

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Plan 2024-27**

**1. Introduction**

This EDI Plan is designed to support the University in meeting its legislative responsibilities and advancing its strategic aims for the period 2024-27. EDI is an intrinsic part of everything we do at the University of Chichester. The University by its nature is a complex structure which exists as a learning, working, social and living environment all at the same time and our approach therefore extends to all individuals, across all facets of University life.

The University’s mission as defined in our University Strategy 2018-25: Open for Change, is ‘To provide outstanding education, advance knowledge and benefit the world’. We recognise the importance of every individual in helping us meet our local, national and global ambitions and are committed to creating a diverse, inclusive and nurturing environment for our students and staff through the embodiment of our stated Core Values and the advancement of our Strategic Objectives.

**1.1 Core Values**

At the heart of our Core Values is ‘Community’. Our community is made up of students and staff who are recruited locally, nationally and internationally, bringing diverse identities and experiences. Enabling that community are the values, principles and practise of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.



**1.2 Strategic Objectives**

The University has a number of key objectives within several strategies that this Plan seeks to support and advance. The full documents can be accessed via the University’s website.

**University Strategy 2018-25: Open for Change**

We recognise the enrichment that a diverse student body and workforce brings to the whole University. The following objectives from the University Strategy are incorporated into this Plan:

* ‘We will increase the size and diversity of our student body.’
* ‘We will strengthen the distinctiveness of the Chichester student experience as high-quality, personalised, accessible and aspirational’.
* ‘We will provide an excellent staff experience based on the core values of the University community.’

**People Strategy 2018-25, “Working together – supporting each other”**

The People Strategy identifies initiatives and objectives under three interconnecting themes of Recruit, Develop and Engage, aimed at:

• improving our ability to attract and retain the best and most talented people

• providing support through professional development opportunities

• engaging and looking after our staff

**Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2020-21 to 2024-25**

The Office for Students’ Strategic Objective 1 states that ‘All students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, are supported to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education’. To further Objective 1 at the University, four strategic aims for 2020-21 to 2024-25 have been identified:

a) Closing the equality of access gap between the most economically disadvantaged applicants and their peers.

b) Closing the equality of access gap between Asian/Black 18-year-olds and their peers through creating an accessible, representative and nourishing a learning community for BAME[[1]](#footnote-1) applicants seeking a personal, pastoral, scholarly, supportive, aspirational and non-urban tertiary academic experience as for other learners.

c) Closing the equality of attainment gap between all BAME students and their peers through building a diverse and inclusive context, culture and curriculum through which all BAME students are able to achieve their full attainment potential.

d) Closing the equality of attainment gap between economically disadvantaged Male students and Female students from the same background through having better understood and more effectively implemented approaches to social/educational mobility, motivation and transition to study, and models of supported work/study that significantly enhance attainment and life chances for economically disadvantaged Males in our region.

**2. EDI Themes for 2024-27**

This EDI Plan will support the University’s strategic objectives as outlined in the University Strategy 2018-25 ‘Open for Change’, the People Strategy 2018-25 ‘Working Together – Supporting Each Other’ and the Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2020-21 to 2024-25 through advancement of the following three key themes:

Theme 1: Uphold an inclusive environment.

Theme 2: Attract, retain and develop a diverse community of staff and students

Theme 3: Embed EDI into all aspects of University life to enhance each individual’s experience.

**2.1 Key actions to support the EDI Themes**

In order to support these themes and fulfil their aims, we have identified a number of actions.

Whilst these actions will be driven by individuals across the University, they are owned by the whole University community and we expect all to actively engage in these areas.

Engagement can take many forms, such as acting as a role model, being an ally, sharing best practice, engaging with events and discussion, challenging others, providing feedback, reflecting on our own behaviours/actions, professional development training, or in any other way that furthers the key EDI themes.

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| **Theme** | **Actions for 2024-27** |
| **Uphold an inclusive environment**  | We will promote an inclusive culture where individuals are treated with respect and dignity and feel safe to be the person they are. We will do this by: * promoting a culture based on the principles of respect, dignity and a sense of belonging for everyone, and through recognising and celebrating individual differences.
* ensuring accessibility and inclusive practices to accommodate the needs of our staff, students and visitors when considering our current campus and future developments.

We will ensure compliance with our legal duties and statutory requirements by continuing to meet all statutory obligations including the Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Pay Gap reporting, progressing any issues indicated.We will continually revise our Equality Analysis process, which helps us to systematically ensure that policies and practices work well for everyone in our community, especially groups which are likely to face disadvantage and/or underrepresentation. Alongside updating the documentation, we will develop online training to support colleagues in carrying out analyses. |
| **Attract, retain and develop a diverse community of staff and students** | We will provide opportunities for students and staff with different backgrounds, characteristics, cultures and identities to work together and share experiences, perspectives and learning for the greater benefit of all. We will work to ensure that everyone can attain, succeed and realise their full potential to the best of their abilities, accessing any support that they may require. We will do this by: * ensuring we engage and inspire students from diverse backgrounds to join us at undergraduate and postgraduate level, making sure our admissions processes are accessible, fair and inclusive.
* progressing delivery of the Access & Participation Plan (APP) 2020-21 to 2024-25 to underpin the access to participation, progression, and success for the student groups identified.
* proactively engaging and encouraging staff applicants for academic, professional services and leadership roles where there is an under-representation at different levels.
* seeking to better understand the diverse composition and needs of our staff and students by creating an environment which encourages disclosure, encouraging students and staff to provide, and update as necessary, their sensitive information around the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010, (namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). Anonymised and collated staff and student data reports help us to monitor our inclusion progress more effectively and meet related statutory requirements.
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| **Embed EDI into all aspects of University life to enhance each individual’s experience.** | We will work together to ensure that everyone can contribute fully to University of Chichester life, knowledge and growth through embedding EDI across the whole University. We will proactively advance EDI practice in our staff and student recruitment and admissions processes; our student community; our teaching and learning; the experiences we offer to our academic and professional services staff; our research activity; the engagement and experience of stakeholders, partners and visitors; and the University campus environment. We will do this by sharing relevant activities, communications, good practice, policies, guidance as well as offering and highlighting elements to aid this work such as professional development opportunities for staff alongside our staff and student support services.We will work with the University of Chichester Students’ Union to organise and promote a series of EDI events that inspire and challenge staff and students, facilitating staff and students sharing and raising EDI related ideas, good practice and concerns for action.We will uphold our commitments to existing EDI initiatives, practices and awards where applicable including:* Disability Confident Employer award.
* Mindful Employer commitment to the ‘Charter for Employers Who Are Positive About Mental Health’ to eliminate mental health stigma in the workplace.
* Dementia Friends member to support understanding of people with dementia.
* Recognising the Students’ Union Allyship Charter - standing up for the rights of others, actively learning about how to better support marginalised communities, making a positive change as a good ally.
* Recognise, promote and facilitate existing and new Staff Network Groups to support a range of protected characteristics to provide peer support and a social/professional space for colleagues to interact.
* Promoting EDI professional development opportunities and enhancing our EDI online training for colleagues.
* Review of the University Mental Health and Wellbeing Commitment, and consideration of alignment with the *Student Minds* Mental Health Charter. We will progress actions using the ‘whole University’ approach to mental health with colleagues and students across the University.
* Disclosures of Sexual Violence at the University - training for staff on responding to disclosures of sexual violence.
* Menopause Awareness - increased understanding and training for staff so they can support colleagues going through the menopause as well as ensuring menopause issues are reflected across University policies.

We will implement and embed new initiatives where applicable. |

**3. Monitoring and Reporting Our Outcomes**

The three themes outlined support the University’s key strategic goals. Progress in relation to the themes is monitored through analysis of staff and student data, such as anonymised staff recruitment or student data or destination of leavers’ data for students. This information is summarised alongside reflective consideration of the University’s activities in a number of EDI related reports including our Gender Pay Gap Report, EDI Annual Report and Equal Pay Audit. EDI will form a major part of the next people strategy, to be finalised in 2025.

The Vice-Chancellor’s Group will monitor reporting outcomes, for example for the EDI Annual Reports and Gender Pay Gap reports, to ensure progress is being made against the defined areas. It is recognised that additional EDI requirements or initiatives may arise during the period 2024-27 and this document will therefore be updated with any identified or additional requirements.

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**If you would like to receive the information in this report in an alternative format to meet your needs, please contact us as above.**

1. The University will no longer be using the term BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) in line with updated guidance on the Government’s preferred style for writing about ethnicity (December 2021). Where the term BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) has been referenced such as within this excerpt from the Access and Participation Plan, the University was following the Government’s earlier writing conventions. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)