of students who enter with high tariffs, there is no attainment gap. This is an area of activity that we will continue to pursue to enable us to focus on the best activity to narrow the ethnicity attainment gap.

We have delivered innovative mentoring and employability schemes for BME students, providing them with practical skills and role models for success in the workplace. The BME ambassador scheme, an initiative part funded by the HEA, involves students engaging with staff in Schools and Departments to consider actions that can be taken to improve BME student inclusion, representation, engagement and to promote race equality. This project has been widely cited across the UK HE sector as an example of good practice in engaging and listening to BME students.

The ethnic attainment gap is a sector-wide issue and forms much of the focus of work with students on equality issues in universities today. This is an area of activity that we will continue to pursue in relation to our work towards the ECU's Race Equality Mark. We will, however, expand this work to identify and address differences in completion rates and attainment amongst other groups, such as LGBT and trans students, mature students, disabled students and those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Evaluating current initiatives, such as the BME ambassador scheme, and embedding good practice more widely
- Delivering sessions (via CLAD) for staff on understanding and developing race equality for students
- Investigating and developing a response to potential attainment gaps and completion rate issues in relation to LGBT and trans students, mature students, disabled students and those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds
- Setting up a working party to address BME issues in preparation for an application for the ECU's Race Equality Mark



Objective 2. Increase the proportion of women in senior academic posts

The University is committed to recruiting, developing and supporting talented staff and to growing the depth and diversity of our leadership capacity. We have a long-term commitment to sustainable female careers in STEMM, via our Athena SWAN membership. 18 of our 21 STEMM Schools and Institutes hold Athena awards and the final three will submit applications in 2016. All have steering groups actively addressing the recruitment and progression of female academics. During 2010–2015, the University has also delivered leadership development programmes for female and BME staff via its People and Organisational Development unit, to increase leadership capacity.

Greater diversity at senior level continues to be a key issue for the University and one that has been highlighted by both students and staff as an area where more change is needed. Consultation has indicated that staff and students want the University to be ambitious and creative in tackling the structural barriers that women can face in advancing their academic careers, and to address gender balance at senior levels and on key decision-making bodies.

Going forward, we shall thoroughly examine and develop solutions to the issues that impact on female representation and progression at senior academic levels, and take action to ensure that recruitment and progression processes are seen to be fair and transparent.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Instigating a working group to identify sector-leading initiatives to improve female representation, and make recommendations to the University to address female representation in senior academic posts and committees and support Silver Athena accreditation
- Expanding the Athena scheme into individual Schools in the Colleges of Arts and Law and Social Sciences
- Developing our Aurora senior leadership programme for women

Objective 3. Increase the proportion of BME staff in senior academic and Professional Services posts

Greater ethnic diversity at senior level and across all Professional Services roles continues to be a key issue for the University, and one that has been highlighted by both students and staff as a priority. As a sector, we are being challenged to address racial inequalities in higher education and commit to long-term solutions to address BME under-representation and attainment.

Going forward, we will prioritise the representation and progression of BME staff in senior leadership positions and on decision making committees. As a civic university with strong links in the Midlands and the City of Birmingham, we will focus on raising our public presence as a local employer, and aspire to reflect the diversity of the city and region in the recruitment and development of our Professional Services staff.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Making recommendations to UEB regarding improving BME representation, attainment, the diversity of the curriculum and the progression of students into academia. This will be carried out as part of the work towards the ECU's Race Charter Mark
- Identifying, implementing and monitoring recruitment activities to promote the University as a local employer
- Identifying, implementing and monitoring national recruitment activities to ensure BME representation in applications for senior leadership and management positions
- Developing and delivering our senior leadership programmes for BME staff
- Developing a bespoke development programme for BME Professional Services staff

Success measures

We will measure our success by the development, implementation and evaluation of initiatives to address and improve attainment, representation and progression. Key measures that we will use to determine our success are:

- The student ethnicity attainment gap is reduced (against the 2014 HESA benchmark of 11.2% for first or upper second degrees)
- Degree completion rates by equality characteristics and socioeconomic background are addressed
- The proportion of female academics in senior grades is increased (against the 2015 benchmarks of 36% Senior Lecturers and 21% Professors)
- The proportion of female and BME academics in senior leadership positions is increased
- The proportion of BME staff in senior grades is increased (against the 2015 benchmark of 10% senior academic and Professional Services staff)
- The proportion of Professional Services staff from BME backgrounds applying to UoB and gaining employment is increased
- Achievement of institutional Silver Athena award and renewal of Silver school awards in the Colleges of Engineering and Physical Sciences and Medical and Dental Sciences
- Achievement of Bronze Athena awards for all STEM schools and progression to Silver status for those schools that already hold Bronze.
- Achievement of Bronze Athena awards by Schools in the College of Arts and Law and College of Social Sciences
- Achievement of Race Equality Mark accreditation

Flexibility

We support different ways of working and learning

2016-2020 OBJECTIVES:

- Staff are supported to achieve their career objectives and manage their family and other responsibilities
- Our delivery of teaching and learning recognises and supports the needs of students with caring responsibilities

Making Important Things Happen: Flexibility

The University's Strategic Framework recognises people as being at the heart of our University. We can only achieve our ambitions of doing more and better research and delivering an even more outstanding education, through developing, supporting and recruiting talented staff. Consultation with our staff, and wider research into changing employee expectations, demonstrate that flexible working, and maintaining an appropriate work-life balance, are highly valued 'pull' factors in attracting and retaining employees.

Objective 1. Staff are supported to achieve their career objectives and manage their family and other responsibilities

We recognise that combining a successful career with raising a family, supporting elderly parents or being a carer is the norm for many of our staff, and that staff have an expectation that University working practices reflect this reality. Staff may need additional support at specific points in their careers, such as returning to work from maternity or parental leave. We also need to be aware of the particular challenges that female academics can face in combining parenthood with progressing their careers.

The University provides opportunities for flexible working for all staff, who can formally apply to change their working hours and/or where work is performed. We also offer generous maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave arrangements. However, consultation with staff and managers demonstrates that these opportunities are not always widely known, or that assumptions are made as to who can access these opportunities.

Going forward, we will aim to match the flexible and family-friendly arrangements offered by sector leaders (such as Athena Gold universities), and improve awareness amongst staff and managers of the opportunities that are available. We will also take action to communicate the benefits of supporting staff work-life balance, promote positive messages about flexibility and career development and highlight that family-friendly initiatives benefit both women and men.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Reviewing our current staff flexible working and family-friendly initiatives against leaders in the sector, and other industries, and identifying and implementing improvements
- Creating improved online staff resources that are easy to locate and navigate
- Implementing a communications strategy to promote awareness of flexible working opportunities, to include case studies of flexible working by men and at senior level
- Improving the availability of baby-change areas, breast-feeding facilities and spaces for children on campus, as part of the Estates campus audit
- Reviewing how part-time working impacts on career progression



Objective 2. Our delivery of teaching and learning recognises and supports the needs of students with caring and other responsibilities

In addition to creating more inclusive curriculum content, consultation with students has indicated that the delivery and assessment of the curriculum does not meet the needs of all students. For example, assessments can be 'bunched' around holiday times when student parents, carers and mature students have additional responsibilities. Equally, students with mental health issues may need time off to manage their condition and the University's systems need to be responsive to this.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Identifying how the curriculum can be more flexible for different groups of students
- Reviewing how flexibility can be better embedded in student regulations and processes
- Making sure that the Equalities team works closely with the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Student Experience so that welfare issues are dealt with appropriately
- Setting up a young carers network

Success measures

Success will be measured by the development, implementation and evaluation of initiatives to promote flexibility. Key measures that we will use to determine our success are:

- Increase in flexible working and family-friendly initiatives
- Uptake of such initiatives
- Delivery of awareness-raising activities
- Staff satisfaction with flexible working opportunities, as demonstrated through satisfaction surveys
- Satisfaction of student parents and carers, as demonstrated through the student satisfaction survey



Embedding

The active promotion of equality informs our culture and behaviour

2016-2020 OBJECTIVES:

- Our diversity is reflected in our decision-making bodies
- The promotion of equality and diversity is embedded at local level
- Equality training supports individual development and institutional change
- We effectively communicate our commitment to equality both within the University and to our partners
- Equality is an integral part of the mission of the University and enhances research and teaching activity

Making Important Things Happen: Embedding equality

For our commitment to equality and diversity to result in real change, and support the Strategic Framework, it needs to be embedded into our structures and culture and inform our behaviour. Equality and diversity considerations need to be woven into what we do and not be viewed as an optional 'add on'. In addition, we need to recognise the contribution that our expertise in teaching and research can make to the equalities agenda, both within the University and further afield.

The University has significantly invested in equality training for staff. All staff are expected to complete an online training module to improve their understanding of equality issues. New staff complete the module as part of induction. Approximately 80% of all staff have completed the training to date. We have also launched unconscious bias training to challenge underlying assumptions and the impact they can have on perceptions and decision-making. Awareness of unconscious bias and its impact has been incorporated into recruitment and selection training, which is a compulsory requirement for all staff involved in recruitment processes.

Consultation with our students and staff has highlighted the desire for greater diversity amongst our senior decision-making bodies, as key to embedding equality in University structures. Staff have also emphasised the importance of embedding equality locally in Schools and Budget Centres, and the cascading of information to managers, as key to translating our aspirations into an everyday reality. Both students and staff want equality and diversity to have a higher profile at the University and would welcome a programme of awareness-raising to support this objective.

Objective 1. Our diversity is reflected in our decision-making bodies

The University has committed – through our Strategic Framework – to enhancing the diversity of its leadership. A growing body of research demonstrates that gender-diverse bodies positively influence decision-making and that a critical mass of at least 30% female representation is needed to achieve this impact.*

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Instigating a working group to review membership and criteria for key decision-making bodies and develop an action plan and targets for greater diversity
- Continuing to collaborate with the Guild's liberation associations and Guild officers via the Equality Executive Group to ensure student input on equality issues

Objective 2. The promotion of equality and diversity is embedded at local level

The University has networks of Equality and Diversity Champions in each School and Budget Centre, and on College Board, to support the local embedding of equality. Schools engaged in Athena SWAN activities also have Athena leads and many Schools have their own equality committees to develop activities locally. College Equality and Diversity Champions are also members of the Equality Executive Group.

Continuing to embed equality at local level and ensure that University policies and initiatives have impact is a key priority, and will continue to be a focus for our equality work. In particular, we need to ensure effective systems for communicating and monitoring the uptake of initiatives locally.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Utilising the DPVC Equalities role to engage with Heads of Colleges and Budget Centres on equality issues
- Reviewing the Equality and Diversity Champions model and ensuring that Champions' work is appropriately supported in terms of communication with and support from the equalities team, time and resources (including workload models), recognition and local reporting structures
- Revisiting the effectiveness of local equality action plans and objectives
- Where there are sufficient numbers of students to make the results statistically significant, reviewing the performance of students by equality characteristics at Annual Programme Review, to identify issues of underperformance/attainment



* Joecks J., Pull K, Vetter K. Gender Diversity in the Boardroom and Firm Performance: What exactly constitutes a "Critical Mass"? J Bus Ethics 2013; 118:61-72

Objective 3. Equality training supports individual development and institutional change

The University provides a wide range of equality training for staff to ensure awareness of equality issues. Going forward, we need to review and develop our offering, whilst balancing the need for more focused and specialist training against the challenge of effectively delivering this to a large staff population.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Reviewing the effectiveness of unconscious bias training as an intervention tool by participating in national sector research by the ECU. Birmingham is one of five universities working with the ECU to rigorously measure the effects of equality and diversity training
- Reviewing the content of our staff online training module and identifying further training and development needs
- Continuing to offer specialist leadership development programmes for female and BME staff
- Developing training for Welfare tutors on key issues, such as trans, LGB, BME, older students, carers and parents, so that they are able to effectively support students with diverse issues
- Developing and promoting online equality training for students
- Ensuring equality and diversity form a core component of teaching programmes for staff

Objective 4. We effectively communicate our commitment to equality both within the University and to our partners

Feedback from both students and staff has emphasised the need to raise the profile of equality and diversity at the University. Improved communication will also help to raise awareness of initiatives amongst students, staff and managers as well as helping to embed equality in our campus culture. Effective communication of our equality objectives will also support different areas of the University to work together to ensure those objectives are realised.

In addition to working with staff and students, we will also develop regional, national and international partnerships that will inform our practice and increase the impact of our work.

During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Implementing a multi-strand equality and diversity communications strategy, with the aim of raising and maintaining awareness of key issues and initiatives at all levels of the University, and a 'you said, we did' approach to feedback
- Working with the new HR structure (in particular, 'Ask HR') to support the cascading of information to managers
- Engaging with City, Regional and National partnerships to raise our profile and influence on equality issues

Objective 5. Equality is an integral part of the mission of the University and enhances research and teaching activity

Equality has been central to the University since its inception in 1900 and a commitment to equality is still at the heart of our vision and mission as a modern, global university.

We recognise that individual themes of activity, such as research and teaching, are enhanced not diminished by a strong equalities agenda. As we prepare for our next Research Excellence Framework (REF) we will ensure that equality remains integral to our research activity, particularly in relation to race & age, as well as gender, and is taken into account in our processes.

The University's Teaching Strategy outlines ways in which we will work towards a more student-centred and inclusive approach to teaching and learning. The newly developed Teaching Academy has a core commitment to train and support the development of lecturing staff who fully appreciate the diverse needs of students. We will incorporate research and teaching outputs from our academic groups to inform specific equality initiatives. We will continue to invest in our outreach programmes including Access to Birmingham and Routes to the Professions.

We also recognise the special role that Universities have in promoting learning, developing ideas and convening debate and will use these strengths to develop a distinctive equality programme. During 2016/17 we will work towards this objective by:

- Ensuring more collaboration between student equality and diversity and outreach and access areas
- Developing stronger ties with our academic centres of expertise and using this to inform and develop our equalities work
- Responding effectively to the equality and diversity monitoring requirements for the next REF
- Responding effectively to the equality and diversity monitoring requirements for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

Success measures

Our success will be measured by the development, implementation and evaluation of initiatives to effectively embed equality. Key measures that we will use to determine our success are:

- Gender and ethnic composition of key decision-making bodies
- Number of School and Budget Centre-led equality and diversity initiatives (such as Athena SWAN)
- Equality & Diversity Champions feel confident and supported in their role
- Training uptake and feedback
- Number and regularity of communication channels used to promote equality initiatives
- Engagement with equality awareness-raising (e.g. attendance at events, responses to surveys)
- Engagement of partner organisations with our equality initiatives
- Equalities events are informed by our teaching and research expertise
- REF and TEF equality measures are implemented successfully



Responsibilities



Council

Council is the University's supreme governing body, responsible for setting the strategic direction and policies governing all aspects of the University's activity. In addition to Council members' individual responsibilities as members of the University, Council has overall legal responsibility for the University's compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

University Executive Board

Council has delegated responsibility for matters of equality and diversity to the University Executive Board, which makes an annual assurance report to Council on this. The University Executive Board has established an Equality Executive Group with responsibility for reviewing and making recommendations to the Board on the development of equality and diversity policy within the University, including the development of the University's Equality Scheme.

Equality Executive Group

The Equality Executive Group is responsible for the development, implementation and review of the Equality Scheme and for recommending the Equality Scheme to the University Executive Board.

Students, staff and other members of the University community

All members of the University community have a responsibility to uphold the University's commitment to equality and diversity by:

- Treating students, staff and visitors to the University with dignity and respect
- Not engaging in, colluding in or encouraging behaviour that constitutes unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act
- Supporting activities to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations as required under the Equality Act

Members of the University found to have engaged in unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including expulsion in the case of students, and dismissal in the case of staff.

Third parties carrying out services on behalf of the University are also expected to comply with the University's policies. Failure in this may result in contracts being terminated.



Monitoring, Reporting and Publishing

The University's Equality Executive Group will review the Equality Scheme on an annual basis to measure progress against objectives and benchmarks and to identify new actions, as appropriate, for the coming year. The outcomes of the review will be collated in an annual report, alongside student and staff data as required by the Equality Act. Both documents will be published on the University internet and intranet. An Equality and Diversity Assurance report, will be submitted to University Council on an annual basis.

Contacts and Further Information

Equality and diversity

Further information on equality and diversity initiatives at the University is available at <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/equality>

Queries about the Equality Scheme (including the availability of alternative formats) should be addressed to the Student and Staff Diversity Advisers via equality@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Concerns and complaints

Students

Students who believe they have been subjected to discriminatory behaviour should refer to the Student Concerns and Complaints Procedure for guidance on how to proceed. If the complaint concerns harassment, the process outlined in the University's Harassment and Bullying Policy should be followed. Both policies are available on the University website and on request from Academic Services.

Staff

Staff who feel they have been subjected to discriminatory behaviour can make use of confidential services provided by the Employee Advice and Support Services to discuss their concerns. Staff who wish to make a formal complaint about discriminatory behaviour should refer to the relevant Staff Grievance Procedure for guidance on how to proceed. If the concern or complaint relates to harassment, the guidance in the University's Harassment and Bullying Policy should be consulted. Information on the above is available on the University intranet at <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr> and on request from Human Resources.





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