



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Strategic Equality Plan
2020-2024

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UWTSD welcomes comments on all aspects of this report, both in what it contains and what it may not make clear enough about the work we intend to do. If you have any comments or want to know more about the work UWTSD is doing in relation to equality and diversity please contact us through hrquestions@uwtsd.ac.uk (for staff) and secases@uwtsd.ac.uk (for students).



Foreword by the Vice-Chancellor

This plan contains important information about the work UWTSD is doing to promote equality and diversity.

Rydym wedi ymrwymo i sicrhau ein bod yn darparu amgylchedd dysgu a gwaith cynhwysol lle gall ein dysgwyr, ein myfyrwyr a'n staff ffynnu yn gymuned ddysgu iach a chynhwysol, heb ragfarn na gwahaniaethu. Fel Is-Ganghellor Grŵp Y Drindod Dewi Sant, sy'n cynnwys Coleg Sir Gâr a Choleg Ceredigion, rwy'n falch dros ben o'n hymrwymiad i ehangu mynediad, hyrwyddo dysgu gydol oes heb rwystrau a chefnogi dysgwyr a myfyrwyr o bob cefndir ac ar bob cam yn ystod eu haddysg.

Credaf fod addysg yn elwa o amrywiaeth ac amgylchedd lle gall pobl ddod ynghyd o bob cefndir i geisio gwybodaeth, dysgu oddi wrth ei gilydd a datblygu sgiliau sydd o fudd i'n cymunedau ehangach. Mae'r Cynllun Cydraddoldeb Strategol hwn wedi'i seilio ar ein cenhadaeth i Drawsnewid Addysg a Thrawsnewid Bywydau. Ein gweledigaeth yw creu diwylliant o fod yn agored a pharch lle caiff y rhwystrau i'r rhai sydd â nodweddion gwarchodedig eu nodi a'u dileu. Rydym am i bawb yn ein cymuned ddysgu deimlo'n ddiogel ac yn werthfawr, a chyflawni eu potensial llawn.

Ein nod yw hyrwyddo cyfle cyfartal, arferion gweithio teg, a chysylltiadau rhyngpersonol da ledled ein cymuned staff a myfyrwyr. Hoffwn ddiolch i'n staff, dysgwyr a myfyrwyr am eu mewnbwn i'r Cynllun Cydraddoldeb Strategol hwn ac i bartneriaid allanol am eu harweiniad a'u cymorth.

Yr Athro Medwin Hughes, DL
Is-Ganghellor

We are committed to ensuring that we provide an inclusive learning and working environment in which our learners, students and staff can flourish as a healthy and inclusive learning community, free from prejudice and discrimination. As Vice-Chancellor of the UWTSD Group, which includes Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion, I am particularly proud of our commitment to widening access, championing lifelong learning without barriers and supporting learners and students from all backgrounds and at all stages during their education.

I believe that education benefits from diversity and an environment where people can come together from all backgrounds to seek knowledge, learn from each other and develop skills that benefit our wider communities. This Strategic Equality Plan is grounded in our mission to Transform Education and Transform Lives. Our vision is to create a culture of openness and respect in which barriers for those with protected characteristics are identified and removed. We want everyone in our learning community to feel safe and valued, and to achieve their full potential.

We aim to promote equality of opportunity, fair working practices, and good interpersonal relations throughout our staff and student community. I would like to thank our staff, learners and students for their input into this Strategic Equality Plan and to external partners for their guidance and support.

Professor Medwin Hughes, DL
Vice-Chancellor

SECTION 1

ABOUT US

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) is part of the UWTSD Group (the Group), a multi-institutional collaborative venture owned and governed by the University, with Coleg Sir Gâr (CSG) and Coleg Ceredigion (CC) as constituent colleges. The Group has campuses in Carmarthen, Lampeter, London, and Swansea, each with their own distinct identities. It also has a learning centre in Birmingham, locations in Cardiff and outreach community centres throughout South Wales, which help to deliver our strategic focus on widening participation. HE and FE provision is offered at several further locations within South and West Wales through its constituent and partner colleges.

We are committed to the principles of equality and diversity and to building strong communities on all sites and to create an inclusive, supportive learning and working environment in which all staff, students and learners can flourish and fulfil their personal potential. We actively work on removing barriers to participation and supporting people from all backgrounds and circumstances to fulfil their potential.



Our mission is:

Transforming education, transforming lives.

Our vision is to be a University for Wales, with a commitment to the wellbeing and heritage of the nation at the heart of all that we do.

Central to our vision is the promotion and embedding of a dual-sector educational system which educates learners of all ages and backgrounds, and stimulates economic development in our region, across Wales and beyond.

Our Strategic Plan defines seven key values:

- 1. Excellent teaching, informed by scholarship and research, and applied research
- 2. Inclusivity
- 3. Employability and creativity
- 4. Collaboration through strategic partnerships
- 5. Sustainable development
- 6. The concept of global citizenship
- 7. Wales and its distinctiveness

This Strategic Equality Plan aligns with our institutional Strategic Plan, our Fee and Access Plans and key strategies such as the Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It also fully embeds the provisions of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and aims to ensure that we continuously improve equality and diversity and enhance inclusive approaches within our organisation and in partnership with others. To set our objectives we have reflected on the outcomes and impact of our current Strategic Equality Plan and on the latest data available through our Annual Equality Reports, alongside key sector reports.

All key objectives will be underpinned by a focus on data quality to ensure that robust and accurate data is available to take an evidence-based approach to setting priorities and to demonstrate the impact of our Strategic Equality Plan and compliance with our Equality duties. We will also ensure that procurement data is available and will evidence the diversity of procurement. All key objectives have SMART targets associated with them in an accompanying central operational action plan, which include short- and medium-term outcomes and longer-term ambitions. We will also ensure that positive action is taken as appropriate to UWTSD's commitment to ensure that Wales becomes a fairer place to work and study. We will work in partnership with staff and students in relation to the implementation of the new Strategic Equality Plan.



SECTION 1

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

The Strategic Equality Plan has been developed so that we can set out how we aim to meet our commitment to equality and how we will meet legal obligations contained within the Equality Act 2010.

Within the Equality Act 2010, public bodies have an additional responsibility to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Who is protected under the Equality Act 2010?

The Equality Act provides protection against discrimination for individuals on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and/or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation



Public Sector Equality Duty

The General Duty

When making decisions and delivering services we must have due regard to:

- **Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;**
- **Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (protected characteristics are explained later in this report);**
- **Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.**

When thinking about how to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't, we also need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and are connected to that characteristic;
- Meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

We also have to particularly think about how we will tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The Specific Duties

The Equality Act provides a power to make regulations imposing duties on public bodies to support better performance of the general duty; these are known as the Specific Public Sector Equality Duties and are different in England, Scotland and Wales. The Specific Duties underpin the General Duty and have been developed around four main principles:

1. Use of evidence
2. Consultation and Involvement
3. Transparency
4. Leadership

The Welsh Government published regulations that introduced the Specific Duties for Wales in March 2011, these set out the actions UWTSD must take in order to comply and include the following areas:

- **Setting Equality Objectives and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan;**
- **Ensuring engagement with people who have an interest in how UWTSD's decisions affect them;**
- **Collecting and publishing information relevant to compliance with the General Duty;**
- **Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and publishing the results if there is a substantial impact;**
- **Publishing employment monitoring information annually;**
- **Promoting knowledge and understanding of the General Duty amongst employees and using performance assessment procedures to identify and address the training needs of employees in relation to the General Duties;**
- **Setting a gender pay equality objective where a gender pay difference is identified;**
- **Thinking about including conditions relevant to the General Duty in procurement processes.**

SECTION 1

THE WELL-BEING OF
FUTURE GENERATIONS



The Group is committed to embedding the provisions of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 into all its strategies and activities.

The Act puts in place a sustainable development principle which means that we must ‘act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

The Act puts in place a duty on UWTSd as a public body to maximise its contribution to seven national Wellbeing goals, which are shown below. As an education provider, we have placed the goals at the core of our planning and made sure that when we make decisions, we consider the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

Whilst it is clear that some Wellbeing goals specifically relate to equality, it is important to recognise that equality objectives contained within this plan and their associated action plans have a significant role to play across all Wellbeing goals, for example, actions to improve employment for disabled people will contribute not only to ‘a more equal Wales’, but to ‘a healthier Wales’, ‘a prosperous Wales’ and ‘a Wales of cohesive communities’.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act also asks individual public services to apply five ways of working:

- 1** The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
- 2** How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
- 3** Considering how the public body’s wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the Wellbeing goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
- 4** Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its wellbeing objectives.
- 5** The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

The five ways of working are embedded within our Strategic Plan and have helped to shape UWTSd’s equality objectives.



- A globally responsible Wales
- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh Language
- A Wales of cohesive communities

SECTION 2

OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2020-2024

To develop our equality objectives, we have given all our staff, learners, and students, within HE and FE, the opportunity to engage with the development of the Strategic Equality Plan through a consultation survey. We have also engaged with key internal and external stakeholders as outlined in our SEP Engagement Report. In addition, our equality objectives have been informed by Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) reports, HE sector-wide reports (e.g. from AdvanceHE and UUK), sector Welsh Government reports, and internal strategies such as our Strategic Plan and our Fee and Access Plan.

One pleasing aspect arising out of the consultation process was the overwhelming agreement from respondents to the suitability of our strategic equality objectives and the actions associated with them.

The use of relevant information is explained more in section 3. Each objective is underpinned by more detailed actions and targets which are shown in Appendix 1 – Central Operational Action Plan.



1. To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive



2. To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities



3. To promote safe communities



4. To reduce the gender pay gap



5. To create healthy and inclusive learning communities



1. To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive

This first objective is to ensure that we understand more about the needs of our diverse communities so that targeted action can be undertaken to support groups with specific issues or where barriers exist to enable informed decisions to be made regarding our priorities for action.

In Wales, whilst there has been a narrowing of educational attainment gaps for some since 2015, the Equality and Human Rights Commission concludes there is still more progress to be made in its *Is Wales Fairer 2018* report. Disabled people in Wales are not experiencing the progress seen by other groups and their educational and attainment gaps are widening rather than narrowing. Women in Wales have some of the most equal outcomes they have ever had yet are still facing challenges to their safety and career progression. Some ethnic minority people in Wales have experienced improvements but face hate crime motivated by race.

We have made progress in relation to the gathering and analysis of equality and diversity data since the last Strategic Equality Plan and are consistently benchmarking all our data against sector data. This has already helped with some targeted action: for example, there has been a strategic focus on the provision of on-line and digital resources in order to enhance access to facilities for a range of students, including mature students, students with work and/or caring responsibilities and students from deprived backgrounds. Student satisfaction data from the NSS shows that this work has had a positive impact, with mature student satisfaction rates with resources scoring above sector average. In response to the Students' Union Academic Quality Report on Additional Costs of Study, action has also been taken in relation to transparency of information and in relation to targeted support through our bursary and scholarship framework to take away barriers to study.

However, this objective continues to be important for us as a multi-institutional organisation with education offered on multiple sites, each with its own distinct identity. In recognition of the distinctiveness of each site, provosts were appointed in October 2019 to nurture each community and respond to their specific needs. We know from evidence from our Annual Equality Reports that our communities are increasing in diversity, with more students from mature and BAME backgrounds enrolling on courses over the past few years. Compared to the sector average we also have high levels of students with disabilities. We recognise that, in addition to comprehensive data analysis and focused engagement with key stakeholders including our unions, **we need to continue to improve the quality of our workforce profile data including staff recruitment, development and progression. We also need to further enhance our consultation with particular groups of staff, learners and students to ensure that barriers are fully understood to enable any action taken to be effective, and to better understand the needs of our communities.**

As part of the work required to meet this objective, we want to **consider in more detail how to enhance access to facilities and resources for certain groups of students, learners and staff alike.** Data from the NSS, for example, shows that for students with disabilities (other than specific learning difficulties) satisfaction with resources is below the UWTSD average satisfaction levels. Initial evidence from our counselling service shows that male students access mental health services less than female students, but further work will need to be undertaken to consider whether there are any issues in relation to access to such services by individuals with other protected characteristics (e.g. ethnicity, LGBT+ students). **This work will assist us to ensure consistent high-quality mental health provision across communities.**

Progress has been made in relation to the embedding of equality and diversity within the curriculum. For example, the Group requires consideration of equality and diversity issues as part of its programme validation process. In addition, inclusive teaching and learning resources have been developed by our Learning Support team over the past two years in relation to all major disabilities to further our inclusive education environment. During the period of this Strategic Equality Plan **we will implement and embed these resources so that we continue to enhance inclusive teaching practices for all students and learners as part of our overarching strategic focus on embedding wellbeing within the curriculum.**

Chaplaincy provision has been considered as part of our Prevent focused action plans, monitored by HEFCW, and, although we have made progress in this respect during 2019 with enhanced provision in Swansea, further work is needed, particularly in relation to our Birmingham and London sites. As part of our work to create an inclusive educational environment, we will also be working on **policy guidance regarding our approach to religion and belief generally.**

As a dual sector University, we will also **undertake work to enhance transition into Further and Higher Education and transition between levels in order to enhance the student experience and increase performance in relation to progression.** In line with sector best practice guidance, we will seek to ensure that specific and additional interventions will be provided for those students who face additional barriers to access education.

Finally, we recognise from the consultation feedback provided the need for improved engagement and communication at all levels within the University, including our staffing community. **We will work to ensure greater communication in this respect and to improving staff training at all levels to better understand the needs of our diverse communities.**

SECTION 2

OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

2020-2024



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2. To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities

We know from EHRC evidence that inequalities exist within society including the areas of educational attainment, employment and living standards. We have included this objective to ensure that work is enhanced in relation to the recruitment, progression, retention, attainment and career outcomes of particular groups of students so that there is equality of opportunity and barriers are removed. The Group recruits high levels of students who are in receipt of DSA support (9.4% above benchmark). In the last four years, the Group has increased its degree qualifiers from a BAME background by 12%, where it is now 7% above the Welsh average. The Group recruits mature students at a level 18% above sector average. The Group **will continue to support the HEFCW South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership initiative** to offer a range of learning and aspiration-raising activities for targeted children, young people and adults in the bottom 40% of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation across South West Wales to create pathways to higher education.

As part of this objective, UWTSD will consider sector concerns in relation to attainment gaps. Currently, there is no attainment gap between students who declare disabilities or for mature students, and significant progress has been made in relation to the BAME attainment gap. The latest 2018/19 HESA data shows that 72% of UWTSD's BAME students achieved a good honours degree, significantly above the Welsh (65%) and UK (67%) sector average. When considering intersectional attainment data, young male non-disabled students from lower socio-economic groups (and from all ethnic groups) have lower progression and attainment rates. **During the first year of this plan, the Group will run focus groups with students from these backgrounds to identify support needs and effective intervention strategies.**

As part of its mission, the Group seeks to support all students and learners in finding employment and provides specific interventions for disadvantaged groups. While students with disabilities do not have an academic attainment gap, sector employment data shows that those with disabilities have lower employment rates. To aid with this, the Group participates in HEFCW's GO Wales programme which helps students in danger of non-employment to gain valuable employment experience. **The Group is committed to continuing this type of support during the period of the SEP.**

The Group's commitment to continue to enhance skills for all students and learners means that **the Group is considering investment in an electronic employability platform**. From a curriculum point of view, we have developed a range of innovative professionally focused portfolio of programmes that are attractive to underrepresented groups in Higher Education, including those with protected characteristics. These programmes aim to provide graduates with the skills needed to succeed in their careers. **We will work closely with employers and sector bodies to achieve this. In particular, the Group will continue to develop new apprenticeship opportunities and programmes for students and work with employers with the aim of ensuring that underrepresented people are recruited into these programmes.** Applicants, students and learners often indicate there are financial barriers to participation in studies and progression to further levels. Therefore, in accordance with the actions identified with regard to objective 1, **we will review the action taken in relation to the transparency of information available regarding targeted support through our bursary and scholarship framework.**

As a Group and purchaser of goods and services **we will continue to work towards ensuring procurement drives equality.**

As an employer we recognise we need to do more to attract and recruit people from under-represented groups into our workforce. Disabled people's employment rates in Wales are less than half those for non-disabled people and the number of disabled people in low pay occupations has increased according to the Equality and Human Rights Commission. **We will work as part of this objective to become accredited as a Disability Confident employer which will include a review of our access facilities on our campuses.** Muslims continue to have a lower employment rate than either Christians or people of no religion in Wales and the relatively small Chinese population is likely to have had the lowest employment rate. **We will be reviewing our recruitment and selection policy, process and practices** to continue to increase the diversity within our workforce taking positive action where appropriate. This will also include work to increase the **diversity of our governing body and senior appointments.**

In addition to the focus on recruitment, **we will also work to enhance the support for staff from under-represented groups during their careers with us** to ensure they do not experience deteriorating opportunities. In relation to our REF submission, we will **implement our REF Code of Practice to ensure that fair and inclusive decisions are made.**

Staff training is again an action point with regard to this objective, and we will review unconscious bias training and equalities training generally to staff at all levels.

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1. To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive



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3. To promote safe communities

Several important external reports have been published over the past two years in relation to the Higher Education sector, covering violence against women, domestic abuse, sexual violence, identity-based abuse, harassment, hate crime and bullying. Examples of these are the Universities UK 2018 report (Changing the Culture: One Year On: An assessment of strategies to tackle sexual misconduct, hate crime and harassment affecting university students) and the EHRC 2019 Inquiry into racial harassment in Higher Education (Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged). We will build on the work already undertaken within this area as part of our policy and development framework to support and protect the wellbeing of our learners, students and staff and raise awareness of abuse in relationships.

The Group will focus on a range of measures, taking on board the recommendations made by sector bodies such as the EHRC and Universities UK, to ensure that all those who work and learn within the Group are part of a safe community, this includes work on **enhancing reporting routes including for those on placements or exchanges abroad, support for students who have disclosed, training for staff, and support for reintegration into University life following a traumatic experience.** The Group is working on developing early intervention and prevention services that improve the resilience of students and learners.

Sexual harassment remains widespread in the workplace in Wales and seven out of ten mothers have had a negative or possibly discriminatory experience during pregnancy, maternity leave or on returning to work from maternity leave. As an employer, **we will consider and adopt the EHRC's Technical Guidance (Sexual harassment and harassment at work).** We will also **consider the findings of the EHRC's Pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace:**

Recommendations for Change report and seek to implement the recommendations. We will support the Equality and Human Rights Commission pledge (Working Forward) which supports pregnant women and new parents. In addition, we will continue to avoid the use of non-disclosure agreements which could silence students and employees who have suffered harassment or discrimination.

The Group **will monitor the effectiveness of its student and staff Bullying and Harassment Policies, considering the findings and recommendations of the EHRC inquiry (Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities challenged).** We will work to eliminate the impact of harassment on learner, student and staff experiences which may affect mental health and wellbeing, attainment and career progression. Harassment and Bullying advisors are already in place for staff; **the Group aims to make this first line informal support mechanism available to students as well.**

In addition, we will conduct a periodic and regular survey of staff and students to measure the prevalence of racial harassment and assess their confidence in existing reporting and complaints procedures.

We will also undertake a review of our safeguarding procedures in line with existing statutory guidelines, which again will include a review of staff training; we will also ensure that any applicable codes of conduct are regularly reviewed (e.g. the Student Code of Conduct being reviewed alongside the Student Charter.)



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4. To reduce the gender pay gap

We have a responsibility to identify any pay differences that exist across the organisation and to take action to address any differences identified. The gender pay gap is the difference between what men earn on average in an organisation compared to what women earn, irrespective of their role or seniority. In this sense, the gender pay gap reflects the workforce profile as opposed to equal pay which is designed to identify unequal reward for men and women doing the same job (which is illegal in the UK unless justified).

Is Wales Fairer 2018 sets out details of gender pay differences in Wales:

Median hourly earnings were higher for men in Wales (£11.36) than women (£9.80) in 2016/17, representing a 13.7% gender pay gap. Using an alternative source, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), the median gender pay gap for all employees in 2017 was 14.8%.

The 2019 UCEA Briefing on HE Gender Pay Gap Infographics identifies that progress has been made in relation to the gender pay gap in the sector over the past decade from 23.8% in 2007/8 to 15% in the 2017/8, (source: ONS ASHE 2018 based on median gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for all employees full-time and part-time).

UWTSD's Gender Pay Gap was calculated on 31 March 2018 and it was found women's median and mean hourly wage was lower than men's by 11.1% and 11.3% respectively. At UWTSD in 2017/18, 58% of our workforce were female and 66% of our female staff worked part-time compared to 39% of men.

We already operate the HERA Job Evaluation Scheme – this is imbedded into our pay structure, thereby ensuring a transparent pay scale with clear parameters regarding pay progression. We also appreciate that gender pay gap reporting involves a reflection of our working community at any point in time.

As part of this objective more work is needed to ensure that the gender pay gap decreases further. **We will seek to further understand why the gender pay gap exists.** We will consider guidance from the Government Equalities Office to assist including the Eight ways to understand your organisation's gender pay gap publication. **We will also benchmark our work against the UCEA's report, Taking action: Tackling the gender pay gap in higher education institutions,** which examines the extensive work HE institutions are undertaking to keep narrowing the sector's gender pay gap.

We will consider every stage in the employee life cycle from recruitment to leavers to identify any underlying causes and to develop a meaningful and timebound action plan. We will consider intersectionality of protected characteristics, occupational segregation and the under-representation of groups in particular roles.

UWTSD will continue to work on addressing gender equality within the workplace both in relation to the gender pay gap and more broadly in relation to, for example, family friendly policies, development opportunities, and pregnancy and maternity policies. Work in this area will include appropriate consideration of access to programmes with **gender inequalities, for example, participation by women in STEM subjects and advertising all jobs, including senior roles, on a flexible or job-share basis unless there is a genuine business reason that means this is not possible.**

In addition to our work on reducing the gender pay gap within this SEP cycle we will carry out a further equal pay audit and **we will also seek to identify, publish and take action to close any other pay differences that may exist linked to other protected characteristics.** We have seen recent improvements in the levels of staff disclosing information for monitoring purposes. In 2017/18 93% of staff disclosed their ethnicity compared to 85% in the previous year. We will continue to work on improving disclosure rates through increased awareness and training.

We will also review our gender pay gap statistics on an annual basis (by reference to not only our own statistics but those of the wider sector) in order to identify any changes / trends / action points which require further review.



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As part of this objective UWTSD will seek to ensure that good relationships are fostered between all students and staff and that our communities are welcoming, nurturing, and supportive places for everyone. **The mantra of Stonewall Cymru is ‘people perform better when they can be themselves’. This is what we also believe. The Group will aim to achieve Stonewall Workplace Equality Index accreditation by the end of the SEP cycle. The Group will enhance its support for students and staff to participate in a safe, healthy and inclusive multi-cultural, bi-lingual learning environment where everyone is respected, this will include training relating to bi-lingual and cultural awareness.**

We recognise the important role of line managers in developing an inclusive working environment and have prioritised the development of leaders and line managers through the design and implementation of our ‘Future Leaders’ and ‘People Management Essentials’ programme. **We will continue to develop and train our leaders and people managers on diversity and inclusive people management practices.**

Our different sites are distinctive and all aim to foster a sense of belonging. Within this objective, in response to significant sector concerns, emphasis will be placed on mental health and wellbeing more broadly. Our data shows that there has been an increase, in line with the sector, of students and learners declaring a mental health difficulty. UWTSD will take a proactive whole university approach to wellbeing and embed it during 2020/24 HEFCW’s Policy Statement on Wellbeing and Health in HE. **Work in this area will include considering, implementing and embedding the recommendations and principles from several key sector frameworks (#Stepchange, Suicide-Safer Universities, the Healthy Universities Framework, The University Healthy Minds Charter) as well as the recommendations of the 2019**

internal audit conducted by Mazars into student well-being arrangements. We also aim to work more effectively to identify appropriate multiagency approaches to supporting both students and staff in need. We recognise that the general wellbeing of our staff, learners, and students is critical to the future success of our organisation.

The work in this area builds on work already undertaken in this area for both staff and students, such as enhancing crisis management and support, training (e.g. Mental Health First Aid training for key staff as well as I-Act training for line-managers) and the availability of online mental health support through Big White Wall since January 2019. The first annual report on Big White Wall shows that students have utilised the service in particular out of hours and to seek help to manage stress, anxiety or depression. **The Group is committed to continuing to offer this service. The Group is also committed to continue work developed as part of the HEFCW funded mental health pilots, which include work to develop Welsh medium mental health training and resources and projects to enhance social integration for isolated students.**

We are aware that mental health difficulties affect both staff, learners, and students. **We will therefore commit to the Time to Change Wales pledge to end stigma towards mental health conditions and difficulties** and work proactively in this area. We are working hard to support our employees with mental health and have already enhanced training for line managers.



SECTION 3

HOW WE DEVELOPED THE EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Our Equality Objectives will continue to help us meet the Public Sector Equality Duty and ensure we are making progress in advancing equality and inclusion for all protected groups.

To identify our Equality Objectives, we undertook a comprehensive engagement exercise across the Group. This included an online survey for staff, learners, students and key external stakeholders (e.g. our Unions, HEFCW, key external bodies for particular protected characteristics). In addition, face to face meetings were held with several key internal stakeholder groups (e.g. the Women’s Network). These engagement activities helped us understand the needs of our learning communities and our workforce and helped us shape the Equality Objectives and action plan. The Engagement Report which can be viewed here gives an indication of the issues which were raised most frequently during the engagement exercise. The response rate to the survey was very good and overwhelmingly the feedback was that people supported our proposed equality objectives and the actions associated with them. There were lots of constructive comments and lots of good ideas and we have used these to develop the actions within the objectives.

The consultation phase directly informed the refinement process for the strategic equality objectives. For example, the feedback highlighted the need for improved engagement and communication at all levels within the University, including our staffing community. This directly informed our first objective to better understand the needs of our communities. Following consultation, we also expanded our second objective with greater consideration for religious and ethnic groups to reduce inequalities within our communities. Our third objective was adjusted to include support for those who have suffered trauma to return to the workplace. Our final objective around creating healthy and inclusive learning communities was extended to highlight the important role of line managers in this regard.



What relevant information did we use?

As well as listening to our learners, students, communities and our staff we have also used a range of equality information to support us in identifying equality objectives.

We have looked at HEFCW and Welsh Assembly priorities and have reviewed the progress that we have already made in relation to the Public Sector Equality Duties. We have also reviewed national and external sources such as reports by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Welsh Government policy and priorities, UUK and AdvanceHE research reports and other relevant statistics and reports. Whilst several external reports and EHRC inquiries have contributed to the development of the Equality Objectives, outlined below are the key reports that assisted in shaping the objectives:

Is Wales Fairer? 2018 – EHRC

The challenges were identified taking a thematic approach as follows:

- Education
- Employment
- Living Standards
- Health
- Justice and Personal Security
- Participation

A mapping exercise was undertaken to ensure our Equality Objectives are reflective of the above-mentioned themes, ensuring that our Equality Objectives are relevant and reflect current priorities for the citizens of Wales and our Group. The Action Plan shown in Appendix 1 identifies how the Equality Objectives and actions link to these themes.

Key Sector Reports that informed the development of the Strategic Equality Plan

- HEFCW’s Policy Statement on Wellbeing and Health in HE
- Barden and Caleb 2019 Student Mental Health and Wellbeing in Higher Education: A practical Guide
- UUK’s Student Mental Health in Wellbeing in Higher Education: Good Practice Guide
- The Healthy Universities Framework
- The Student Minds University Mental Health Charter
- UUK’s StepChange: Mental Health in Higher Education
- UUK’s Suicide Safer Universities
- UUK’s Changing the Culture: One Year On: An assessment of strategies to tackle sexual misconduct, hate crime and harassment affecting university students)
- EHRC’s Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged
- UCEA’s 2019 Briefing on HE Gender Pay Gap
- AMOSSHE’s Insight project on Sexual Misconduct Disclosures
- Rape Crisis South London’s responding to disclosures of sexual violence
- NUS Power in the academy: staff sexual misconduct in UK Higher Education
- AdvanceHE’s Religion and Belief: supporting inclusion of staff and students in higher education and colleges
- ECU’s Trans Staff and students in HE and colleges improving experiences

SECTION 4

HOW WE WILL DELIVER AND MONITOR THE PLAN

The actions within the Strategic Equality Plan (Appendix 1) will be delivered through an operational action plan.

The central Operational Action Plan sets out the key priorities to be delivered over the coming 4 years with key milestones set for each target. The central Operational Action Plan is supported by strategic action plans at Institute, constituent College, and relevant professional unit level to ensure embedding of the priorities throughout the Group. There will be an annual review of progress made in relation to the central operational action plan which will be reported to Senate and Council. In addition to assisting the service with monitoring progress against its priorities, the central Operational Action Plan also:

- supports delivery of the Group's priorities, e.g. in relation to its Strategic Plan and Fee and Access Plan as well as several key strategies such as the Student Health and Well-being strategy.
- demonstrates how the Group is aligning with the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
- facilitates coordination of cross cutting strategies etc.
- enables auditing of the impact and effectiveness of key strategies, including the Strategic Equality Plan.
- monitors delivery of equality and diversity objectives and priorities within relevant units.

Annual Review of Progress

We have a well-established and effective annual review process in place.

The annual review process evaluates on impact and outcomes of the actions, with the aim to monitor performance and ensure effective outcomes.

The annual review process enables Senate and Council to monitor and scrutinise the progress of the Group's priorities and actions in relation to equality and diversity.

Publication of the Annual Equality Monitoring Report

The main purpose of an Annual Equality Monitoring Report is to fulfil the Group's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties which includes its progress in delivering the Equality Objectives. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that all public authorities covered under the specific duties in Wales should produce an Annual Equality Report by 31 March each year. We will use the outcomes of the annual review process to review and if necessary, adapt our priorities and planned actions.





Equality Objective 1: To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive

Action	Link to EHRC theme
Enhancing our consultation with particular groups to ensure that barriers are fully understood to enable any action taken to be effective, and to better understand the needs of our learning communities	Participation and Education
Undertaking a review of access to facilities and resources for staff and students in order to enhance access to the same.	Participation and Education
Implementing and embedding resources to enhance inclusive teaching practices and wellbeing for all students.	Participation, Health and Education
Policy development regarding our approach to religion and belief generally.	All themes
Enhancing transition into Further and Higher Education and transition between levels in order to enhance the student experience and increase performance in relation to progression.	Education and Participation
Improving engagement and communication at all levels including staff training to better understand the needs of our diverse communities.	Education, Employment and Participation



Equality Objective 2: To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities

Action	Link to EHRC theme
Supporting the HEFCW South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership initiative.	Education and Participation
Running focus groups with students to identify support needs and effective intervention strategies.	Participation
Participating in HEFCW's GO Wales programme to help students gain employment experience.	Education and Participation
Collaborating with employers and sector bodies to develop new apprenticeship opportunities and programmes for students with focus on underrepresented groups	Education and Participation
Reviewing our recruitment and selection policy, process and practice	Participation
Becoming accredited as a Disability Confident employer, which will include a review of our access facilities on our campuses	Participation
Reviewing our REF Code of Practice to ensure that fair and inclusive decisions are made	Education and Participation
Reviewing staff training including current equalities training provision	Employment
Reviewing action taken in relation to targeted support through our bursary and scholarship framework	Participation



Equality Objective 3: To promote safe learning communities

Action	Link to EHRC theme
Enhancing reporting routes and support for students and staff who have disclosed trauma including focus on reintegration into University life	Participation
Reviewing our Bullying and Harassment Policy	Justice and Personal Security
Extending provision of harassment and Bullying advisors to both staff and students	Justice and Personal Security
Surveying staff and students to measure the prevalence of harassment and assessing confidence in existing reporting and complaints procedures	Employment and Education
Reviewing safeguarding procedures in line with existing statutory guidelines and applicable codes of conduct	All themes



Equality Objective 4: To reduce the gender pay gap

Action	Link to EHRC theme
Continuing to operate HERA scheme and keep under review	Employment and Participation
Developing action plan following review of employment life cycle to identify any underlying causes	Employment and Participation
Reviewing and developing family friendly policies	Participation
Increasing access to programmes with gender inequalities (e.g. women in STEM initiative)	Participation and Education
Benchmarking our work using sector information (e.g. UCEA’s report)	Employment
Reviewing pay differences linked to any other protected characteristics	Employment and Participation
Annual review of our gender pay gap statistics to actively monitor progress and effectiveness of actions taken	Employment and Participation

APPENDIX ACTION PLAN



Equality Objective 5: To create healthy and inclusive learning communities

Action	Link to EHRC theme
Aim to achieve Stonewall accreditation by the end of the SEP.	Participation
Enhancing support systems for students and staff including diversity training, extending to bi-lingual and cultural awareness training.	Education
Implementing and embedding the recommendations of the internal Mazars audit into student well-being arrangements	Health, Education and Participation
Identifying appropriate multiagency approaches to supporting both students and staff in need	Health, Education and Participation
Enhancing crisis management and support, training (e.g. Mental Health First Aid training for key staff as well as I-Act training for line-managers)	Health, Education and Participation
Providing online mental health support through Big White Wall	Health, Education and Participation
Continuing work developed as part of the HEFCW funded mental health pilots, including work to develop Welsh medium resources and projects to enhance social integration for isolated students.	Health, Education and Participation
Committing to the 'Time to Change Wales' pledge to end stigma towards mental health conditions	Health, Education and Participation