

## EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN



SHAPING A BETTER WORLD SINCE 1845

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### INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

INSTITUTIONAL STAFF STUDENTS

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
INSTITUTIONAL					
<ol> <li>Conduct an institutional Article 55 review every 3 years.</li> </ol>	To review our workforce composition and employment practices affecting recruitment, promotion and training by community background every 3 years, as required Under Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998.	Community Background	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Conduct institutional Article 55 Review every 3 years.  Develop an action plan to address objectives and agreed positive action measures.  Report progress to the Equality Commission every year, following internal approval.  Publish Review and Action Plan on website.	Timescales detailed in the Article 55 Action Plan
2. Continue to implement our Institutional Disability Action Plan 2021-2026.	To ensure the university continues to have due regard for the need to update and implement how we intend to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and encourage participation by disabled people in public life.	Disability	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing University's Disability Forum (Monitoring Progress)	Review progress annually.  Develop institutional actions annually.  Review and report progress to the Equality Commission every year, following internal approval.  Click here to access our Disability Action Plan	Timescales are detailed in the Disability Action Plan  September 2023 (and annually thereafter)
3. Report institutional progress to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (Section 75 Annual Progress Report).	To fulfil our statutory reporting responsibility as a public authority designated for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.  Click here to access our latest Section 75 Annual Progress Report.	All 9 protected characteristics	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Submissions for relevant Section 75 progress requested and received from relevant directorates.  Report progress to the Equality Commission every year, following internal approval.	September 2023 (and annually thereafter)
4. Review and analyse (staff) Equality Monitoring data and submit Fair Employment Return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.	To understand the breakdown of job applicants and university staff by community background, gender and disability, submitting return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and develop actions to address underrepresentation.  Click here to access our Fair Employment webpage.	Community Background, Gender, Disability	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Monitor, analyse and report our Equality Monitoring data.  Develop action plan to address identified underrepresentations.  Report progress to the Equality Commission, following internal approval.	June 2023

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5. Review and analyse (student) Equality Monitoring Data.	To collate and submit (student) Equality Monitoring data to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (GB) and Department for Economy (NI).	All 9 protected characteristics	Academic and Student Affairs: Planning Office	Monitor, analyse and report Equality Monitoring data.  Annual progress report to Higher Education Statistics Agency.	Annually
6. Conduct an institutional Equal Pay Audit every 3 years.	To analyse and report on the pay of male and female staff doing equal work, to identify equal pay gaps and develop appropriate actions to close gaps that cannot be satisfactorily explained on grounds other than sex.  Equal Pay Audit 2020	Gender, Disability, Ethnicity	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Analyse and report Equal Pay Audit every 3 years.  Develop institutional Equal Pay Action plan to address identified gaps and positive outcome measures for implementation across the university. Report progress to the Equality Commission following internal approval and publish.	Report for period 2020 –2023 Published June 2024
7. Conduct annual analysis of Academic Progression & Promotion.	To analyse data to identify patterns, trends and inequalities in respect of academic progression including gender, race, disability and community background to ensure equality of opportunity.	Gender Race, Disability, Community, Background	People & Culture	Review the process and roles for conducting analysis of data.  Redesign the Academic Progression Dashboard and conduct analysis of data.  Agree targets and timetables.  Report progress internally to University Management Board.	Annually

# OUTREACH, ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC LIFE ACTIVITIES

INSTITUTIONAL STAFF STUDENTS

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
INSTITUTIONAL					
8. Promote and deliver a wide range of gender equality activity through Athena SWAN at both institutional and school level.	To enhance the participation and visibility of women in all aspects of university life, share best practice and support women at Queen's.	Gender, Race, Disability, Age, Sexual Orientation, Dependents	SWAN Self-Assessment Team Queen's Gender Initiative SWAN Champions SWAN Project Manager	Support the institutional activity of the Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI).  Support the University's institutional gold Athena Swan submission and associated actions.  Support Individual School submissions/renewals with the collation of relevant data and analysis.  Continue support of QGI Objectives and alignment with UN Sustainable development goal 5 Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls.  Click here to access information on the Queen's Gender Initiative.	Aligned with submission/ renewal deadline
9. Support the institutional activity of the Race Equality Charter.	To continue to support QGI and the Race Equality Charter (REC) Application, and develop and support race equality at Queen's.	Race	Queens Gender Initiative  Race Equity Champions  Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Submit Queen's REC Charter Bronze Application 2023/2024.	Annually
STUDENTS					
10. Continue to encourage and support those people most able but least likely to participate in higher education to pursue their education at Queen's University Belfast.	To ensure that those most able but least likely to participate in Higher Education should have an equal opportunity to do so, irrespective of socio-economic background, disability, ethnicity, political opinion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or age.  Please click here to access our Widening Participation webpages.	All 9 protected characteristics	Education and Student services - Widening Participation Unit	Increase the number of students who declare a disability; and who are in receipt of Disability Support Allowance.  Increase the number of:  adult learners participating in HE.  enrolments for those from a care background.	Ongoing

ction	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
. Continue to support Pre-Entry Outreach and Flexible Access to Higher Education.	To ensure that those most able but least likely to participate in Higher Education should have an equal opportunity to do so, irrespective of socio-economic background, disability, ethnicity, political opinion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or age.  Please click here to access our Widening Participation webpages.	All 9 protected characteristics	Education and Student services - Widening Participation Unit	Continue to deliver, review and assess impact, and enhance our programmes e.g., The Pathway Opportunity Programmes, Queens Senior Academy, Junior Academy, Professor Fluffy Programme, student volunteer support to homework clubs throughout Greater Belfast Area.  Contribute to develop initiatives in partnership with FE to progress apprenticeships.  Continue to develop scholarships available for Widening Participation entrants.  Recruit and train volunteer student and graduate ambassadors as role models.	Ongoing
c. Continue to Support Transition, Retention, and Attainment.	To ensure that those most able but least likely to participate in Higher Education should have an equal opportunity to do so, irrespective of socio-economic background, disability, ethnicity, political opinion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or age.  Please click here to access our Widening Participation webpages.	All 9 protected characteristics	Education and Student services - Widening Participation Unit	Enhance the provision of advice and guidance to Widening Participation entrants on support and assistance available, including access to bursaries scholarships and wellbeing activities to enable transition to university life.  Address barriers to progression based on identified need such as cost of living support for students.  Further promote the provision of dedicated services and support to:  students with disabilities.  one-to-one and financial support available for care-experienced students.  ensure positive employability outcomes for Widening Participation cohorts.	Ongoing
TAFF					
B. Develop a new programme of institution wide activity to support staff with their Mental Health.	To support a nurturing and supportive environment that empowers our students and staff to be mentally well. Support a whole university approach to student and staff wellbeing and support the creation of a learning environment and organisational culture that enhances the health, wellbeing and sustainability of its community and empowers our staff and students to be mentally well.	All 9 protected characteristics	People and Culture Diversity Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Develop Staff Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Develop and implement a comprehensive annual program of Mental Health training and support for all staff including a dedicated programme for managers.  Implement Stress Management Policy and Procedure for staff.  Consider feasibility of developing Mental Health First Aiders.  Continue to promote Employee Assistance Programme.  Explore the potential provision of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) interventions	Ongoing

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
STUDENTS					
14. Continue to develop the programme of institution wide activity to support students with their Mental Health.	To support a University approach to student and staff wellbeing and support the creation of a learning environment and organisational culture that enhances the health, wellbeing and sustainability of its community and empowers our staff and students to be mentally well.	Disability.	Education Student Services - Student Disability & Wellbeing Students' Union Diversity Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Develop and promote #QUBeWell:  Supporting Student Mental Health and Wellbeing' through e-Learning and targeted initiatives.	Ongoing.
15. Continue to develop and deliver a range of welcoming and integration activities for international students.	To ensure that international students feel welcomed, integrated and encouraged to participate in a wide variety of activities at the University.	All 9 protected characteristics	Global Marketing Recruitment and Admissions Student Plus Immigration Support Service People and Culture Education and Student Services	Biannual welcome event (September & January)  Promote institutional approach to Diversity Calendar  Promote and encourage participation at cultural events, religious festivals e.g. Chinese New Year, Diwali, Saint Patrick's Day Parade etc.  Continue to deliver Black Ethnic (BAME) Ambassador Programme and the International Buddy Scheme.	Ongoing
STAFF					
16. Continue to develop and deliver a range of welcoming and integration activities for international staff.	To ensure that international staff feel welcomed, integrated and supported to participate in a wide variety of activities at the University, and in Belfast.	All 9 protected characteristics	Global Marketing and Admissions Student Plus Estate Immigration Support Service People and Culture Education and Student Services iRise Staff Network	Staff Induction and Welcome events quarterly.  Promote and encourage participation at cultural events and religious festivals e.g. Chinese New Year, Diwali, Saint Patrick's Day Parade etc.  Obtain feedback on international staff experience.	Ongoing
STUDENTS					
17. Continue to support international and local cultural student societies, activities and engagement.	To provide welcoming, inclusive societies, and support and promote activities and events which reflect the diversity of our student population and promote awareness and understanding of different cultures.	All 9 protected characteristics	Education Student Services Students Union	Support and promote international and local cultural student societies activities and engagement.  Work with societies on staff-student events e.g. Black History Month.  Promote and support Linguistic Residential Scheme.  Continue to identify opportunities to collaborate with staff and students to celebrate and promote key diversity /recognition days.	Ongoing

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
18. Continue to support active religious Student Societies.	To provide welcoming and inclusive societies and promote and support activities and events which reflect the diversity of religions of our student population and promote awareness and understanding of different religions.	Religious beliefs	All	Support and promote religious student societies, activities and engagement.  Work with societies on staff-student events e.g. Diwali, Eid.  Continue to work collaboratively with staff and students to celebrate and promote key religious and recognition days.	Ongoing
19. Continue to support and develop University staff networks.	To provide welcoming, inclusive opportunities for staff.	Dependants, Gender, Sexual orientation, Disability, Race and Ethnicity.	People and Culture  Connect Carer's Staff Network  PRISM LGBT+ Staff Network  iRise Black Asian Minority Ethnic and International Staff Network	Programme of annual events and activities in collaboration with the networks on key dates e.g., Black History Month, IDAHOBIT, Belfast Pride, Carers Week  Benchmarking on Staff Network composition and arrangements.  Review the support and governance of staff networks and committee membership.  Consultation with staff networks on key University issues.	Ongoing
20. Continue to support and promote Linguistic Diversity.	To support all QUB staff and students, and members of the public with opportunities to develop their language skills and cultural awareness.	All 9 protected characteristics	The Language Centre  Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Provide opportunities for staff and students to develop language skills through Language Courses.  Provide Cultural Awareness courses to staff and students.  Promote and support Ciorcal Comhrá - Irish conversation circle for staff and students.  Develop staff network for promoting Linguistic Diversity & Minority Languages.	Ongoing
21. Continue to develop the University's Inclusive Employment Scheme.	To continue to provide work opportunities for persons who have a disability and/or long-term condition to develop skills and gain valuable work experience to improve their employment prospects.  Click here to access information on our Inclusive Employment Scheme.	Disability	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Monitor and review Inclusive Employment Scheme.  Report on referrals to Workable (NI).  Survey of participant and host departmental experience and outcomes.  Promote and share Inclusive Employment Scheme model as a good practice example for other employers.	Ongoing

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
22. Continue to partner with local organisations to promote diversity, inclusion and understanding at Queen's.	All protected characteristics.	All protected characteristics	Students' Union  Public Engagement  Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing  Staff Engagement	Continue to develop Students' Union Volunteering opportunities for students.  Review existing staff volunteering partnership arrangements. Develop further partnerships with local organisations to promote understanding of diversity and inclusion.	2023 -2024
23. Promote and encourage staff and student attendance at a range of cultural diversity events in the Greater Belfast Area.	To provide staff with access to citywide cultural diversity events, exposing them to different cultures and people from different backgrounds.	All protected characteristics	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing Belfast City Council; other statutory agencies as appropriate	Promote and encourage staff and student attendance at appropriate cultural events.  Advertise cultural diversity events on internal communications.	As and when events are scheduled to take place
24. Continue to improve and promote physical access at the University.	To help staff, students and visitors to access our sites and buildings more easily by providing detailed information regarding physical accessibility.	Disability	Estates Directorate	Continuously review and update provision of the AccessAble App.  Promote AccessAble app to staff, students and service users.  Grow registered users on AccessAble.	Ongoing
25. Develop and promote assistive technology available for staff and students.	To ensure that all students and staff have access to a range of assistive technology software which can assist them with their studies and day to day work.  To continue to provide access to a Disability Support Fund which allows QUB staff to apply for funding to purchase various pieces of equipment to assist them when carrying out their work.	Disability	Information Services  Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Review current provision for accessible software.	2024 - 2025
26. Review web accessibility for all QUB webpages.	To ensure Queen's webpages and online content is accessible and usable to everyone.	Disability	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing Information Services	Scope the University's website accessibility and undertake a benchmarking exercise of web accessibility of other universities and public authorities websites.  Implementation of web accessibility software for digital inclusion e.g. ReachDeck or similar.	2024

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
27. Review the University's approach to institutional and digital accessibility.	To ensure all staff are aware of digital accessibility and their responsibilities to develop and provide accessible content e.g. emails, institutional reports and documents.  To develop and enforce staff guidelines to ensure digital accessibility on institutional documents.	Disability	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing Information Services	Undertake a benchmarking exercise of digital accessibility at the University.  Implement accessibility awareness and guidance to ensure digital and accessibility of documents and communications.  Ensure all staff eligible for Agile working have digital accessibility.	2024
28. Continue to provide, where practicable, gender neutral facilities.	To ensure facilities for trans and non-binary staff, students, and visitors in line with our institutional commitments in our Trans Equality Policy.	Gender	Estates Directorate  Diversity Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Key staff are aware of the University's commitment to provide gender neutral facilities, where practicable e.g., Estates and Planning colleagues. Develop map of gender-neutral facilities on campus.	Ongoing
29. Continue to ensure that marketing, communication and engagement content and activity reflect the diversity of our staff and student bodies; and are accessible.	To reflect diversity of our staff and student bodies; to assist with attracting overseas international staff and students to work and study at the University; to demonstrate the diverse and inclusive nature of the University and the surrounding area of Belfast.	All 9 protected characteristics	GMRA (Global Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions)  International Office  Student and Campus Life  Development & Alumni Relations Office (DARO)  Diversity Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing  Education and Student Services  All Web content managers  All content and marketing developers	Communications and engagement activities and content, including guides, prospectuses, websites, policies and procedures are accessible.	Ongoing
30. Ensure our social media activity is inclusive and diverse and promotes good relations between people of different protected characteristics.	To ensure social media content reflects the diversity of our staff and student body relating to topics, news and events.	All 9 protected characteristics	All content and marketing developers	Institutional compliance with the, Social Media Protocol Guide.	Ongoing
31. Continue to develop and promote a bank of digital imagery that will reflect a diverse body of staff and students.	To ensure our marketing and communications activity and content reflect the broad diversity of staff and students at the University.  Diverse content e.g., Student Disability and Wellbeing testimonials.	All 9 protected characteristics	GMRA (Global Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions)  All Web content managers	Create portfolio of up-to-date and representative diverse images for use in University communications.  Communicate and encourage use of diverse images to users.	Ongoing

#### POLICY, PROCESS AND PRACTICES

INSTITUTIONAL STAFF STUDENTS

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
32. Develop Accessibility Guidelines / Compliance for institutional events and promote good relations between people of different protected characteristics.	To ensure equality of opportunity and participation for all attendees at University events (online and on campus).	All 9 protected characteristics	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing  All Directorates & Schools  All event organisers	Develop an Inclusive Events Checklist.  Publish and promote checklist to staff as part of any event planning.  Commitment to sign language interpreter/live captioning for institutional events/conferences of 250+ people.  Where relevant, develop Easy Read version of questionnaires/documents for institutional documents.	June 2024
STAFF					
33. Review and update relevant People and Culture policies and practices.	To ensure all People and Culture policies are inclusive and reflect legislative change and best practice.  To ensure the University provides modern, inclusive, and user-friendly employment policies and processes and ensure that equality screening is central to all policy development and review.	All 9 protected characteristics	People and Culture	Develop framework for review of People and Culture workplace policies and processes, to identify and reduce any negative and adverse impact of existing practices.  Future policy development to include development of  Pregnancy Loss Domestic Abuse Support leave / Kinship or Miscellaneous leave provision  Review sexual harassment policy position and training. Review recruitment process for staff  Review Reasonable Adjustments process for applicants and current staff.  Develop enhanced Menopause / Menstruation Support for staff and line managers.	Ongoing
34. Review recruitment practices to support and encourage those from underrepresented groups and protected characteristics to work at Queen's.	To ensure equality of opportunity and participation, and support and encourage those from underrepresented groups and characteristics to work at Queen's.	All 9 protected characteristics	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing All Directorates & Schools All event organisers	Targeted advertising of posts and partnerships with organisations to encourage applicants and provide support for those from under represented groups.  Develop a 'Behind the Scenes at Queen's' event to encourage and support under represented groups to apply.	2023-2024

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
STUDENTS					
35. Increase student engagement with Disability Services and work collaboratively across the University to provide students with the skills/abilities to overcome the challenges of their disabilities and be Healthy Learners.	To ensure equality of opportunity and participation for students with disabilities.	Disability	Student Disability Services	Provision of advice and guidance to students through targeted open days / offer holder events and inductions.  Develop accessible resources to promote the Student Disability Service.  Collaboration with internal / external stakeholders to enhance the student experience through improved service delivery.  Assessment appointments for students registering with Disability Services (in-person, online and desktop) within two weeks during term time.  Increase awareness and student engagement including use of funded one-to-one support and assistive technology.  Encourage students to effectively use Assistive Technology.	2023-2024
36. Digital infrastructure ensures outstanding student and staff experience and international connectivity.	To ensure equality of opportunity and participation for students with disabilities.	Disability	Student Disability Services	Systems reviewed and developed with improved student data and processes for registering with the Service and maintaining records and informing support.	2023-2024
37. Provide specialist advice and guidance to staff supporting students with disabilities.	To ensure equality of opportunity and participation for students with disabilities.	Disability	Student Disability Services	Training implemented for staff supporting students.  Advice and guidance provided to staff supporting students, including identifying support mechanisms outside of Disability Services.	2023-2024
38. Continue to build an integrated digital approach to effectively supporting students with disabilities / long-term conditions to provide a transformative learning experience. connectivity.	To ensure equality of opportunity and participation for students with disabilities.	Disability	Student Disability Services	Enhanced student engagement with the Needs Assessment Centre and improved agile / flexible booking system.  Increased student awareness of funded support opportunities.	2023-2024

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
INSTITUTIONAL					
39. Integrate equality screening guidance, support and assistance for institutional policy leads and ensure / develop mechanism for internal Equality screening compliance.	To ensure staff understand the University's responsibility to equality screening new /reviewed policies for potential impact on students/staff with protected characteristics; introducing mitigation or undertaking EQIAs where appropriate.  Click here to access our new Equality Screening webpage and guidance.	All 9 protected characteristics	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Develop process to ensure compliance with equality screening requirement prior to institutional approval of key decisions, policies etc.  Continue to review and update a dedicated webpage, library of screened policies, frequently asked questions etc.  Continue to deliver equality screening training.	Twice a year

#### **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

INSTITUTIONAL

STAFF

STUDENTS

Action	Aims and Objectives	Impacted Section 75 Group	Functional area / responsibility	Measurable Outcomes	Timescale
STAFF					
40. Ensure Members of Senate receive appropriate level of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.	To ensure compliance with Advance HE Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) Equality and Diversity Handbook for Governors of Northern Irish Higher Education Institutions.	All 9 protected characteristics	People and Culture	All new members of Senate to complete EDI training as part of their induction.	Upon request
41. Deliver Bullying and Harassment Training for staff.	To ensure staff are trained in Queen's policies and procedures; ensure staff are equipped to effectively respond to formal and/or informal allegations of bullying/harassment; to ensure all complaints are dealt with in a professional, effective and timely manner.	All 9 protected characteristics	People and Culture  Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing  Union Representatives  Staff	Deliver Bullying and Harassment sessions for all staff annually.  Develop and deliver a programme of Active Bystander Training for all staff.	Three sessions annually
42. Review and update Recruitment and Selection Training for all staff.	To ensure the Recruitment and Selection Training for staff reflects new Appointments Procedure; includes specific reference to Fair Employment Code of Practice; relevant case law and anti-discrimination legislation.	All 9 protected characteristics	People and Culture  Resourcing  Organisational Development  Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing	Review Annually.	Annually
43. Deliver staff training on sexual orientation / Transgender and Non-Binary awareness.	To have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between people of different genders; sexual orientation sessions to focus on gender identity status; myths / misconceptions; legislative framework; frequently asked questions; appropriate interventions; language and pronouns.	Sexual orientation and gender	Diversity and Inclusion Unit The Rainbow project	Deliver Bullying and Harassment sessions for all staff annually.  Deliver Transgender and Non-Binary awareness sessions for all staff annually.	Three sessions annually
44. Deliver 3 staff training and build awareness of disability equality in the workplace.	To raise awareness of disability issues in the workplace and ensure staff are aware of their duty to provide equality of opportunity, appropriate reasonable adjustments; etc.	Disability	Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing Employers For Disability NI HR Business Partners Organisational Development	Deliver disability awareness and equality in the workplace sessions for all staff annually.  Develop training on neurodiversity.  Develop module and resources to be included within management/ supervisor training which considers disability duties and reasonable adjustments.  Develop enhanced resources which include specific information on supporting and managing staff with disabilities.	Deliver training sessions annually



For further information:

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