

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

University Management Board
27 October 2025

Section 75 Annual Progress Report 2024 – 2025

UMB Sponsor	Alistair Finlay, Chief People Officer
Author	Jenny Torley, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, People and Culture Directorate
Meeting Attendee(s)	N/A
Reserved Business	The paper contains confidential/sensitive issues that should be considered under Reserved Business: Yes ☐ No ☒ <i>(If yes, the paper will be accessible to UMB members only and will not be for discussion/communication post meeting)</i>
Paper Category	☒ Information – a paper that provides an update for members but does not require discussion
Executive Summary	This paper provides a summary of institutional Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) activity carried out in the last 12 months, which is captured in the University's Section 75 Annual Progress Report ("the report"). This report is prepared in response to the University's statutory requirement under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It reflects a wide range of EDI activity and uses a template adopted by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and as such does not follow the University's usual style of reporting. Once noted by University Management Board, a summary paper together with the report will be submitted to the University's People and Culture Committee for noting, before being formally sent to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The report will also be uploaded to the University's website to comply with our statutory reporting obligations.
Financial/ Resource/ Sustainability Consequence	N/A
Communication post UMB	This item will be included in the UMB Published Minutes (All staff and students), unless considered as Reserved Business.

	Please indicate if the paper can be distributed to relevant areas including FMCs etc. Yes ☒ No ☐
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Section 75 Annual Progress Report 2024 – 2025

1. Introduction

The University's Section 75 Annual Progress Report (Appendix 1, hereinafter referred to as "the report") has been prepared in response to the statutory requirement (Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998) placed upon public authorities, to report annual progress on the implementation of its 5-year Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland ("the Equality Commission").

This report presents a comprehensive account of the equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) activities undertaken across the University during the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.

The report has been prepared using the standard reporting template issued by the Equality Commission. As a result, certain questions and terminology within the template may not fully correspond with the University's structures, established terminology, phraseology or presentational style.

2. Key Highlights

This paper provides an overview of all known EDI activity undertaken in this reporting period, but key highlights include:

The new [Carer's Research Support Fund](#) was launched in Autumn 2024 and is designed to contribute towards the cost of care that is additional to normal care provision when staff are attending career development activities such as conferences, training or other research-related events.

The new institutional [Illumination of the Lanyon Building](#) Policy was launched in January 2025. The Illumination of the Lanyon Building on key dates demonstrates our support for causes, recognise important inclusion days, and contributes to the University's overall goals of supporting wider social and civic impact and change.

The University hosted [Diversity Mark Breakfast](#) on Wednesday 28th May, with senior leaders from Queen's, Diversity Mark and the business world came together to discuss the benefits of embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within their organisations.

Digital Accessibility for Staff in June 2025 [Everway donated game changing inclusive software](#) to Queen's staff and their families who have benefited from a world leading inclusive software donation. Everway, formerly known as Texthelp, is providing an Enterprise Licence for Read&Write for Work - a set of discrete reading, writing, and communication tools designed to unlock the full potential of every employee.

The celebration of LGBTQIA+ inclusion through our [Queen's Pride Picnic 2025](#) and attendance at Belfast Pride, which were attended by a large number of students and staff.

[LGBTQueen's: a celebration showcase](#) was led by the University's LGBTQIA+ staff network [PRISM](#) with project partner [HereNI](#), supported by the University's Civic Contribution Fund.

The delivery of 85 EDI events to staff either on campus and/or virtually which included cultural and other celebrations around Chinese New Year, Black History Month, International Womens Day, Belfast Pride, Mental Health Awareness Week etc.

The [Racial Equity](#) at Queen's survey was conducted among staff and students in November and December 2024. The survey was completed anonymously, and feedback received will help us to identify what we are doing well, and crucially, where we can do better in making the University a more diverse, equal, and inclusive place. It will also inform our application to the Race Equality Charter in 2025.

The [Inclusive Employment Scheme](#) delivered in conjunction with Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment. This allows us to host individuals with a disability or long-term condition in various schools and directorates and this year, we supported 15 placements in 2024-2025.

Our targeted support for our carers has continued through [Connect](#) staff network which provides a safe space for carers to meet others who have shared or similar experiences and guest speakers from relevant organisations.

We have also continued to promote our [Carer Passport](#) to make it easier for staff with caring roles to talk about the flexibility and support they need.

We have equality screened (or are actively equality screening) 15 workplace policies including screening of the Voluntary Severance Scheme.

We have continued to embed and our [Fertility Treatment Leave Policy and support](#) and [Menopause Policy, Guidance, training and support](#) for all staff and line managers/supervisors.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the actions outlined in our [Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024 - 2029](#) to ensure continued progress and accountability.

Following the achievement of our Athena Gold Award, conferred by Advance HE in January 2024, we remain committed to implementing the five-year [Gold Action Plan](#) across the University.

We continued to deliver and facilitate a range of training programmes, including sessions on Bullying and Harassment, Neurodiversity, Equality Screening, and Disability Awareness, alongside our bespoke staff EDI training programme – *'Think Difference. Act Differently.'*

Gender Equality/Athena SWAN

- During the last 12 months, the University has continued to deliver a wide range of strategic and operational activity linked to its Institutional Athena SWAN Action Plan through the Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI), SWAN Champions Network and the work of the Diversity and Inclusion Unit.

- Differentiated Female Development Support continues to be provided to support female progression in the University including the Annual QGI Academic Mentoring Programme, Annual QGI Academic Progression Workshop.
- A number of events to celebrate under the theme “#Accelerate Action” were delivered on campus including:
 - Launch of In Good Company: Portraits of Queen's Women, a landmark exhibition celebrating the vital and diverse contributions of women at Queen's university.
 - QGI International Womens Day Networking Lunch with keynote speaker Professor Judy Williams.
 - School of Nursing and Midwifery Public Lecture Ending Violence Against Women and Girls: Linking the efforts of the World Health Organisation and Northern Ireland Policy and Research.
 - AEL and their Athena Swan Team celebrated International Women's Day 2025 with the release of a short film Let's Talk Gender.
 - Faculty of Medicine Health and Life Sciences –Let's Talk about Pregnancy and Baby Loss learning from QUB's leading researchers on pregnancy and baby loss, hear personal perspectives and look at what support is available.
 - The School of EECS celebrated International Women's Day with an inspiring talk from one of their PhD students Smart Tech: To Use or Abuse?
 - International Women's Day Student Wellbeing Event. The panel featured voices from diverse backgrounds, exploring important issues such as women's rights, gender-based violence, workplace equality, and policy development.
 - HAPP Athena Swan International Women's Day Seminar Series . This event provides students from the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy, and Politics with the opportunity to present their research and engage in meaningful discussions on diversity, inclusion, and representation in academia.
 - School of Natural and Built Environment – 2025 Beacon Lecture. A 21st Century Museum Career: New Thinking about Old Things.

Race Equality

- Within the last reporting period, the University continued to work towards identifying and critically reflecting on the institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students through our work on the Race Equality Charter (REC). This national charter is run by Advance HE aimed at supporting institutions on their work in this area. We are one of 100 higher education institutions in the UK who are signatories to the Race Equality Charter (REC) and will be applying for a Bronze Award in November 2025 – of which 66 institutions currently hold a Bronze award.
- Our REC work continues to be supported by the Racial Equity Champions Network which was established to lead on the work that sits within the Race Equality Charter. Each School and Directorate within Queen's is represented on the network, as well as iRise representation. The Champions share best practice and identify local issues as part of their remit and are also responsible for the introduction of initiatives and promotion of REC-related programmes of work within their Schools and Directorates.
- iRise, the University's first Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) and International Staff Network, created in 2019, continued to provide a peer network open to all staff who identify as, or are characterised as, BAME and/or international and represent the views of BAME and International staff at the University.

- The Race Equality Mentoring Programme continued in this reporting period, launched in May 2023, this programme is the first traditional style mentoring scheme at Queen's designed to support the career progression of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues. Twenty-two staff mentees and mentors from across the University have commenced a one-year mentoring relationship. We continued the Race Equality Reverse Mentoring programme which saw 12 participants in this reporting period.
- Race equality week took place between 3rd -9th February 2025. Queen's hosted a number of events to mark Race Equality week including: [Race Equality Week Breakfast 2025](#) – Celebrating Progress and Sharing Voices. [Race Equality Matters - The 5 day Challenge](#) The Queen's Gender Initiative - REC team took part in the Race Equality Matters five-day challenge – exploring some of the key and daily issues that impact on BAME and international staff and students.

Disability

- The Disability Action Plan (2021-2026) outlines how we aim to embed disability awareness and consideration within our staff and student communities, and throughout the University's operational decisions and activities, to ensure that any barriers and inequalities to full participation in studying, employment and life on campus are removed.
- The Disability Forum continued to promote best practice and put in place the actions to support accessibility at Queen's including:
 - Developing guides to help staff, students and visitors to get to and around our sites and buildings more easily;
 - Developing comprehensive training and support to enable digital accessibility at Queen's;
 - Providing funded support to staff (Disability Support Fund) and students (Disability Support Allowance) to enable reasonable adjustments and full participation in work and study;
 - Delivering specific training for all staff to increase awareness and identify barriers to participation and inclusion of people with disabilities including Neurodiversity training, Autism Awareness training, Bitesize Deaf Awareness and Basic Sign Language Training and Mental Health training.
- The Disability Staff Network continued to support those staff who have a disability and/or a long-term condition and provided feedback to the University on how it could encourage and support greater representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions throughout the University.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

- The University continued to raise awareness and encourage conversations about mental health to reduce stigma and promote better mental health and wellbeing.
- The Students Union (SU) has been working to progress the OMNI action plan. The plan contains core action areas (both strategic and operational) for the SU to work towards to seek to improve student mental health and wellbeing at QUB. Several of these core action items have been progressed this academic year and have been achieved through cross-departmental working within the SU but also with internal and external stakeholders.

LGBTQ+ Awareness

- In July 2025, the University hosted [Queen's Pride Picnic 2025](#) bringing together staff and students to celebrate Belfast Pride 2025 with free street food and ice cream at the front of the Lanyon Building.
- PRISM, our LGBTQ+ staff network, continued to provide a forum for networking and a means of peer support between LGBTQ+ staff, representing the interests of LGBTQ+ staff and working with colleagues to inform the University on relevant issues.

3. Recommendation

Recommendation A: that University Management Board notes the Section 75 Annual Progress Report for 2024-2025 attached in Appendix 1, which will be submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

Queen's University Belfast



Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality

Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Mr Conor Curran Telephone: 028 90 971045 Email: c.curran@qub.ac.uk
Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above ☒ Name: Click or tap here to enter text. Telephone: Click or tap here to enter text. Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:	Diversity and Inclusion People and Culture Queen's University Belfast
Signature:	

Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between August 2024 and July 2025

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

- 1 In 2024-25, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Policy/service delivery developments

Policy / Reporting

- Queen's University Belfast has been awarded a prestigious Gold Athena SWAN Award conferred in January 2024 by Advance HE. Queen's is the first university on the island of Ireland and is only the second in the UK to achieve an institutional Gold Award for its work improving gender equality. [Athena SWAN](#)
- The new [Illumination of the Lanyon Building Policy](#) was launched in January 2025. The illumination of the Lanyon Building at Queen's serves as a symbolic gesture, marking key institutional and global days of significance. This initiative aims to contribute to the goal of driving wider social change and creating greater awareness of the importance of these days.
- In June 2025 Queen's became officially recognised as a [University of Sanctuary](#). Queen's is the first university in Northern Ireland to be declared a University of Sanctuary, joining just over 40 institutions across the UK and just eight others on the island of Ireland. This prestigious recognition celebrates institutions that go above and beyond to create a culture of welcome, safety, and support for those seeking sanctuary.
- Queen's [Inclusive Employment Scheme](#) continued and we hosted 15 individuals with a disability or long term condition in various Schools and Directorates throughout the University.
- We continued to offer support and guidance on Menopause and Fertility Leave and continue embedding our [Menopause Policy](#) and [Fertility Treatment Leave Policy](#)
- We published our Fair Employment returns, for further details see [Fair Employment Return Monitoring Data](#)
- The new [Carer's Research Support Fund](#) was launched in Autumn 2024 and is designed to contribute towards the cost of care that is additional to normal care provision when staff are attending career development activities such as conferences, training or other research-related events.

EDI Training

- We delivered Neurodiversity training with Employers for Disability NI for staff in February 2025.
- We delivered Active Bystander Training to staff and students throughout the year and with the Active Bystander Company in April 2025.
- We delivered a Dyscalculia & Dyspraxia Awareness session in March 2025.
- We delivered two Bullying and Harassment training to staff (6 February 2025 and 6 March 2025)
- We delivered one of our award-winning Menopause awareness sessions in October 2024.
- We delivered an Autism, ADD and ADHD information session in conjunction with Employers for Disability NI in March 2025.
- In this reporting period, the university delivered, one introduction to Suicide Awareness, Mood Matters – a mental health awareness session, bereavement in the workplace, men's mental health awareness session, working through change and building resilience, communicating with empathy and understanding, Stress awareness, introduction to mindfulness, Drug and alcohol awareness, compassionate conversations and a session on the nature of worry and uncertainty.

Outreach, Engagement and Events

In the 2024-2025 reporting period, the University delivered:

- A comprehensive Staff Wellbeing Programme which included support for mental health; men's health; parenting and family life [Staff Wellbeing at Queen's](#);
- 15 events related to Disabilities / Long Term Conditions / Mental Health. Disability Forum met on 3 occasions during the period
- 12 events related to Race / Ethnicity.
- 23 events related to Gender Equality.
- 6 events related to Sexual Orientation.
- 5 events related to Political Opinion.
- 3 events related to Religion / Faith.
- 2 events related to Age.
- 6 events related to Dependents / Caring Responsibilities.

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2024-25 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Some examples of outcomes and impact delivering quality and diversity positive action measure are set out in the response above.

The following evidence is presented **in alphabetical order**.

ACCESSIBILITY

AccessAble (Physical Accessibility)

In this reporting period, the University has continued its commitment to enabling physical accessibility on campus for staff, students and visitors. We have continued our partnership with [AccessAble](#) to develop guides to help staff, students and visitors to get to and around our sites and buildings more easily. The promotion of the AccessAble has seen a 25% increase in users during the reporting period.

To encourage awareness and consideration of physical accessibility there are posters for all public areas of the University which promote and provide information on accessibility guides for each of the locations on campus. This enables staff, students and visitors to ascertain if their destination at Queen's is going to be accessible to them. QUB accessibility guides continue to be actively promoted on digital screens in shared areas on campus.

Institutional Digital Accessibility

The Web Support Team continue to provide training for all website moderators to ensure their content meets accessibility requirements and are compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 - AA standard. Website owners and content editors receive scheduled accessibility reports for their website(s) via email on a fortnightly basis. We have continued to improve integrations between our web platforms to make the process of implementing accessibility fixes easier for website owners and content editors in the CMS. Our guidance continues to evolve with these changes.

The University has also created further resources for all content management system users to ensure that those working with web content are acting in line with the accessibility requirements for public sector bodies and continue to promote and follow good practice regarding web accessibility. This includes dedicated Accessibility support available from the University's IT Helpdesk. We are also moving our web content into newer templates which have accessibility features built into them from the start.

Digital Accessibility

Support and training continue for staff to enable digital accessibility. The Centre for Educational Development (CED) provides support, resources and guidance including:

- A range of online guides are in place on the [Digital Learning at Queen's](#) site to help staff plan, design and develop content in a more inclusive way.

- A [Canvas Course Setup](#) guide has been developed which is updated annually and used as a tool to support staff in preparing for the next academic year 2024 /2025.
- How to [Record a Video quick guide](#) learning materials.
- [Accessible Video Content Design for Learner Variability](#).

The University has put in place appropriate tools, advice and support to staff on how to record learning materials which also allows for [automated captions and transcripts](#).

The University continues to deliver and promote '[Accessibility Toolkit](#)'; an online, self-paced Canvas course that provides guidance for academic staff to become more knowledgeable about digital accessibility. It provides advice on how to create accessible content for learner variability, giving examples of both good and bad practice; and highlights accessibility checker tools such as the Canvas Rich Content Editor and Blackboard Ally. The training is available to all staff with access to Canvas VLE and the training was advertised and promoted in several ways internally in the University to encourage attendance.

Anti-Harassment Advisors

Queen's is committed to creating an environment free from any form of harassment and ensuring all staff feel comfortable within the workplace. We continue to work with our established network of Anti-Harassment Advisors on Campus who can provide confidential information to staff on issues relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Any member of staff who is experiencing harassment can contact an Anti-Harassment Advisor to seek advice, support or to talk to them about what they are experiencing in strict confidence and help them decide what steps to take next. The Anti-Harassment Advisors provide support through:

- Listening to staff who believe they are being harassed, to clarify the options open to them and to assist them in resolving the matter informally where possible and provide similar support to those accused of harassment.
- Where requested, supporting individuals throughout the resolution of their concerns. This may include discussing with the individual what they may wish to say or write to the person who they feel has harassed or bullied them or to a senior member of staff who can take action. The aim is to empower and support the individual.
- Dealing with all cases with the utmost confidentiality except in cases where there is an unacceptable risk to a member of staff, student or to the institution.
- Signposting to other appropriate support.
- Providing similar support to those accused of harassment.

The details and further information on our Anti-Harassment Advisors is detailed on our [Diversity and Inclusion webpages](#).

ATHENA SWAN

Athena SWAN (Gender Equality)

Queen's University Belfast has been awarded a prestigious Gold Athena SWAN Award conferred in January 2024 by Advance HE. Queen's is the first university on the island of Ireland and is only the second in the UK to achieve an institutional Gold Award for its work improving gender equality.

Institutional Athena SWAN Award from Advance HE and 15 school awards 4 Gold, 6 Silver, and 5 Bronze awards have been attained making Queen's a leader in gender equality in the Higher Education Sector. We have made significant progress in implementing the Athena SWAN Silver Action Plan 2019-2023 and now the Athena SWAN Gold Action Plan 2023-2028.

As well as leading the Athena SWAN Programme at Queen's, Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI) continues to celebrate and champion women at our University. It provides a voice for women at Queen's and advocates for structures, culture and working practices that are fair, transparent and responsive to the needs of women.

QGI is active in developing women's careers through promotions workshops and bespoke mentoring programmes and enhances the visibility of the contribution of women in Queen's through prestigious lectures, networking events, conferences, portraits project, art commissions and podcasts. QGI engages with Schools and Directorates, representing women's views across Queen's and supporting women's views on priority issues to come to the fore.

In the last reporting year, QGI and the Athena SWAN team at Queen's have hosted several activities as part of our continued commitment to gender equality. Highlights include:

- [Women in Leadership: Looking to the Future](#) on Friday 15 November 2024, Queen's Gender Initiative were honoured to host the prestigious Women in Leadership: Looking to the Future event at Queen's Business School. Celebrating the efforts across the University in equality, diversity and inclusion, particularly celebrating and empowering women in leadership roles. The event brought together a wide range of inspiring speakers who shared meaningful reflections, actionable insights and powerful messages of encouragement and change.
- [Queen's University hosts SistersINSPIRE](#) event in March 2025 to empower future female leaders. An initiative designed to inspire and empower young women by showcasing leadership, career pathways, and education opportunities. Led by Queen's academics and students, sessions covered diverse topics such as women's contributions to cinema, engineering for a sustainable future, saving lives through medical simulation, the role of AI in learning, and the fundamentals of legal mooting.
- [Portrait illustration Project](#) was established to celebrate and promote the impactful contributions of women at Queen's. The project aims to highlight the critical and varied roles that a diverse range of women play across the University with 15 watercolour portraits commissioned by renowned Irish artist Laura Callaghan. The portraits were unveiled in a special exhibition at the Naughton Gallery in November 2024 and are now part of the University Art Collection.
- [The Annual Dame Ingrid Allen Lecture 2024/25](#) Tribes and Tribulations Navigating Gender Equality.

We also continued to offer differentiated Female Development Support to help women's progression in the University.

- **Aurora Leadership Development Programme** is an Advance HE leadership female only led development programme aimed at addressing the under representation of women in leadership positions. In this reporting period we supported 16 female colleagues (both academic and professional services staff) from across Queen's successfully completed the programme.
- **Annual QGI Academic Mentoring Programme** provides mentorship for female lecturers, senior lecturers and professors. The 2024-25 programme arranged approximately 23 Mentee – Mentor pairings.
- **Annual QGI Professional Services Mentoring Programme** provides mentorship in career development and leadership for professional services staff at Grade 7 the 2024-2025 programme has arranged 35 Mentee-Mentor pairings
- **Academic Progression Workshop 2025** the annual academic progression workshop was held on 4th February 2025. All female academics were invited. The workshop enabled informed understanding and learning about Academic Progression and career planning.
- **Annual Professorial Progression Workshop 2025** was held on 5th February 2025 in the Senate Room at which all female professors were invited.
- **SWAN Champions Training and support** continued in this reporting period.

International Women's Day (March 2025)

An extended programme of events and initiatives took place in March 2025 to celebrate International Women's Day at Queen's including:

- Launch of [In Good Company: Portraits of Queen's Women](#), a landmark exhibition celebrating the vital and diverse contributions of women at Queen's university.
- [Celebrating the Women of Queen's: Past, Present and Future](#) marking the impact of women from Queen's have made across the globe. Joined by women graduates, honorary graduates and students across a range of fields and sectors, the event showcased the enormous effect of women of Queen's.
- QGI [International Womens Day Networking Lunch](#) with keynote speaker Professor Judy Williams.
- School of Nursing and Midwifery Public Lecture [Ending Violence Against Women and Girls](#): Linking the efforts of the World Health Organisation and Northern Ireland Policy and Research.
- AEL and their Athena SWAN Team celebrated International Women's Day 2025 with the release of a short film [Let's Talk Gender](#).
- Faculty of Medicine Health and Life Sciences –[Let's Talk about Pregnancy and Baby Loss](#) learning from QUB's leading researchers on pregnancy and baby loss, hear personal perspectives and look at what support is available.
- The School of EECS celebrated International Women's Day with an inspiring talk from one of their PhD students [Smart Tech: To Use or Abuse?](#)
- [International Women's Day Student Wellbeing Event](#). The panel featured voices from diverse backgrounds, exploring important issues such as women's rights, gender-based violence, workplace equality, and policy development.

- HAPP Athena SWAN [International Women's Day Seminar Series](#) . This event provides students from the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy, and Politics with the opportunity to present their research and engage in meaningful discussions on diversity, inclusion, and representation in academia.
- School of Natural and Built Environment – [2025 Beacon Lecture](#) . A 21st Century Museum Career: New Thinking about Old Things.

Active Bystander Training

This training aims to empower staff across the Queens University community to challenge poor behaviours which may have become normalised and bring about change through the reinforcement of messages defining the boundaries of unacceptable behaviour. Scenarios were designed specifically related to experiences in higher education, including in the context of age, gender, LGBTQ+ inclusivity and respect for cultures. These scenarios enable focused discussions and provide attendees with guidance and strategies on how they could intervene as an Active Bystander. The aim is that by working together, a safe and supportive working environment is created through supporting staff to intervene and interrupt unacceptable behaviours, safely and appropriately.

Carers and Parents

Carers Research Support Fund

The [Carers Research Support Fund](#) is a new fund developed by QGI as part of the Institutional Athena SWAN Programme and was launched in the Research and Enterprise Directorate.

The fund contributes to the costs of additional caring responsibilities for Academics (Teaching & Research or Education), Researchers and staff when attending research conferences or other development research activities.

Staff can apply for up to £500 per academic year which can be used for either caring costs, or travel costs of dependant(s) and an additional caregiver to accompany the staff member to a conference.

Queen's recognises that participation in research conferences and career development research activities can be more challenging for those with caring responsibilities. This new fund is part of our broader approach to enhancing and enabling an inclusive and supportive research culture.

Carers Network

The staff Carers Network continues to support our employees with caring responsibilities. The Carers Network allows carers across Queen's to come together and share experiences and information and provide carers at Queen's with a voice to support the University's understanding of the issues faced by working carers.

A new procedure helps identify new carers commencing employment at Queen's and improved alerts for those who update their record to identify as a carer. The Diversity and Inclusion Unit issue regular updates and share information with carers, including information from Health Trusts, targeted information sessions around financial matters, benefits advice from Employers for Childcare and information sessions on Direct Payments.

The Carers Network continues to offer several social gatherings each year as an opportunity to meet and share experiences. There have been coffee mornings, a holistic therapy session and a Christmas lunch during the reporting period.

As part of Carers week in June 2025 we had two members of staff share their own experiences through blogs about their experiences as part of the network and their experiences as a staff carer at Queen's.

[BLOG: Carers Week Reflections: My Experience as a Staff Carer at Queen's](#)

[BLOG: Carers Week Reflections: My Experience as a Staff Carer at Queen's](#)

The University continues to engage and consult with the carers network in helping shape an informed approach to new policies and procedures throughout Queen's. Further information on the Carers Network is available on the [Carers Webpages](#).

Carers Passport

We continue to promote the benefits of the Carer Passport. The Carer Passport is a way for staff who are working as carers to electronically document and communicate their caring responsibilities to their manager, in a way that allows for the conversation and discussion to take place with less stigma.

The Passport, which has been adopted in many progressive workplaces around the UK, aims to promote the understanding of the staff member's needs, enabling managers to put in place the flexibility needed to support their individual circumstances where possible.

Enabling a two-way discussion, the Carer Passport supports a conversation between staff and managers that will generally involve balancing the needs of the staff member with the needs of the business area. It does not normally involve a formal change to the staff member's contract of employment, but, instead, enables staff and managers to find solutions and arrangements that can empower and support carers at Queen's.

The launch of the passport has been assisted by specific sessions for Line Managers to support their understanding and application of the Carer Passport at Queen's. [Click here for more information on Queen's Carer's Passport](#)

Parents Network

This informal network was established to help support staff who are new parents or have recently joined Queens and have children and wish to connect with other parents informally, to ask and answer general questions. Since its launch, the network continues to grow and be a beneficial resource for those at Queen's with parenting responsibilities.

Student Parents and Carers Network

Queens continues to offer support for students with dependants. For students with caring responsibilities, the QUB Student Parents and Carers network offers relaxed and friendly fortnightly meetings to raise issues, share information and learn about opportunities.

Students' Parents and Carers Support Fund

During this reporting period, the University continued to publicise and encourage applications for the 'Parent and Care' Support Fund. Available to all students with caring responsibilities,

funding of a £100 award is available to contribute to the costs of caring activities such as emergency childcare, household or transport costs, or any other costs associated with caring responsibilities.

Homework Clubs

The Homework Clubs Programme gives Queen's University volunteers the chance to provide homework support to children and young people who live in areas of educational underachievement.

During 2024-25, Homework Clubs Programme worked in partnership with 16 Clubs based in areas of educational achievement throughout Belfast.

Volunteer Student Union recruited, trained and allocated 150 student volunteers to these 17 partner homework clubs, offering weekly study support to approximately 400+participating children and young people aged 4-18 years, improving their study skills, building their confidence and raising their aspirations about further and higher education.

Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms at Queen's

The university continues to promote the private Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms for use by Queens's staff and students returning to work or study after Maternity Leave.

All rooms are equipped with comfortable sofas, armchairs and footstools, have access to electrical sockets for breast pump use, and are located close to bathroom facilities. Pregnant staff and students may also use these rooms to rest in during their pregnancy.

Information on the location of the rooms and areas where breastfeeding is welcome across the campus is available on the University's [Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms Webpages](#).

Breast Feeding Welcome Here Scheme

Queen's has joined over 800 other business and organisations as a member of the Public Health Agency's Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme. This Scheme is an initiative which makes it easier for mums to recognise places where they can breastfeed their baby while out and about. [Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme at Queen's](#)

COST OF LIVING

Queen's continued with support to staff and students facing the cost-of-living crisis.

- Our Accommodation bursary scheme supported approximately 350 students in this academic year, reducing their costs by up to 37% (check)
- The University's Financial Assistance Fund is available to support students in financial hardship during their studies. It is available to students who are not eligible for the Student Support Fund.
- Care experienced students can request support from SUQCESS for costs directly related to their academic studies or academic career.
- Childcare support and discounted sport memberships.
- Queen's Students Union teamed up with the University to provide [The Pantry](#), a free refill station located on the Ground Floor of One Elmwood.

Accredited Living Wage Employer

Queen's has already been paying its employees the Real Living Wage since 2022, and the recent [accreditation](#) officially recognises the University's commitment to ensure employees and any regularly contracted workers are paid the living wage hourly rate.

Currently, only 93 organisations in Northern Ireland are Living Wage employers, compared to 3,714 in Scotland and 580 in Wales, underscoring the need for increased advocacy and support for the Living Wage movement across Northern Ireland.

The Living Wage accreditation is one of a number of initiatives the University has undertaken during the Cost of Living Crisis to support and invest in their people. These include a new pay deal that will see a base salary increase of 13% over three years for all staff, a one-off payment and an additional day's leave. Queen's also developed a Financial Assistance Scheme that allows interest free borrowing of up to £2,400. Other benefits include existing on-site affordable childcare services, discounted sport membership and free period products in bathrooms across campus.

DISABILITY

Autism Awareness Training

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit hosted Autism Awareness training session in November 2024 delivered by Employers for Disability Northern Ireland (EFDNI).

The session focused on how people on the autism spectrum are affected, their wide range of abilities, challenges, skills and strengths. The session brings the individual perspective of people on the autism spectrum through several videos, to increase insight and enhance awareness of how best to interact with and support people on the autism spectrum in the workplace and line managers were specifically encouraged to attend. A total of 32 staff attended.

British Sign Language Training

The Language Centre currently supports the British Sign Language Level 1 and Level 2 teaching and assessment, supporting staff to improve their ability to communicate with the deaf community, including those living with hearing loss.

Employ Autism Scheme

The University continued to work with the charity Ambitious about Autism and Santander Universities UK to enable autistic students and graduates to access paid internships and tailored careers support and advice, and to improve neurodiversity in the workplace.

Internships are typically equivalent to full-time work for 8-10 weeks but could stretch over a longer period with reduced hours per week.

The programme is open to all current students or graduates who have graduated within the last two years and have not yet secured permanent employment, who are over 18 and registered as autistic with [Queen's Disability Services](#) or who have a formal diagnosis (received or in progress) of autism or a social communication disorder.

Inclusive Employment Scheme

Our Inclusive Employment Scheme provides an opportunity for those who have been unable to obtain work, or have had to leave work because of a disability, to develop skills and gain valuable work experience. The placements at Queen's provide opportunities to learn skills, develop relationships in the workplace, build confidence and enhance CV's, ultimately to lead to full-time or part-time employment. [Inclusive Employment Scheme Webpage](#)

This Scheme has been growing year on year following the pandemic, with 15 placements opportunities matched for 2024/2025. Those matched individuals commenced in August and September 2024; with placements for varied durations from twelve weeks – six months. We hosted a catch-up event in April 2025 [Inclusive Employment Scheme catch-up event, April 2025, Queen's University Belfast](#)

Other Disability Initiatives

The University continues to deliver several additional disability friendly good practice initiatives:

- Queen's University Disability Forum (meets quarterly) to review and monitor progress against the University's Disability Action Plan and consider the needs of, and the issues affecting, staff and students with disabilities at the University.
- Funded support is available for students with disabilities through Disability Support Allowance (DSA).
- The Needs Assessment Centre provides support, advice and guidance tailored specifically to the individual students to prepare them for University life and enable them to reach their potential and provides advice on the DSA process from the application for funding to receiving recommended support.
- Peer support is provided through regular social group meetings to enable students with disabilities and/or long-term conditions to meet other students.
- One to one support is arranged by Disability Services for students through the Register of Support Providers at Queen's to assist with specific academic challenges.
- Advice and guidance for staff declaring a disability is now available to provide clarity and support regarding who they need to tell and for what purpose e.g., for reasonable adjustments or staff monitoring, in addition to further sources of support.
- Support is provided to disabled staff via the [Disability Support Fund](#) which allows QUB staff (who have disclosed their disability) to apply for funding to purchase various pieces of equipment to assist them when carrying out their work.

Staff Disability Support Network

The Staff Disability Support Network continues to provide a voice for staff with disabilities and long-term conditions. The network provides an opportunity for these staff to be represented and participate in University life. A nominee from the network attends the University's Disability Forum which provides feedback on how the University can encourage and support

greater representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions throughout the institution.

Digital Accessibility for Staff

[Everway donates game changing inclusive software](#) to Queen's staff and their families who have benefited from a world leading inclusive software donation. Everway, formerly known as Texthelp, is providing an Enterprise Licence for Read&Write for Work - a set of discrete reading, writing, and communication tools designed to unlock the full potential of every employee.

This software will support more than 4,000 staff, and their families, to work more effectively by adapting to different learning needs and working styles, both at work and at home.

The donation strengthens Queen's commitment to diversity and inclusion, making digital content more accessible and creating a more supportive working environment.

Read&Write for Work helps employees of all abilities work more productively and confidently, whether they are neurodivergent, working in multilingual teams, or face every day reading and writing challenges. The software plays a vital role in supporting inclusive workplaces, helping organisations attract and retain diverse talent.

EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE CURRICULUM

The University continues to invest and improve EDI in the curriculum, most notably with regards to digital accessibility. EDI in the curriculum is key to the student experience. All the support provided by the Centre for Educational Development aims to remove barriers for students and to ensure equity (See further information on digital accessibility on Page 5).

Queen's use of Canvas, a University-wide Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), across all academic programmes from has been a key enabler in the move to active connected learning and online learning, meeting the needs of a diverse digital student body. Canvas has also supported the delivery of alternative assessments.

Canvas has been enabled to allow a personal pronoun identifier in Canvas VLE; a Canvas account setting which enables staff and students to select and update their personal pronouns in their user settings, which will display after their name in areas throughout Canvas.

This is function communicated regularly to ensure that new staff and students are aware of this way to identify.

There is continued on-going work across the University in relation to De-Colonising the Curriculum where appropriate.

EQUALITY SCREENING

In the reporting period, we equality screened (or are actively equality screening) the following workplace policies:

- Fire Safety Policy
- Dealing with Criminal Conviction disclosures
- UG and PG Admissions Policy

- Voluntary Severance Scheme
- Electric Vehicle Scheme
- Naming of PG Cohort of students as Sir Peter Gregson
- Academic Progression
- Relocation and Visa Policy
- Dual Language Policy
- Naming of MHLS Buildings
- Reward Policy
- Domestic Abuse and Safe Leave Policy
- Graduation Decisions 2025

Please click to view our [Equality Screening](#) webpage for policies screened and supporting information provided to staff.

Initiatives addressing Under-representation

We will continue to develop initiatives to address under-representation in the University, for example through the use of Welcome Statements, our Social Charter Project and Behind the Scenes at Queen's and our Inclusive Employment Scheme.

We have expanded our general Welcome Statement to confirm that the University welcomes applications from all sections of society and particularly from individuals from the Black, Asian, Minority or Ethnic (BAME) community, persons with a Disability and those who identify as LGBT. We also provide evidence of our commitment to Equality to applicants by including information on our staff networks for our LGBT staff (PRISM), BAME and International staff (iRise) as well as a Disability Support Network and Carers Network.

FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES

Staff can avail of family friendly policies to ensure work-life balance including Adoptive Leave, Career Break, Dependant Leave including Bereavement Leave, flexible working, parental leave, paternity leave (including Adoptive Paternity Leave) and Shared Parental leave. Further details on our family friendly policies can be accessed on our [Annual, Family and Other Leave webpage](#).

Manager Training – Family Friendly Policies

Knowledge sessions on Family Friendly Policies have been built into the People Manager Essentials Programme, the development programme is designed to support people managers to build their people management knowledge, skills and effective behaviours. These knowledge sessions provide guidance and information to Managers on Family Friendly policies such as Family Leave, Dependents Leave and Flexible Working to ensure policies are applied fairly and consistently.

Online toolkits have been developed, including an online toolkit specifically relating to family leave. These manager guidance toolkits provide support and ensure consistency, fairness and full information on family friendly entitlements for all employees when making and responding to requests. Policy, guidance and information on these toolkits was communicated via staff roundup (Internal Comms) and advertised on the Queen's webpage. This guidance can be viewed at [People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast](#).

The University is committed to facilitating flexible working arrangements where possible to ensure staff are supported to strike the right balance between home and work life, and particularly support those with caring responsibilities or those impacted by health or disability considerations.

GENDER

[Diversity Mark Breakfast](#) on Wednesday 28th May, senior leaders from Queen's, Diversity Mark and the business world came together to discuss the benefits of embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within their organisations.

Queens currently holds a Silver Diversity Mark, recognising its commitment to advancement of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

The Silver Diversity Mark award highlights the University's progress in advancing gender, race and disability equality and its ambitious plans in this space and reflects significant progress since the University was awarded Bronze several years ago.

Fertility Treatment Leave Policy

Following the launch of the [Fertility Treatment Leave Policy](#) we have continued to support staff who are undergoing fertility treatment, or those supporting a partner who is undertaking fertility treatment, including the provision of paid time off.

The Fertility Treatment Leave Policy acknowledges the demands on individuals and their partners, offering offers staff members who are undergoing investigation of fertility treatment, undertaking or recovering from fertility treatment up to five days paid leave per treatment cycle.

The policy also entitles a staff member who wants to support a partner who is undergoing fertility treatment up to two days of paid leave per treatment cycle.

The policy was designed to offer support to staff undergoing fertility treatment, whilst raising awareness of the issues with line managers and other staff members. The fertility treatment leave is a day one right for all staff, and sits alongside existing support available to staff, including temporary workplace adjustments and free counselling.

Menopause Policy and Guidance

The University continues to create an environment where women feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for reasonable adjustments at work, if necessary. The [Menopause Policy](#) and accompanying [Menopause Guidance](#) sets out the University's

commitment to supporting colleagues experiencing the menopause and/ or menopause type symptoms.

The [Menopause webpage](#) also provides information and further support for staff experiencing the menopause, and for Line managers and Supervisors who are supporting staff. These include Frequently Asked Questions, further sources of Information and support, information on roles and responsibilities, symptoms and reasonable adjustments.

Menopause Support Fund

The Staff Menopause Support Fund provides financial assistance for staff who are experiencing menopause/menopausal symptoms. The fund can be used to contribute towards the purchase costs associated with reasonable adjustments to enable them to remain in the working environment. For example, this could include:

- A fan.
- Fitting blinds to windows.
- Where uniforms are compulsory, providing additional spare uniforms, or uniforms in different sizes.
- Consideration of adjustments to, or purchase of additional PPE or in different sizes.

Menopause Information Sessions

The University is continuing to schedule a regular programme of Menopause information sessions for staff, and specific sessions to increase awareness and support line managers to support staff experiencing the menopause.

The sessions are designed to reduce stigma, raise awareness, and inform staff on what to expect and when and how to seek help around issues relating to menopause.

Period Dignity at Queen's

Queen's recognises the inability to access period products is a societal issue of increasing urgency in the context of the current cost of living crisis. Following pilots by Students Union and Student Wellbeing Team providing free period products in the Library, Graduate School and One Elmwood, and similar pilots by Athena SWAN Champions in their Schools, Queen's launched an institutional approach by providing free period products in bathrooms across campus.

We have now installed 43 free period product vending units in bathrooms, including all-access bathrooms, located across the main University campus and in key sites on the wider campus.

Providing free pads and tampons, we hope that these vending machines will help our students and staff – whether needing period products in the moment or being impacted by period poverty. [Period Dignity @ Queens](#)

Activities and Events

- [Women in Leadership: Looking to the Future](#) Queen's Gender Initiative were honoured to host the prestigious Women in Leadership: Looking to the Future event at Queen's Business School.
- [QGI Professorial and Academic Progression Workshops](#)
- [Annual Dame Ingrid Allen Lecture 2024/25](#)
- [International Women's Day Programme 2025](#)
- [Celebrating the Women of Queen's: Past, Present and Future](#)
- [In Pictures: QGI International Women's Day Networking Lunch](#)
- [Queen's honours 15 women from across the University through an inspiring art exhibition](#)
- [Queen's University hosts SistersINSPIRE event to empower future female leaders](#)
- [One Year Anniversary - Athena Swan Gold Award Celebration](#)

ILLUMINATION OF THE LANYON BUILDING

The new institutional [Illumination of the Lanyon Building](#) Policy was launched in January 2025. The Illumination of the Lanyon Building on key dates demonstrates our support for causes, recognise important inclusion days, and contributes to the University's overall goals of supporting wider social and civic impact and change.

The University's annual calendar of key diversity and recognition days outlines the proposed dates for celebration by the University. These dates have been selected as they celebrate equality, diverse communities, cultures and faiths, and reflect the diverse local population of our staff and students.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

African Scholars Research Network

The network continues to build a cross-campus Research Network of African Scholars at Queen's. The network fosters collegiality and a strong foundation for a sustainable supportive culture for these researchers of various disciplines and educational backgrounds.

Chinese Culture Forum

The Chinese Culture Forum continues to provide a platform at Queen's for ongoing exchange of ideas and sharing experiences of individuals who are interested in Chinese culture, contemporary or traditional, with an intention to understand better Chinese cultural products, practice and perspectives through intercultural dialogues.

The Chinese Culture Forum celebrated the Year of the Snake commencing on Wednesday 29th January 2025, with a spectacular Lion dance against the backdrop on the Queen's Lanyon Building was illuminated Red. Students, staff members and their families were invited to join group photographs alongside the lions.

Chinese Language Interest Group

The Chinese Language Interest Group facilitates the student-led learning community to enhance a better understanding of Chinese culture, through learning the language and social activities throughout the academic year.

Language Courses

The Language Centre at Queen's continued to support staff and students at the University, as well as members of the public, in developing their language competence and cultural awareness, through the provision of language courses, both taught and online/blended course, as well as related training workshops focusing on cultural awareness and understanding.

In Academic year 2024-2025, there were courses offered across 16 different languages taught at a range of levels.

QUB DEIB Forum

In March 2025 at Riddel Hall, over 30 colleagues and student representatives from various sectors and disciplines participated in a forum focused on supporting international Chinese students at Queen's. [In Pictures: QUB DEIB Forum | Chinese at Queen's](#)

Cultural Awareness Training

The Language Centre supported Cultural Awareness training workshops during the academic year in both online and face-to-face contexts. This involved collaboration with Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences faculty, Students Union volunteering initiatives as well as a number of ad hoc workshops supporting engineering and global food security students in discipline specific training contexts.

The Language Centre team has also worked positively with colleagues at Queen's during this reporting period, to propose the development of an institution wide approach to supporting cultural skills development.

Linguistic Residential Scheme

The University has continued with the successful Linguistic Residential Scheme which is aimed at developing language students' skills as part of their academic studies. The Scheme offers a maximum number of 12 places for students studying Irish with remaining spaces offered to other students who have indicated a preference to live with Irish speakers and who have confirmed they speak the language.

Iorla Morra More – Linguistic Diversity and Minority Languages Staff Network

Queen's continues to support the staff network called 'Iorla Morra More', this is a peer network open to all staff who are interested in celebrating and promoting minority languages and linguistic diversity on campus.

This staff network which launched in February 2024, represents an important move towards promoting greater understanding and respect for languages on campus and acknowledging language rights as defined and elaborated upon by numerous United Nations, UNESCO, and Council of Europe reports.

The network aims to:

- Promote respect for all languages and minority languages, including but not limited to, Irish and Ulster Scots through academic and cultural events for staff and students.
- Serve as a platform for staff to seek support, raise awareness and share findings relating to languages and minoritised language practices.
- Liaise with other HE institutions to develop knowledge on best practice in supporting minority languages.

Activities and Events

- Ciorcal Comhrá – Irish Speaking coffee and conversation group. Meeting Monthly during term time.
- International Student Ceili.
- Diwali Night (November 2024) took place in One Elmwood including music, food, dance and henna tattoos.
- Language events: International Day of Sign Language, European Day of Languages, World Arabic Language Day, International Mother Language Day, UN French Language Day, The Sound of Language Festival, UN Chinese Language Day, World Portuguese Language Day.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (STAFF TRAINING)

During the reporting period the following numbers of staff completed the mandatory diversity training modules (e-learning):

- **Think Difference. Act Differently** – 90% of all staff have completed this module;
- **Unconscious Bias** – 89% of all staff have completed this module.

More details on all staff training during the reporting period is included in Table one on page 38.

LGBT+

LGBT+ Staff Network – PRISM

Members of PRISM continue to host an information stand at staff induction sessions for new staff.

In this reporting period we have held welcome events in September, February, April and June, each with all new staff who have started in that quarter in attendance. The welcome events provide new staff with an opportunity to meet PRISM members and hear about its activities and how to join the Network.

The network continues to provide a forum for networking and a means of peer support between LGBT+ staff, representing the interests of LGBT staff and working with colleagues to inform the University on relevant issues.

Recently the network has been instrumental in providing information, feedback and assisting the development of our enhanced guidance on our [Trans Equality Policy](#) which provides information to staff and students on gender and trans identity. This updated guidance

continues to support staff to help individuals discuss how they would like their transition to be managed, and how they can be supported at Queen's.

LGBTQueen's A Celebration Showcase

[LGBTQueen's: a celebration showcase](#) was led by the University's LGBTQIA+ staff network [PRISM](#) with project partner [HereNI](#), supported by the University's CiviContribution Fund. A showcase at One Elmwood celebrating the university's vibrant LGBTQIA+ community. This exciting event marked LGBTQ+ History Month brought together students, staff, and community organisations for a day of celebration, connection and learning.

Student and staff networks - Pride Society and PRISM - promoted their services and activities alongside representatives from incredible LGBTQIA+ charities and support groups, including Cara Friend, HERe NI and The Rainbow Project. The event included:

- Entertainment – Featuring drag acts and showcasing local queer art
- Free Refreshments, Merch & Prizes – Indulge in complimentary treats, grab exclusive goodies, and win fantastic prizes.
- Networking Opportunities – Connect with Queen's LGBTQIA+ networks and meet representatives from community partners.
- [Support a Worthy Cause](#) – Learn about and support Rainbow Refugees NI, a local group providing safe spaces and support for LGBTQIA+ refugees and sanctuary seekers.

This event celebrated, connected, and provided fundraising opportunities and a chance to discover more about the thriving LGBTQIA+ culture at Queen's and across Northern Ireland.

Pride 2025

On 23 July 2025 Queen's University Belfast's fourth [Pride Picnic 2025](#) at Queen's took place, bringing together staff and students to celebrate Belfast Pride 2024 with music and street food.

Over 350 staff, students and their families attended the event celebrating Belfast Pride and providing an opportunity for people to come together and enjoy some food while having an opportunity to find out more about PRISM, our LGBT+ staff network, and how to become an LGBT Ally at Queen's.

LGBT+ Allies

The University supports the established network of LGBT Allies on Campus. The LGBT Allies across the Queen's campus are supported to identify and practice practical ways to step up as an ally and to commit to inclusive behaviours in the University, creating a safe and supportive environment for all our LGBT staff and students.

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit and PRISM continue to work on developing and mobilising our network of LGBT+ Allies across the University. Further information on the support that LGBT Allies can provide can be found on our [LGBT+ Allies Website](#)

CIVIC UNIVERSITY and UNIVERSITY OF SANCTUARY

University of Sanctuary

In June 2025 Queen's became officially recognised as a university of Sanctuary. Queen's is the first university in Northern Ireland to be declared a University of Sanctuary, joining just over 40 institutions across the UK and just eight others on the island of Ireland. This prestigious recognition celebrates institutions that go above and beyond to create a culture of welcome, safety, and support for those seeking sanctuary.

This announcement comes as the University officially launched its 180th anniversary celebrations, hosting a special event to celebrate the impact Queen's has had on communities locally, nationally and internationally.

Going forward, Queen's will commence the implementation of a three-year Sanctuary Action Plan, shaped and driven by a Path to Sanctuary oversight group, made up of students, and academic and professional staff, ensuring that this important work continues, and that the University remains committed to playing an active role in promoting equality, compassion and civic responsibility.

Refugee Week

Queen's University Belfast marked Refugee Week 2025 with a programme of events that celebrate community and diversity, including a celebration event to formally recognise Queen's becoming a University of Sanctuary.

Throughout the week, Queen's partnered with community organisations, advocacy groups and civic partners to deliver a meaningful series of events that reflect its commitment to creating an inclusive, welcoming environment for all. These included-

- A film screening event in Queen's Great Hall on Monday 16 June, curated in partnership with Northern Ireland Now, a contemporary archiving and screening project. Northern Ireland Now is a collaboration between BFI, the Nerve Centre, and Northern Ireland Screen Digital Film Archive, that addresses the underrepresentation of diverse voices in the Digital Film Archive to champion equality and inclusion, with a focus on creating a living archive that reflects who lives here and what matters to them. The evening featured powerful video stories from a diverse range of community organisations across Northern Ireland, including Springboard, ANAKA Women's Collective, and ImageNation NI.
- On Tuesday 17 June, we held a special celebration in the Great Hall to mark our official recognition as a University of Sanctuary- the first university in Northern Ireland to receive this honour. The award acknowledges Queen's commitment to supporting people seeking sanctuary by facilitating access to higher education and working closely with local refugee communities. The event was attended by staff, students, and community partners who helped achieve this important milestone.
- On Wednesday 18 June we hosted the Big Sanctuary Information Fair in Queen's Whitla Hall, bringing together 42 stallholders offering direct support and advice in areas including housing, education, health, employment, safety and immigration. Organised in collaboration with the Consular Corps of Northern Ireland, Advice NI and

the NI Housing Executive, the Fair welcomed individuals and families from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds, including asylum seekers and refugees.

- On Saturday 21 June Queen's staff and students will joined the Big Refugee Picnic at Ulidia Playing Fields on Ormeau Road. This joyful community celebration brings together families, friends, and neighbours to honour culture, stories, and shared humanity.

External Networks

We are a member institution of the SAR Ireland Committee. [Scholars at Risk \(SAR\)](#) is an international network of higher education institutions dedicated to protecting threatened scholars, preventing attacks on higher education communities and promoting academic freedom worldwide. Scholars at Risk-Ireland is the Irish section of SAR. [The SAR-Ireland committee](#) has representatives from universities on the island of Ireland.

Queen's University is also forging new relationships and expanding its networks with local, national, and international organisations. Among these collaborations are currently Belfast City of Sanctuary and Anaka Women's Collective: they exemplify our university's commitment to partnering with organisations dedicated to fostering inclusion and supporting marginalised communities. By working together with these groups, we continue our journey towards creating a more equitable and welcoming environment for all.

Copty scholarship

A [scholarship scheme](#) enabling Palestinian students to study for a masters at Queen's has been extended for a further 5 years.

Fellowships

To support academics from conflict-affected regions, Queen's has partnered with the [Council for At Risk Academics \(Cara\)](#) to create and fund three Queen's University Fellowships per year. These fellowships will run for two years and offer academics at risk around the world an opportunity to come to Queen's to continue their academic pursuits safely.

Open Learning Programme Sanctuary Courses

[Queen's University Open Learning Programme](#), recognising the importance of supporting and welcoming migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, offers a number of courses to build capacity and intercultural understanding.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The University continues to support is #QUBeWell Healthy Campus Framework, which seeks to outline the University's commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its students and staff community.

Staff Wellbeing (Including Mental Health)

The university marked Mental Health awareness week 12 – 18 May 2025 with a range of events focused on this year's theme of community – highlighting the power of connection and the importance of supporting one another. included:

- Health and Wellbeing Fair
- Tropical Ravine Tour
- Dance yourself fit
- Games on the Quad & Free Ice Cream or Slushy

Staff health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2025-2028

The new staff health and wellbeing action plan was launched in (date). The University is undergoing a period of substantial change, and supporting the wellbeing of our staff is crucial to sustaining our success. We have developed the health and wellbeing action plan to support our staff over the next three years.

Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Training

Targeted mental health support and training delivered during this reporting period included:

Suicide Awareness, Mood Matters – Mental Health Awareness, Bereavement in the Workplace, Men's Mental Health Awareness, Employee Assistance Programme Awareness Session, Working through change and Building Resilience, Communicating with Empathy and Understanding, Stress Awareness, Cancer Awareness Sessions, Introduction to Mindfulness, Drug and Alcohol Awareness, Dying Tidily, Parents Emotional Health, Programme for Mental Health Awareness Week, Compassionate Conversations and Nature of Worry and Uncertainty.

Talk Campus Peer Support

Talk Campus Peer Support is a further support in addition to Inspire 24/7 student telephone number Talk Campus. Talk Campus is an app-based peer support platform where students come together from around the world, and give and get support within a safe, supportive infrastructure. Students can use it if they are struggling, worried about their mental health, and need some help, or they can go on and listen and support others. The app provides additional cultural competency to the suite of support services offered through the University as TalkCampus supports over 26 different languages.

The platform is safe and moderated and is designed as a place where students can be themselves and talk openly about how they are feeling. TalkCampus is not a replacement for counselling or professional support, however it is a great place to start talking and to make sure that however students are feeling, they are not alone.

Promotion of Talk Campus App will continue with particular focus during Semester One of each academic year.

Students Union Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan

The Students Union (SU) has been working to progress the OMNI action plan since it was published (March 2023). The plan is based on data from the OMNI student mental health survey (published February 2023).

The plan contains core action areas (both strategic and operational) for the SU to work towards to seek to improve student mental health and wellbeing at QUB. Several of these core action items have been progressed this academic year and have been achieved through cross-departmental working within the SU but also with internal and external stakeholders.

Some examples of the campaigns / initiatives this year include:

- Offering events focused on mental health
- Community-building events across the year, varying from smaller to larger events
- Large-scale cost of living initiatives, including The Pantry (free refill unit). The Pantry now includes fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Mental health and wellbeing training for both staff and students.
- Working towards accreditation by being part of the SOS Drug and Alcohol Impact initiative (adopting a harm reduction approach), collaboratively with QUB Wellbeing and QUB Accommodation.
- Implementing a social prescribing programme
- Focusing on improving factors that contribute to student burnout, such as academic timetabling.

RACE

Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and International (BAMEI) Staff Network (iRise)

Our BAME and International Staff Network, iRise, continues to provide a peer network open to all academic and professional services staff who identify as, or are characterised as, BAME and/or international.

The network provides a safe and welcoming space for BAME and/or international staff in Queen's to regularly meet during working hours to discuss issues and work matters, in addition to planning social events both on and off campus.

iRise was also established to give BAME and international staff at Queens's University a voice on systemic and operational issues and the network continues to represent the interests of these staff and work with colleagues to promote deeper understanding of the issues faced and also inform the University on relevant issues. In this reporting period, the network was consulted in the development of the new Discipline and Grievance Procedure (currently pending approval).

The network also continues to provide support for new BAME and international staff joining the University. iRise is represented at all new staff induction Welcome Events.

iRise conducted a number of activities in 2024-2025 in partnership with other areas across the University. These events were designed to engage with and celebrate the community of Black and international staff and students at Queen's, and to raise awareness of and educate staff on experiences of racial inequality. Events included:

- Black History Month.

- Black History Expo in Belfast
- Academic Progression Workshop.
- EID Radiance: Celebration.
- BAME Career Seminar Series Event
- REC Survey for staff and students Nov – Dec 2024
- AEL and REC Collaborated on an International Student Photography competition in May 2025

Race Equality Charter

Within the last reporting period, the University continued to work towards identifying and critically reflecting on the institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students through our work on the Race Equality Charter (REC). This national charter is run by Advance HE aimed at supporting institutions on their work in this area. We are one of 100 higher education institutions in the UK who are signatories to the Race Equality Charter (REC) and are aiming to apply for a Bronze Award by 2025 – of which only 39 institutions currently hold an award. This programme is synergised by a wider structure of staff and student groups whose collective efforts are imperative to driving meaningful and positive change on racial equity within Queen's. Our REC programme is a key component of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments, embedded within the University's Strategy 2030, designed to nurture an inclusive and supportive culture and demonstrably valuing the diversity of all our people.

Racial Equity at Queen's Survey

The [Racial Equity](#) at Queen's survey was conducted among staff and students in November and December 2024. The survey was completely anonymously, and feedback received will help us to identify what we are doing well, and crucially, where we can do better in making the University a more diverse, equal, and inclusive place. It will also inform our application to the Race Equality Charter in 2025.

Racial Equity Champions Network

Our network of Racial Equity Champions has over 30 active members representing each School and Directorate. Champions bring a wealth of personal, professional, and research-based knowledge to the work on advancing racial equity and the network meets formally every 6 weeks. Champions share best practice and identify local issues as part of their remit and are also responsible for the introduction of initiatives and promotion of REC-related programmes of work within their Schools and Directorates.

Mentoring Programmes focused on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff experiences.

- Reverse Mentoring programme with 12 participants (6 Pairs)
- Traditional Mentoring 22 programme with participants (12 pairs)

Race Equality Week 2025

Race equality week took place between 3rd -9th February 2025. Queen's hosted a number of events to mark Race Equality week including:

- [Race Equality Week Breakfast 2025](#) – Celebrating Progress and Sharing Voices.
- Information stands across campus
- [Race Equality Matters - The 5 day Challenge](#) The Queen's Gender Initiative - REC team took part in the Race Equality Matters five-day challenge – exploring some of the key and daily issues that impact on BAME and international staff and students.

SOCIAL CHARTER PROJECT

Our Social Charter reaffirms our commitment to engaging with society and celebrates the many ways in which we contribute through our dedicated projects with communities throughout Belfast and the wider region. The University's Social Charter commits us to the principles of equality and social justice. These principles are embodied in the following projects:

- Developing Social Innovation with local communities.
- Widening Participation – Raising awareness, aspirations and attainment.
- Asylum Seeker Scholarships.
- Research on issues affecting migrant and minority ethnic communities.
- Research and Expertise on Gender Issues.
- Disability Research Network.
- Transforming divided societies into welcoming communities.

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No (go to Q.4)

☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the [Diversity and Inclusion Webpages](#) for further information on details of decisions.

Click or tap here to enter text.

- 3a** With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the [Diversity and Inclusion Webpages](#) for further information on details of decisions.

- 3b** What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

☒ As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the [Diversity and Inclusion Webpages](#) for further information on details of decisions.

☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details)*:

Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details)*:

Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ Other *(please specify and give details)*:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☒ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Welcoming statements are added to job advertisements where underrepresentation is identified in certain areas e.g., in respect of persons with disabilities, females, and ethnic minorities.

In addition, all job adverts contain equal opportunities statements confirming Queen's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity to all, reference to LGBT+ and BAME and International Staff networks.

Queen's University is committed to promoting equality of opportunity to all. We have created an inclusive culture by establishing staff networks such as iRise (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and International Staff Network) and PRISM (LGBTQ+) which help us progress equality. We also

subscribe to Equality Charter Marks such as the Diversity Charter Mark NI in addition to Athena SWAN.

For further information on our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, please visit: [Diversity and Inclusion](#), [Queen's Gender Initiative](#), [Staff Networks](#) .

- 5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☐ Yes, organisation wide
- ☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- ☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- ☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

- 6 In the 2024-25 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- ☐ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- ☐ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- ☐ Yes, in some departments/jobs
- ☒ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's corporate plan
- ☐ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2024-25 report
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The University's Strategy 2030 and People and Culture Plan both seek to ensure that equality and diversity objectives are mainstreamed across Queen's.

In January 2024 we launched our new Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan 2024-2029, informed by an updated Audit of Inequalities.

Equality action plans/measures

- 7** Within the 2024-25 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Actions ongoing:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Actions to commence:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

The Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 Actions above all relate to the Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024-2029.

- 8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2024-25 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

N/A

- 9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2024-25 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality

☐ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way

☒ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities

☐ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10** Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

☒ All the time

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

- 11** Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2024-25 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

We have continued to offer targeted stakeholder engagements and consultation online both with internal stakeholders and external consultees through our consultee list, social media and external consultations available on our webpages at [Consultation Exercises](#).

- 12** In the 2024-2025 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

☒ Face to face meetings

☐ Focus groups

☐ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing

☐ Questionnaires

☒ Information by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation

☐ Internet discussions

☐ Telephone consultations

☒ Other *(please specify)*: Click or tap here to enter text.

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

Our engagements continue to be primarily online using our [Consultation Exercises](#) Webpage with responses received via email or using Microsoft Forms.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2024-2025 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Informal and formal meetings were held with Trade Union representatives (UCU, NIPSA and Unite). Informal meetings were held with representatives from the Equality Commission during the year 2024-2025 and telephone conversations/email seeking advice. Formal consultation and engagement meetings were held with other key internal and external stakeholders.

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

[Consultation Exercises | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

[Equality Screening | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

Click or tap here to enter text.

PART A

- 15** Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

13

- 16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2024-25:

Click or tap here to enter text. Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented. N/A

Click or tap here to enter text. Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented. N/A

Click or tap here to enter text. Consultations for an **EQIA** alone. N/A

- 17** Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

None in this reporting period.

- 18** Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (*tick one box only*)

☐ Yes

☒ No concerns were raised

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2024-25 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

PART A

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2024-2025 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☐ No, already taken place

☐ No, scheduled to take place at a later date

☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

Click or tap here to enter text.

- 21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☒ No

☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2024-25 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

- We continue to use the Audit to inform our institutional Equality Action Plan.
- Monitoring of equality data (community background) is helping to inform our Social Charter project and the use of welcome statements in job advertisements. This is designed to encourage applications from under-represented groups to apply for employment opportunities at Queen's.
- We use our equality data to inform our Equality Screening exercises and to inform policy development. E.g., the University's new Menopause and Fertility Treatment Leave Policies, Pregnancy loss and Domestic abuse leave.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2024-25, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Detailed in Table one below.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Detailed in Table one below.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
Think Difference, Act differently. (Mandatory e-learning training)	This training addresses issues such as equality, diversity, Section 75 and disability/gender	90% of all staff have completed this eLearning training

	discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping.	
Unconscious Bias Training	E-learning mandatory training for all staff.	89% of all staff have completed this module
Neurodiversity Awareness Training	Delivered by Employers for Disability NI	45 attendees
An introduction to Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity	The aim of this course is to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity.	Among those staff working with international students.
Bullying and Harassment Training	2 Sessions delivered by Diversity and Inclusion provides staff with training on what bullying and harassment can look like in the workplace, the impact of bullying and harassment, and the policies and procedures available to support all staff,	132 attendees in this reporting period
Active Bystander Training	Empower staff to challenge and stop inappropriate behaviours on campus Open to all staff, committed to running at least one course annually.	193 staff completed this training in 2024.
Staff Induction	All new staff joining the University must attend a Staff Induction Event. Which includes awareness raising on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.	Welcome Events were held in September 24 January'25 and May 25.
Mental Health and Wellbeing Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact / Participant's
Know Your Numbers – Health Checks	Delivered with School of Nursing and Midwifery	250
Blood Pressure Awareness	Delivered with School of Nursing and Midwifery	34
Suicide Awareness	Delivered by Lighthouse	15
Paediatric CPR	Delivered with School of Nursing and Midwifery	10
Mood Matters – Mental Health Awareness	Delivered by Action Mental Health	20
Blood Donation Drive	Hosted by Belfast Trust	140

Bereavement in the Workplace	Delivered by Lena Formerly Inspire	25
Osteoporosis Awareness	Delivered by a Queen's academic	33
Diabetes Awareness	Delivered by a Queen's academic	28
Men's Mental Health Awareness	Delivered by Lena Formerly Inspire	18
Christmas Macrame	Hosted by Staff Wellbeing	50
EAP Awareness Session	Delivered by Lena Formerly Inspire	14
Working Through Change and Building Resilience	Delivered by Staff wellbeing team.	60
Communicating with Empathy and Understanding	Delivered by Lena Formerly Inspire	20
Stress Awareness	Delivered by Lighthouse	20
Cancer Awareness Sessions	Delivered by Queen's academic's	60
Sleep Workshop	Delivered by a Queen's academic	90
Introduction to mindfulness	Aware NI	15
Drug and Alcohol awareness	Delivered by Lena Formerly Inspire	15
Dying Tidily	Delivered by Queen's School of Law	50
Parents Emotional Health	Parenting NI	18
Mental Health Awareness Week	Programme of events delivered by staff wellbeing and partner organisations	160
QUB Pensions Workshop	Delivered by Finance	150
Compassionate Conversations	Delivered by Staff Wellbeing	30
1-to1 Financial Advice Sessions	Delivered by Kith and Kin	150
Nature of worry and uncertainty	Delivered by Queen's Academic	60

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2024-2025, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

During the reporting period, significant progress has been made by a wide range of Faculties, Schools and Departments in providing University staff with access to a wide range of information, advice and support services online through a variety of sources, including but not limited to:

- The Queen's University website: [Queen's University Belfast](#)
- The Queen's People and Culture website: [People and Culture](#)
- The Queen's Diversity and Inclusion website: [Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- The Queens Equality Screening and Consultation website: [Consultation Exercises](#)

- The Queen's Disability and Wellbeing Services website [Disability Services | Student Centre](#)
- The Queen's staff Wellbeing website: [Wellbeing at Queen's](#)
- Queen's Accommodation website: [Student Accommodation](#)
- Students Union Equality and Diversity website: [Students Union Equality and Diversity](#)
- The Queen's Gender Initiative Website: [Queen's Gender Initiative](#)
- PRISM, the Queen's LGBT+ staff network: [PRISM LGBT+ Staff Network](#)
- iRise, the Queen's Black Asian Minority Ethnic and International staff Network [iRISE | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)
- CONNECT the Queen's Carer's Staff Network: [Connect](#)

The University continues to ensure information is signposted to University Staff and Students through a wide variety of other communications vehicles (email: Staff Round Up) digital notice boards and social medial platforms (YouTube, Facebook, X, Instagram). The University makes its facilities available to a wide range of user groups and when required to do so can make its publications and general information available in alternative formats as required.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2024-25?

Insert number here: 0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

- 28** Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

The new updated Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 was launched in January 2024 and the actions are reviewed on an annual basis.

- 29** Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

Continue to focus on training on:

- Sexual orientation, transgender, disability equality in the workplace (annually).
- Delivery of Bullying and Harassment Training.
- Active Bystander training.

Continue to raise awareness and provide training on disability, reasonable adjustments equality screening new/ reviewed workplace policies.

Following the Supreme Court ruling on 16 April 2025 we will review the guidance from the ECNI on the impact for all employers and service providers in Northern Ireland when its published.

- 30** In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- ☒ Employment
- ☐ Goods, facilities and services
- ☒ Legislative changes
- ☒ Organisational changes/ new functions
- ☐ Nothing specific, more of the same
- ☐ Other (please state):

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are at the heart of [Strategy 2030](#) which sets out the University's ambition to shape a better world through life-changing education and research, investing in its people, both students and staff to ensure excellence and impact. Our Commitment to meeting the statutory Equality Duties is fundamental to these aims and our broad ranging programme of work will continue in the forthcoming year.

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

39	13	2
Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level Local for all items	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
1	To mainstream the disability duties into all decisions and activities	Mainstream new or identify existing disability duties into local area plans, decisions and actions	Achieved Each member of disability forum to provide tangible evidence of how disability duties have been mainstreamed into their local area plans – every three months Process to ensure support and compliance to support every service provider in Professional Services and the

			learning environment Promotion and embedding of accessibility in University policies, guidance and structures, supported and lead by senior management
2	To mainstream the disability duties into all decisions and activities	Develop, communicate and operationalise an effective Disability Action Plan (DAP) that underpins the University's responsibility and commitment to enact disability duties into its strategic and operational decisions and activities	Publication of DAP online (QUB website), maximising all social media channels and internal communication media such as Team Brief, Staff Round Up etc Each member of DF communicates locally in their Faculty/School/Directorate Section 75 Annual Progress Report provided to Senior Management and to the Equality Commission on the actions taken under this plan.
3	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Continue to administer and promote the Disability Support Fund	Achieved
4	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Work with external partners to deliver specific training regarding disabilities and long-term conditions, to educate and support staff, students and visitors	Achieved Delivered a series of Neurodiversity training sessions, Autism ADD and ADHD Awareness, Disability Awareness training for all staff.

5	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Ensure all Line Managers are adequately supported to support applicants and prospective staff with disabilities or long-term conditions Provide Manager resources which include specific information on supporting and managing staff with disabilities.	Achieved and Ongoing HR Business Partners and Diversity and Inclusion Unit provide specific support to Line Managers and Supervisors Continue to review and plan for structured approach and sharing of best practice across the University
6	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Include welcome statements at each key stage of the applicant journey to encourage and support prospective employees to disclose a disability or long-term condition. Recruitment information available in accessible formats when requested.	Achieved and Ongoing Welcome statements at all stages and alternative formats of recruitment information offered when requested
7	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Establishment of Staff Disability Network Partially Achieved Continue to raise	Partially Achieved

		awareness, encourage growth and engage members	Continue to raise awareness, encourage growth and engage member
8	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Continue to build and increase participation in the Inclusive Employment Scheme	Achieved Inclusive employment scheme Hosted 15 placements in this reporting period and is set to continue with another cohort for 2024/2025.
9	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Include welcome statements at various key stages of the student applicant journey encouraging prospective students to disclose a disability or long-term condition	Achieved Welcome statements included on both digital and physical prospectus Digital and physical prospectuses available in accessible formats Encourage and share information about disability disclosure and accessibility with schools, colleges, careers teachers to encourage student disclosure of disability Engage international students to minimise apprehension and support disclosure.
10	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Continue to administer and promote the disability support fund for staff.	Achieved

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Think Difference Act, differently	Annual mandatory e-learning training)	90% of all staff have completed this eLearning training.
2	Unconscious Bias Training	E-learning mandatory training for all staff	89% of all staff have completed this module
3	Bullying and Harassment Training	2 Sessions delivered by Diversity and Inclusion in February 2025 and March 2025	132 attendees in 2024/2025
4	Neurodiversity Training	Autism, ADD and ADHD information session in conjunction with Employers for Disability NI in March 2025.	54 attendees

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Enhance the physical and digital accessibility and inclusiveness of the University for people with disabilities and long-term conditions	1. Ensure communications and engagements activities and materials are available in other formats, including subtitles 2. Create portfolio of diverse images which can be used throughout University communications	Achieved and ongoing. Continue to update the Brand Hub with diverse pictures. These photos are used across the website and marketing materials. Use of subtitles in all social media videos. You-tube videos are auto subtitled.
2	Enhance the physical and digital accessibility and inclusiveness of the University for people with disabilities and long-term conditions	Continue to communicate information on accessibility	Achieved and ongoing

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	1. Continuously review and update provision of the AccessAble App 2. Continue to promote the AccessAble App to service users	Achieved. Incorporated into Staff Recruitment and Induction/Onboarding process. 25% increase in users. Top 5 Access Guides used in this reporting period were: 1. Medical Biology Centre 2. PEC - Physical Education Centre 3. Peter Froggatt Centre 4. 6 College Park 5. New Physics Building Bell Lecture Theatre Further promotion of AccessAble in September 2025 and ongoing.
2	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to undertake Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs) review for all staff and students with mobility impairments.	Achieved
3	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to ensure that the University, where possible and reasonable to do so, ensures that the physical infrastructure and systems are in place and maintained to comply with the DDA codes of practice.	Achieved and ongoing

4	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Include welcoming statements at each key stages of the applicant journey to encourage and support prospective employees to disclose a disability or long-term condition.	Achieved
5	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Ensure digital and physical recruitment, job advertisements and information are available in accessible formats	Achieved
6	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Ensure all Interview Panel attendees receive appropriate training to ensure they understand the University's commitment to equality of opportunity and support applicants and prospective staff with disabilities or long-term conditions.	Training resources/support available to educate panel members on requests for reasonable adjustments and disability duties as part of the selection process, and reasonable adjustments in relation to the employment lifecycle.
7	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	1. Continue to advertise and promote Staff Disability Network Group to raise awareness and encourage growth of membership. Disability Network to provide feedback to Forum on how the University can encourage and support greater representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions	Achieved and ongoing Network established and continue to raise awareness and grow

8	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Work with external partners to develop and participate in additional schemes and initiatives which provide persons with disabilities and long-term condition work experience opportunities	Achieved and ongoing Inclusive Employment Scheme Employ Autism Scheme
9	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Inclusion of welcoming statements at various key stages of the student applicant journey encouraging prospective students to disclose a disability or long-term condition	Achieved
10	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Promote the experiences of current students registered with disability services at open day and transition events to encourage prospective student disclosure	Achieved
11	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Increase higher education opportunities for prospective students with disabilities and long-term conditions through targeted WP initiatives	Achieved and ongoing
12	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to enable autistic students and recent graduates to access 10 paid internships and tailored careers support and advice as part of the Employ Autism Higher Education Network	Achieved

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	N/A		

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Work with external partners to develop and participate in additional schemes and initiatives which provide persons with disabilities and long-term condition work experience opportunities	Working with External partners to participant in additional schemes and initiatives	Consider further opportunities to work with external partners to develop and participate in additional schemes and initiatives which provide persons with disabilities and long-term condition work experience opportunities for persons with disabilities and long-term conditions.	Continue to explore options in relation to guaranteed interview scheme, ringfencing posts and paid opportunities.
2	Inclusion of specific training on disability considerations and the duty of providing reasonable adjustments for Line Managers	Provide Manager resources which include specific information on supporting and managing staff with disabilities	Deliver one session annually which considers disability duties.	To be included as part of the development of resources for Manager Toolkit

3	Create portfolio of diverse images which can be used throughout University communications	Create portfolio of diverse images which can be used throughout University communications	Grow percentage use of images in printed/digital documents featuring positive images of disabled people by 10%. Communicate and encourage use of diverse images to users.	This portfolio creation is ongoing
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4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Analyse staff surveys to identify areas for improvement to support staff with disabilities or long-term conditions	Analysis of staff Surveys is ongoing and disability declaration is not always included in anonymised data.
2	Review web accessibility for all QUB webpages	Benchmarking was not undertaken in this year planned for next year.

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit actively monitors measures in the action plan as part of a live, iterative process. We informally gain feedback from staff across the on a range of subjects. Feedback is regularly discussed at team meetings which can help inform new initiatives.

(b) Quantitative

The Disability Forum monitors progress against the action plan measures at meetings which take place three times a year. Progress is also monitored by the Diversity and Inclusion Unit, who provide the University Operating Board with a Progress Report on an annual basis. Quantitative data is collected, collated and analysed across equality categories. Our equality monitoring system and database is reviewed regularly and where necessary, changes and/or new data may be commissioned.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

Please select No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	N/A		

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

No

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.