

## EDI Strategy Action Plan (2021-2022)

The University's EDI Strategy action plan was implemented in February 2021 and will be reviewed annually by the EDI Steering Group. The action plan has been designed using a thematic approach, to mirror the key priorities outlined in the EDI Strategy.

<b>Facilitate the Delivery of the EDI Strategy</b>					
	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>1</b>	Continue to operate and review progress of EDI Strategy Steering Group	A dedicated and cohesive team is required to galvanise and ensure the delivery of the strategic ambitions outlined within the EDI Strategy	Ongoing	Chief People Officer	Steering Group meets three times per annum
<b>2</b>	Carry out biannual EDI pulse surveys to monitor the impact of the EDI Strategy at all levels of the organisation and test employee engagement with equality	This will provide a better understanding of how staff/students perceive EDI in the workplace, and enhance general accountability	June and Dec 2021	Chief People Officer	Steering Group implements the findings of the surveys to augment delivery of the EDI strategy

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<b>3</b>	Monitor and review progress of action plan on an annual basis	This will provide a clear evidence base for future targets, goals and actions	Annually (June)	Chief People Officer	Action plan is reviewed annually using a traffic light system and updated as necessary. Any slippage is addressed
<b>4</b>	Submit annual monitoring report to SLT and include within S75 Annual Report	This will provide a clear evidence base for future targets, goals and actions	Annually	Chief People Officer	Submissions made on time
<b>5</b>	The Steering Group will report to Council and its appropriate sub-committees and the Senior Leadership Team as necessary	Provides scrutiny and oversight at senior levels	Ongoing	Chief People Officer	Clear committee reporting line established and followed

**Priority: Identify, acknowledge and address (unconscious) bias in the workplace**

	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>6</b>	Continue to provide unconscious bias awareness training session to staff on alternating campuses, on a first come, first served basis; and to all staff sitting on promotions or recruitment panels	Without encouragement to recognise and address unconscious bias and associated micro aggressions, the potential exists that inequality, discrimination and segregation will be perpetuated throughout the workforce.	Once a semester and align with recruitment training schedule	Chief People Officer	All professional and support staff attend training. All staff sitting on promotions or recruitment panels AND all staff in Schools applying for an Athena SWAN award attend training
<b>7</b>	Consider technology and software which can ensure that all recruitment advertisements use gender neutral language (i.e.Textio)	Unconscious bias training will assist staff to understand the barriers presented by unconscious bias and how it impacts on decision making, so that it can be addressed both at the individual and the institutional level	2021	Chief People Officer	Unconscious bias removed from all recruitment advertisements

**Priority: Address gender role segregation within the institution**

	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>8</b>	Get agreement from Council (or appropriate sub-Committee of Council) as to short- and longer-term targets to increase the diversity of University Council and the Senior Leadership Team	To ensure strong and visible leadership and ensure that EDI is embedded within the governance framework. According to the Higher Education Code of Governance, board diversity promotes more constructive and challenging dialogue, which in turn can improve governance outcomes by helping to avoid 'groupthink'. The governing body must also routinely reflect on its own composition and consider taking steps to ensure that it reflects societal norms and values	2021	Chair of Council, Vice-Chancellor and Chief People Officer.	Targets established, implemented and reviewed by the end of 2021. Increased diversity of University Council and SLT.
<b>9</b>	Identify opportunities to increased diversity of University Council and the Senior Leadership Team - for example using a welcoming statement / using external networks and association bodies / consideration of where to place adverts		2021	Chief People Officer	

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<b>10</b>	Provide necessary resources to support the University's application for an institutional Athena SWAN Silver Award (at institutional level)	The University has held an Athena SWAN institutional Bronze Award since April 2014. The Bronze Award specifically recognises that the university has established a solid foundation for eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff in STEM-related subject areas	Ongoing	Chief People Officer	Increase the percentage of Professorial staff who are female by at least 5%
<b>11</b>	Provide adequate resources to support individual Schools applications for Athena SWAN Awards and expansion of the Charter to non-STEM subjects	In May 2015, the charter was expanded to non-STEM subjects, and in professional and support roles, and for trans staff and students. The charter now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women	Ongoing	Chief People Officer	All Schools maintain or improve Award received. All Schools achieve a Bronze Award

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<b>12</b>	Implement the Athena SWAN Action Plan	The Athena SWAN Action plan is an integral part of our Bronze Charter Award. The plan sets out to achieve gender equality for female staff	2017-2021	Chief People Officer	Advancement of gender equality: improved representation, progression and success of all staff
<b>13</b>	Identify opportunities for, and support delivery of, development / engagement options for women (i.e., Aurora / Wo/men's Network)	Aurora is a unique leadership development programme for women and is delivered over an 8-month period. It combines 4 interlinked development days; an action learning set; self-directed learning and in-house mentoring. It is delivered by Advance HE (formally Leadership Foundation for Higher Education) to help address the issue of declining numbers of women in senior posts in Higher Education. It has been specifically designed to encourage women to think of themselves as future leaders and actively engage in developing their leadership potential. It aims to provide a positive experience of leadership and inspire participants to recognise their talent and capabilities and support them to "step up" to promotional posts	Ongoing	Chief People Officer	12 spaces sponsored each year on Aurora. Provide participants with a positive experience of leadership and inspire them to recognise their talent and capabilities and support them to "step up" to promotional posts

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<b>14</b>	Implement training on women and governing boards (Council, SLT, EDI SG and sub-groups)	Cross reference with DAP action	2021	Chief People Officer	Training offered within the University's leadership programmes  Staff encouraged to complete the 'Boardroom Apprentice Programme'
<b>15</b>	Implement Advance HE's self-audit tool of recruitment and promotion policies and practices supporting gender equality	This tool will enable us to assess our own policies and progress against the HE sector baseline. The audit tool completed during the pilot (2017) provides with a clear evidence base for future targets, goals and actions	Annually	Chief People Officer	University Athena SWAN Silver Award  Clear evidence base from which to measure and monitor progress
<b>16</b>	Provide thought leadership and perspective to advance the institution's ability to recruit more female professors - evidence based consideration of promotion and progression data	Our institutional equal opportunities data demonstrates persistent vertical and horizontal occupational segregation. For example: 36% of Professorial posts are female	Annually	Chief People Officer	Increase the percentage of Professorial staff who are female by at least 5%

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	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>17</b>	Work with appropriate governance and colleagues to identify measurable targets (over a five-year rolling period) for gender representation at Grades 3,4,9, and Professor	<p>Our institutional equal opportunities data demonstrates persistent vertical and horizontal occupational segregation - on 6 February 2021:</p> <p>27% of Grade 3 staff are male and 29% of Grade 4 staff are male</p> <p>44% of Grades 9 and 30% of Professorial posts are female</p>	2021	Chief People Officer	<p>Equal participation of women and men (a minimum of 40% males and 40% females) in Grades 3, 4, 9, and Professor.</p> <p>Proportions of male staff in Grades 3 and 4 increase by 25%. Proportions of male staff in Grades 9 and female Professorial staff increase by at least 5%</p>



**Priority: Advance race equality at Ulster and build intercultural awareness**

	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>18</b>	Provide necessary resources to support the University's focus on capacity for delivering race equality	Whilst the proportions of BME staff and students are double that of Northern Ireland, there has been little progress in addressing BME academic flight, occupational segregation, disparities in grade representation, pay, contract type or the difference in experience at Ulster. The Race Equality Charter Pilot presented an opportunity for Ulster to represent the Northern Ireland Experience and provided a framework within which to initiate the race conversation.	2021	Chief People Officer	Self-assessment team established to carry out an audit of race equality at Ulster
<b>19</b>	Improve the representation, progression and success of BME staff and students: Focus on working group and action planning leading to application for the Advance HE/ECU Race Equality Bronze Charter award	Latest data in respect proportion of Ulster's Professors who are BME added in Q1 2021:	2021	Chief People Officer and EDI Strategy Steering Group sub-group for Advancing Race Equality	Race equality action plan developed and implemented. Consideration of targets
<b>20</b>	Review the use of the welcome statement in recruitment for all grades	Only 10.5% (17) of Ulster's Professors are BME. 1 of these is female. Almost 95% who declared BME are in grade 6 and above.	Ongoing	Chief People Officer	Increase the numbers of local BME applicants to Grade 2-6 posts.

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<b>21</b>	Continue to monitor the academic promotions process to ensure that factors relating to women and BME staff are considered	A revised promotions scheme was implemented in 2019. EO Monitoring will assist the University to identify and mitigate any perceived barriers which are preventing staff from applying or engaging in the promotions process	2021	Chief People Officer	Increase in the success rate for female staff going forward for academic promotion. Increased numbers of female research staff going forward for promotion
<b>22</b>	Continue to focus on delivery of the recommendations of the Equal Pay Review 2017	The Equal Pay Review 2017 identified a mean gender pay gap of 18.8% and a median pay gap of 27.7%. One of the principal reasons for the gender pay gap is that females are disproportionately represented in specific job categories, the lower grades and especially amongst part-time staff	2021	Chief People Officer	Gender Pay Gap in line with Higher Education
<b>23</b>	Carry out a triennial review of equal pay to ensure that we are not undervaluing some types of jobs	This is a commitment within our Equal Pay Policy	2022	Chief People Officer	Equal Pay Review completed, and recommendations endorsed by SLT

**Priority: Continue to meet statutory requirements relating to equality of opportunity and good relations**

	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>24</b>	Continue to raise awareness of the importance / requirement to collect EO data and the purposes for which it is used (i.e., engage / all staff email / Insight)	The Equal Pay analysis was dependant on data obtained by staff self-declaration. The Equal Pay Working Group considered that only data for gender, age, community background and disability was reliable for the purposes of the Equal Pay Review. The Group noted that some categories contained incomplete data (e.g., disability) due to under-reporting or incorrect data	2021	Chief People Officer	Improved quality and accuracy of our EO data. Insight article. Bi-annual reminders to staff to raise awareness of why we monitor equal opportunities data. All staff review update their equal opportunities data using the self-service area
<b>25</b>	Revisit the structure / phrasing of the sexual orientation question in an attempt to increase response rates	(e.g., Sexual Orientation) due to misinterpretation of the monitoring question	2021	Chief People Officer	Sexual orientation question amended, as necessary.  Increased percentage of staff declaring sexual orientation to 70%

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	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>26</b>	Develop and present an Annual EDI report to the EDI Steering Group and Council, presenting data, outlining key findings and progress, and recommending mitigations and methods to address any issues	<p>The Higher Education Code of Governance requires governing bodies to receive an annual equality monitoring report detailing work done by the institution during the year, identifying the achievement of agreed objectives, and summarising data on equality and diversity that institutions are required to produce (e.g., on staff recruitment and promotion).</p> <p>To some extent this is already achieved through the Section 75 Annual Report and various HESA reports. However, the provision of more comprehensive equality data will help staff to identify disadvantage and under-representation, develop a clearer picture of the lived experience of staff and students and monitor progress in addressing these issues</p>	2022	Chief People Officer	Increased variety of key equality data available internally and on our website. Report presented to the EDI Steering Group, SLT, GNRC and Council
<b>27</b>	Increase the variety of key equality data available internally and on our website	Key equality data is already available on the EDI Unit's website, to inform policy development (and meet the demands of S75). This provides a general overview of the staff and student equality profiles. The provision of more extensive and explicit data will assist staff to identify and mitigate equality gaps through respective annual planning processes. It will also highlight and increase awareness of equality issues at Ulster	Annually (June)	Chief People Officer	Key equality data uploaded to website and disseminated to staff

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	<b>Enabling Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>28</b>	Continue to implement the University's Equality Scheme	The University is required by law to have in place an Equality Scheme and a Disability Action Plan, based on templates provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The University's current Equality Scheme expires in 2022. The Disability Action Plan expired in 2018 (following a one-year extension).	Ongoing	Chief People Officer	Statutory requirements met.
<b>29</b>	Undertake 5-year effectiveness review of equality Scheme		2022	Chief People Officer	Statutory requirements met
<b>30</b>	Implement the University's third Disability Action Plan		2018-2021	Chief People Officer	Statutory requirements met
<b>31</b>	Complete the Section 75 Annual Report, including the annual report of progress of the Disability Action Plan	The University is also required to submit a variety of statutory equality reports at specific times. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Section 75 Annual Report (The Northern Ireland Act 1998),</li> <li>• the annual report on progress of the Disability Action Plan (Section 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995),</li> <li>• the Annual Fair Employment and Treatment Order (FETO) Return (the Fair Employment and Treatment Order 1998),</li> <li>• the Triennial Article 55 Review (the</li> </ul>	Annually 31 August	Chief People Officer	Report submitted on time
<b>32</b>	Complete the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (FETO) Return		Annually on 6 June	Chief People Officer	Statutory requirements met
<b>33</b>	Complete the Triennial Article 55 Review (For period 7 February 2019 – 6 February 2022)		6 February 2023	Chief People Officer	Statutory requirements met

34	Implement the University's Article 55 Affirmative Action Plan	Fair Employment and Treatment Order 1998), and • Gender Pay Gap reporting (Article 19 of the Employment Act (NI) 2016) (pending).	Ongoing 7 February 2020– 6 February 2022	Chief People Officer	Affirmative actions achieved
35	Complete the annual Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) return for staff	A failure to comply can result in investigation, litigation or a financial penalty.	Annually 26 September	Chief People Officer	Statutory requirements met
36	Calculate and publish the University's Gender Pay Gap	The University is also required to submit specific equality data to the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) as part of its annual staff record.  The EDI Strategy does not detract from our statutory obligations. Rather it is evidence that Ulster is committed to going beyond mere compliance	Annually	Chief People Officer	Resources and protocols in place to ensure statutory requirements of Gender Pay Gap reporting (Article 19 of the Employment Act (NI) 2016) are met.
37	Form Gender Pay Working Group and deliver to series of actions		Ongoing	Chief People Officer	To act to reduce the University gender pay gap so that it is in line with the Higher Education sector mean.

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<b>38</b>	Maintain the Students' Union (SU) Good Relations Policy Review the Terms of Reference for the Good Relations Working Group	The SU Good Relations Working Group was established in October 2013. It consists of SU Officers, representatives of various SU societies and University staff. The main remit of the Group is to support the implementation of the SU Good Relations Policy and action plan and provide a consultative forum for the SU as and when good relations issues arise	Annually	Chief People Officer	Good Relations is promoted across the Student body