



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd
agus nan Eilean

Update to Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report

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2019

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact communications on: communications@uhi.ac.uk

Our Institution

The University of the Highlands and Islands is a collegiate federal partnership of the Executive Office and 13 Academic Partners (APs). Each of the APs is an institution in its own right, with a distinctive focus and mission, which has entered into an academic partnership agreement with the University. The APs include colleges of further and higher education, research institutions and specialist colleges as detailed within figure 2.

We are Scotland's newest university, having achieved the title in 2011, and are the only university based in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Geographically we cover half of the land-mass of Scotland, including areas and communities in which there are no other post-compulsory education providers (see figure 1).



Figure 1

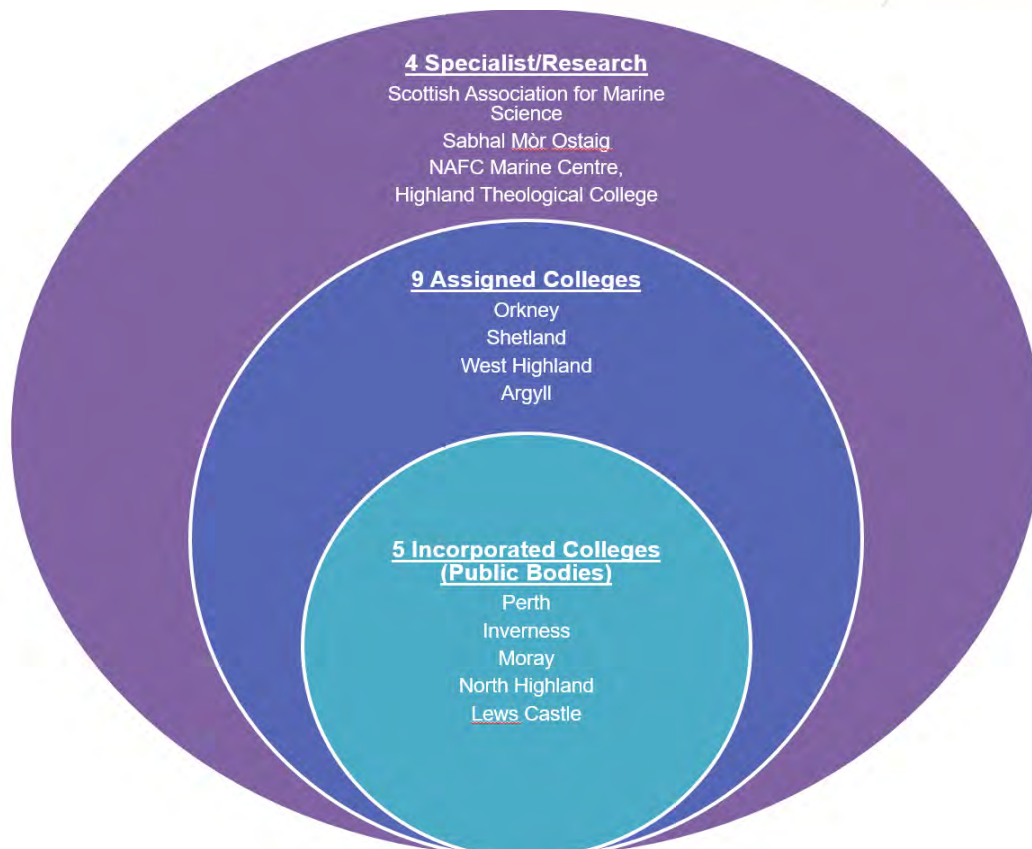


Figure 2

The University partnership provides access to study at further and higher education level, as well as research opportunities, and aims to meet the needs of diverse groups of learners and other stakeholders. Each AP serves local, regional, national and international needs, and makes a distinctive contribution to the university partnership. Some are relatively large colleges in urban centres. Others are smaller institutions, including some whose primary focus is on research.

In addition to the main campuses, the university partnership also provides educational opportunities through a network of more than 70 learning centres located throughout Scotland. Much of our curriculum is specifically designed to be accessible across multiple sites.

Equality at University of the Highlands and Islands

Our reputation is built on our innovative approach to learning and our distinctive research and curricula – all enriched by the people, natural environment, economy, culture and heritage of the Highlands and Islands and its communities. We have 40,000 students at the heart of our university partnership and we are measured by their success. Our curriculum portfolio across both further and higher education is designed to meet current and future local and regional needs and to attract students to the Highlands and Islands to study.

Our blended learning approach makes extensive use of ICT and video-conferencing to enable students and staff to work together, wherever they are physically located. Our approach to equality and diversity therefore needs to be regional as well as local in perspective and needs to consider parity of experience and outcome in very different contexts.

Due to our uniquely dispersed student population, equality in the context of University of the Highlands and Islands takes on a broader meaning than consideration of particular protected characteristics. We adopt a definition of equality that additionally includes remote and rural contexts; Gaelic language; countering isolation, and increasing representation of the student voice among local communities.

Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report: Legislative Context

The University of the Highlands and Islands is committed to equality of opportunity and non-discrimination in all aspects of its work and study.

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to streamline existing equalities legislation, and protects individuals and groups from unfavourable treatment on grounds of protected characteristics, ie: age; disability; ethnicity; gender reassignment; marriage & civil partnership (in employment); pregnancy & maternity; religion/ belief; sex and sexual orientation.

The general public sector equality duty (PSED) came into force on 5 April 2011, and requires public bodies to take steps to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- Foster good relations between people from different groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

Each UK nation also has a requirement to meet specific duties, which exist to help public bodies better meet the general duties. Scottish Specific Duties commenced on 27 May 2012.

The Specific Duties require public bodies to publish four yearly reports (from April 2013) setting Equality Outcomes and detailing progress in mainstreaming equality into daily operations, reporting on progress in these areas within 2 years.

Additionally, we are required to publish 2-yearly Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay Statements; 4-yearly Pay Gap reports in respect of Disability and Race, as well as 2-yearly Annual Employee Information reports.

We also have a duty to report on the gender balance and succession planning of our Board of Governors, UHI Court, as per Regulation 6A of the Specific Duties.

Regulation 4 of the specific duties requires that our Equality Outcomes are based on evidence, and involvement of equality groups.

As such, The University of the Highlands and Islands has:

- Prepared and published on our website, this set of equality outcomes
- Taken reasonable steps to involve people who share relevant protected characteristics, or who represent their interests
- Considered relevant evidence relating to people who share a relevant protected characteristic

Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty

Scottish colleges; Higher Education Institutions, and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), are covered by the PSED and the specific duties. As such, the University and each separately listed partner (below) has responsibility to report on all public sector equality duties requirements. Partners' reports will be uploaded to their respective websites on or before 30 April 2019:

- Inverness College UHI
- Lews Castle College UHI
- Moray College UHI
- North Highland College UHI
- Orkney College UHI
- Perth College UHI
- Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI
- Shetland College UHI
- West Highland College UHI

Both Orkney and Shetland College's staff are employed by respective Island Councils, to whom the colleges delegate reporting responsibility in respect of Annual Employee Information and Pay Gap reporting.

Argyll College UHI became an assigned college in December 2018. As Argyll College was not previously assigned, they did not report in 2017: as such they are not required to publish updates in April 2019, and will first report in April 2021.

Highland Theological College UHI (HTC), North Atlantic Fisheries College (NAFC) and Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) are not listed authorities, and as such are not required to report under the specific duties.

Our Equality & Diversity Publications

2017 Publications

This report is an update to two reports that we published in April 2017:

- [University of the Highlands and Islands Equality Outcomes 2017-21](#)
- [University of the Highlands and Islands Mainstreaming Report 2017-21](#)

Additionally, in 2017 we published:

- [University of the Highlands and Islands Equal Pay Statement & Pay Gap Analysis 2017](#)
- [University of the Highlands and Islands Annual Employee Data 2013-17](#)
- [University of the Highlands and Islands Gender Action Plan 2017-2020](#)

2018 Publications

On 25 October 2018, we published:

- [University of the Highlands and Islands British Sign Language Plan](#)

2019 Publications

On April 30 2019, we published:

- **University of the Highlands and Islands Update to Equality Outcomes & Mainstreaming Report 2017-19 (present report)**
- [University of the Highlands and Islands Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay Statement 2019](#)
- [University of the Highlands and Islands Annual Employee Data 2017-19](#)

Future Publications

- (July 2020) University of the Highlands and Islands Gender Action Plan 2020-23
- (October 2020) Update to University of the Highlands and Islands British Sign Language Plan
- **(April 2021) University of the Highlands and Islands Equality Outcomes & Mainstreaming Report 2021-25**
- (April 2021) University of the Highlands and Islands Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay Statement 2021
- (April 2021) University of the Highlands and Islands Annual Employee Data 2019-21

Context for Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Reports 2017-19

Our Equality Outcome Agreement and Mainstreaming Reports 2017-21 both focused on 6 key themes across the partnership in respect of staff and HE students:

- Leadership, Governance and Management
- Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships
- Data and Disclosure
- Supporting Equality and Diversity in the Student Population
- Staff Development
- Staffing

The current report evidences progress towards achieving outcomes, and progress in respect of mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into our day-to-day operations. As both previous reports dealt with the same themes and areas of activity, it is economical to conflate the reports to avoid duplication and provide more complete context, in a single document.

Actions set in both reports feature in our Equality Outcome Agreements, which we have tabulated as a table of progress [below](#).

To avoid duplication, where the ✓ symbol appears next to a point, it signifies either evidence of mainstreaming, or sets further action in this regard (see below example).

Extensive activity across the University partnership forms the foundation of many of the mainstreaming examples within this report. As well as our many successes, this report will look at areas requiring further development, and set actions accordingly. We will pay particular attention to how the University can better serve its partners in respect of equivalent EDI support and coordination.



Summary of Equality Outcomes (EOs)

- EO1** [Leadership, Governance and Management \(pp. 23-34\)](#): “Inequalities affecting those with protected characteristics are reduced through the embedding of equality and diversity in the university’s leadership, governance and management structure and processes.”
- EO2** [Stakeholder Engagement \(pp. 35-42\)](#): “People’s needs are better understood because the University takes reasonable steps to involve people who share a relevant protected characteristic and any person who appears to the University to represent the interests of those people.”
- EO3** [Data and Disclosure \(pp. 43-57\)](#): “The most pressing equality challenges affecting those with protected characteristics are identified and addressed through the gathering and analysis of comprehensive, robust evidence.”
- EO4** [Students \(pp. 58-86\)](#): “There is parity of opportunity and consistency of experience for all students whatever their background.”
- EO5** [Staff Development \(pp. 87-99\)](#): “Staff understand and act on their responsibilities to advance equality and foster good relations between all equality groups.”
- EO6** [Staffing: \(see Data and Disclosure\)](#): “Equivalence for staff is supported through consensus building and agreement on partnership-wide policies relating to staffing and staff development and through initiatives aimed at developing shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.”

Protected Characteristics

The current report contains activities that include and refer to all 9 protected characteristics.

For the most part, our 2017 Equality Outcomes did not set outcomes in relation to specific characteristics, instead setting broader targets such as “addressing under-representation” more generally, and referring to “all individuals and groups”. As such, activities in this report are mapped to outcomes, as opposed to particular characteristics.

We recognise the requirement to report activities relating to particular groups, and hope that the activities outlined throughout will allow us to set appropriate outcomes for each protected characteristic in 2021.

Introduction

The following document outlines key successes and priorities in relation to Equality Outcomes set in April 2017, as well as providing background rationales. Extensive activity has been undertaken autonomously by individual partners across UHI, each of whom have worked extensively with the University towards a cross-partner approach to our many operations.

Given the complexity of our structure, some “all partner” areas of activity are at an early stage: no two partners have the same needs as each other, and many have different legislative responsibilities, as previously described in the [Meeting the PSED](#) section of this report. As such, this report not only focuses on what we have achieved, but on further steps to unify partners in respect of our Equality and Diversity (E&D) activities and outputs, to ensure we can achieve the outcomes set in April 2017.

Our geographical breadth raises challenges when seeking to provide consistent activity and support across all campuses: we are represented by 14 locations across 7 local authorities. Consequently, unification of partner experience is a major driver for the University and is key to many of our future plans. As such we need to consider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) on two levels: equivalence of experience between partners, and equality of opportunity between groups and individuals.

Our previous Equality and Diversity Advisor role was undertaken on a part-time basis (0.4FTE), seconded from Perth College UHI. Following the publication of our 2017 report, our previous advisor transferred to a new role and we experienced a loss of continuity with this role: as such the extensive activity demonstrated in this report is testament to the fact that equality is effectively ingrained in each partner’s operations. The positive work undertaken separately has the potential for wider impact if mapped to central strategic priorities and to a measurable framework.

Having reviewed our priorities, the University established a new post and appointed a full-time Equality and Diversity Advisor in February 2019. The remit for this new role includes ensuring that equivalent support is available across the partnership; that training is developed and delivered; that data collection is improved in terms of both breadth and depth; and that feedback and dissemination mechanisms are optimised. This will allow us to further mainstream and monitor equality objectives, as well as developing methods for evidencing impact and extrapolating future priorities.

As well as above activities, our E&D Advisor will be heavily involved in supporting UHI’s 2020 Athena SWAN submission; our 2020 Gender Action Plan and REF 2021 Code of Practice. In recognition of sectoral requirements to provide statistical and qualitative evidence of impact, we will look for opportunities to improve our methodology through these channels. We are currently looking into aligning Gender Action Planning across the partnership; developing people impact assessments in place of separate equality/ privacy/ islands impact assessments, and developing models to address underrepresentation.

We encourage all people, universities, colleges and like-minded organisations to get in contact with any questions or suggestions. Together we can continue to work towards a more equal society across the Highlands and Islands region and beyond.


Progress Table

The following report is preceded by a table of progress, which is colour coded to denote progress. The table adopts a 'traffic-light' system, for which there is a key below. Given the interim nature of this report, we should expect the central 2 columns (green and orange) to be populated in most instances.

Key	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
Complete				
Complete, with renewed activity underway				
In progress or ongoing				
In progress with further activity planned				
Plans in place; awaiting progress				
Yet to be started, with plans in place				
Yet to be started				

As previously noted, some outcomes are further advanced than others. **Outcome 3: Data and Disclosure, Outcome 5 Staff Development** and **Outcome 6: Staffing** will require particular attention over 2019-21. These areas will focus on consistent training provision & impact assessment, as well as improving the quality of staff and student data, forming a detailed E&D operational plan and associated steering groups.

Ultimately, above actions should allow us to undertake targeted activities, aimed at supporting groups and individuals with specific characteristics, and more explicitly mapped to our general public sector equality duties. In meeting these objectives we will facilitate clear evidence of impact, and capacity to set targeted activity by protected characteristic in our 2021 PSED reports.

Navigation Tip: When following hyperlinks within the body of the report, you can navigate back to the link by pressing the backspace key () or selecting 'back' in your browser:

Equality Outcome	Activity No.	Activity- "We said we would:"	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
1) Leadership, Governance and Management	1	Embed the Equality Impact Assessment process in all functions of the University Partnership				
	2	Review and revise University Equality & Diversity Policy				
	3	Embed the universities Equality Outcomes within the Regional Outcome Agreement				
	4	Develop a Gender Action Plan				
	5	Develop a British Sign Language (BSL) Plan				
	6	Develop a Disability Action Plan				
2) Stakeholder engagement	1	Engage with local and national equality groups, stakeholders, partners, community groups, people with protected characteristics and/or their representatives to inform equalities decisions.				
	2	Develop template to record consultation with stakeholders, partners, community groups, people with protected characteristics and/or their representatives.				
	3	Extract stakeholder information from completed Equality Impact Assessments and gather evidence from across the university partnership to populate template and develop database.				
	4	Share evidence of engagement across university partnership through Equality Practitioners Network (EPN) /Staff Intranet/ SharePoint.				

Equality Outcome	Activity No.	Activity- "We said we would:"	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
3) Data Collection	1	Collect details for 'all' student protected characteristics across the partnership through a supportive culture				
	2	Identify and analyse core data reports for both HE and FE students in relation to under-representation, low retention and low achievement; disseminate findings across the partnership, for action				
	3	Enhance and share demonstrable good practice in reporting, analysis and action processes for student protected characteristics data across the partnership				
	4	Collect data for 'all' staff protected characteristics through a supportive culture				
	5	Ensure governing bodies across the partnership are representative of the diversity of their communities				
	6	Report 2 years of data and analysis on recruitment, retention and development of all staff				
	7	Display a clear section on progress in collecting and using employee equality data in all Academic Partner (AP) and University employee data reports				
	8	Identify and address areas of staff under-representation				
	9	Work collectively to support consistent reporting with regards to Gender Pay Gaps				

Equality Outcome	Activity No.	Activity- "We said we would:"	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
	10	Publish gender pay gap information (all partners with between 20 and 149 staff) and a statement on equal pay, including occupational segregation for gender.				
	11	Develop a procedure to use Scottish Government information, to promote greater diversity of court members				
4) Students	1	Establish processes to review programme frameworks to ensure curriculum more accessible, flexible and appropriate to student and employer needs				
	2	Develop and share pan-university resources through the equalities Practitioner Network to ensure student understanding and knowledge of equality and diversity				
	3	Establish mechanisms to increase breadth and depth of employer engagement with our curriculum—to advance equality of opportunity for those with protected backgrounds				
	4	Support all students, regardless of protected background in their preparation for employment or further study				
	5	Review available progression pathways, entry and re-entry points to ensure that our curriculum is accessible to as many learners as possible and supportive of lifelong learning				
	6	Establish more even patterns of participation by those from protected characteristic groups, including an improvement in the gender balance of the student population and in imbalanced subjects				

Equality Outcome	Activity No.	Activity- "We said we would:"	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
	7	Work with groups with low levels of participation to remove perceived and real obstacles and develop responsive provision				
	8	Develop a university STEM Strategy				
	9	Develop a model of approach to address the underrepresentation of protected characteristics in subject areas				
	10	Establish training and support for academic decision makers in relation to admissions processes				
	11	Provide support to Care Leavers in both FE and HE through further development of the Care Leavers Group and Corporate Parenting Scheme				
	12	Evidence how the needs of learners with profound and complex needs are being met				
	13	Increase participation, (access, retention and successful completion) of learners from all protected characteristic groups				
	14	Reduce gender disparities within subject areas				
	15	Review training and support for students to ensure that all students regardless of protected background are able to access training and support to engage effectively at all levels of institutional decision making				
	16	Ensure consistency of approach and an equivalence of student experience across the university				

Equality Outcome	Activity No.	Activity- "We said we would:"	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
	17	Establish inclusive support to encourage all students regardless of protected background to understand and engage in the student representation process				
	18	Analyse student feedback, where gathered by protected characteristics, to determine any under-representation or low scoring by specific groups –where identified, take action				
	19	Work to ensure all students are aware of the Red Button				
	20	Develop a process to record where Red Button issues are equalities-related to help identify any actions that can be taken to ensure inclusiveness of services etc.				
	21	Identify clubs, societies and activities in place across the partnership which create a positive experience for students				
	22	Record number of pan-university clubs set up and successful recruitment to these				
	23	Identify activities from across the partnership which have shown to aid social integration of our students				
	24	Promote and disseminate information on clubs across academic partners for action				
	25	Ensure ongoing compliance with the sector guidance on Prevent and integrate the handling of Prevent-related student issues through existing safeguarding procedures across the partnership.				

Equality Outcome	Activity No.	Activity- "We said we would:"	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
5) Staff Development	1	Include 'equalities' within the PDR, giving all staff across the partnership an opportunity to discuss how they mainstream equalities within their job role and to have their equalities work recognised.				
	2	Create improved access to guidance and support/ direction/ encouragement on equalities for staff in relation to teaching practice, student support, quality and policy.				
	3	Further align HR based systems for accessing CPD, scholarship and research opportunities				
	4	Establish a more systematic approach to the identification of professional development requirements				
	5	Ensure all staff complete the EIA online training module				
	6	Ensure all staff are supported to develop accessible materials and inclusive approaches eg through Blended Learning Standards/Style Guide				
	7	Develop a process to ensure staff equalities training available across the partnership is collated and shared				
	8	Develop and deliver training to academic staff who make the assessments on contextualised applicants				
	9	Consider improvement of staff awareness of existing Additional Support Online processes				

Equality Outcome	Activity No.	Activity- "We said we would:"	Complete	In progress	Planned	Not Started
	10	Develop a model of approach that can be used to address the under-representation of protected characteristics in subject areas.				
	11	Develop a University Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths (STEM) Strategy to help tackle gender inequality.				
6) Staffing	1	Agree and develop partnership-wide policies relating to staffing and staff-development				
	2	Develop initiatives to gain shared understanding of staff roles and responsibilities				
	3	Staffing initiatives and schemes for underrepresented groups to be gathered and shared through the Equalities Practitioner Network				

Contextualising Cross-Partner Equivalence

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Contextualising Cross-Partner Equivalence

Each academic partner undertakes autonomous, mainstreamed equalities work. However, facilitating a consistent strategic approach to E&D across partners has presented a number of challenges in the absence of a dedicated equalities lead. Moving forward we will look to explore ways to enable consistency, without dictating actions to individual partners.

A number of the actions we set in our Equality Outcome Agreement (2017-21) relate to cross-partner activities, which have and will continue to involve capacity-building activity to map local activities to wider institutional goals. Where it has not been possible to complete or undertake an action, we will explore ways to overcome this through development of an effective cross-partner model.

The following section contextualises some of the ways that the University has moved towards cross-partner equivalence since 2017, maps these to our wider EDI objectives and suggests future actions to further progress this agenda.

Full-time Equality & Diversity Advisor

In February 2019 the University appointed a full-time Equality and Diversity (E&D) Advisor to advise on high level cross-partner activity, and support individual partners to better meet their equality objectives.

Previously the University has seconded an E&D Advisor from Perth College UHI (0.4FTE), but the decision was taken to appoint a full-time resource to ensure adequate and consistent support for the University and all partners.

With a dedicated E&D resource, UHI can take on more ambitious projects, and aim to stand alongside older and more established Universities in respect of sectoral excellence in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).



Single Policy Environment

The below excerpt from our Vice Principal (VP) for Further Education contextualises the Single Policy Environment project as part of the wider move towards cross partner equivalence. Information on work towards a single EDI Policy can be found in the [Leadership, Governance and Management](#) section.

“The Single Policy Environment Project is primarily a Further Education project that seeks to improve parity of experience for students across the partnership by creation of single policies and underpinning procedures to be used by all Further Education colleges.

Operational risk is mitigated for partners and communities of practice are developed/reinforced by the Policy Ownership Groups that create the

policy and procedures. Work duplication is reduced and a single Equality Impact Assessment is carried out by the group. Flexibility for local roles and job titles is built into the documents, whilst retaining consistency across the partnership for the activities carried out and experience students should expect.”

Dr Diane Rawlinson; VP for Further Education

Practitioner Networks

Knowledge sharing and collaboration across the partnership is facilitated by Practitioners Groups and Networks. There was previously an Equality Practitioners Network (EPN), but in absence of equality-specific support, this lost momentum early in 2018 and is currently being reformed as a matter of priority. Upon reestablishment, the EPN will fit into the below framework of cross-partner networks.

Practitioner Network	Frequency of Meetings
Student Engagement Group	3 meetings per year
Class Rep Working Group	4 meetings per year
Disability Practitioners Group	2 meetings per year
Careers and Employability Network	4 meetings per year
Placement Practitioner Network	4 meetings per year
Student Support Group	4 meetings per year
Student Health and Wellbeing Group	2 meetings per year
Care Leavers and Student Carers	2 meetings per year
British Sign Language Working Group	2 meetings per year
Equally Safe Practitioner Group	3 meetings per year
National Student Survey Strategic Group	3 meetings per year
Non-continuation Strategic Group	3 meetings per year

The E&D Advisor is currently building institutional knowledge and relationships, before establishing a process for ensuring that each partner is represented on the practitioners network. Those who have met and taken advantage of support to date advised that sessions were useful and informative, and that a set-up period would help establish priorities to ensure that time is spent as usefully as possible. A successful model aims to ensure not only that all staff can work together to support our diverse student base, but that they feel supported to excel in this regard.



The University’s Disability Practitioners’ Group is particularly well attended. The group initially met 4 times a year until established, and now meets every semester, in order to maximise the opportunity for members to attend. In addition to an annual Staff Development Day, this provides 3 scheduled meetings per year, with all staff having networked to the extent that

extra one-to-one and bespoke meetings can easily be organised. Staff email across the group to share knowledge and collaboratively solve problems.

Our reinvigorated Equality Practitioners Network will look to adopt this model in the first instance, possibly aiming to set up 2 panels to cover mainstreamed and explicit equalities work: this will help to ensure that the same jobs do not always fall to the same people. It will also ensure that problems, progress and priorities can be discussed at 3-monthly intervals, and fed back to partners by those present. This approach allows us to maintain regular contact, whilst taking on board staff feedback that capacity to attend extra meetings remains limited.



Cross-Partner Approaches to Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

PSED Support

Whilst working at Perth College UHI, our E&D Advisor held a half-day workshop (December 2018) on PSED reporting duties, in recognition that there has not been specific support in this regard for some time. The workshop was delivered to 8 staff with PSED reporting oversight, attending both physically and by video-conferencing from colleges across the partnership.

Initial feedback was positive, though suggested that a less intensive session would be easier to digest. Initial interest was gathered for starting a Cross Partner PSED Group, to explicitly address our Specific Duties. We currently have commitment to attend from 5 partners, and will work methodically over summer 2019 to develop rapport with potential members.

Advance-HE kindly delivered a follow up session in Inverness (February 2019) to help support those with reporting responsibilities in preparation for the current round of reports. To maximise the value of Advance HE's visit, the session was additionally attended by the Dean of Students, Head of HR, Academic Registrars and the Single Policy Environment Project Manager. All consulted confirmed that this session was useful in contextualising E&D obligations, and in providing an opportunity to enhance networking opportunities with Advance-HE and other education providers nationally.



PSED Reporting & Gender Action Plans (GAPs)

We are in the early stages of reviewing our approach to Public Sector Equality Duty reporting to facilitate greater visibility of EDI activities across the partnership; we hope this will allow us to assess and track goals at a local level to ensure that E&D support is relevant to each partner's needs.



Potentially, this process involves collecting data in standard formats, aggregating and returning this to the University to collate and disaggregate centrally. This would allow for benchmarking against similar institutions by comparing numbers to those in similar settings across the partnership. This could be hugely valuable in terms of addressing a lack of

geographically appropriate comparators: as the University is almost unique in the sector, suitable benchmarking has presented- and continues to present- major challenges.

We are presently discussing above possibilities through our Joint Faculty Executive (JFE) Group in relation to our Gender Action Plans (GAPs). We aim to establish a process where centrally set priorities are flexible enough for partners to adapt to their own bespoke needs. When a workable solution is reached, we will look to apply this to our wider EDI reporting duties to maximise effect and minimise duplication. We will continue to explore how we can unify our reports to ensure we set actions that are conducive to consistency of experience and opportunity across the University.

By maximising knowledge-sharing and minimising duplication, we stand to move increasingly away from EDI-specific initiatives towards fully mainstreaming these into our daily functions. This will potentially free-up time to undertake positive activity.



Feeding-In and Feeding-Back: Newsletters and Digest

Conversations with Advance-HE have reflected that there has been limited representation of the University Partnership in College Liaison and HE Sector Liaison Groups (CLG & SLG). Whilst all partners have invested significantly in high-quality video-conferencing (VC) facilities, not all external venues have an equivalent resource, or offer attendance by VC. Due to the remote nature of many of our campuses, many lack capacity to attend in person.

Our E&D Advisor liaised with Advance-HE to establish potential solutions. Initial steps involved gaining support from other HEIs across Scotland to hold the next SLG conference in Inverness, giving us access to high-quality VC facilities, and allowing an opportunity to facilitate delivery for all partners. This meeting has been confirmed, and will take place on 8th May at the University's Executive Office, Inverness. Some Universities from the Central Belt have expressed that they wish to attend by VC.

Going forward, the E&D Advisor aims to pilot a model, whereby partners populate a form with 3x questions, a challenge and a success story ahead of CLG/ SLG meetings. The Advisor will then feed this into CLG/ SLG, and gather feedback, advice and updates. This will form the foundation a 6-monthly Newsletter for equality practitioners and senior staff, with up to date developments and practice from across the sector.



In recognition of the requirement to update our whole workforce we will also look at other newsletters which can feature a section on EDI, to achieve wider reach: examples include through Communications and Student Services.



Conclusion

Much of this report looks to centrally coordinate activities that are already mainstreamed at partner level, but which would benefit from a more cohesive approach. Going forward, we hope to provide central EDI support, advice and practices at a sufficiently high level to enable partners to mould processes to their local needs and resources.

This chapter has demonstrated that the University has made progress in many areas, and requires further action in respect of others, as summarised in conclusion below:

Successes

- Increasing capacity through appointment of full-time E&D Advisor
- Forming a cross partner working group to form a Single University E&D Policy
- Exploring a Cross-Partner Gender Action Planning process
- Providing cross-partner support and options for integration into Central-Belt Activities
- Initial plans with Advance-HE to ensure cross partner involvement in SLG/ CLG
- Buy-in from national HEIs to attend Inverness for SLG/ attend by VC

Going Forward

- E&D Advisor to form rapport across partnership, and establish local priorities
- Establish central, high-level E&D agenda, and discuss local implementation with APs
- Refresh and reinvigorate E&D Practitioners Group, as well as PSED & GAP Steering Group
- Design templates for APs to report activities, successes and queries to the University/ SLG/ CLG
- Design Newsletter with the University's Marketing and Communications teams
- Discuss inclusion of training and events in Student and Staff newsletters (UHI Marketing and Student Services)

Outcome 1: Leadership, Governance and Management

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Leadership, Governance and Management

This section explains measures taken to strengthen the integration of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles into the running of our University. This includes working groups, impact assessment, and action planning.

The following chapter reports on successes in achieving outputs set under **Equality Outcome 1: Leadership, Governance and Management**, as well as documenting where further action is planned or necessary.

Successes have included diversifying membership of our Board of Management (University Court), achievement of Athena SWAN Bronze Accreditation and publication of our Institutional Gender Action Plan. Priorities going forward include our 2020 Athena SWAN submission; implementation of our BSL Plan and forming a People Impact Assessment process, as well as continuing to diversify our Board of Governors: University Court.

Equality and Diversity in Governance Group

The Equality and Diversity in Governance Group provides a forum for University Court to discuss perceived priorities and methodology to diversify their membership. So far, our E&D Advisor presented to the panel on initial points for development, and received positive feedback on proposals for suggested future priorities. We transparently invited minority-gender and ethnic categories to join the group, would like to extend our thanks to all who accepted the invitation for helping to ensuring minority voices feed into governance.

“The Equality and Diversity in Governance Group was formed in September 2017 in recognition of the need to improve the gender balance and diversity of Court and also some academic partner boards. The Chair and Vice Chair of Court were keen to look at innovative approaches to this issue and academic partner boards were represented by members from Inverness and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. The group meets around twice a year and is chaired by the Vice Chair of Court. The group is supported by the University’s Chief Operating Officer and Secretary, and its Equality & Diversity Advisor.

The main focus for the past 18 months has been on improving gender balance. This has been very successful with 5 new female Court members being appointed. To encourage more female applicants to Court positions we have revised the role description and person specification, held an open evening for anyone interested in finding out more and advertised through women’s organisations such as the Highland Business Women’s Club.



Attention will now be given to looking at how we can improve the diversity of the Court and partner boards to reflect the wider population.”

Fiona Larg MBE; UHI Chief Operating Officer

“The working group comprises Court members and Partner board members, and draws on the expertise of the Equality & Diversity Advisor and the University Secretary. The role of the working group is to promote equality and diversity in the governance of the University and its Partner colleges. Its remit is to identify and implement best practice for E&D in the recruitment of governors at Court and to share this best practice and mechanisms for improvement with Partner boards”

Dr Fiona McLean; Group Chair; Depute Chair of Court; Independent Board Member

Underrepresentation on UHI Court

Court Membership by Gender; 2017-2019

Historically, we have experienced difficulty attracting female candidates to our governing body. Our recruitment process in late 2017 saw 70 per cent of applications received from men. One female governor was recruited through this process, but to supplement this we ran another recruitment process using a different approach. This included:

- changing the role description and person specification significantly to make it accessible to a much wider audience, for example removing the requirement that applicants must have previously served on boards, and focusing on the skills needed for the role
- specifying that candidates should be able to demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity
- encouraging appropriate candidates by sharing the vacancy with local women's groups, for example the Highland Business Women's Club.
- Production of an inspirational video from Vice-Chair Dr Fiona McLean, available [here](#).(uploaded 12/10/2017)



Above measures resulted in better quality applicants, a greater number of female applicants and ultimately to a stronger Court in terms of skill and gender balance.

See [below](#) for 2017-2019 membership. Please note that there are 2 independent female observers who will be fully appointed when we update our articles of association later in 2019.

Promotional Video



Dr Poonam Malik- University Court

We are in the process of producing a video describing the benefits of serving as an independent board member, or as chair of a board. Currently all partners' boards have white male Chairs, so it is particularly important to reflect diversity on Court to encourage a range of applicants and ensure that minority perspectives are present at the highest levels of governance.

Having discussed our reasoning, we engaged 2 men and 2 women from University Court, each reflecting white and BAME statuses across a range of age groups: Fiona McLean (Vice Chair), Poonam Malik (Independent Court Member, pictured in video still, inset), Prince Honeysett (President of HISA Perth) and Garry Coutts (Chair). We would also like to thank Perth College UHI Media student Michelle Wangui for filming and editing the project: her enthusiasm and professionalism are hugely appreciated.



Gender Representation on University Court

Period	Non-Executive Board Member (including Chair)			Staff Board Member (including Principal)			Student Board Members		Total
	Male	Female	Chair Gender	Male	Female	Principal Gender	Male	Female	
Aug 2018-present	9	5	M	2	1	M	2	0	19
Aug 2017-July 2018	11	5	M	2	1	M	2	1	22
Aug 2016-July 2017	11	2	M	3	1	M	3	1	21

Future Appointments

The [HE Governance \(Scotland\) Act \(2016\)](#) necessitates membership from two trade union representatives, which is currently being allocated amongst the four trade unions involved. The trade union reps will come onto Court when new articles are adopted later this year. We have also recruited two female observers, who will be formally appointed at the same time ensuring a majority of independent members.

When our Chair of Court steps down, the next chair will be appointed by election as per the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. We will ensure that conversations around underrepresentation in governance are widely publicised at this juncture.

Aurora

Aurora is a programme for people who identify as women, to increase confidence and experience to pursue senior positions. Participants develop skills using a combination of development days and self-directed learning that complements key themes and individual development needs.

Aurora prepares women to step into Court positions in future. The University's Senior Management Team took the decision to fund ten Aurora places, all of which have been filled and are undertaking this opportunity presently. 25 women applied to the Aurora Programme, showing that there is a clear expectation that gender-specific development opportunities can help to overcome real-world problems.

Our 2015 Auroran is currently Acting Dean for Science, Health and Engineering at UHI, and we hope our present cohort continue to use the qualities they build-on through the programme to apply for senior and Court positions at UHI. Aurora will be further discussed in relation to staff development later in this report, [here](#).



Local Boards

The process of appointing members is delivered by individual partners, and as such the University has no control or ownership of this process. The University does however have responsibility under the [Post 16 Education \(Scotland\) Act 2013](#) to appoint the chairs and independent members of Boards of the 5 incorporated colleges that are assigned to UHI: Inverness College UHI; Lews Castle College UHI; Moray College UHI; North Highland College UHI and Perth College UHI.

Our Chief Operating Officer is currently looking into the extent of Unconscious Bias training undertaken by those interviewing for board positions across the partnership, with a view to requesting training for all interviewers. Going forward we will look to ensure that each board is made aware of the full-time E&D resource, and is encouraged to take advantage of the support they can provide encouraging more diverse applications.

Single Policy Environment

Our aspiration to provide consistent, equitable resources across the partnership has been further strengthened by work to establish a central Equality & Diversity policy through the University's Single Policy Environment. 12/ 13 Partners are represented on the Policy Ownership Group, and have provided feedback as regards mapping the policy to local contexts.

Initial content for a revised E&D Policy has been produced to reflect more accessible, explicit language, as well as noting the expectation that external stakeholders with whom we work share our institutional values.

Our current draft includes previous information, but also reflects Scottish specific public sector equality duties in layperson's terms and explicitly distinguishes between prohibited behaviours and discrimination. We have clarified our reporting responsibilities so they are readily apparent across all roles, as opposed to merely



those with direct reporting responsibilities. We have also included examples to enhance accessibility, and have explicated our recognition of gender as potentially fluid and non-binary. The Policy Ownership Group is currently reviewing revised content, suggesting amendments and contributing to content and presentation.

The Safeguarding Policy is also currently being progressed as part of the UHI Single Policy Environment; development of this policy and procedures have been the main driver for the Safeguarding Group over the present reporting cycle, moving towards universal formalisation of roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. Once agreed, each partner will implement locally, amending as appropriate to local needs.

Equality Impact Assessments

We ask that all policies, processes and practices are Equality Impact Assessed if new or significantly amended. We have published a [guide](#) on how to undertake this process, including common challenges which may impact particular groups, to ensure staff are supported in understanding potential problems outwith their own sphere of experience. We support staff to understand the process, and their responsibilities, through our online EIA e-learning opportunity. For details of uptake see [here](#).

We hope to establish a process, based on incorporating EIAs into broader 'People Impact Assessments', covering Equality, Privacy and Highlands & Islands Impact Assessments: this will help us mainstream our duty of care to protected groups into other inclusive practices. We hope to present positive news on this point in our 2021 reports; this will include learning from feedback on our existing process. We will look into producing our own bespoke e-learning resource at this juncture.



Consistent return and upload of forms has presented compliance challenges, and as such are reviewing and improving the forms to improve ease of use and subsequent return rates. We will look to design and implement an online submission process for Impact Assessment, to ensure visibility and central publication.



We will also ensure that staff are well-briefed on their responsibilities in this regard. Our E&D Advisor is keen to step forward as a central point of contact, and is involved in preliminary talks with the University archivist to establish a formal online process for submission, which can be hyperlinked from forms as part of the policy approval process.

It has been expressed that forms do not allow us to sufficiently document our rationale for decisions made on the basis of EIAs, or to go into detail about any prospective concerns we have. This could potentially affect the impact of this process in a governance context: if rationale is not apparent, nor is the value of the process. As such, the E&D Advisor designed a form explicating how and why to complete each section. This form is currently being trialled at Perth College UHI, and subject to feedback will form the basis of the equalities aspect of future People Impact Assessments.

Regional Outcome Agreement

There is explicit mention of our Equality Outcomes Agreement in our Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA), though individual actions have not yet been embedded due to the lack of an equalities lead. As the document stands, it refers to our Equality Outcome Agreement, Gender Action Plans, and contains significant content relating to SIMD categories and Safeguarding.

Going forward, the University will look to enhance its ROA to inform support for trans and gender-diverse stakeholders in collaboration with TransEdu Scotland, and informed by empirically driven [priorities](#) discussed in their 2017 HE/ FE research [report](#). We will cover key areas identified therein, including but not limited to: infrastructure; processes; culture and environment.

Initial activity will look to increase individuals' confidence in disclosing gender identity, identifying ways to decouple data from administrative systems to mitigate fear of data being mishandled: this will increase our capacity to identify empirical evidence first-hand. Methods may include comparing anonymously collected data to HR/ Student Records systems to assess the extent of non-disclosure among trans and gender diverse people.

We are looking to introduce explicit Gender Identity and Expression content for our revised EDI Policy. We will also look to develop guidance materials, and co-developing training with academic, student and community partners, to ensure these groups are well placed to both contribute to and receive support. We will explore relationships with other community services to maximise knowledge-sharing opportunities and potential for shared-identity networks, potentially combatting isolation, alienation and informing our practice.



We will circulate visible hard-copy promotional material celebrating LGBT identities, and will explicate advice on services available both inside and out of the immediate university environment. Activities will aim to foster feelings of inclusion, integration, and to increase empathy from cisgendered people.



We value the opportunity to work together with other public and educational bodies, and would welcome any requests to collaborate and share best practice: together we can improve opportunities for trans and gender-diverse people, both locally and nationally.

We will also look to ensure capacity to contextualise and implement TransEdu suggestions as part of our 2020 Institutional Gender Action Plan.

British Sign Language (BSL) Plans

The University published its BSL Action Plan in October 2018, having liaised with Deaf Action who provided extensive advice, context, and support for which we are very grateful.

Previous correspondence with the Scottish Government relating to Corporate Parenting Plans suggested that local plans were preferable to a centralised plan. However, partners have found that reports often relate to similar areas, resulting in the same staff taking on disproportionate planning responsibilities which could potentially impact other, equally important work-streams. Deaf Action subsequently liaised with the Government on UHI's behalf to establish permission to centralise our BSL Plan, removing duplication and increasing staff capacity.

Actions in the plan have been informed by external agencies, and set at a high level, to enable the necessary flexibility for partners to tailor approaches, ensuring consistency with local needs, priorities and resources. All academic partners have bought into the single UHI plan: this constitutes a significant step towards normalising cross-partner activity, and providing consistent resources in this regard.



Our active working group has responsibility for taking forward actions from the plan, and has an initial meeting set for May 2019 to prioritise actions and work out initial timescales. The group have all contributed to our BSL Plan, and contain key staff from across the partnership.

We recognise that historically, there has been a lack of inclusive options for D/deaf communities across society, and that as such integration is at an early stage. As such,, our first steps will relate to raising awareness of BSL, whether through events, online resources or showcasing of translated materials on the website. We have translated our plan into BSL and uploaded to our website.



One of the first activities we aim to undertake will be scoping the relevant sections of the website that will require translation into BSL. We will also identify key staff who will require training in conversational BSL to welcome D/deaf people to campus, whether students, potential staff or community members. Both of these activities will provide an opportunity to raise awareness of BSL and promote our activities.



We are mindful that BSL professionals are in high-demand presently, and are a costly resource due to the specificity of their skillset. As such, we would like to work together with our existing staff and student bases to build capacity for independence where possible, whether through teaching key staff, or helping to raise awareness.



We contacted partners for information on staff, students and courses using BSL, in order to ensure those best placed to advise of capacity and logistical considerations are able to feed directly into planning ([see below](#)).

Partner	No. of Courses	No. of Tutors	No. of BSL Users	Notes
Argyll College	2	2	0	2 evening classes (accredited SQA units)
Highland Theological College	0	0	0	

Partner	No. of Courses	No. of Tutors	No. of BSL Users	Notes
Inverness College	0	0	1	Looking at developing this area to meet demand for training locally. Tutors & support currently contracted-in.
Lews Castle College	0	0	0	
Moray College	1	1	1	BSL Level 1 course has 25 enrolments this session
NAFC Marine Centre				No response
North Highland College	0	0	0	
Orkney College	0	0	0	Orkney College does not employ BSL tutors, but has one member of support staff with CACDP Stage 3 in BSL who has previously supported students in BSL.
Perth College	1	1	0	Evening Leisure Class
SAMS	0	0	0	
SMO	0	0	0	
Shetland				No response
West Highland College	1	1	0	

BSL: Good News Stories

West Highland College UHI offers a 10-week beginners BSL course, running once a week at the West Highland College UHI Fort William campus. After this course, the college encourage participants to progress on to Intermediate and Advanced BSL courses which are again delivered in 10-week blocks. These courses have been approved for Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) funding as both stand alone and bundle packages.



Last year, one FE student at Orkney College, who hadn't previously signed, was supported to develop BSL to good effect at an introductory level i.e. approx. CACDP Stage 1 and some Stage 2 sign.



Gender Action Plan

The University published its Gender Action Plan (GAP) in July 2017, and will next publish an Institutional GAP in July 2020.

Currently, each of our 9 incorporated colleges are required to publish a GAP, and each subject network completes Gender Action Planning to feed into institutional plans: this is undertaken in

collaboration with Curriculum Development Employment Engagement Officers (CDEEOs). It is widely felt that this process could be streamlined; involves significant duplication, and does not necessarily yield universally applicable solutions.

One of the first tasks set for our E&D Advisor has been to assist the Joint Faculty Executive Group (JFE) in planning an approach that is not only consistent, but by extension versatile: if we all collect and store data the same way, we can perform more sophisticated analyses between partners, and inform actions that may work better in variously remote environments.

Initially, we hope to set high level actions across the partnership, and for these to be amended to local needs. We hope that partners will agree to publish local plans, with actions that are considered in local contexts: this will ensure that Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) requirements are met in respect of each partner, and the University as a whole. We also hope that through demonstrable progress, we can encourage partners who are not SFC funded to adopt best practice measures. The E&D Advisor has submitted a paper to JFE to this effect, and we hope to undertake a new process for the July 2020 publication round.

2020's GAPs will discuss our progress in respect of courses with a gender imbalance of >75/25%, and we will conduct a cohesive and detailed analysis at this juncture.

More detail on localised GAPs can be found in the [Data Collection & Disclosure](#) section of this report.

Disability Action Plan

Our Disability Support Coordinator contributed extensively to a number of local reports, setting actions to improve the support we provide across the partnership.

As part of a move towards Mainstreaming EDI into our functions, the intention to develop a Disability Action Plan has been absorbed into normal planning and reporting processes: this approach ensures that consideration of disability issues embedded throughout the partnership, and is proportionate given the range of reporting requirements academic partners are required to fulfil. This also enables staff to continue to provide the level of service that they do presently.



Athena SWAN

UHI successfully achieved an Athena SWAN Bronze Award in April 2017. We will submit our next application under the post-May 2015 Award Criteria in April 2020.

Our Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team (SAT) was explicitly designed to include a number of women and men from a range of roles across the University, including Early Career Researchers (ECRs), Senior Management, Research Fellows and Heads of Service. The SAT meets four times a year, and will meet more frequently in the run up to our April 2020 submission.

Challenges we foresee with our forthcoming application include obtaining data from multiple partners, and navigating UHI's complex structure, which encompasses many different reporting structures and differing levels of data collection, type and granularity.

Our SAT Lead, and Dean of Science, Health and Engineering are currently exploring critical friendship with Swansea University to discuss their strategy for overcoming barriers to submission.

Conclusion

This section has shown that we have made significant progress towards increasing minority representation on Court; progressing an improved EDI Policy; setting up our BSL Plan and planning towards improved Gender Action Planning and Impact Assessment.

It is also apparent that increased action is necessary to streamline Gender Action Planning, and assess the most accessible model for more versatile 'People Impact Assessments' to help mainstream the process of identifying potential impact in respect of Equality, Privacy and Island considerations. Work to promote more applications from minority groups on Court will include completing a promotional video, diverse advertising channels and work with 'Changing the Chemistry'.

Further activity relating to departmental governance and communication is included throughout this report, with the previous chapter summarised overleaf:

Successes

- Athena SWAN Bronze Accreditation (April 2017)
- Publication of UHI Gender Action Plan (July 2017)
- Publication of single UHI British Sign Language Plan (October 2018)
- Ongoing networking with Deaf Action to inform BSL-focused work
- Integration of Disability Action Planning into local reporting
- Establishment of Critical Friendship with senior female professorial staff from Swansea University

- Appointment of 5 new female Governors, including BAME representation
- Higher quality, more diverse applications for Non-Executive Court Membership
- Student-facilitated promotional video to encourage applications to serve on Court from a range of gender, race and age profiles
- 25 Aurora applications received: 10 Aurorans recruited
- Previous Auroran appointed as Interim Dean of Science, Health and Engineering

- Initial draft of UHI Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy complete
- Raising awareness of Equality Impact Assessment process: initial design of more evidence-based form

Going Forward

- Submit Athena SWAN Application (April 2020)
- Publish UHI Gender Action Plan (July 2020)
- Implement initial activity from BSL Plan, including scoping development opportunities with BSL tutors, Class Reps and reviewing online materials

- Investigate and implement further measures to diversify Court membership, including completion of promotional video, and alternative advertising channels/ recruitment events
- Investigate and advise on unconscious bias training and recruitment measures for local Boards.
- Promote E&D Advisor Provision, and the offer to help in diversifying applications from potential chairs and independent members of local Boards

- UHI Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy to be further developed and finalised by Single Policy Ownership Group, including input on bullying & harassment reporting and Gender Identity/ Expression
- Discuss and design 'People Impact Assessments' process, conflating Equality, Privacy and Islands Impact Assessments
- Design and implement online submission process for Impact Assessment, to ensure central visibility and publication

- Identify potential activity from [Trans Edu Project 9 Report \(2017\)](#); report through Regional Outcome Agreement

Outcome 2: Stakeholder Engagement

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Stakeholder Engagement

Due to our unique geographical circumstances it can be challenging to engage all partners in consistent external stakeholder engagement. For this reason, much of our activity relating to stakeholders over the 2019-21 period will focus mechanisms to collect and share information from external stakeholders across the partnership. Going forward, we hope our E&D Advisor can provide an interface between partners and equality work in wider society.

This chapter focuses primarily on **Equality Outcome 2: Stakeholder Engagement**, and notes local and national E&D networking, as well as recording the potential for mutually beneficial equality work with external stakeholders.

National Networking

Our E&D Advisor regularly attends national events, including:

- Scottish Race Equality Network (SREN)
- HEI Sector Liaison Group (SLG)
- College Liaison Group (CLG)
- National Gender Conference
- Disability in Scotland: National Conference
- Equality and Intersectionality: National Conference

Attendance facilitates contact with other E&D professionals, and those with E&D responsibilities as part of a wider role.

Our E&D Advisor will continue to attend national conferences and symposia to network with other Scottish Colleges and Universities, feeding-back discussions and presentations that have taken place. Initial feedback shows that cross-partner staff welcome the suggestion of our E&D Advisor disseminating a six-monthly digest of sector-developments and collaborative work with other institutions. Our progress in this regard will be reported in our 2021 PSED reports, and is further highlighted in this report [here](#).

As well as the above groups, our E&D Advisor has joined an online group with equality practitioners from other Scottish HEIs through the University Innovation Fund (UIF), allowing further networking opportunities and sector-wide collaboration in the interests of all.



The University hosted two eminent female professors from Swansea University to present at our 2019 International Womens Day celebration. The Dean of Science, Health & Engineering and the Athena SWAN SAT Lead are looking to develop this relationship going forward. The event is discussed in more detail later in this report, [here](#).

Local Community

Active community partnership relating to equality groups has presented challenges, as UHI's equality provision was previously seconded from Perth for 2 days per week until February 2019. As such regular attendance at local equality groups has been more practical in Perth than Inverness.

Now that we have employed a dedicated resource, talks with Highland community partners are underway to actively integrate the University into local equality groups, eg. Highland Community Planning Partnership. This will not only allow knowledge and practice sharing opportunities, but also a chance to collaborate to meet the needs of our wider communities.



Pooling resources, co-running sessions and quid-pro-quo arrangements will provide the opportunity for the University and our partners across the community to maximise progress with our respective E&D agendas, around us.



Currently, all partners are deeply integrated in their respective communities; to better meet our PSEDs it is prudent for us to explore shared E&D priorities with local community partners, with a view to sharing expertise and activities. Partners will be asked to collaboratively identify areas of particular value for the E&D Advisor to explore.

External Engagement

Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities

The University hosted a cross-sector event in respect of gender based violence (GBV) through Equally Safe in Colleges & Universities, University of Strathclyde and #Emilytest. A number of speakers from the public and third sectors spoke, including eminent campaigner Fiona Drouet, who tragically lost her daughter Emily as a result of GBV. Feedback from the event is still being collated, but informal feedback suggested the day was found by most to be both informative and challenging. Further information on UHI's work around preventing GBV is available [here](#).

Disability Support

The University has positive relationships with external organisations, including Concept Northern and Sight and Sound Technology Limited. In November 2017 for instance, the University hosted a regional CPD-certified disability awareness day run by Concept Northern for Skills Development Scotland.



Moreover, individual practitioners have an ongoing commitment to continuing professional development. In April 2017, for example, one needs assessor travelled under the Erasmus Programme to Brno in the Czech Republic to explore the provision in place for disabled students at Masaryk University. A second assessor is engaged in training to become certified to train students in the use of the [Brain in Hand](#) system, and a third achieved qualification as an Associate



Member of the British Dyslexia Association in 2018 and is therefore qualified to diagnose Specific Learning Differences.

The University has been represented at sector conferences during the last two academic sessions, and the online delivery of webinars continues to benefit colleges across the partnership. This is particularly true for colleagues who cannot ordinarily access such training opportunities due to geographical distance.



Athena SWAN Scotland Committee

The University's Self-Assessment Team (SAT) Lead Dr Mary Doherty was elected as Depute Chair of the Athena SWAN Scotland Committee and will take over as chair in 2 years' time. The current chair is from an E&D background, and Dr Doherty from an academic background, resulting in an effective balance of different knowledge and experiences.

Going forward, Dr Doherty will make a case for our E&D Advisor to join the panel as the University's depute representative. This will also allow more informed conversations, and will help to streamline workloads.



The University hosted the Athena SWAN Preliminary Consultation in January 2018, which was chaired by eminent scientist Professor Lesley Yellowlees and was attended by a number of external agencies including University of Aberdeen and Scotland's Rural College.

Tapping Our Talents 2018

The University had significant input into 2018's update to Royal Society of Edinburgh's 2012 [***Tapping our Talents***](#) report, with repeated reference to our contribution in round table groups and formal consultation. We were also noted in the report for utilisation of mini-sabbaticals, videoconference-facilitated meeting attendance and flexible working. The update was the subject of Parliamentary Questions, led by Iain Gray in January 2019, and received extensive cross-party support.

When engaging with RSE we took the opportunity to contribute to potential solutions to some of the challenges facing the sector in respect of data collection and tracking actions:

"Consideration should also be given to how the administrative burden can be alleviated through alignment of Athena SWAN requirements with Gender Action Plans, Outcome Agreements, reporting under the Public Sector Equality Duty etc. As the University of the Highlands and Islands commented, this would allow focus to be on delivery rather than chasing data."

[***Tapping All Our Talents Report 2018***](#)

Engaging with Specific Groups

Disability: Our E&D Advisor developed a working relationship with a BSL Tutor from one of our partner's Learning Centres in the run up to publication of the BSL Plan. Conversations covered provision of levels 1&2 Conversational BSL classes to key staff and class reps, as well as subsidised classes for other staff who wish to explore this opportunity. Our contact has confirmed they are happy to deliver sessions in Inverness, and has reached out to other Highland BSL Tutors with a view to establishing ways in which they can help the University to implement the BSL Plan



Sex: At UHI's 2019 International Women's Day celebrations, we circulated pictures of- and introductions to- key staff, encouraging attendees to introduce themselves and offer feedback. This allowed us to engage with interested staff and students, to gather feedback and foster feelings of inclusion. Our E&D Advisor was approached by various people, all of whom expressed interest in feeding into future E&D work, including case studies.



Race: The Afro-Caribbean Society at Perth has expressed that they are happy to work towards Black History Month celebrations with the E&D Advisor, to advise of opportunities to improve and issues that may need addressed.



Going forward we hope to establish staff and student networks relating to particular shared characteristics, with membership open to those who identify, allies and experts. We will also look to our cross-partner LGBTQI network to inform activities in relation to sexuality and gender-diversity: initial willingness to inform groups relating to sexual orientation, non-binary and BAME identities have been established through informal networking.



Survey Participation

The University participated in the National Inquiry into Racial Harassment in Higher Education Survey. The exercise was reported to be thought-provoking, and showed that no complaints of racial harassment have been reported to the University. Whilst on the surface this represents positive news, it also flags other potential explanations, such as the fact that we have very small numbers of BAME staff and students across some partners due to remoteness from larger population centres.

We recognise the possibility that lack of reported harassment could reflect either unawareness of the process, or perceived repercussions of reporting. As such, going forward we will look to review awareness and effectiveness of our current reporting channels, and measurably increase understanding and confidence to these ends.

It is our hope that lack of complaints reflect a complete absence of racial harassment, and hope that our research yields this conclusion. We will also relate this investigation to reporting

of other forms of harassment, in collaboration with our Equally Safe in Higher Education Working Group, which deals primarily with sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

Recording Consultation

UHI currently use a Customer Relationship Manager system (CRM) to log high-level interactions with external stakeholders. From summer 2018, the University's Corporate Systems Officer has worked closely with larger UHI partners (Inverness, Perth and Moray Colleges) to gain buy-in to the process, aiding with facilitation, training, supporting and inputting information.

Whilst CRM does not have an explicit E&D focus, we recognise the potential to feed into this case management software from our communications with equality bodies and third sector organisations. We hope to explore this possibility in greater detail once the process is more firmly established across the partnership.

Over the next 2 years, UHI will explore working with above-listed academic partners to pilot collection and tracking of E&D stakeholder information via CRM: contact details of third sector organisations and logs of previous collaborations and enquiries. If we find that this is not a holistically viable platform, we will look to construct a database for this purpose, accessed via Sharepoint. If communicated effectively, use of CRM not only stands to increase the network of consultants independently available to each partner, but to reduce duplication of contacts, streamlining the support that we ask for from external partners.

Having reviewed EIA forms, it is clear that most stakeholder consultation has taken place at an internal level, and that interactions with external organisations are not recorded. It is important to move towards collecting stakeholder information to develop a network of contacts who represent the interests of particular groups and individuals, and to track previous interactions in this regard.

We will ensure that our new Equality/ People Impact Assessment forms include fields to explicitly record stakeholder information, including contact details and summaries of advice. If we adopt CRM in an EDI context, we will look to hyperlink EIA forms to this platform as a mainstreamed alternative to manually extracting information centrally. This will allow us to better meet our General Duties, but also our specific duties by enabling us to undertake more thorough EIAs.



Managing Files, Documents & Updates: Internal Stakeholder Engagement

Part of forming a streamlined and simplified cross-partner model will be creation of an EDI Sharepoint space, enabling ease of communication, file sharing, resources and group-working.

A shared online-space allows us to work more flexibly and securely, simplifying and enhancing processes such as PSED Reporting and Athena SWAN application by facilitating a collegiate approach to authorship.

We hope that impact will be shown by staff feeling that they have more time to respond to the findings of reports, due to less time being monopolised by collating long and detailed reports. From greater capacity should follow finer grained analysis, and more impactful action.

Conclusion

There is extensive stakeholder engagement taking place across the University partnership, with specific groups, those representing their interests, and external agencies such as employers and other education providers: external engagement with employers is discussed [here](#). However, external engagement is not explicitly mapped to an EDI Framework, and work is required to mainstream these considerations.

Over the 2019-21 period we will establish the structures to gather and store information centrally and accessibly to ensure that everybody feels enabled to support staff and students. This will ensure that every interaction with external agencies can be used to ensure we are meeting, and where possible exceeding our responsibilities to specific groups.

This chapter has discussed many successes and points for further action from 2019-21, which are summarised in conclusion overleaf:

Successes

- Establishing networking opportunities through national E&D Symposia
- Initial networking between E&D Advisor, Head of HR and Highland Community Planning Partnership
- Initial enthusiasm at prospect of E&D Digest to disseminate up-to-date information from recent conferences, publications and legislative developments
- E&D Advisor joined the University Innovation Fund national network of E&D practitioners

- Networking day held in respect of Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities, in partnership with University of Strathclyde.
- Hosted a regional CPD certified disability awareness day run by Concept Northern for Skills Development Scotland
- Needs assessor travelled to the Czech Republic to explore the provision for disabled students at Masaryk University
- Qualifications achieved by individual staff members, enabling them to diagnose specific learning differences, and train students to use enabling technologies

- Hosting the Athena SWAN Preliminary Consultation in January 2018
- UHI SAT Lead democratically elected as Depute Chair of the Athena SWAN Scotland Committee: will take over as chair in 2 years' time.
- Heavily referenced in update to [Tapping Our Talent Report \(2018\)](#), which received extensive cross-party support as the subject of Parliamentary Questions
- Initial relationships formed with specific groups wishing to share knowledge and experience in respect of Race, Disability, Gender and Sexual Orientation
- No reports of racial harassment or segregation

Going Forward

- Establish E&D digest with UHI Marketing
- Continue to develop relationships through University Innovation Fund
- Take forward relationships developed through Equally Safe GBV Event, UHI International Women's Day 2019 Event and Equality & Intersectionality National Conference
- Further develop Highland community partnerships with other E&D practitioners

- Scope and form staff and student networks on the basis of specific protected characteristics
- Review awareness and effectiveness of our current reporting channels relating to bullying and harassment

- SAT Lead to request E&D Advisor membership of Athena SWAN Scotland Committee
- E&D Advisor to apply for Athena SWAN Assessment Panel membership

- Pilot collection and tracking of E&D Stakeholder information via CRM/ Sharepoint
- Set up and promote E&D Practitioners Sharepoint Area
- Ensure stakeholder info can be recorded on forthcoming People Impact Assessment forms

Outcome 3: Data and Disclosure

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Data and Disclosure

Academic partners gather data to different extents, but generally only report on those which feed into Further Education Statistics (FES) returns. The University Student Records Office reports on data that relates to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) returns. Practices and processes relating to protected characteristics data have not been significantly developed since the last reporting round. With a dedicated E&D resource in place, we will be able to undertake granular analysis to inform targeted action.

We recognise that improving the breadth and quality of this data is key to improving our ability to meet our General Duties. In light of previous chapters, a model which allows us to share aggregated statistical information across the partnership would be consistent with our current goals, and will allow us to evidence impact. We will work with our Data Protection Officer to progress this area over the 2019-21 period.

This chapter covers actions relating to **Equality Outcome 3: Data and Disclosure; Equality Outcome 4: Supporting Equality and Diversity in the Student Population; and Outcome 6: Staffing**. The following pages demonstrate what is currently collected and published across the partnership, and deals with HE student and University employee data. Going forward we hope to extrapolate our methods for recording and accessing this data to include FE students to increase central agility to suggest and review areas of activity.

Student Protected Characteristics

Collected Characteristics

We collect student special category data at application stage, and confirm this at enrolment: this includes data on age; gender; ethnicity; religion/belief; disability; gender reassignment and sexual orientation. We are currently only able to collect information asked for on UCAS forms, to ensure equitable treatment between application routes.

As well as protected characteristics data, the enrolment process asks for information on access routes, care experience, caring responsibilities and written, spoken and read Gaelic language proficiency. In future, the section relating to Gaelic language fluency could provide an opportunity to ask about BSL proficiency and teaching qualifications to feed into facilitation of the University's BSL Plan.

"Mx" has been added to title-options to cater for non-binary students. It has been noted that some cisgendered allies would rather state 'no title', in order to move away from an "outdated" system of titling, without inheriting the trans stigma associated with 'Mx'. We will look into the feasibility of this going forward.

Currently student protected characteristics information is held in student records case management software SITs: it is accessible to those with appropriate training and permissions to access this, and is not accessible from the main Student Record window.

As with staff data, addressing issues of non-disclosure and 'prefer not to say' returns will be key to improving the quality of data that we hold. We will look to try new and engaging ways to describe our lawful basis for collecting data in order to reassure people that their anonymity will be protected, and their data treated as sensitive.



Work to compare the number of 'prefer not to say' responses both before and after promotional work will hopefully suggest that a number of these responses are due to misunderstanding our reasons for collecting this data, and what we do with it. If we do not note a significant increase in positive responses, we will look to identify why people prefer not to disclose: appropriate remedial action would differ if people fear discrimination on the basis of their personal characteristics than if they choose not to respond for ideological reasons.

We will review the way that our privacy agreement is worded to increase not only student participation, but staff confidence in our scope to request, measure and analyse special category data. We will also explore producing a brief video version of the privacy statement.

Collected Characteristics: Academic Partners

We can compare data from any combination of academic partners through our dynamic reporting tool *Bridge Reporting*, which is linked through SITs to provide up-to-date figures. Whilst quick analyses can enable staff to independently undertake bespoke EDI queries, production of comparative reports is prohibitively time consuming. In order to view figures relative to other partners and internal benchmarks, information needs to be extracted and disseminated in a more accessible and malleable format. Our E&D Advisor will look to progress this as part of the case to move towards a more universal and versatile reporting model, and will update on this point in April 2021.

As discussed, higher education (HE) data is collected centrally at the University's Student Records Office. Each academic partner gathers protected characteristics data from further education (FE) students to different extents. The table [overleaf](#) reflects what is collected across the partnership: green signifies that data is collected while red signifies that it is not.

Partner College	Age	Declared Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marital Status	Pregnancy/ Maternity	Race	Religion / Belief	Sex	Sexuality
Argyll	Not provided (PSED does not apply)								
HTC	Not provided (PSED does not apply)								
Inverness	Not provided								
Moray									
LCC									
NAFC	Not provided (PSED does not apply)								
NHC	Not provided								
Orkney	PSED delegated to Orkney Islands Council								
Perth									
SMO									
SAMS									
Shetland	PSED delegated to Shetland Islands Council								
WHC									

The above table goes some way to demonstrating the difficulty and delineation of reporting lines across the partnership. There are many possible reasons for this: some partners can be difficult to source information from, without the opportunity to meet and form a rapport. Some partners are not obliged to report on data, but do anyway; some delegate reporting to third parties and some have no PSED obligations. As such, it is important that we review regional reporting requirements, and develop a consistent approach across the partnership.

Perth & West Highland Colleges are the only partners who explicitly ask for information on gender reassignment, although some partners will offer 'other' as a potential response for questions relating to sex/ gender. As 'gender reassignment' relates to 'gender' as opposed to 'sex' (ie. social and physical transition and gender-presentation, as opposed to having intersex characteristics), it is important that we seek to include this question across the partnership, to avoid exclusion. As discussed throughout this report, implementation of recommendations from University of Strathclyde's [Trans Edu project](#) will provide reasonable grounds for starting to collect this data.

Reporting on Protected Characteristics Data

Programme Leaders and Subject Network Leaders (SNLs) each produce an annual quality monitoring report which includes key performance indicator data (KPIs), some relating to equalities information. Each Programme level report shows comparative figures on 3 years of data, including applications, enrolment, retention and attainment outcomes; the Subject Network level report covers 5 years' of historical data.



Data we can report on from Bridge Reporting has been limited, and relates to Gender, Ethnicity, Age and Disability to align with HESA returns. Now that there is a full-time E&D resource we

can justify running reports on all special category data in order to assess under-representation and support provision, and where necessary can plan remedial action from an informed perspective.

The characteristics currently reported on are documented below:

Level of SED	Characteristics Reported-On
Programme	Declared disability; gender; age categories
Subject Network	Declared disability; gender; age categories; SIMD; fee group and ethnicity

*SED: Self-Evaluation Document

In 2021 we will report on success measures in expanding the data categories we collect. In order to maximise the value of this exercise, we will look at ways to promote disclosure to prospective applicants and enrollers, to reduce the number of fields left blank. Currently, not every stage in the student journey is mapped to protected characteristic data, as noted in the table below.

Stage in Student Journey	Equality Data Reported-On
Applications	Yes
Enrolment	Yes
Retention	-
Attainment	-

Over the 2019-21 reporting period we will look into recording more extensive protected characteristics data, at more stages applicable to the student journey. Ultimately, this information is available through SITs, but when reported on programme

and network-wide scales, capacity to cross-reference equalities data is limited and time-consuming. As such, the E&D Advisor will work together with Subject Network Leaders to discuss how best to mainstream collection and assessment of equalities data wherever reasonable and justifiable.



Upon collection, we will limit the use of, and access to, retention and attainment data: due to low numbers in remote settings some people may be identifiable by cross-referencing minority status against programme of study, betraying whether they have suspended studies, withdrawn or achieved certain grade profiles.

Analysis of Student Protected Characteristic Data

Currently, Programme Leaders comment on KPIs only where they are noteworthy. With small numbers of some protected characteristic groups, it is not always apparent where a pattern of potential disadvantage occurs. Our E&D Advisor will investigate solutions, including production of cross-partner information packs and databases for SNLs and Course Leaders, drawing from baseline data, local/national benchmarks, and potentially highlighting when inputted figures fall outwith a given range. This would allow us to spot successes and priority-areas at the earliest opportunity.



Whilst centrally held data is recorded at enrolment stage, there is a requirement to collect applicant data in order to report on the student journey from application stage through to graduation and employment. Our reporting dashboard does not currently enable us to report on retention, attainment and successful completion by protected characteristic: going forward we will investigate solutions as a matter of priority.

Reporting on Specific Characteristics

Courses with sex-disparity in respect of representation, retention and attainment are considered in each of our University, Partner and Subject Network level Gender Action Plans (GAPs). Areas reported-on include courses with severe sex-underrepresentation (>75/25 split), as well as those with a >10% difference in retention and attainment.

Extrapolation of this process to include other protected characteristics is a significant undertaking, and for this reason we will explore this possibility only after undertaking activity to increase disclosure. As such, we hope to facilitate meaningful activity in the medium-term, as opposed to encumbering staff with a potentially inconclusive exercise in the short-term.

Identifying Potential Remedial Measures

Outwith the Gender Action Planning process there is not currently a forum for assessing student protected characteristics. As such it is difficult to tell if there are any implicit, unreported gaps in support.

Discussions suggest that collection and use of student protected characteristics data should constitute an immediate priority, now that staff capacity to analyse and advise has been expanded.

Plans are presently at an early point in discussion, and potential ways to explore data collection will require further scoping prior to development. However, initial conversations with the University's Head of Student Records Office, and Data Protection Officer suggest that pseudo-anonymisation of data collected through JISC Online Surveys would potentially stand to increase disclosure.

Collection of data through a pseudo-anonymised survey model would also provide intermittent opportunities to promote disclosure, through Class Reps, Promotional videos (via social media or email), or face-to-face with Personal Academic Tutors (PATs). We are in the process of piloting a comparable model with regard to REF 2021.



Staff Protected Characteristics

We currently collect staff information in respect of Sex, Race, Disability and Age, as per HESA staff return requirements. Our HR system currently only facilitates collection of these data, which we hope to address going forward. Brief analyses of existing staff data in relation to above categories is available [overleaf](#). Please note, that these figures relate only to those employed directly by the University and not those employed by each Academic Partner.

Going forward, increasing staff disclosures across the partnership will constitute a key priority, as well as establishing systems that can capture a broader range of characteristics (see [above](#) planned measures for student data collection to inform potential methodology).

It is also important to find ways to increase applications from disabled and BAME staff, and staff below the age of 30. The E&D advisor will produce a detailed operational plan which will cover each of the 9 protected characteristics, and will feed into our 2021 PSED Reports: actions set in time for the present round of updates would be reactive and not sufficiently well-considered to reflect either staff or organisational needs.

Data Collection in respect of REF 2021 represents an opportunity to trial new data collection methods with Research staff. As Research staff demography is directly relevant to Athena SWAN self-assessment, we will look to include a privacy statement that allows us to use data which is directly relevant for our April 2020 submission, to save duplication and survey-fatigue.



As well as a written privacy statement, our REF process will look to explain our rationale for collecting information through a <90 second video. This may be easier to find an opportunity to engage with than additional reading materials, and easier to relate to.



We will use pseudoanonymised data in order to track leaks in the selection pipeline, and establish if there is a demographic connection to who produces highest quality outputs. We will publish our methodology and findings on our website after submitting to REF in 2021.

Staff Data

The following information relates to staff who are employed directly by the University only. *Please note that the University is a collegiate federal partnership consisting of the University and 13 independent partners who are also employers in their own right.

Staff Data: Gender

Over the last 5 years there has been a consistent majority of women employed by the University. These figures are higher in 2017-18 than in 2016-17, which can be explained by new Nursing Courses being attributed to the University's HR System: our nursing staff are predominantly female.

Sex	2016-17		2017-18	
	No.	%	No.	%
Male	106	40.61	126	36.52
Female	155	59.39	219	63.48

It is apparent from **figure 2** below that the University had higher numbers of male and female staff in 2017-18 than in 2016-17. As we continue to expand our workforce, we hope that we continue to equally attract both men and women. **Figure 3** below shows that despite numbers of men and women increasing, that women are joining the service faster than men, as reflected in the incline of female staff, and the decline of male staff. As this disparity is increasing, we will review numbers upon submitting our HESA staff returns (2018-19) and set actions accordingly at this juncture.

Given that the University has a mean gender pay gap of 22% in favour of men, we should look to attract men into lower graded positions, and consider positive action in this regard. Attracting men onto nursing roles has potential to address underrepresentation both institutionally and at subject level. Alongside our support for women on the Aurora Leadership Programme, we hope to encourage more female applicants to senior posts, increase men in lower graded and gender atypical posts, and ultimately continue to close our gender pay gap.

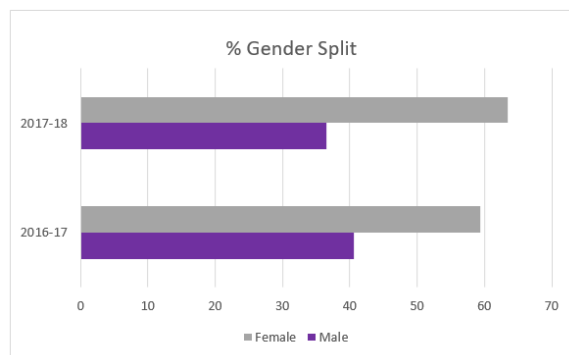


Figure 1

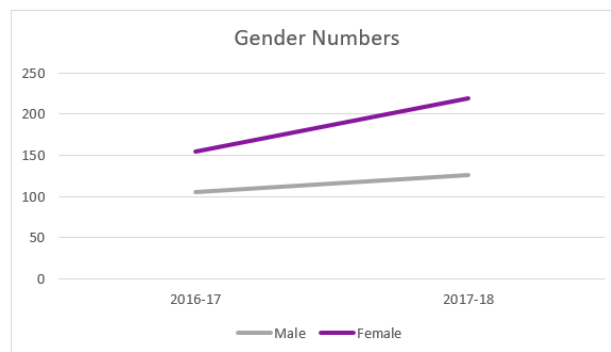


Figure 2

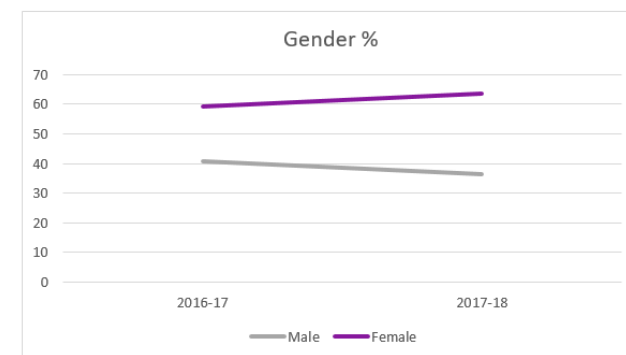


Figure 3

Staff Data: Age Categories

Figure 1 shows that over the 2016-18 period, the majority age group for University Staff is people in their 50's, who have only increased by <0.5% over this period, despite attracting the largest pool of candidates. By the same token, staff in their 40's have been proportionally consistent to within 0.05% over this period, despite the significant increase in our overall staff numbers. This shows that the majority of appointments are of staff aged 40-60.

Whilst the number of staff <30 has almost doubled, the overall proportion of staff at this age has only increased by <1.1%. Whilst this is a bigger % increase than those in their 40s and 50s, numbers were initially so small that this signifies a small increase overall. The number of staff in their 30s has seen the smallest numerical increase, resulting in a 4.37% decrease. As such we will look to conduct analyses on the age profile of applicants, interviewees and appointees to ascertain reasons for disproportionate growth among staff in their 40s and 50s.

The largest proportional increase is among staff over 60: this may be due to staff previously in their 50's turning 60, but if-so this will only contextualise increased 60+ figures, and suggests that appointment of candidates in their 50s is disproportionate to a greater degree than is initially apparent. **Figure 2** shows that all age categories have increased in number, whilst figure 3 shows that <30 and >60 have nominally increased in proportion, while 40s and 50s remained consistent, and 30's showed a proportional decrease.

Age Bands	2016-17		2017-18	
	No.	%	No.	%
<30	7	2.68	13	3.77
30's	78	29.88	88	25.51
40's	74	28.35	98	28.4
50's	79	30.27	106	30.72
60+	23	8.81	40	11.6

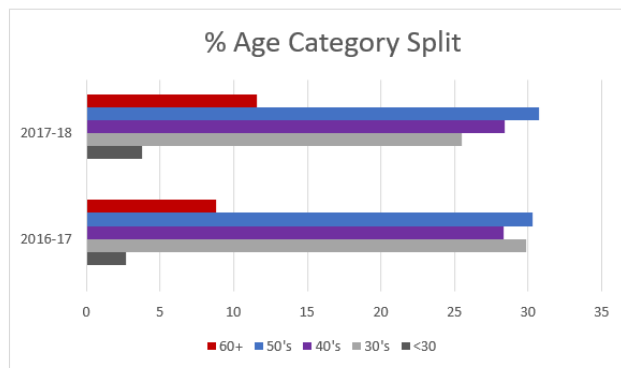


Figure 1

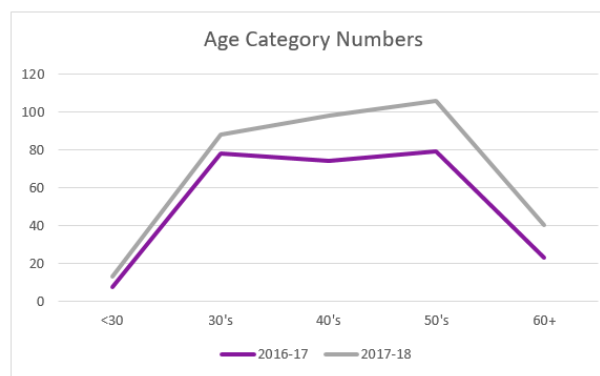


Figure 2

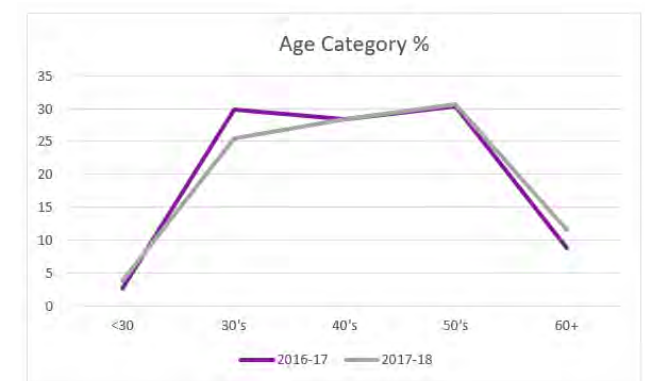


Figure 3

Staff Data: Declared Disability

Figure 1 shows that the proportion of University staff declaring a disability, leaving the field blank and those not declaring a disability have remained largely consistent, with negligible fluctuation in any category. The largest proportional difference is among those with no known disability, who have grown by 0.72%, despite making up more than 7x the declared disabled workforce.

Disability	2016-17		2017-18	
	No.	%	No.	%
No known disability	247	94.64	329	95.36
Declared Disability	8	3.01	9	2.61
Blank	6	2.3	7	2.03

Figure 2 shows that the number of both disabled staff and non-responders have grown over the 2016-18 period, although the increases are disproportionately low when compared to the overall staff increase. As such, the increase in numbers is undermined by approximately 0.5% drop in proportional representation from these categories (see **figure 3**).

Over the following two years we will look to increase the number of disabled applicants, as well as increasing staff confidence in disclosing a disability. Initial measures will involve liaising with Perth College UHIs Sensory Impaired Job Club, and potentially working with Advance-HE on their Disabled Staff Recruitment Project with our academic partners. We hope that this will reflect positively on Disability Pay Gaps on our 2021 Pay Gap Report.

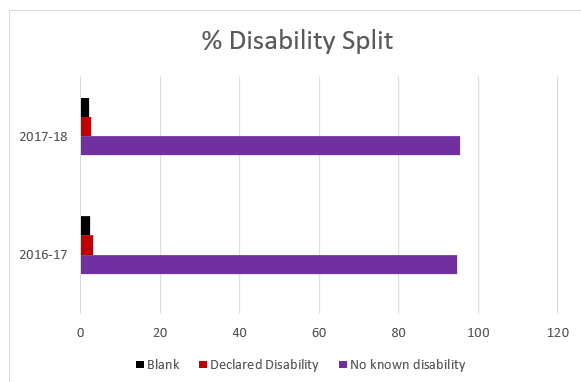


Figure 1

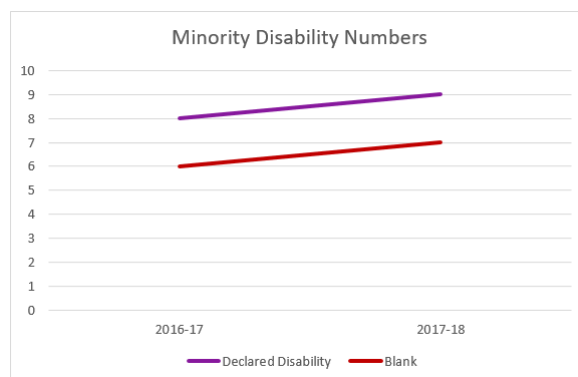


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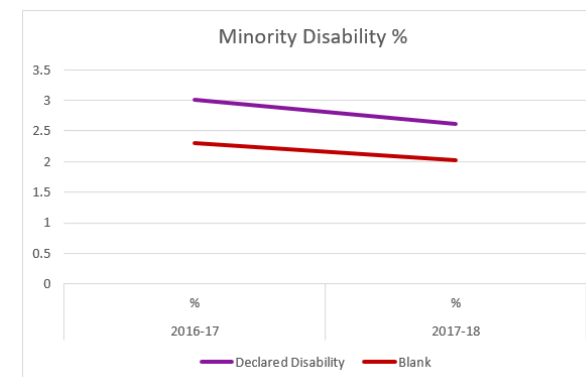


Figure 3

Staff Data: Ethnicity

The number of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME), and Dual Heritage staff has remained very low throughout UHI's history: this is in part due to low BAME residency in remote and rural Scotland, and a lack of advertising in large urban population centres across the UK.

Figure 1 shows that there has been a significant increase in White Scottish staff employed by The University, as well as a decrease in white staff members from other countries. We also see that all other disclosed ethnicities account for a tiny staff minority.

Figure 2 shows that both BAME and Dual Heritage employees have grown in number, although this is by such a small margin that numbers have been removed from graphs and tables to protect staff anonymity. As such, we will remain mindful of the fact that small fluctuations make a big proportional difference, and that if this positive trajectory continues that we are clearly progressing in terms not only of attraction, but retention. **Figure 3** shows small proportional increases for BAME and Dual Heritage staff, but this success is put in perspective by reading **figure 2** against **figure 3**: the number of non-disclosers remains identical, but the proportional decline of this category is steeper than the incline of the former 2 categories, suggesting that as we attract more staff, that disproportionately few of these are from non-white backgrounds.

Going forward, we will look to identify targeted action to attract ethnically diverse staff, and will look into measures for positive action, to ensure our workforce is representative of wider society.

Ethnicity	2016-17		2017-18	
	No.	%	No.	%
White Scottish	146	55.94	209	60.58
White Other	110	42.14	129	37.4
BAME	*	0.77	*	0.87
Dual Heritage	*	0.38	*	0.58
Not disclosed	*	0.77	*	0.58

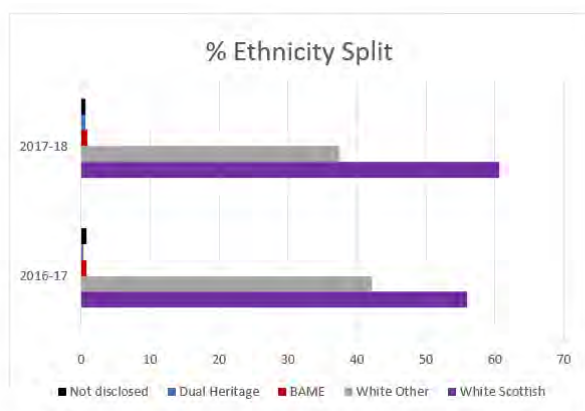


Figure 1

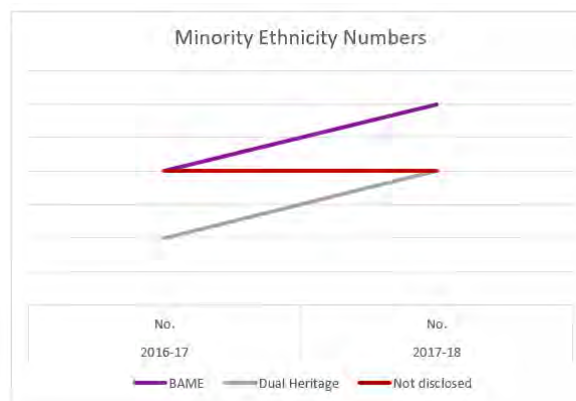


Figure 2

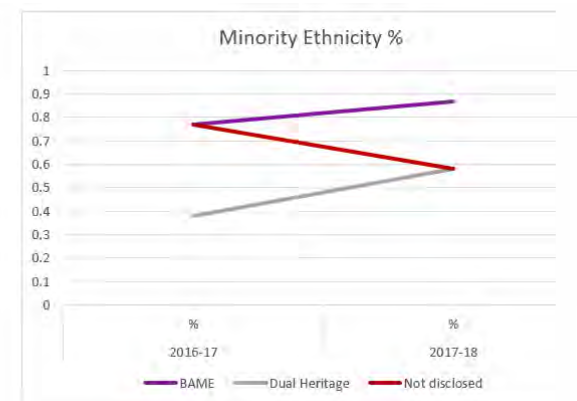


Figure 3

Annual Employee Information Reports

Academic Partner	Info Provided	Statement on Improving Data
Inverness	Orange	Grey
Moray	Green	Green
LCC	Green	Green
NHC	Orange	Grey
Perth	Green	Green
SMO	Green	Green
WHC	Green	Green

Our 2019 Annual Employee Information Report included a statement pledging to improve the depth, breadth and accuracy of data we collect. The University requested that academic partners provide information on whether they have done the same. The table to the left shows those who were required to provide a response, and what that response was: Green- Yes; Orange- Pending; Grey- N/A.

All Academic Partners who responded have included a pledge to improve their data in their reports. Going forward we will look to correspond with those yet to

respond to make them aware of the importance of doing so.

Orkney College UHI produce an overview for display on their website, as those looking to apply to the college may not feel inclined to access employee information from external services. Going forward, the University will look to request basic overviews of information, based on the information partners return to their respective governing bodies.



Employee Data on Recruitment, Development & Retention

We do not currently collect, store and analyse protected characteristic data on mandatory training. Moving forward, we will collect this data on E&D Training: this could constitute a 'quick win' in that the training itself provides a forum for encouragement and explicating rationale for collecting this data. Design of an online E&D training module will allow us to run reports on the demography of those who have completed the module, provided they have disclosed their special category data.

Over the medium term, we hope to be able to measure, analyse and report E&D data on all training, and we will look into the feasibility of this action for the next reporting round. This will allow us to see if any groups are implicitly discouraged from undertaking training, or have fewer opportunities to do so.



Currently, training, recruitment and retention data is held at departmental level across the partnership, limiting central access. This could potentially be explored as an aspect of partner visits, where rationale can be described in a way which can easily be related to

The University's recruitment figures are reported by protected characteristic in our Annual Employee Information Report 2017-19.

Gender Pay Gap Reports

Academic Partner	Info Provided	Pay Gap Published	Equal Pay Statement Published
Inverness	Orange	Grey	Grey
Moray	Green	Green	Green
LCC	Green	Green	Green
NHC	Orange	Grey	Grey
Perth	Green	Green	Green
SMO	Green	Green	Green
WHC	Green	Green	Green

The University requested that Academic Partners provide information on whether they have published a Gender Pay Gap Report, and whether this contains an Equal Pay Statement. The table to the left shows those who provided a response, and what that response was: Green- Yes; Orange- Pending; Grey- N/A.

We will aim to standardise the system as far as possible, including central production of an Equal

Pay Statement, and ensuring inclusion of Occupational Segregation reports, initially on grounds of gender.

Whilst not all partners are required to publish this data, we will aim to ensure that all partners are aware of the national sectoral disparity as regards equal pay, and the importance of collectively helping to address this deficit.

University Pay Gap Figures

The University has made significant progress in closing our Gender Pay Gap, with the 2018 figures significantly lower than the previous reporting round in 2017 (see table below). We will report 2019 & 2020 figures in April 2021. A detailed analysis is available in our [Gender Pay Gap Report & Equal Pay Statement 2017-19](#).

Pay Gap	2017	2018
Mean	32%	22%
Mean Benchmark	Grey	15.4%
Median	23.3%	13.7%
Median Benchmark	Grey	14%

Whilst our mean pay gap figure is higher than the national sector benchmark of 15.4%, this still reflects major progress against our internal baseline data. Our 2018 median pay gap is 0.3% less than the sector average of 14%.

Extensive work is still required to eliminate the pay gap, though this lies less in the structural framework of pay and more in the recruitment and development of women, particularly into our most senior posts. To do this we plan to:

- Continue to focus on professional and personal development with increased emphasis on women's leadership development, working both within the UHI network and with external partners such as Advance HE. (see information on [Aurora](#) and [Mentoring](#))
- Deliver our Athena SWAN action plan to address unequal gender representation across academic disciplines and professional functions.

- Continue to move to modern, flexible working for professional services staff, supported by an agile working climate and high-quality mobile technology, increasing our ability to recruit and retain staff that require flexibility to meet family and other commitments.



In addition, we will:

- Keep the operation of our appointment process under review to ensure that its application is not creating unnecessary barriers to reducing the gender pay gap.
- Engage with the Remuneration Committee to review and confirm the process and transparency by which they determine senior staff salaries.
- Review the academic role profiles and career pathways we have in place to ensure they are not implicitly furthering these pay gaps.
- Seek accreditation by the Living Wage Foundation



Conclusion

Whilst capacity to analyse and report on a full range of data has been limited, appointment of a full-time E&D resource will allow us to make more significant progress in 2019-21. Already, many discussions have taken place regarding potential approaches to student and staff data collection, and initial buy-in from senior staff is high.

Going forward, we will prioritise standardisation of what information is collected and reported across the partnership, with a view to producing a dynamic data reporting dashboard. This will significantly increase our capacity to identify successes and challenges in real time, as well as producing quantitative evidence of impact.

Analysis of complex gender imbalances at subject and course levels will be reported in our 2020 UHI Gender Action Plan, and informed actions will be set for 2021-25, once our data collection methods have been enhanced. In the interim, our focus will be on establishing a model that allows us to quickly and accurately identify rationale for these actions.

This chapter has discussed initial successes, and points for further action from 2019-21; these are collated and summarised in conclusion below:

Successes

- Addition of 'Mx' to titles on application forms
- Identifiable student data is only accessible to specific records staff with high-level permission
- Ambitious targets set at Subject Network level in respect of gender representation
- Initial discussions in relation to undertaking pseudo-anonymised data project underway
- Senior level buy-in to pilot data collection methods through REF 2021 EIA process
- Publication of Annual Employee Data Report (2017-19)
- Publication of Equal Pay Statement and Gender Pay Gap Analysis (2017-19)
- Flexible working facilitated where possible through mobile technology

Going Forward (relating to all staff and students unless otherwise stated)

- Discuss production of reporting dashboard for HE & FE Student Data, and Staff Data
- Aim to standardise which data is collected across APs, to include all 9 protected characteristics
- Aim to standardise what is collected at application and enrolment/ induction stages
- Expand reporting tools to allow analysis of student retention and attainment
- Explore mechanisms to assess staff data on development and retention centrally (subject to AP capacity)
- Produce central Equal Pay Statement, and seek to progress through Single Policy framework

- Aim to collect BSL User Data on application (staff and student)
- Review Privacy Statements to ensure clear rationale for collecting additional data
- Undertake promotional work to maximise disclosure of personal information from existing staff/ students/ applicants: review success with before and after data snapshots: determine further action subject to success
- Establish and pilot a model for pseudo-anonymised data collection
- Pilot data collection through REF 2021 (Bristol Online Surveys)
- Enhance data collection capacity for Athena SWAN Silver Application (April 2020)

- Investigate increasing breadth and depth of data we collect as a formalised aspect of the quality assurance framework
- Liaise on Staff Survey: potential to cross reference satisfaction with aggregated protected characteristics information

Outcome 4: Supporting Equality and Diversity in the Student Population

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Local Officers	p 68
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Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	p 74
Careers: Direct EDI Reference	p 74
Employability for Students with Disabilities	p 75
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Supporting Equality and Diversity in the Student Population

This section overviews activity that has helped to integrate EDI principles into the student journey since April 2017. This includes opportunities to feed into strategic decision making and curriculum design; to engage in the student representation process; undertake local and national initiatives; join clubs and societies; utilise alternative articulation routes as well as developing academic and career skills.

The following chapter reports on successes in achieving outputs set under **Equality Outcome 4: Supporting Equality and Diversity in the Student Population**, as well as documenting where further action is planned or necessary. This is the largest section of this report, with more than double the number of activities attributed to it as any other outcome we set: as E&D used to sit under the Student Services Team, associated processes are firmly mainstreamed into day-to-day operations.

In order to report on a complete cycle, this update will focus on the 2017/18 academic session unless stated otherwise. We will report on 2018/19 and 2019/20 sessions in our 2021 Equality Outcome Agreement & Mainstreaming Report.

Being locally based, regional in structure and having national and international reach, the University acts as a force for economic, social and cultural change as well as meeting the needs of individual learners. We value and respect the differences there are between people and promote opportunity for all.

In particular, we want our students to have the opportunity to study, to take up employment, to be involved in their community without discrimination and be treated with dignity and respect in all their dealings with the University. This requires support to overcome existing educational barriers and geographical isolation, as well as provision of opportunities that reflect the diversity of our student body.

We are proud of the work we are doing and welcome this opportunity to share our progress over the last two years in this report. We look forward to building further on this progress and continuing to support all our students effectively in our unique, distributed and inclusive institution.

-Dr Iain Morrison; Dean of Students

Student Feedback

Student Satisfaction

The University's [Get Involved](#) webpage contains a section detailing all the ways that students can 'have their say' including surveys, class reps, The Red Button and external reviews. Below is a diagram of the various points in the student journey where students have the opportunity to feed-back through surveys, and an account of survey results for selected students in the 2017-18 Academic Session:

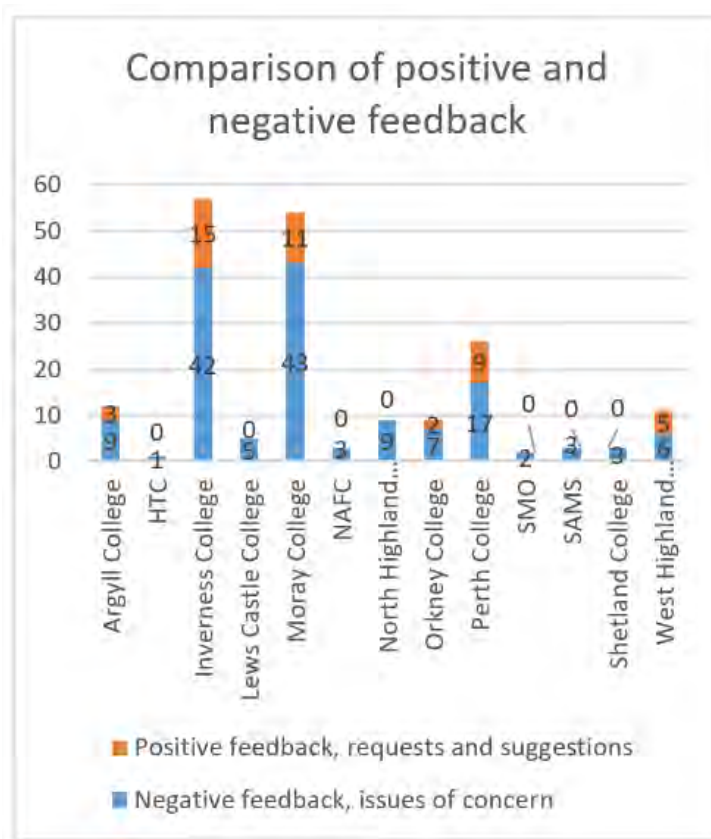
The National Student Survey (NSS) is aimed at final year HE students, and year 2 HND Students); overall satisfaction in 2018 was 85% (benchmark 83%). This represents an overall increase of 6% on our 2017 NSS score.

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES): the latest results for both surveys show an improvement and overall satisfaction at above the national sector benchmark level: PTES 79% (compared to 78%); PRES 87% (compared to 82%).

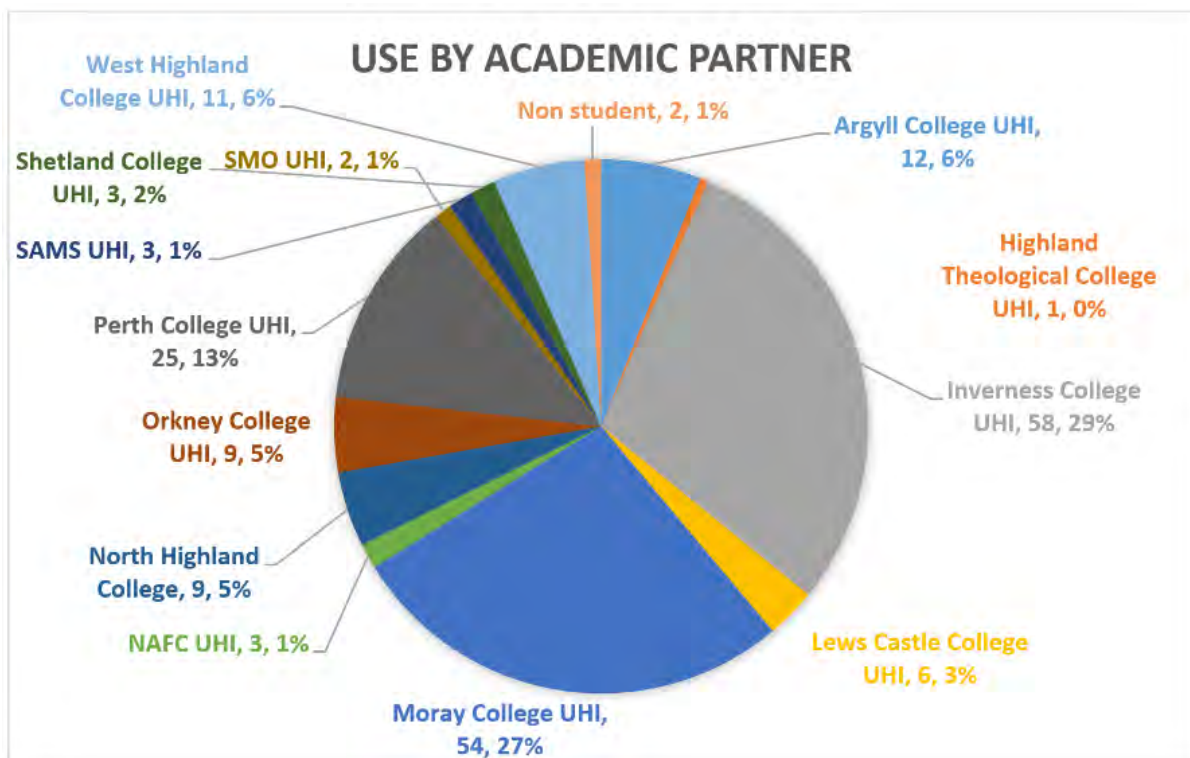
The above response rates suggest that the University outperforms sector averages in each of the HE surveys we promote. The university NSS Strategic Steering Group was set up to address issues arising from the survey responses and to monitor annual operational action plans.

The Red Button

The Red Button is an informal feedback and problem-resolution mechanism. Students are encouraged to submit questions, suggestions, issues of concern and positive feedback. Students are advised that they should raise any concerns with staff directly at their respective Academic Partner in the first instance. This is reflected in the drop from 331 enquiries in 2016-17 to 197 enquiries in the 2017-18 session. The number of Red Button submissions relating to a particular Academic Partner or Subject Network should not be viewed as an indicator of poor quality: increasingly, students are using the Red Button to express satisfaction and a higher number



of contacts can also reflect effective promotion of the service to students. Providing an early opportunity for student feedback and problem resolution through the Red Button helps us to improve the student experience, and can affect measures of satisfaction, such as the NSS.



It is apparent from above figures that Student Services have successfully continued to raise awareness of the Red Button, as each partner has utilised the service. Whilst disparity in number of enquiries will partly be due to different sizes of student populations, Inverness and Moray Colleges have by far the highest engagement with the service, with more submissions per head of population. As such, we will look to investigate and replicate promotional avenues utilised by these partners, to increase engagement across the partnership.

Discussions were previously held around including an option on the Red Button form for students to specify if their submission relates to a protected characteristic. The idea was postponed, as there was not a specific E&D provision to analyse this, and it was felt that this activity should wait until we had capacity to assure students of our rationale for collecting this data.

Examples of positive, negative and neutral feedback relating to equalities are reflected on the [table overleaf](#).

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	+/-	Comment	Resolution	Narrative
04/18	Inverness College	Further Education	+	Student wished to thank the staff member who helped with their additional needs and provided liaison with the exam board.	The student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed on to relevant staff.	The Red Button was used on a number of occasions to praise academic staff for supporting particular needs and helping students to overcome specific and general challenges.
05/18	Inverness College	Business, Management and Leisure	+	Student reported their lecturer had 'excelled themselves' with organised lectures and the support offered. The lecturer treats students as equals and is also very knowledgeable in the subject area. The student has found it a pleasure to attend the lectures.		In some instances, students expressed that they would have exited the course or underperformed without the support and knowledge of their lecturer. In many instances, students attribute their satisfaction with courses to the approach of their tutors to subject matter and individuals.
05/18	Inverness College	Business, Management and Leisure	+	Student said their lecturer was excellent and very knowledgeable. The lecturer is also a PAT and the support they've provided has had a direct affect on the student remaining on the course after a difficult period.		One Subject Network Area within Inverness College received multiple positive feedback relating to support and inclusion: the disproportionate level of positive feedback could relate to this SN having the highest number of inquiries submitted than other areas, with 22% of all inquiries. Inverness College also had the highest number of overall submissions. We will liaise with the appropriate team to extrapolate good practice going forward, either to other curriculum areas at Inverness, or to Business, Management and Leisure courses across the partnership. We will also look at how Inverness College publicise the service.
05/18	Perth College	Creative and Cultural Industries	-	Student was in touch stating that they experienced bullying and harassment from other students within halls.	The student met with a member of the Wellbeing and Support team to deal with the situation, and had the option	The Red Button provided a means for the student to seek assistance without having to attend campus in the first instance.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	+/-	Comment	Resolution	Narrative
					to attend subsequent weekly support meetings	
05/18	North Highland College	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	-	Student feels there is a lack of community for the humanities students. There are only four on the course this year and lectures are only a couple of times per week, which is making them feel as if they are not really part of the college. The group believe that some sort of mentoring system would help.	The students were contacted to arrange discussions around setting this up. It was suggested it could be for all students who are studying in isolation or in small groups and used as a platform to promote the more formal academic mentor groups to those who need it.	<p>Going forward, combatting isolation will provide a mainstreaming opportunity- mentoring not only stands to help foster feelings of inclusion and community, but also gives the opportunity to develop those requiring further confidence and skills to enhance specific prospects.</p> <p>We will aim to assess underrepresentation among Humanities students at NHC and to establish if there are opportunities to extrapolate benefits to wider groups</p>
05/18	Argyll College	Not provided	-	Student reported positive and negative experiences in relation to attending a course by VC. The student felt the technology was 'amazing' and praised the assistance from site managers as well as the teaching. The downside of coming in by VC from a remote and rural location was that the student did not feel they had peer support, or an opportunity for discussion with their classmates.	The student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed on to relevant staff.	<p>As above, isolation can be an issue at some of our more remote campuses, in particular if class sizes are low. As such, we will look at opportunities to increase students' engagement with both their college and each other.</p> <p>Other online fora will be explored, as well as opportunities for group work outwith class time.</p> <p>In addition to opportunities to improve, this feedback demonstrates students' appreciation of the University's goals, and the challenges we face in achieving these</p>
06/18	Perth College	Applied Life Studies	Request	Student has arranged for an autistic speaker to come along a residential weekend for their course. They requested funding to cover the speaker's travel costs and possible a small fee.	The Dean of Students confirmed the university would pay for the speaker's expenses, but could not offer a fee.	In some instances the Red Button is used to make suggestions, as opposed to providing feedback, for instance if a student does not know who to approach to assist with a certain query.

Students on Committees

There is student representation on all relevant University committees. A guide for students serving on committees has been produced and is available on Sharepoint: this is used directly with students, and through our Student Engagement Group.

Student members are nominated to join committees for their expertise as current students, and their knowledge and experience of student issues through other representative roles. Students participate on the committee as individuals, although they may also have links to HISA that might usefully inform the committee. The role of a student member will usually be to research, consult widely, and present evidence and perspectives that represent a wider student views, as opposed to those of an individual or particular group.

Class Representatives

We established an online training module for class reps, hosted on our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): Blackboard. Whilst the module does not currently have an explicit EDI element, the University's move over to new VLE [Brightspace](#) will provide an opportunity to incorporate this. We will also look for further opportunities to develop online 'train-the-trainer' resources for Class Reps, to help mainstream basic equalities training into a resource that students can relate to, and as another aspect of the Course Rep experience which feeds into employability contexts.

Whilst working at Perth College UHI, the E&D Advisor briefed local elected HISA President and Vice-Presidents on the Equality Act, and discussed synergies between HISA's work and the wider University E&D agenda to roll out to class reps. We will look to ensure that elected officers are consistently well-equipped in this regard going forward.

Student Partnership Agreement

In 2017/18 HISA and UHI launched a Student Partnership Agreement (SPA). The SPA outlines how staff and students can work together to improve the student experience and was developed in light of the recommendations in the Scottish Government's Post-16 Education Green Paper.

One of the three main themes identified in our 2017-18 SPA was to collaboratively improve mental health for all students: through the focus on mental health in this work stream, the group were able to create a Student Mental Health Agreement, with help from the University's Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Group. The agreement was launched on University Mental Health Day on the 2nd March 2018.



Regional Council

HISA's annual Regional Council took place from Monday 5th – Tuesday 6th February 2018 at the Mercure Hotel, Inverness. There were approximately 70 students in attendance, from 12 out of the 13 UHI partners.

Discussion centred on Travel in the Highlands and Islands: connecting communities in an effective, affordable and accessible way. HISA Vice President of Higher Education chaired a panel discussion, with questions submitted by students to MSPs and a local Councillor.

Student participation included an account from an Orkney College UHI student who uses a wheelchair and has a service dog, and often struggles with everyday travel. Their account fostered discussion that led to HISA adopting a transport-based Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) for the 2018/19 year, and to our student's situation being raised during First Ministers Questions.



Student Representation

The HISA team comprises student representatives who are full and part-time, both paid and volunteers: from Class Reps, who feed issues directly back to their classes; to those running HISA's clubs & societies; and to elected Local and Regional Officers, ensuring development that is appropriate to the region where they are based.

Manifestos from the 2018-19 Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates showed a pronounced interest in, and commitment to, equality issues, including but not limited to representation of minority groups. There was a clear commitment to women, BAME and LGBT liberation groups, but also a clear message of inclusion relating to Gaelic speakers, remote and rural inhabitants and FE students, who may feel peripheral due to associations of the University with the HE sector. A sample of candidates and extracts from their manifestos is available [overleaf](#).



Our E&D Advisor will work with HISA to provide practical advice and support in relation to focused E&D Activity.

HISA Officer Candidate	Extract from Manifesto
 <p data-bbox="135 526 459 622">Tom Green Perth College UHI HISA President Candidate</p>	<p data-bbox="491 286 1390 320">"I'm a 3rd year History student and General Manager of the Highland Stags"</p> <p data-bbox="491 360 636 394">My Policies</p> <ol data-bbox="491 434 1086 607" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More Digital Core Texts 2. Create Gaelic and International Officers for HISA 3. Create Regional Gaelic Committee 4. Open Forums with Students 5. Engage Students with their communities
 <p data-bbox="153 893 442 1099">Debbie Das Chaudhury Perth College UHI Vice President (Higher Education) Candidate</p>	<p data-bbox="491 667 1345 768">"I'm running for HISA Vice President for Higher Education. I am studying social sciences, and in the future I hope to work for a non-profit organisation."</p> <p data-bbox="491 808 636 842">My Policies</p> <ul data-bbox="491 882 1233 1160" style="list-style-type: none"> • Better variety of affordable food e.g. vegan, halal, gluten free. • Access to a microwave and kettle. • Reduce plastic waste. • Free sanitary products. • Set up feminism, LGBTQ, BAME clubs. • Improve learning resources. • Raise awareness on mental health. • Improve access to broadband.
 <p data-bbox="135 1422 459 1559">Liam Duffus North Highland College UHI HISA President Candidate</p>	<p data-bbox="491 1202 1374 1270">"I'm currently a student of Contemporary Filmmaking in the Highlands and Islands (BA Hons) at the North Highland College."</p> <p data-bbox="491 1310 1390 1411">I would like to address the lack of diverse representation for the wide group of students that belong to the UHI, and set up solutions to ensure a fair system of representation ... for our diverse students.</p> <p data-bbox="491 1451 1409 1585">I would also like to contact other student associations about representing our students on the effect of Brexit. This would be for our students from the EU who face uncertainty, and to ask the Scottish and Westminster Governments for assurances that SAAS will not be affected.</p>
 <p data-bbox="153 1807 442 1942">Callum Stephen Perth College UHI Vice President (Further Education) Candidate</p>	<p data-bbox="491 1700 1398 1872">If I am re-elected as VPFE I will seek to set up an FE focus group in order to ensure the accurate representation of FE students across the University. I will finish and expand on my work on mental health that I started last year. I will assure that LGBT students are accurately and fairly represented across every campus.</p>

Regional Officers

HISA's 2017-18 Regional Officers were each responsible for a Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) workstream; sitting on committees, boards, working groups and attending events. A selection of achievements with an explicit EDI element are outlined below:



Holly Scrimgeour
HISA President



Sorcha Kirker
HISA Vice President
Higher Education









Callum Stephen
HISA Vice President
Further Education




- HISA put forward a motion to NUS Scotland Women's Conference regarding the Repeal the 8th campaign in Ireland, which looked towards the government being allowed to legislate for abortion. HISA's VPHE spoke to this motion which was almost unanimously passed at the conference. She then travelled to Ireland with HISA's Student Association Coordinator, to help campaign in this referendum. Their involvement was highlighted in the Orkney press. ✓
- HISA's VPHE wrote a comprehensive report providing a snapshot of students' attitudes and habits towards mental health, physical exercise and wellbeing, and included survey results from 488 students. The report highlights the need for better mental health and physical health provision. ✓
- As the lead officer for liberation, HISA's VPHE increased HISA attendance at the NUS Scotland liberation conferences in 2017-18. These conferences saw the successful election of three HISA student representatives onto three different liberation committees (Women's Committee; Disabled Students' Committee; and LGBT Committee) ✓







Local Officers



The University also has local representation at each academic partner, whose roles are integral to our equalities agenda. Whilst the geographical isolation of many of our campuses limits the breadth of some protected characteristics, a generally egalitarian disposition is clear, as there is democratically elected HISA representation from minority groups including characteristics relating to gender, race, disability, pregnancy & maternity. This brings significant breadth of experience to the student representation process, and informs HISA activity from a range of perspectives.

Local Officers' key EDI achievements are documented [overleaf](#). The Officers relate to the 2017-18 session, with updates from 2018-19 and 19-20 to follow in April 2021. All activity in the below table is testament to effective mainstreaming across HISA. All academic partners are included below, with the exception of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, which has its own student union in recognition of the differing needs of a campus with a strong Gaelic Language influence. ✓

Academic Partner	HISA Representation	Eg. Equality Activity
Argyll College UHI	 <p>Shannen Calderwood HISA Local Officer</p>	<p>Shannen represented HISA and UHI students at many events over the year, including These Women Can, NUS Scotland Conference, NUS UK Conference and NUS Women’s Conference.</p> <p>The 2018 Christmas Ball was the first ever successful social event for students at Argyll, with students in attendance from Helensburgh, Campbeltown, Oban, and more– a positive step towards a closer partnership between the local communities.</p>
Highland Theological College UHI	 <p>Cate Ramos HISA Local Officer</p>	<p>Cate was President of the University Christian Union, with weekly meetings and extensive interaction between Highland Theological College (HTC) UHI and Inverness College UHI students.</p> <p>HTC students based at the main learning centre in Dingwall met up with distance learners based in Paisley. Students came together in Perth to share experiences and improve their sense of community.</p>
Inverness College UHI	 <p>Gabbi Starr HISA Inverness President</p>  <p>Chris Shaw HISA Inverness VP Engagement</p>  <p>Ryan McAdam HISA Inverness VP Education</p>  <p>Andrew Bowie HISA Inverness VP Equality</p>	<p>Inverness College Students’ Association (ICSA) officially joined HISA in summer 2017, so 2017-18 was first year of their local team being part of the HISA Team.</p> <p>The creation and implementation of a Society Sustainability Plan aims to provide better continuity for local Clubs & Societies: this resulted in almost all current Clubs & Societies having completed forward planning for the next academic year, with new leadership teams in place. This minimises the chance of important social outlets being discontinued.</p>

Academic Partner	HISA Representation	Eg. Equality Activity
<p>Moray College UHI</p>	 <p> Mark Harshaw HISA Moray Depute President Activities and Welfare </p> <p> Alan Simpson HISA Moray Depute President Education </p>	<p>The HISA team in Moray moved to a more visible and accessible office at the start of the year, improving engagement with both staff and students.</p> <p>This was the first year that HISA was in control of running the Class Rep system at Moray College UHI. Monthly meetings for all Class Reps provided two-way communication about issues and concerns as well as giving positive feedback. The Deputes provided Class Reps with the opportunity to meet board members and participate in workshops.</p>
<p>Lews Castle College UHI</p>	 <p> Joshua Smith HISA Local Officer </p>	<p>Josh was named Scotland College Rep of the Year at the 2017 sparqs' National Conference. He attended many national events, and was elected to the NUS Disabled Students' Committee for the 2018/19 year.</p> <p>Josh commented that "it was an honour to attend the NUS Scotland Disabled Students Conference and to represent more than 50 students who have a disability at the college."</p>
<p>NAFC Marine Centre UHI</p>	 <p> Ciaran Boyd HISA Local Officer </p>	<p>Ciaran has focused on engaging the NAFC students with HISA, to encourage a positive perception of HISA, and forge better links to students.</p> <p>He organised and ran a ten-week block of evening football sessions, funded by HISA, with the activity chosen based on feedback from students. The sessions were highly popular, with many NAFC students taking part.</p>

Academic Partner	HISA Representation	Eg. Equality Activity
North Highland College UHI	 <p data-bbox="524 395 629 422">Nicky Herd HISA Local Officer</p>	<p data-bbox="875 276 2116 395">Nicky is part of several committees, including the HISA Liberation Working Group and HISA Depute Support Working Group, as well as local groups based at the college: Drug and Alcohol Forum; Student Communication Strategy and the Board of Management.</p>
Orkney College UHI	 <p data-bbox="524 612 629 639">Hannah Thompson HISA Local Officer</p>	<p data-bbox="875 440 2152 515">Hannah worked in conjunction with the Orkney Alcohol Counselling Advisory Service, to help students understanding of alcohol, and their awareness of the dangers.</p> <p data-bbox="875 564 2152 639">Hannah also lobbied the college to provide free sanitary products for staff and students: this successful campaign received local and national press coverage.</p>
Perth College UHI	 <p data-bbox="338 847 465 874">Prince Honeysett HISA Perth President</p>  <p data-bbox="495 847 658 890">Nurina Sharmin HISA Perth VP Education and Engagement</p>  <p data-bbox="689 847 817 890">Rachel Daniel HISA Perth VP Welfare and Activities</p>	<p data-bbox="875 683 2018 715">Perth College Students' Association (PCSA) officially joined HISA in summer 2017.</p> <p data-bbox="875 767 2152 922">The HISA Perth team felt it was important to highlight Black History Month. Using resources from the NUS Black Students' campaign, they raised awareness and facilitated a week of African and Caribbean cuisine at the end of the month, which proved to be very popular with students.</p>
Scottish Association for Marine Science UHI	 <p data-bbox="524 1126 629 1153">Shannon Lafferty HISA Local Officer</p>	<p data-bbox="875 1010 2152 1126">SAMS students were the only UHI partner affected by the UCU strikes. To minimise adverse effect, Shannon attended meetings to look at the impact on students, and to update students as the strike progressed.</p>

Academic Partner	HISA Representation	Eg. Equality Activity
Shetland College UHI	 <p data-bbox="521 400 631 432">Michaela Kincaid HISA Local Officer</p>	<p data-bbox="875 252 2157 459">Michaela has worked hard to ensure that students from Shetland are able to take part in regional HISA activity - a full delegation represented Shetland College UHI at both Regional Council and Sports Day, even though the round trip took multiple days of travel. Away days allow Class Reps to meet and work through issues together, making plans for positive change in both Academic Partners in Shetland.</p>
West Highland College UHI	 <p data-bbox="528 639 629 667">Lucia Petrovicova HISA Local Officer</p>	<p data-bbox="875 523 2157 603">West Highland College UHI (WHC) participated in sparqs' Gender Action Plan pilot project, with meetings run by sparqs in order to further develop the college's Gender Action Plan.</p>

Clubs and Societies

There is not currently a mechanism for recording which clubs and societies have an explicit EDI focus, and this is something which we will look to address before the 2021 PSED reporting round. Additionally, we do not currently collect protected characteristics data on club-participation; we will explore possible ways to source this data without detracting from expectations of informal activity. Ultimately, it may prove most effective to uphold a message of universal inclusivity on all promotional and bureaucratic material relating to societies, to evidence that we are taking reasonable steps to remove barriers to participation.

Pan-UHI Clubs and Societies

HISA have set up a number of cross-partner clubs and societies, which continue to expand with the most recent addition being a University-wide LGBT Society: HISA Rainbow Foundation. Initial meetings have taken place, and a group area set up to move plans forward (see below). The ultimate goal is to ensure that LGBT students feel as well accommodated in our remote campuses as they would at one of our larger partners. Whilst it is too early to report meaningfully at present, we look forward to doing so in the 2021 reporting round.



HISA's Activities and Events Regional Co-ordinator conceptualised Adventure Clubs to meet the needs of FE students who may be undertaking shorter courses, and don't necessary have time to commit to regular attendance. By subsidising costs and charging low, one-off fees, students can partake in any activity they chose, without future commitment or recurrent cost. FE students advised they felt this was more like a 'college club' fostering a sense of belonging.



In March 2018, HISA was awarded the NUS Scotland Student Opportunities Award at the NUS Scotland Conference in recognition of their engagement and the inclusive, tailored choices given to students through Adventure Clubs.

Origins and Destinations: Supporting Access to Education and Employment


Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)


We are committed to widening access, and encourage applications from those who do not have formal entry qualifications. As part of this commitment, we support the principle of recognising all prior learning provided it can be assessed.


We updated our Recognition of Prior Learning Guide in November 2017, to provide advice to staff who are assessing contextualised applicants: the updated guide is available [here](#), and information from our website for those considering making a claim is available [here](#).

Training is provided to staff assessing RPL claims on an as-required basis. In addition to formal training, the Student Engagement Manager offers one-to-one support to those assessing claims. All staff currently assessing claims have been trained.

Careers: Direct EDI Reference

The Careers and Employability Service directly reference our EDI responsibilities in our Placement Policy and guidance for students, staff and employers. The policy has been adopted by the University's Single Policy Environment, and is revised annually. The policy is managed through the Placement Practitioners' Network, whose agenda includes EDI as a standing item. We ensure employers' observance of EDI principles by asking them to: confirm their adherence to processes that allow for reasonable adjustments to working conditions; confirm their awareness and understanding of the University's principles of Equality and Diversity; sign a tri-partite learning agreement in respects of the previous two conditions. 

Similarly, we explicitly state our position on EDI within our Student Entitlement Statement, which states: "...we will not knowingly support any employer or institution who is not committed to equality. Our services are guided by the principle of respect: we believe that a student or graduate is ultimately the best judge of their options and we do not 'tell people what to do', but seek to support the decision-making process." 

The Careers and Employability Service launched a new careers platform in March 2019. This contains a multi-purpose privacy statement which allows us to gather explicit consent to record careers guidance relating to particular needs, and store this within the Careers Management system. The data gathered is based around narrative as opposed to metrics, and will be used to build an informed empirical support-model for advice that we provide in future. The system holds information securely within protected case-logs and can only be viewed by the student themselves and the career advisor they are dealing with. 

Employability for Students with Disabilities

Students who declare a disability have a disproportionate non-continuation rate, which we are currently looking to address. In March 2019, our Careers and Employability Team Manager delivered a session at the Disability Practitioners' Group Development Day, with a focus on adopting a solutions-based approach to student transition into employment.

By helping students build the confidence to positively manage the move from university to employment, we help students develop the capacity to break down stereotypes regarding disabled employees; importantly, we also help students establish methods to talk with employers about support needs, without raising normative concerns relating to absence and flexibility.



Perth College's Student Engagement Officer and Additional Support Team Leader communicated with Deaf Links to set up a Job Club for sensory impaired students: the initial session was hosted within the Careers Department at Perth College, and we will report on uptake and impact in 2021.

Students with Specific and Complex Needs

Additional Support Provision

Our Disability Support Coordinator describes their role as "supporting the supporters" to deliver an equivalent student experience between all sites, and all individuals. Whilst their role is staff facing, it has a direct impact on student experience.

The majority of our Disability Support Coordinator's work focuses on the development of policy and guidance across the University. As a qualified DSA Needs Assessor, with a professional background in Equality & Diversity they bring a high level of first-hand experience to the role.

The University's Disability Practitioners' Group provides an opportunity to network across the partnership, and is described in the [Cross Partner Equivalence](#) and [Staff Development](#) sections of this report.

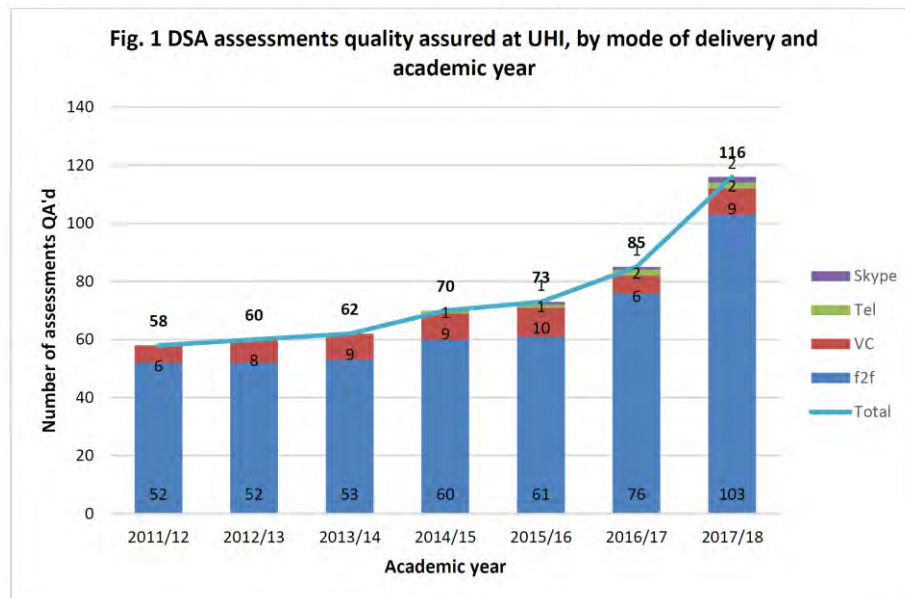
Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) Service

The University DSA Service previously had no involvement in the quality assurance of needs assessments completed externally for our students. Our Student Support Team now requires quality forms to be submitted for assessments completed by freelance assessors for UHI students, given that these assessments will not have been quality assured through other channels. This process will also provide a more accurate indication of the number of university students assessed for DSA in a given year.

The University quality assured >200 needs assessments internally in 2016/17 and 2017/18, via media appropriate to students' locality. These comprised:

- 179 face-to-face assessments
- 18 assessments conducted by Video Conference/ Skype
- <5 assessments conducted by telephone

The number of needs assessments quality assured internally by the University has increased exponentially since the University first gained accreditation in 2011, as illustrated below:



Personal Learning Support Plans (PLSPs)

We have a University-wide Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP) process, which is underpinned by staff guidance facilitating cross-partner consistency of support. The PLSP process is available to anyone disclosing a disability or specific support need.

In 2014, the University started building toward a cross-partner model, gradually progressing from foundations to a process now recognisably functional at a holistic level, using a standardised form and process across all partners. The PLSP process and associated guidance also aligns with the tertiary learner support policy and procedures, developed under the University's Single Policy Environment project.

Example Impact: Inverness College UHI has had a focus on specific learning differences for several years. As a result, success rates for learners with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or AD(H)D have increased by 15 points since 2015-16 and success rates for learners who have disclosed that they have an Autistic Spectrum Disorder remain high overall. The attainment gap between learners in these groups and those who have no known disability has almost been closed.

Corporate Parenting & Care Leavers Group

Prior to the inception of statutory guidance on Corporate Parenting in the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#), the University established a Care Leavers Group, which has since been joined by formation of a Student Carers Group.

[Corporate Parenting Plans](#) covering 2016-17 and 2017-18 were initially published in 2017; we submitted a formal report to the Scottish Government in 2018. We anticipate publication of another report before, or concurrently with publication of our 2021 Public Sector Equality Duty reports. We also report on Care Leavers as part of our [Regional Outcome Agreement](#).

Over the last 3 years, the main focus of Care Leavers and Corporate Parenting groups has centred on aligning activity with corporate parenting legislation. Now that plans have been implemented, the next step is to focus on progressing activity.

Student Services currently attend corporate parenting events and disseminate key information across the partnership as part of an effort to ensure that all staff are up to date on key developments to roles, responsibilities and practice. Work is currently underway to establish a mandatory partnership-wide training framework.

Student Services are presently drafting a paper requesting that we waive graduation costs for care-experienced students. It is our hope that we can cover the cost of gown-hire, travel and certificates. Publicising this initiative clearly on our website stands to attract those who may have been discouraged to apply by the idea of hidden costs, as well as allaying fears of exclusion among our existing student-base.



In addition to prospective measures noted above, we run a scheme whereby within our City Heart student accommodation we act as rent guarantors, recognising that without such an initiative, that many care experienced individuals stand to be disadvantaged, stressed or even completely excluded by a point which many people take for granted.



Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities (ESCU): Combatting Gender-Based Violence

In September 2015, Universities UK established a taskforce to examine violence against women, harassment and hate crime. The Taskforce assessed the nature and scale of the problem in HE institutions, leading to publication of [Changing the Culture](#) report in October 2016. This report contains 9 primary recommendations for combatting Gender Based Violence (GBV), which the University are currently working to uphold.

The Scottish Government worked in partnership with the University of Strathclyde from 2016-18 to create the [Equally Safe in Higher Education \(ESCU\) Toolkit](#), ensuring that staff and students are aware of the prevalence of GBV, as well as responsibilities and skills necessary to tackling it. It includes information about the signs that someone may be in an abusive relationship, including changes in performance, missing classes and isolation from peers.

The university is at an early stage in implementing our ESCU Strategy, and work to integrate the toolkit has constituted a major driver in this process. The University has set up a strategic group, formed a living action plan, as well as a dedicated [Gender Based and Sexual Violence webpage](#), containing links to local support services. We have circulated support cards to raise awareness (see photo inset right), and for staff to keep with their staff cards to move towards provision of first-responder support.



We are looking to mainstream guidance on abuse and harassment into Promoting Positive Behaviour policy material, which we aim to incorporate into a singular Code of Conduct over summer 2019. This stands to ensure that materials are not kept in isolation, and are familiar to staff and students before such a time as they need to access these. It will also help foster wider understanding of issues relating to GBV prior to anticipated implementation of an online reporting and disclosure tool.



The University has submitted an application to the Association for Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE), to produce Level 1 First Responder Training. The application is progressing at present, having passed the first round of funding applications: we are currently waiting to hear of further progression. We intend the online training to be an introductory precursor to face-to-face provision, allowing our more remote locations early-access. We also hope that the resource will be picked up by other agencies across the sector, and would welcome queries in this regard.



Going forward, key priorities will include networking with broad contacts across Scotland, to ensure that we are able to potentially help coordinate support for students across the partnership. As with all aspects of cross-partner activity, this will involve overcoming logistical issues such as forming relationships with different local support services.

Love Doesn't Hurt Event

The 'Love Doesn't Hurt' event was held at Executive Office in March 2019. The event was part of a series of three workshops taking place across Scotland to support the implementation of the Toolkit, and to distil key lessons from Freshers' Weeks to inform future awareness work across Scotland's colleges and universities. The day featured addresses from a range of guest speakers, including Fiona Drouet from the #EmilyTest campaign who spoke about the tragic death of her daughter, a law student who took her own life as a result of gender-based violence, and shared important lessons for how support can be improved.



Delegates also watched a video address from Richard Lochhead MSP, minister for FE, HE and Science. He thanked attendees for coming together to discuss GBV and underscored the Government's commitment to tackling it. There were also workshops, panel discussions and a buffet lunch. Feedback is currently being compiled by University of Strathclyde.

Prevent Duty

Within universities and colleges, the term Prevent refers to measures taken to safeguard members of the university community who might be at risk of being drawn into terrorism ([Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015](#)).

Our Careers and Employability Team Manager is the University's single point of contact (SPC) for Police Scotland: there is an SPC in each partner, who mediate between subjects and the University's SPC, who then mediates between partners and Police Scotland. Part of the training involves how to meet our safeguarding duties by resolving issues locally where possible.

If cases are deemed to require escalation, our SPC will contact the Police, who decide if the Prevent process should be applied. Currently, numbers of logged cases are too low to publish.

The University has internal Prevent Group meetings twice a year. Our SPC attends Highlands and Islands regional Prevent meetings, as well as the national Higher Education Prevent Working Group, which includes representation from all Scottish universities.

The University's SPC is trained to deliver the highest level (WRAP3) Prevent training (completed: October 2018). The University also hosts online training, which is mindfully balanced in its representation of radicalisation, including far-right-wing and sectarian activity as prominently as other normatively-foregrounded fundamentalist belief systems.

Student Underrepresentation

At present we are limited in the data we can report on: student underrepresentation will be reported in detail in the University's Gender Action Plan (July 2020). Broader protected characteristics analyses will follow, subject to success measures in relation to improving the depth and breadth of data we collect, as per [Equality Outcome 3: Data and Disclosure](#).


Our 2017-21 Equality Outcomes Agreement states the activity of developing "a model to address underrepresentation". As each area requires a tailored approach- ideally developed locally- a singular 'model' is not an ideal solution. Going forward we will explore different ways to disaggregate data to ascertain if different approaches are appropriate to particular geographical factors.


We will look to set high-level actions, for each partner to amend to their own local needs, and work together with Subject Networks to establish bespoke approaches to different curriculum areas. Subject to conclusive evidence, these activities should allow significantly greater flexibility to our approaches to addressing complex imbalances. We have included examples


of measures to address underrepresentation of women and men in particular subject areas below:


Men into Care

Currently only 3 per cent of the childcare workforce in Scotland is male. Men-only care courses are delivered at FE level across the partnership, as part of our efforts to address serious underrepresentation in this area. Many actions are in their early stages, and are part of a goal to increase males studying Care by 10% within 5 academic years of September 2017.

Partners delivering Applied Life Sciences Courses (led by Inverness College UHI) have been successful in their joint bid to SFC for a £23,600 grant to help address gender imbalance in childcare settings. The grant will be used to pilot a 12-week 'Men and Childhood Practice' twilight course in 2019 to encourage more men into early years and childcare. Those completing the course will be guaranteed an interview for the HNC Childhood Practice; classes will be run in the early evening to allow men already in employment to re-train. 

At Perth College UHI, the 'Men in Childcare' course is run in partnership with the Local Authority. The college won the 'Championing Gender Equality' category at the Scottish Public Services Awards (December 2017), and was commended for their innovation and partnership working. This prize is supported by Holyrood magazine and The Scottish Government, and is aimed at 'an initiative that removes barriers and improves the work experience and engagement levels of employees, demonstrating excellence in the delivery of services to all genders'. 

Orkney College UHI deliver a 'Men into Childcare' one-day taster to increase awareness of childcare and early education careers, hopefully raising aspirations to enter into these. The college also undertook a study to identify good practice in recruiting young male carers, concluding that the terminology used may imply the need to deliver care at an intimate level, and does not reflect that varied work experience that care roles draw on. Male interviewees showed eagerness to help promote care as a career, appearing to favour either going into schools and colleges, or being videoed for secondary school career-talks. This may provide an opportunity to liaise with school pupils on how to title/ describe courses to attract male students. 

Argyll College UHI made a promotional video with a male staff member from the nursery and statements from male students explaining what it was like being a male student in the childcare industry; the video is available [here](#). The College also employed a male tutor and ensured a male presence in course promotional-imagery. 

Male students increased by 300% last year alone, suggesting that these measures are proving an initial success. As previously noted, small numbers on some courses mean that such influxes could be co-incidental, so we will be better placed to report on sustained success in the 2021 reporting round. Lews Castle College UHI also ensured presence of male students in their promotional care video, available [here](#).



Women in the Rural Sector: Women in Wellies Event

Across Scotland the rural workforce is nearly 74% male. The Women in Wellies campaign was conceived by Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) to try and encourage women into rural professions.

The event was held at Boat of Garten, and involved presentations from women working in forestry, farming, gamekeeping, recreation, conservation and academia. The event took place in October 2018, and was attended by over 170 people, including S4-6 pupils from 5 schools across the Highlands. The event was promoted through the UHI partnership as part of the goal to diversify our student base in this area.

When speaking at the campaign event, Head of Forestry Commission Scotland Jo O'Hara stated:

“As soon as a woman shows up in a room full of men, who are used to being in a room full of men, just by being a woman in the room you've broken the norm and you get innovation happening.”

-Jo O'Hara; Head of Forestry Commission Scotland

The University's International Women's Day Celebration (2019) allowed the opportunity to follow up on this point, by inviting 4th Year UHI Geography Student Deborah Halliday to present on her experiences volunteering with Cairngorm National Park, and undertaking rural sector study at the University.

Deborah presented at length, describing the enjoyment and fulfilment she has gained from, and contributed to the course. Feedback widely reflected that her positivity and enthusiasm were contagious, and a very effective source of encouragement for those considering rural volunteering and further study. As much of the day was heavily focused on sexual and gendered differentiation, it was refreshing to see a talk which demonstratively undermined societal stigma, without explicitly presenting an argument in this regard. The enduring message from Deborah's talk was that outdoor professions can be enjoyable for everyone, regardless of personal characteristics.



Gender Balance and STEM

The UHI STEM team have intensified and broadened their activities in schools focusing on inspiring potential STEM students at an early stage and seeking to break down gender barriers by planning female only computer programming and male only care/nursing events.



STEM Strategy

The University is in the process of creating a new high-level STEM strategy, led by our STEM Development Officer. The strategy aims to coordinate approaches to STEM learning and teaching (L&T) in school and community engagement across the University network. This aligns with the four key areas outlined in the Scottish Government STEM strategy: inspiration, excellence, equity and connectivity. Gender equality is an integral part of the strategy: we aim to address unconscious bias and to improve participation in all STEM courses.

The University STEM Team are currently leading on a school engagement project within the Highland Council region. This SSE-funded project aims to inspire pupils to engage with STEM. Over the last year the STEM Team have completed over 150 school interactions engaging with more than 6000 pupils across the Highland region. The vast majority of such interactions are with Primary schools, however we have also increased our work with Secondary schools and introduced new Early Years sessions.



The Early Years sessions were devised in light of extensive research showing that pupils enter school having already formed strong gender stereotypes. Sessions aim to introduce pupils as young as three to different STEM careers and aims to dispel gender stereotypes relating to professional pathways appropriate to particular genders.



In 2018 we worked with a women in construction group. Many of the women advised that their experience throughout school and FE/HE education had not explicitly discouraged pursuit of STEM careers, but that the sexism they experienced once they had entered the workplace had severely impacted their career trajectory and in some cases had led individuals to leave the sector. Subsequently, the STEM Team believe that it is equally important for boys and girls to understand that women are as suitable for high level posts as men.



In addition, we concluded that we do not merely face a gender divide, but that even genders are subdivided. For example when asked to draw / describe an engineer, more than 90% of pupils (regardless of age or sex) drew a stereotypical "masculine" man. Therefor the STEM Team have adopted new approach that focuses on actively using counter-stereotypical examples to normalise under-represented groups in particular disciplines. The overarching message is that anyone can do anything, provided they have the requisite skills.



The STEM Team has increased work with uniformed groups, targeting girl Guides, Brownies and Rainbows to increase the awareness of STEM pathways. The STEM Team have supported a number of community 'girls into STEM' events, including SMART STEMS Girls into Coding, Developing the Young Workforce and Skills Development Scotland's respective Girls into STEM events.



The STEM Team have a number of stereotype-busting events planned in the near future including a Scottish Government-funded, girls-only STEMinist event during the Inverness Science Festival. This aims to introduce participants to a range of counter-stereotypical STEM role models. From August 2019 we also plan to introduce a number of STEM stereotype-busting career-long professional learning (CLPL) for Primary and Early Years practitioners to embed gender equality across the curriculum.



Inverness Science Festival 2018

It is widely recognised across the E&D sector that addressing gender and cultural stereotypes is most effective during formative years. The STEM Team played a central role in coordinating the Inverness Science Festival, which looks to increase engagement with STEM subjects and professions. The Festival saw a number of free events and workshops for children and adults across Inverness, in addition to series of evening lectures. A series of school events ran alongside the public programme.



The STEM hub engage heavily with local schools and professionals: work includes the weekly "Inverness Coding Club", which is an after-school club with a computing focus. While the club is not gender-specific, it provides a safe space where senior secondary pupils can explore their interest in coding.



UHI's Athena SWAN SAT Lead is heavily involved in encouraging Women into STEM, and delivered a workshop with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in Inverness over 2 days on the 8-9 February 2018. The first night comprised an informal discussion with senior secondary pupils, where panellists describes what they do, their educational backgrounds and career paths to date.



The following day was aimed at junior secondary pupils: Our SAT Lead delivered a 20-minute talk, and performed hands-on experiments with the Royal Society of Chemistry. Additionally, there were presentations from Head of Communications at Scottish Association for Marine Science UHI (SAMS) describing the experience of studying at SAMS, and a hands on session with a member of UHI Nursing.



School outreach will be further reported in 2020 in respect of UHI's Gender Action Plan, and mapped to Equality Outcomes in April 2021.

STEM Hub

UHI has developed a dedicated STEM Hub at An Lòchran, Inverness, which has been extensively involved in outreach with schools, and liaison with businesses. The Hub is regularly contacted by these parties, and helps build UHI's place in the local community infrastructure: we will look into the possibility of logging interactions on CRM as part of a wider E&D action (See [Stakeholder Engagement](#)).



Social Media



*** Attracting diverse students and staff is an important part of our mission to address under-representation. Social media represents an opportunity to demonstrate our mainstream support for liberation campaigns and days of celebration. As with our clubs and societies, our Twitter and Facebook presence allows us to form cross-partnership connections, and positive discussion is often fostered in the comments sections. To the left is an example UHI harnessing and showcasing local liberation, and of days of celebration across the wider partnership area.



Conclusion

We have shown that extensive E&D-related activities have taken place so far in the 2017-19 reporting period in relation to **Equality Outcome 4 Supporting Equality and Diversity in the Student Population**. Significantly more success measures and actions are noted than for other outcomes: our 2017 reports identified more than double the outputs for this than any other area.

The previous section provides extensive examples of mainstreaming serving not only protected groups, but wider E&D contexts relating to Gaelic Language, Care Leavers and those who suffer isolation or addiction. Significant activity has occurred in relation to student feedback; representation; clubs and societies; employer engagement; pathways to admission and employment; specific support arrangements; workstreams relating to particular needs and liberation groups. Going forward, priorities and opportunities to collaborate will be established with the E&D Advisor.

This chapter has discussed successes and points for further action; these are collated and summarised in conclusion overleaf:

Successes

- Improved NSS, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) results
- FE Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey results higher than sector average
- Increase in face-to-face enquiries, over queries submitted via the online *Red Button*
- Increase in geographical breadth of *Red Button* Enquiries
- Widespread positive feedback in relation to additional support needs, video-conferencing & retention

- Production of guide for students serving on committees, increasing confidence among younger or less-experienced committee members
- Production of online training module for Class Reps
- High uptake of class-rep training & local facilitation
- Action on accessibility raised in Parliament as a direct result of student presentation at Student Council event
- Inception of Student Partnership Agreement: subsequent Student Mental Health Agreement
- HISA and UHI awarded two stars for *Healthy Body Healthy Mind* Award.

- Diverse candidates and policies for HISA elections: record voter turnout across UHI
- Input to *Repeal the 8th Amendment* campaign in NUS Scotland Women's Conference: featured in Orkney press
- Comprehensive report on students' attitudes and habits towards mental health, physical exercise and wellbeing
- Reduction of fees for students who do not complete their studies
- Extensive networking of HISA Officers
- Open commitment to E&D from serving HISA Student President

- Extensive pan-UHI events/ activities, including attendance from remote island partners
- HISA awarded NUS Scotland *Student Opportunities Award* at the NUS Scotland Conference in recognition of the inclusive, tailored choices given to students through *Adventure Clubs*.

- Threefold increase in number of clubs; fourfold increase in membership since 2015/16
- Forward/ succession planning for HISA Elected Officers & societies
- Election of three HISA student representatives onto three different liberation committees (Women's Committee, Disabled Students' Committee and LGBT Committee)
- Elected Officer for LCC named *Scotland College Rep of the Year* at the 2017 SPARQS' National Conference; and was elected to the *NUS Disabled Students' Committee* for the 2018/19 year.

- Raised awareness of drug and alcohol addiction/ services
- Afro-Caribbean Cuisine Event at Perth College UHI; joint Afro-Caribbean Society Ball with University of Aberdeen

- Increase in DSA needs assessment undertaken in-house by qualified needs assessors
- Improved Quality Control RE: external DSA Needs Assessments
- UHI *Prevent* Single Point of Contact trained to WRAP 3 level

- Update to Recognition of Prior Learning Guidance
- Provision of one-to-one support to those assessing contextualised admissions claims
- Creation of 5x Curriculum Development Employment Engagement Officer posts
- Implementation of *Curriculum Development Employer Engagement Plans*.
- Inclusion of explicit EDI conditions for students and employers in UHI Placement Policy
- Updated privacy statement allowing us to record careers guidance RE: particular needs
- *Transitions to Employment* workshop for staff & students RE: unseen disabilities

- Creation of *Corporate Parenting* and *Student Carers* E-Learning modules

Going Forward

- Introduce protected characteristic fields to *Red Button* online feedback mechanism
- Scope opportunities to incorporate explicit E&D material into Class Reps Online Training module and student induction sessions
- Look for opportunities to work in-depth with Class Reps

- Record Clubs and Societies with explicit EDI focus
- Establish feasibility of recording protected characteristics RE: club membership

- Scope production of Wider Access Guidance case-studies resource
- Scope opportunities to further engage employers in curriculum design

- Production of online EDI training resource for students: scope producing similar resource RE: Disabilities, subject to success of EDI module

- Publish update to Corporate Parenting Plans
- Submit paper requesting to waive graduation costs for care-experienced students, who may be deterred from applying by the prospect of 'surprise costs'.

- Build on initial employability activity for students with disabilities

- Investigate potential for setting cross-partner actions to address underrepresentation in individual curriculum areas

- Build collaborative relationships between E&D Advisor and: Class Reps; Elected Officers; CDEEOs

Outcome 5: Staff Development

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Staff Development

Each Partner currently manages staff development locally, with a number of ongoing initiatives taking place across the partnership among practitioner groups and subject networks. Training uptake is not currently reported-on in an E&D context, and this will form one of our priorities from 2019-21.

A number of the activities from our Equality Outcome Agreement (2017-21) relate to Staff Development. Presently, some activities are far-advanced and others are in their early stages. The Educational Development Unit (EDU) and Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) are undertaking extensive work and research to develop our workforce, and address gender-underrepresentation. With the appointment of a full-time E&D resource comes the opportunity to develop more holistic and accessible online E&D training, as well as face-to-face provision at induction and for bespoke purposes. Ultimately, we will work to ensure universal awareness that EDI is the responsibility of every employee, and that it is embedded it at every level of the organisation.

The following section focuses on Equality **Outcome 5: Staff Development** and **Outcome 6: Staffing**, highlighting activity to date and points for further development.

Equality Training

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Training

The University supports staff to develop the skills and understanding necessary to completing Equality Impact Assessments via the mandatory online training module. The module can be undertaken at a time convenient to each individual across the partnership. The training can be undertaken in one or multiple sittings, bookmarking progress to these ends.



Currently, 77% of University staff have completed the module, with 4.5% currently in progress. Those yet to undertake the training include staff members who have joined UHI since the last promotion of the module, and as such we will look into promoting E&D training specifically as part of the induction process.

Across the partnership, uptake of the module has been slower: the following figures exclude West Highland College UHI, who maintain the module locally. Currently, 40.5% of all staff across the partnership have completed the module, with 11% currently in progress. As such a majority (48.5%) are yet to undertake the training. Disparity between cross-partner and University uptake demonstrate the difficulty of promoting effectively in a consistent manner; we will look into solutions going forward.

West Highland College UHI (WHC) manage their own online EIA training provision, which is not mandatory for all staff, instead being aimed at "managers plus any other staff involved in

the preparation of policies, strategies or procedures.” Currently, WHC have 156 staff, of whom 44.23% have completed the module. Among registered staff are 27 managers, of whom 4 do not meet the criteria to undertake the training. Of the 23 remaining managers, 95.6% have completed the module.

Given that our current data collection on staff development looks at all roles across the partnership, we are not currently able to report on which job roles are completing the module. Given that WHC are able to confirm that >95% of managerial staff completed the module, there is precedent for isolating the most impactful staff for EIA training completion to maximise uptake, and ensuring mandatory E&D training provision for all staff through a more general EDI module.



WHC also offer a Diversity in the Workplace online module, which has been undertaken by 86.53% of staff, again showing higher ‘all-staff’ uptake than the more specific EIA module. Our E&D Advisor has established a rapport with Staff Learning and Development Administrator at WHC to look further into their E&D training methodology, and will continue to develop a working relationship going forward. Further plans in this regard are outlined below.



To conclude: WHC seem to have a model that is pitched at the right level for various roles. As such we will look to explore potentially replicating this model, in order to evidence that strategic, tactical and operational staff have an appropriate level of training to serve their own professional needs, as well as those of the university more widely.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Training

As discussed above, all University Staff are required to undertake the Equality Impact Assessment e-learning module, and this serves to mainstream the importance of considering equality in all strategic considerations.

Our E&D Advisor is currently looking into potential content and presentation that will allow us to expand our staff and student training provision. We aim to develop new online equalities training with our Educational Development Unit (EDU), covering concepts of equality, diversity and inclusivity. By moving away from a sole focus on legislative requirements, we hope to normalise inclusive behaviour, and create an opportunity for staff to consider daily challenges from different perspectives. It will also enable us to collate, share and report on completion rates.



We hope that that partner colleges will adopt this resource, allowing us to ensure consistent E&D training across the partnership. Part of our attempt to facilitate this will involve prospective talks with all partners to gain insight into local equality contexts, ensuring that everyone has the chance to feed into this learning opportunity to ensure that the resource is universally relevant. We will seek to inform training development through focus groups with key stakeholders, including Quality, Admissions and Learning & Teaching, who have advised they are keen to participate.



Our E&D Advisor and Disability Support Coordinator are currently discussing production of a comparable e-learning resource for training relating to considerations necessary to accommodate students and staff with disabilities.

As previously discussed, the E&D Advisor will explore face-to-face training options with HISA- whether through class reps, or delivered directly to students en-masse. We will investigate the possibility of delivering biennial induction sessions to new staff. If feasible we hope to explore running at least one annual session at each partner, subject to demand and capacity.

Corporate Parenting Training

The University has co-created a Corporate Parenting e-learning module with EDU, which was launched in January 2018. The module is mandatory for all University staff, as all staff have a role to play as corporate parents: solid knowledge and understanding of care contexts are vital to providing equivalence of experience between those who share these circumstances and those who do not.



Our Student Support Manager is currently investigating which partners make this training mandatory, and their local uptake: we will report on this progress in 2021 as part of our efforts to align practice across the partnership. The University also has a Student Carers e-learning module: a scoping exercise is currently underway to gauge who has completed both above modules.

217 University staff have completed the module, with 192 staff having completed the Student Carers module. We will continue to promote completion of the modules, and will look into strategically set points to raise awareness of this requirement.

Staff Development for Disability Practitioners

The University provides central training opportunities through Development Days, ensuring that Needs Assessors and Disability Practitioners have access to latest information and resources from across the support sector. Development Days often include internal and external speakers: In July 2017, for instance, the student support team facilitated an external demonstration of new technologies to support visual impairment.

The University's Disability Practitioners' Development Day in March 2018 included a session outlining current ways to optimise the accessibility of student-facing materials and documents. Responses to an evaluation circulated to attendees after the event indicated that its most

positive aspect was further opportunity to meet others from across the partnership and discuss common issues.

In March 2019, our Development Day included a talk from UHI's Head of Careers and Employability on transitions into employment (discussed further [here](#)), as well as a live demonstration of enabling technologies from IANSYST, on the request of the Disability Practitioners Group.

Staff Development for Needs Assessors

The Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA)'s Professional Development Award in Advancing Equality and Diversity through Inclusiveness has superseded SQA's legacy PDA as the standard qualification for new University DSA assessors. The fact that the new qualification aligns with the legacy PDA will enable existing staff to build on elements of the legacy qualification already completed.

Twelve disability practitioners located throughout the University partnership are qualified as DSA assessors. Eleven of these practitioners actively undertake DSA assessments, including the University's Disability Support Coordinator who can assess a limited number of students per year, peripatetically as required. In addition, one member of staff is currently engaged as a trainee needs assessor and will join the University's team of assessors once qualified. Several other practitioners have expressed an interest in undertaking, or continuing with, the PDA qualification. One colleague has experience from previous employment at an external DSA assessment centre.

Disability Practitioners' Library

We are in the process of migrating all staff guidance and processes relating to disabilities onto a central shared resource bank on Sharepoint. This puts all relevant resources in one place, which is remotely accessible from anywhere across the partnership, and removes the need to share resources by email, thus nullifying potential for duplication or reference to processes which have been succeeded by newer versions.

Some guidance is of particular relevance to specific roles, and permissions for staff areas are determined on a need to know basis: every member of the Disability Practitioners Group has full access to specific disabilities guidance via this forum. Resources of wider relevance are available to anyone with a staff login, helping to raise awareness and autonomy, whilst retaining the need to contact specific support staff with more specialised queries.

Learning and Teaching (L&T)

The Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA)

The Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) helps to develop, share and recognise excellence, innovation and research in pedagogic practice at UHI. The LTA developed the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, which includes:

- Access to professional development [events](#) and opportunities
- Providing networking opportunities, [resources](#), and direct support for projects and initiatives
- [Funded opportunities](#) to enable staff to engage in pedagogic scholarship and research
- Establishing [groups and fora](#) for colleagues to collaborate in helping share and shape pedagogic developments
- Recognising excellence in L&T through the [ALPINE](#) framework

The [Learning Lab](#) is located in An Lòchran at the Inverness Campus, and is utilised for activities undertaken by the LTA and the Educational Development Unit (EDU), described [later](#) in this chapter). It is also offered as a facility that colleagues can use to undertake their own pedagogic development and research activities.

UHI-wide access to L&T support is facilitated by the LTA's coverage of E&D professional development webinars, and other events they offer. Examples include:

- **[LTA Connect: Critical perspectives on inclusivity](#)**
- **[LTA Connect: Creating learning communities for online and distance learning students](#)**

Mentoring

UHI recognises that positive role models and development opportunities can be significant contributors to the skills, experience and confidence required to progress professionally. As such, the LTA is heavily invested in mentoring programmes, and published its revised [Mentoring Guide](#) in March 2018. The guide describes the University's 3 mentoring strands: ALPINE, Research and Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE).

All strands are led by female staff. Each strand is described below, including uptake by female participants. Some strands have individuals acting as mentors and mentees, which explains arithmetic inconsistencies.

Mentoring Scheme	Registered	Mentors	F	Mentees	F
ALPINE	55	38	24	18	8
Research	22	12	6	13	11
LTE	29	17	14	17	15

ALPINE is an accredited route to Associate Fellowships, Fellowships and Senior Fellowships; Mentors support ALPINE applicants through the application process. All applicants must demonstrate how their practice aligns to the [UK Professional Standards Framework \(UKPSF\)](#).

Research mentorship is aimed at colleagues engaging in, or planning to engage in research. The initiative aims to provide advice and guidance from experienced mentors who have expertise in subject research and/or leadership in a research context.

Learning and Teaching Enhancement mentorship is aimed at those recently appointed to L&T, lecturing and support roles. Mentors comprise experienced lecturing and L&T support staff wishing to gain mentoring experience in specific areas, as well as those aiming to develop academic leadership skills.

The Mentoring Journey: Roles and Responsibilities

The University

The University supports mentors in their role and will facilitate a workshop and/or receive guidance before commencement of a mentoring relationship. This provides an opportunity to consider the skills necessary for becoming a mentor and to understand the boundaries of the relationship. In addition to this initial workshop, ongoing support is offered from the mentoring coordinator and mentoring strand leads.

The Mentee

Participation in the mentoring scheme helps develop professional skills and increase opportunities to reach one's potential, offering on-the-job support, career advice, access to networks and organisational knowledge. Participation can help staff to advance their career, improve their chances of promotion and/or gain professional recognition through ALPINE. The scheme operates on a mentee-led basis, meaning that primary responsibility for implementation and progress of plans lies with the mentee, encouraging growth of confidence and leadership skills.

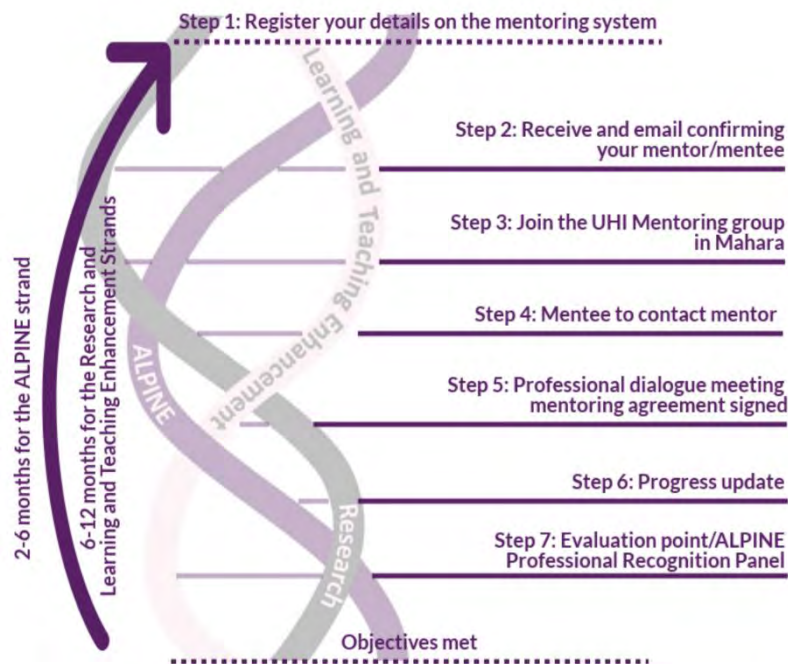
The Mentor

The mentoring scheme actively encourages diversity and equality of opportunity and is looking to recruit potential mentors from across the university. Whilst a mentor is expected to have substantial professional experience, this does not necessarily equate to holding a senior position, or to making a substantial time-commitment

In addition to guiding, advising and facilitating development: mentors can support mentees in trying out new ideas and encourage reflective practice through challenging assumptions regarding suitability for senior roles. The mentoring relationship is built around mutual trust and respect, and provides a non-threatening environment in which the mentee can feel able and willing to express their concerns and anxieties as well as discuss their ideas and aspirations.



The journey from application to mentor or mentee is summarised by the diagram [overleaf](#):



Brightspace Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

The University is in the process of introducing a new virtual learning environment (VLE): Brightspace. The change was prompted by the scheduled discontinuation of Blackboard. As part of this process, the University undertook a series of consultation activities to inform a decision about our choice for a new VLE.

Key aspects of this process included: a student and staff survey (qualitative and quantitative) exploring use and perception of the existing VLE, and future aspirations; a series of presentations from VLE vendors which resulted in a decision to move to tendering; and a formal tendering process for which three VLE vendors submitted.

Two of the largest-weighted criteria for the selection of the new VLE were the extent to which the VLE support the embedding of LTE Values in the LTE Strategy, and usability incorporating key aspects of accessibility provision. The decision to move to Brightspace was a pedagogical one, based on the scoring against the above and other selection criteria.



Brightspace has a strong range of accessibility features, including the Check Accessibility tool in the HTML editor for the VLE. This helps to incorporate accessibility considerations into day-to-day thinking and action, and complements EDU's extensive work to support staff in rendering L&T more accessible to learners and colleagues.

The Educational Development Unit (EDU)

The Educational Development Unit (EDU) supports learning at the University and beyond, developing digital learning materials to meet the needs of modern learning where students join online; in the classroom; by videoconference or a mix of these. The materials help student collaboration, develop independent learners and enhance the learning experience.

Accessibility in digital content

Home

Animation

Audio

Colour and contrast

Images

PDFs

Pictograms

PowerPoint

Tables

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Video

Microsoft Word

Accessibility in digital content

In recent years the removal of barriers in online learning has become a key factor for anyone developing digital learning material.

Typical barriers include:

- Auditory – deafness, hearing impairments;
- Visual – blindness, partially sighted;
- Cognitive/intellectual/developmental - dyslexia, memory impairment;
- Physical – muscular dystrophy.

Jisc guidelines

When developing learning material under Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funding you should employ the Jisc guidelines on [Reasonable Adjustments](#).

The next sections provide information on how you might make reasonable adjustments to your teaching resources.

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A large part of EDU's work involves supporting staff to produce accessible online materials, and ensuring that the University can continue to deliver high-quality blended learning provision. All staff across the partnership have access to resources on the EDU Support Portal, which specifically looks at accessibility considerations in L&T, and can be accessed [here](#). This support is further enhanced by EDU's Material Development Standards; [Brightspace VLE Checklist](#); [Blended Learning Standards Checklist](#); and a list of [Benchmarks for the use of Technology in Learning and Teaching](#).

Analysis of Training by Protected Characteristic

As highlighted previously, we do not currently have the ability to analyse uptake of training by protected characteristic. We appreciate that this is an important step towards identifying if there are implicit differences in the development opportunities available to individuals and groups with particular characteristics.

Currently development records are held locally at individual partners, who as previously discussed collect protected characteristic data to different extents. Once we have taken steps to standardise what is collected across the partnership, we will look to gain support for a feedback mechanism that enables partners to return aggregated equalities data on training, appointment and retention for central analysis; subsequent target-setting; and prioritisation.

Supporting Women into Senior Roles

We recognise that, among other influencers, positive role-models and single-gender activities can help address underrepresentation; increase wellbeing; challenge societal stereotypes and raise awareness across the University and wider communities.

University Women's Network

Professor Antonia Darder opened the University's Women's Network in July 2018. The Network will meet regularly to debate current challenges facing women in HE & FE Sectors and plan initiatives to address these. The Women's Network provides an opportunity to invite internal and external speakers to share their experiences in this area, and have met twice since October.

So far, the group have explored their remit, unanimously concluding that the network should explore how to better promote gender equality in education and research at the University, as well as sharing achievements, inspirational speakers and good practice. The second saw Dr Louise Drumm from Greenwich University talk about her career progression and challenges therein.

Other key tasks have involved looking into contributing to childcare at larger conferences, and establishing wording to ensure that this provision is extended to anyone with caring responsibilities. There has also been discussion of explicating job-share options in job advertisements, as it was felt that this is not necessarily readily apparent across the partnership. The network is currently looking to establish which partners offer this option.



We look forward to reflecting the Network's progress in our 2021 reports, once they are more firmly established.

International Women's Day

Dean of Science Health and Engineering Dr Su Engstrand opened the University's International Women's Day celebrations at Inverness College on 8th March 2019, in front of a crowd of approximately 40 staff, students and community members.

Dr Engstrand's talk centred on effective mainstreaming, discussing ways that we can differently approach tasks to ensure that those with caring responsibilities (of whom disproportionate number are female) are not negatively impacted or excluded. The prevailing message was that with a little consideration we can continue to detach ourselves from implicitly sexist societal structures. Examples of inclusive practice included:



- Setting meetings within core hours to easily include those who may have to collect or drop off children
- Not allowing meetings to run over, in order to ensure everyone is involved until the very end
- Ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to contribute to meetings, and that individuals are not allowed to dominate discussions
- Inviting contributions by asking everyone to introduce themselves and their roles to break the ice at the start of meetings

Dr Engstrand noted that measures such as those above not only represent progress in their own right, but in many instances provide the first step towards professional confidence and integration: if people are happy to speak up in meetings, and do not feel judged for leaving before a meeting has concluded, they are more likely to feel confident to seek promotion, and to actively influence society around them. Similarly, in a classroom environment, inclusive messages are mainstreamed into teaching practice by helping to develop public speaking skills and destabilise stereotypes.



Professors Joy Merrell and Diane Kelly from Swansea University travelled to Inverness to present on how formation of The Mary Williams Group- a panel of senior women across the organisation- has helped tackle their institution's professorial pay-gap. The group forms a mandatory part of Swansea's strategic consultation process. Professors Merrell and Kelly also went into detail about the pay-audit that led to them closing their pay-gap, and their approach to attaining Athena SWAN Silver accreditation. The session not only provided ideas for discussion among the University's Women's Network, but provided an excellent opportunity to debunk misconceptions of what the Gender Pay Gap actually means, and the sorts of considerations requisite to effectively addressing it.



Dr Engstrand and the University's Athena SWAN SAT Lead are currently putting together a proposal to foster a working relationship with Professors Merrell and Kelly with a view to potential future collaboration with Swansea University.

Advance-HE Aurora

The Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) supported the University's Aurora Champion in offering ten places on the 2018/19 programme. Funding covered the cost of the programme and admission to five interlinked development days in Edinburgh (November 2018 to March 2019) covering topics which include:

- Understanding organisations and the sector
- Developing leadership behaviours, skills and knowledge
- Identifying and overcoming barriers and obstacles
- Growing confidence and a leadership identity
- Building networks, coalitions and support processes

Mentoring for each participant is delivered through the University mentoring scheme and almost all spaces have been taken up. Upon completing the programme, participants will be asked become mentors and support will be provided, allowing them to contribute to the wider Aurora Programme. This can take many forms but a common approach is to participate as a role model in future programmes, as undertaken by Dr Su Engstrand and Dr Fiona McLean.



Our Aurorans presented at International Women's Day, where they spoke in front of approximately 40 people.

Conclusion

We have shown many success measures have been met in relation to **Equality Outcome 5: Staff Development** over the 2017-19 period, including successful International Women's Days Events; creation of a Women's Network and high-uptake of mentoring programmes to address gender-underrepresentation. We have equipped Needs Assessors with appropriate training, as well as introducing mandatory EIA and Corporate Parenting Training, and upgrading to a more accessible virtual learning environment.

Going forward, we will look to ensure that we can analyse training uptake by protected characteristic; that EIA Training uptake is measurable by grade/job family, and that we develop online Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Training. Subject to success of the latter module, we will look into creating a comparable online module relating to Disabilities Support.

This chapter has discussed successes and points for further action; these are collated and summarised in conclusion below:

Successes

- High uptake of EIA training- effectively mainstreamed
- REF2021 focused Unconscious Bias Training undertaken by REF Managers Group
- Co-creation of mandatory *Corporate Parenting* online training, with EDU
- Extensive *Prevent* training to WRAP 3 level
- Presentation from UHI's Head of Careers and Employability on transitions into employment for students with unseen disabilities
- Demonstration of enabling technologies from IANSYST and EO Student Support Team
- 12 internal Needs Assessors now qualified
- Population of Disability Practitioners' Library on Sharepoint
- Publication of revised Mentoring Guide (2018)
- High uptake of Mentor and Mentee Roles
- Implementation of accessible Brightspace VLE
- Accessibility benchmarks for the use of Technology in Learning & Teaching published (January 2019)
- Establishment of UHI *Women's Network* (July 2018)
- Successful International Women's Day Celebration (March 2019)
- Visiting Keynotes on E&D topics including Closing the Gender Pay Gap & Gender-specific career- challenges
- Tenfold increase in Aurora participation

Going Forward

- Establish capacity to analyse training uptake by protected characteristic
- Develop Online EDI Training Provision
- Investigate specific E&D element to induction process
- Investigate most relevant audiences for levels of E&D training
- Investigate face-to face training options
- Potential development of Disabilities online training provision
- Promote Online *Prevent* training provision
- E&D Advisor to form active working relationship with Learning & Teaching Academy (LTA) and Educational Development Unit (EDU)
- Targeted work to ensure all staff are aware of EDI responsibilities and methodology, to further embed mainstreaming into each function of our day-to-day activities.

Update to Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2019:

Conclusion

Over the course of this report we have provided context for the Equality Outcomes we set in 2017, have described progress to date and plans for further action. We hope that going forward we can work to unify activity across the partnership, enabling us to draw on the widest expertise possible at strategic, tactical and operational levels.

Appointment of a full-time resource, based in Inverness, should significantly increase scope for cross-partner support provision, and to develop an ambitious operational plan to meet and exceed our 2017 Outcomes. The foundation of the plan will be continuation of our successes, and undertaking points for further action, as documented in this report. In particular, we hope to explicate that EDI is the responsibility of every employee, and should be considered in line with each of the University's functions.

Successes and future activities are tabulated at the end of each section of this report, and can be accessed via the links below. Actions relating to **Equality Outcome 6: Staffing** are interleaved with the rest of the report and are not recorded separately, to avoid duplication.

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6 Staffing	See 'Data and Disclosure'

Contact Us

Thank you for taking the time to look at The University of the Highlands and Islands: Update to Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2019.

We encourage you to get in touch with any queries, information or opportunities to collaborate: please feel free to contact our Equality and Diversity Advisor: stuart.hall@uhi.ac.uk

We hope you enjoyed learning about our activities as much as we enjoyed performing them, and look forward to demonstrating progress and publishing further Equality Outcomes in April 2021.

References

Key Internal Documents

- [University of the Highlands & Islands Equality Outcomes 2017-21](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Mainstreaming Report 2017-21](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Equal Pay Statement & Pay Gap Analysis 2017](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Annual Employee Data 2013-17](#)
 - [University of the Highlands and Islands Gender Action Plan 2017-21](#)
 - [University of the Highlands and Islands British Sign Language Plan](#)
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- **University of the Highlands & Islands Equality Outcomes & Mainstreaming Report 2017-19 (present report)**
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay Statement 2019](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Annual Employee Information Report 2017-19](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Guide.](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Outcome Agreement 2018-19](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Outcome Agreement 2017-18](#)
 - [University of the Highlands & Islands Corporate Parenting Plan](#)

Key External Documents

- [Equally Safe in Higher Education Toolkit](#)
- [Changing the Culture: Report of the Universities UK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students](#)
- [Tapping All Our Talents Review 2018: Women in STEM](#)
- [TransEdu Scotland: Researching The Experience Of Trans And Gender-diverse Applicants, Students And Staff In Scotland's Colleges And Universities](#)
- [Audit Scotland: Scotland's Colleges 2018](#)

Key Legislation

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#)
- [HE Governance \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#)
- [Post-16 Education \(Scotland\) Act 2013](#)
- [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- [Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015](#)