



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

A Culture of Equality

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021



Foreword

From our President and Vice-Chancellor

Our University believes that equality, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. We want to develop and implement policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work. Such a culture, and the consequent sustainable programme of change, will benefit everyone in the University. It will attract a diverse range of high quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equality, diversity and inclusion.

Through this strategy, we will embed a University-wide culture of inclusion that incorporates all aspects of our activity and business. It will be used to map out our delivery journey by setting strategic objectives and key actions for implementation and review. This strategy will support an environment of fairness, transparency and respectfulness for every member of our University of Leicester community.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports our University's vision and reflects its values, as expressed in our Strategic Plan. Our strategy goes beyond legal compliance as we aspire to achieve excellence in equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do.

Professor Paul Boyle

President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester



Introduction

Our Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy sets out our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion for the next four years. It is a public declaration of our commitment to develop a community that is fully inclusive, recruiting and retaining staff and students from all sectors of society.

Our Vision

Our vision for equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in our University Strategy which says:

“ Together our staff and students will do everything we can to recognise diversities, achieve equalities and enable all our staff and students to be people who flourish. We will take a lead in ensuring equality and developing a culture that not only respects but also values and celebrates difference, because we know this will unlock talent” and is the right thing to do.

(University of Leicester Strategic Plan 2015)

Our Core Values

At the University of Leicester our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 'A Culture of Equality' sets out our institutional values. They confirm our strong commitment to equality through developing a culture which values, respects and celebrates diversity making it a place where people want to work and study because they know that we take a pro-active approach to advancing equality. Our values set out our approach to embedding equality and promoting diversity and inclusion, including the way we lead and the way we work with each other and our partners. They embrace the rich internationality of our staff and students, and the diversity of our local communities and promote a culture of respect, dignity and inclusivity.

Our Guiding Principles

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to flourish in an inclusive environment. We will take a pro-active approach to advancing equality and inclusion for all our students, staff and stakeholders, regardless of age, disability, race/ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity/paternity, religion or belief/non-belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We will do this by:

- Demonstrating visible leadership and accountability at all levels
- Working in partnership with our staff, students, unions and other stakeholders
- Embedding equality in all that we do, in our culture and our business

Our Strategic Objectives for enhancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2017-2021

Our strategic objectives for valuing equality and advancing diversity and inclusion build on commitments made within the Discovering People Strategy (2016), which supports the University's wider Strategic Plan (2015). Our objectives translate how we will meet these commitments through our Equality Action Plan (appendix 1) which sets out our priority actions, timescales, key performance indicators and targets.

1. Embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into all aspects of University life

- Develop a sustainable culture promoting personal responsibility for equality rooted in respect and dignity.
- Promote an environment of equality and inclusion in all areas of our day-to-day business and activity.
- Mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion in all our staff policies and practices (both in their development and review) including recruitment, career development, training, communication promotion and procurement.

2. Use robust reliable equalities data to target our activities

- Continuously improve a framework for robust and reliable equality data to be collected, analysed, reported and shared.

3. Attract, retain, develop and support an excellent diverse staff and student population

- Foster good relations, partnerships and communication between diverse groups.
- Capitalise on the rich internationality of our workforce and students.
- Ensure inclusive and accessible physical spaces and virtual environments, providing an accessible environment with equal access for all staff, students and stakeholders.
- Enhance our workforce by supporting career development of staff to develop a cadre of diverse future leaders.

4. Provide evidence of progress and clear measurable action in equality charters

- Raise our ambitions for recognition in equality charters and projects including, Athena SWAN, Race Equality Charter, the Stonewall Index, Disability Confidence and our engagement with the HeForShe solidarity campaign, delivering significant progress in these initiatives.
- Establish a clear focus on each of the protected characteristics, taking action to systematically address inequality.

Our Public Equality Duty

1. As a Higher Education provider we will continue to demonstrate how we meet the requirements of the Equality Act, known as The Public Equality Duty.

The public equality duties consist of a general duty and further specific duties. The general duty takes the form of broad equality requirements. The specific duties outline how we as a public body is required to go about achieving the general duty. Taken together the Public Equality Duty requires us to be proactive in approach.

2. The General Equality Duty requires us to demonstrate how we ensure due regard to:

- a.** Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to the characteristics highlighted within the strategy statement.
- b.** Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.
- c.** Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.

3. The General Equality Duty specifically outlines the following diverse characteristics (known as protected characteristics) against which the duties above should be considered:

- Age
- Disability
- Race/Ethnicity or National Origin
- Gender Reassignment/Identity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Religion or Belief (including non-belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

4. We have translated the duties and how we endeavour to meet them through our commitments and objectives.

5. We will ensure that all aspects of the General Equality Duty are upheld by our staff, students and stakeholders through ongoing communication and consultation as well as monitoring and acting upon our equality data.



Ownership, Leadership and Management

All members of our university community are expected to own and act upon our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

A number of groups and individuals have additional responsibilities including:

- Senate/Council have overall accountability for legal compliance.
- The Vice-Chancellor provides leadership and support to the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda.
- The University Leadership Team oversees our legal compliance with equality diversity and inclusion legislation.
- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, led by the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for equality and diversity has responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of our objectives and commitments.
- Heads of College and Directors are responsible for:
 - Ensuring compliance with the strategy
 - Carrying out actions contained in the action plan
 - Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in their areas
- The Equalities Team are responsible for driving forward the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda, providing support and guidance to all staff, students and stakeholders.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) takes executive responsibility for the development and

implementation of this strategy. Chaired by the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for equality and diversity, its membership is drawn from all areas of the University including staff, students and Trade Union representatives. The Committee meets four times a year.

Our staff are encouraged and supported to take an active role in our Staff Equality Fora, where they are able to champion equality and diversity through their contribution to meetings and related activities.

Our College Management Board meeting agendas have a standing equalities item and all our committees within the University undertake their responsibility, as contained within their constitution to consider and record the potential equal opportunity impacts on decisions (in accordance with the 'due regard' provisions of the Equality Act 2010).

When designing and delivering services; creating and reviewing policies and commissioning services from others we incorporate our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and have due regard of the need to advance equality and diversity, eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations between groups (based upon their associated characteristics). Where we believe there is a high potential impact on equalities we carry out an appropriate examination of the policy or service including an examination of relevant data. Our Equality Impact Assessment guidance informs our "due regard" assessments and these and the outcomes are published on our website.



Our Leadership and Ownership Structure



Our Consultation and Involvement

As part of our commitment to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion we will continue to listen to staff and students and work in partnership with our staff and student networks. We will actively benchmark our equality, diversity and inclusion activity against the Higher Education sector.

Consultation is an integral component of the development of our strategy and action plan, only by involving key stakeholders can we assure ownership and commitment to cultural change.

We employ a number of methods to involve and consult stakeholders in the development of this strategy and take account of published data in order to determine future objectives. We consult with:

- College and Professional Services Equality and Diversity Committees (including Departmental Equality Officers).
- Trade Unions.
- Staff fora and student networks.

- Student Union officers.
- Staff survey.
- Staff who have a remit to support the delivery of this strategy.

The University also receive guidance and support from equality networks including the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU).

Our strategy is kept under review through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee who will consult stakeholders on any significant change it proposes including changes in legislation.

We publish equality data for students and staff annually on our website. We use this data to inform, monitor and benchmark our progress against our objectives, action plan, equality charters and accreditations.

The Equalities Team produce an annual report for our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on the progress made in meeting the objectives in our strategy.

Our Support for Creating a Culture of Equality

Training and development are an indispensable tool in achieving this strategy. Our Equalities Team delivers a range of tailored training sessions and helps ensure that we embrace and embed good practice guides, statistics, research outcomes and other advice produced by recognised national bodies such as The Equality Challenge Unit and the Equality and Human Rights Commission across the University. Members of recruitment panels are required to undertake compulsory training which includes equality and diversity. Equalities

training is provided to support those involved in the delivery of this strategy. We have introduced our on-line equality and diversity module for all staff and new on-line equality and diversity training will be incorporated into the first year of our undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. (Action Plan 1.1 and 1.2).

Our equalities website provides further information and a list of allied publications and websites together with useful contact details for equality and diversity related services.

For more information

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