



APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

EQUALITY OUTCOMES ACTION PLAN 2021 - 2025

Outcome 1: Achieve the highest recognition in equality and diversity through achievement of awards in accreditation initiatives such as Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure
1.1 Support five Schools to submit Athena Swan awards at Silver level	Five Schools (Law, Divinity, History and Philosophy, Natural and Computing Sciences, Social Sciences and Biological Sciences) have stated their intention to submit Silver level awards.	Heads of School/Chair of School EDIC working with Athena Swan Officers	April 2022	Silver award submissions submitted
1.2 Submit a Silver level institutional Athena Swan award	The University has held a Bronze award since 2012. A Silver award requires the University to demonstrate the impact of actions taken. The revised Athena Swan guidelines support the University's ambitions to achieve a Silver award.	Senior Vice-Principal working with Athena Swan Officer	April 2026	Silver award submission submitted
1.3 Submit a Bronze application to the Race Equality Charter	The University has already started work on this following signing up to the Charter in September 2019	Vice-Principal Education working with Race Equality Charter Coordinator	February 2023	Bronze award submitted and achieved
1.4 Achieve a Bronze award in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index	The University has participated in the Stonewall Workplace Index for six years. Through supportive feedback from Stonewall Scotland we have a detailed action plan for achieving an award in the WEI	Senior Vice-Principal working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and Chair of Staff and PG Student LGBT+ Network	February 2022	Bronze award achieved
Outcome 2: Tackle mental health stigma to improve outcomes and experiences for staff and students who have mental ill health				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure
2.1 Agree updated version of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and five-year Strategy	New policy and strategy required to reflect updated position of the University in its journey to tackling mental health stigma	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	December 2021 (Policy and strategy agreed) 2021-2025 (implementation)	Policy and strategy launched with effective communication and implementation plan



2.2 Review Stress Management Policy and launch revised version	Enhance the policy to take account of progress made	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	June 2021 (launch new version)	Policy reviewed, consulted upon and agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee
2.3 Review the training requirements relating to the HSE Management Standards	Review required to establish what extra training is required to support implementation of the Stress Management Policy	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	September 2021	Training requirements and the resources needed to deliver them identified. Training plan agreed.
2.4 Maintain Healthy Working Lives Silver award accreditation and strive towards Gold standard.	Nationally recognised accreditation which supports improved health, safety and wellbeing in organisations in a structured and productive way. Demonstrates University's commitment to creating healthy working lives for colleagues.	Wellbeing Adviser	September 2022/Dependant on NHS restarting award	Annual review passed Awarded programme currently paused due to Covid19.
2.5 Deliver the annual calendar of wellbeing events and activities online and on campus when restrictions allow.	A variety of wellbeing events and campaigns will be delivered to support staff and student wellbeing. These are based around national health campaigns and the needs of staff and students. Community needs are continually monitored, and campaigns will reflect this.	Wellbeing Adviser	2021-2025	Successful events delivered online measures through monitoring participation levels and feedback responses
2.6 Train new Mental Health First Aiders when the courses become available. Funding has been secured, a waiting list is held, and provisional dates are set for the second half of the calendar year.	Training needed to account for turnover of staff and build in some additional capacity in cover for some parts of the University.	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Dependent on availability of courses	Courses run to accommodate everyone on the waiting list, when this is permitted.
2.7 Fully implement reporting/monitoring procedure for Mental Health Champions and Mental Health First Aiders.	Feedback on activities and effectiveness of the MHFA purely anecdotal/verbal at present, via the MHFA Forum. Need to quantify this	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Dependent upon findings of 2.8	Quantitative evidence of MHFA activities reported to enable analysis and feedback.



2.8 Carry out an Evaluation of MHFA and MH Champions activities.	Study needed to identify reasons why the reporting form is not being utilised and any other concerns impeding the effectiveness of the MHFA and Champions. (Very little research has been done on this in the UK).	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	July 2021 (evaluation completed)	Report produced with recommendations for consideration by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Group, and the Equality Diversity, Inclusion Committee.
2.9 Continue to roll out the Suicide Prevention Training Plan.	Training needed to support MHFA and Academic Tutors.	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	2021-2025	Deliver courses as detailed in the training plan and meet demand.
Outcome 3: Eliminate barriers which may present due to multiple intersectional protected characteristic identities				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure
3.1 Consider intersectional approaches when delivering events and engagement activities	The University is increasingly alert to the issues combined protected characteristics can present. Some of this work is already being undertaken as part of the University's Charter work, but it needs to become an ingrained part of data analysis	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with EDI Events and Engagement Group	ongoing	Feedback on events and engagement activities is positive and refer to positive outcomes in relation to multiple identities
3.2 Update Equality Impact Assessment template with guidance on intersectionality	The current EQIA process is focussed on specific protected characteristics. To raise awareness of intersectionality the EQIA form requires to be updated	Equality and Diversity Adviser	September 2021	EQIA template updated and re-launched
3.3 Increase number of staff and student profiles in newsletters and other communication channels which refer to intersectional identities	Raises awareness of the issues around intersectionality	Communications Team working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and Student Experience Team	2021-23	At least one profile launched every six months
Outcome 4: Create an antiracist university by tackling racial harassment and fully embedding the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report <i>Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged</i> (2019) and the Universities UK report <i>Tackling Racial Harassment in HE</i> (2020)				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure
4.1 Develop and implement a Race Equality/Antiracism Strategy	Key remit of RESG to develop a strategy and important to launch a strategy which communicates the University's goal to create an anti-racist culture and set out what this means for staff and students	Vice-Principal Education working with Equality and Diversity Adviser	September 2021	A successful strategy will lead to a culture where staff and students experience a sense of belonging, measured through focus groups and surveys



4.2 Analyse feedback on the Race Equality training launched in January 2021 and agree training approaches for refresher training/reflection and additional training for groups of staff	Appropriate, challenging and reflective training is a key aspect of tackling racial harassment	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with Staff Development and Head of HR	September 2021 and ongoing	Feedback on the training analysed and recommendations for the next phase approved
4.3 Implement and launch new racial harassment reporting system with regular communication of the reporting options	Listening activities have shown that a range of reporting procedures are valued and that strong communication of those is required	Acting Deputy Director of People	June 2021	Expect numbers of reports to increase as the system is communicated Listening sessions / race surveys indicate increased awareness of reporting procedures
4.4 Develop and launch new race equality webpage and monitor traffic	A dedicated webpage is required to act as a 'home' for resources, information about actions the University is taking, support and reporting procedures, consultation initiatives	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with HR Intern	May 2021	Webpage launched Number of hits indicates that it is being used by staff and students Race equality surveys indicate that staff and students are aware of the page
4.5 Achieve 100% uptake on Understanding Race Bias online training	Mandatory training should be completed by all staff	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with Head of HR	September 2022	100% uptake achieved Race surveys and listening activities demonstrate the impact of the training
4.6 Develop and launch race communications plan	A planned approach to communications on race equality is required to maintain an open and transparent approach with the University community and to provide opportunities for staff and students to engage with the work on creating an anti-racist culture	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with Head of Communications	April 2021 and ongoing	Communications Plan developed and launched Expect increased representations and queries from staff and students about activities
4.7 Working group which has been established to recommend a set of terminology/definitions to be used in the University to present its recommendations by September 2021	It is critical that the University explores the use of terminology and definitions in partnership with staff and students to ensure that processes are in place to monitor use of language and review	Vice-Principal Education working with Equality and Diversity Adviser	September 2021	Working group established and achieving appropriate consultation and meeting remit of the group



4.8 Establish a network of Race Equality Champions	The Race Equality Champions will be in place by March 2021 and the network will serve to support the Champions to undertake their role effectively and to provide the University with vital feedback which could inform decision-making	Equality and Diversity Adviser	end April 2021 and ongoing	Champions appointed Network created Network providing useful space for discussion and ideas for moving forward with creating an antiracist University
Outcome 5: Create a culture where gender-based violence is eradicated within the University community and staff or students who do experience this can seek effective support				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure
5.1 Publish a comprehensive policy and accompanying procedures supporting the statement of commitment	Enshrining the values of the statement of commitment into University policy is critical to operationalise its principles	Acting Deputy Director of People/Head of HR Partners	June 2021 (published) 2021-2025 (implemented)	Policy approved and launched Expect increased queries/reports of GBV as the policy becomes embedded
5.2 Continue to participate in pilot training for staff and roll this out to all frontline support staff and Senior Personal Tutors	Training is critical to raising awareness and creating a culture where staff and students can confidently and safely discuss/report GBV	Acting Deputy Director of People/Head of HR Partners	December 2021/ongoing	Effective training assessed through feedback rolled out
5.3 Work with AUSA to develop and deliver Consent training to students entering the University and to all student leaders (Club Captains and Committees and Society Presidents and Committees)	Training for students in specific roles is critical to raising awareness and creating a culture where students can confidently and safely discuss/report GBV	Acting Deputy Director of People/Head of HR Partners	September 2022	Effective training assessed through feedback rolled out
5.4 Work with local partners and institutions (RGU, NESCOL, Police Scotland, ACC and NHS) to further the idea of a "Fearless Aberdeen"	Working with local partners is critical to challenging GBV	Acting Deputy Director of People/Head of HR Partners	December 2021 and ongoing	Partner organisations contacted Actions developed regarding the role of the University and the partners in taking forward the University's priorities
Outcome 6: Eliminate barriers to learning, progression, promotion and physical accessibility for disabled staff and students by taking actions to continuously improve the working and learning environments for disabled staff and students				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure



6.1 Continue to implement and review the University's BSL Action Plan	Required under legislation but is also key to the implementation of Aberdeen 2040 Inclusive commitments	Equality and Diversity Adviser	ongoing	Actions implemented with reviews undertaken
6.2 Approve and implement an Accessibility and Inclusion in Education Policy	Policy required after inconsistencies in the implementation of EDI practices identified across the University. Policy to highlight and support enhanced and consistent implementation of EDI practices across Education	Dean of Student Support working with Equality and Diversity Adviser	December 2021 (approve) December 2022 (implement) 2025 (review)	Policy approved and launched Expect increased queries about accessibility in Teaching and Learning as colleagues begin to implement the Policy
6.3 Continue to work in partnership with the Disabled Students Forum to enhance the accessible accommodation – new website created, and physical changes made	Feedback from the Disabled Students Forum indicated that students were regularly unable to find information about what was available. Application process needs to be more accessible.	Dean of Student Support working with Head of Accommodation Estates Committee	2021-2025	Feedback from students is positive Students who wish to use the accommodation report being able to access information more easily – monitored through surveys/focus groups
6.4 Implement the recommendations of the Higher Education Commission report <i>Arriving at Thriving: learning from disabled students experiences (2020)</i>	A working group has been established to take this forward – the report requires careful consideration regarding the student journey as it indicates that disabled students face challenges and barriers across all aspects of university life	Dean of Student Support working with Inclusion Practitioners Group Estates Committee	September 2021 (actions agreed and communicated) 2021 – 2025 (review of implementation)	Feedback from Disabled Students Forum and wider student body improves, measured through focus groups/surveys
6.5 Review support offered to disabled staff and implement changes where appropriate	The Staff Disability Network plays a key role in supporting staff and it is through this route that a review would initially be undertaken	Head of HR working with Chairs of Staff Disability Network and Equality and Diversity Adviser	December 2021 (review completed) 2021-2025 (implementation of actions)	Review undertaken Actions identified and implemented Feedback from Staff Disability Network is positive
Outcome 7: Reduce the level of discrimination reported in the staff survey from 11% to 5% in 2022				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure
7.1 Achieve 100% completion rate in Inclusion Essentials mandatory online training (advise on implementation at Qatar campus)	Mandatory training should be completed by all staff	Senior Vice-Principal working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and Head of HR	September 2022	Uptake reports indicate 100% completion rates



7.2 Undertake analysis of the results of the staff survey 2020 by protected characteristic and develop and implement actions with EDIC where issues are identified	Understanding where there may be barriers or concerns in relation to specific questions in the survey will assist in teasing out where discrimination is identified	Senior Vice-Principal working with HR Specialist Services Partner	May 2021 (discussion with EDIC) 2021-2025 (implementation of actions)	Analysis completed and appropriate actions approved and implemented
7.3 Implement the Dignity at Work and Study Toolkit and roll out appropriate training	The Dignity at Work and Study Working Group has engaged in powerful debate and conversation on the development of the Toolkit. The Toolkit will, along with appropriate training and awareness raising, support the University's development of a culture which embraces diversity by understanding the barriers, both at an individual and group level, encountered by staff and students and how to address these.	Director of People working with HR Specialist Services Partner	December 2021 (Toolkit launched) 2021 – 2025 (implementation and review)	Toolkit launched successfully, measured by hits on website, feedback from SMT/UMG Appropriate training delivered, receiving excellent feedback, measured through feedback forms
To add once further analysis of the results of 2020 survey completed as per action 7.2				
Additional actions identified in the PSED Report 2021 which are not covered in other action plans and actions which are appropriate to carry over from the 2019 Action Plan which have not been captured in the actions above				
Governance				
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success measure
8.1 Review the frequency of meetings of University EDIC, with a view to adding one more meeting per year	Agenda items have been steadily increasing in number with enhanced level of robust discussion at each meeting	Senior Vice-Principal working with Equality and Diversity Adviser	September 2021	Number of EDIC meetings eases pressure on agenda length and provides enough scope for strong discussion
8.2 Review the operation of EDIC to ensure that it retains its remit as a strategic body. Consider an operational arm of EDIC to present the key questions to be discussed by EDIC	Important that EDIC is perceived as an operates as a strategic decision-making body within the wider University governance structure to reflect the breadth and scope of EDI activities	Senior Vice-Principal working with Equality and Diversity Adviser	September 2021	EDIC retains its position as a strategic body, contributing to the wider University strategic framework
8.3 Support the School EDICs to link into the University EDIC to support consistency in approaches	It will be important to ensure that the School EDICs are fully appraised of the discussions at the University EDIC and are	Senior Vice-Principal working with Charis of School EDICS and	ongoing	A robust framework of governance exists between the School EDICs



	then supported to understand what those mean for the School EDICs	Equality and Diversity Adviser		and the University EDIC to achieve effective flow of communication and support
Transgender Equality				
9.1 Develop supporting guidance for the Transgender Equality Policy through consultation with staff and student groups	The Policy provides high-level guidance however there is a need for practical support to achieve the full implementation of the Policy	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with Chair of the Staff and Student LGBT Network	September 2021	Guidance developed and launched
9.2 Roll out associated training on the Policy and Guidance to staff, exploring online options	School-based session delivered by the STA was well-received and training would support the implementation of the Policy	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with Staff Development and Head of HR	December 2021	Training identified and delivered Feedback indicates the training was helpful Feedback from networks and forums indicate the training has had a positive impact
EDI Events and Engagement Group				
10.1 Plan an events calendar for 2021 and seek approval of this from EDIC	A calendar must be produced to support the Diversity Calendar and to reflect the funding received from DT	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and clerks to the group	May 2021 (approval from EDIC) 2021-2025 (implementation of action plan)	Calendar produced detailing resources and timescales
10.2 Communicate with the staff and student community on the work of the Group and the events and engagement planned	Strong communications plan required to ensure the community is aware of the events and engagement opportunities	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and clerks to the group and Communications	ongoing	Communications plan developed and launched Feedback from staff and students on feedback forms indicate they were aware of events in good time
10.3 Work with staff and students from across the University to harness expertise, lived experience, interests and knowledge and elevate and support EDI initiatives taking place across the University	Events and engagements which are based on feedback from staff and students and which address the lived experience of staff and students should inform the work of the group to deliver events which are likely to be successful and impactful	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and clerks to the group	ongoing	Feedback from staff and students indicates that events and engagement themes are relevant and can drive meaningful change



10.4 Secure an annual budget for the work of the Group	Budget critical to be able to plan appropriately and to maintain the momentum of the group	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and clerks to the group	Annually	Budget secured Plan of action regarding how the budget will be spent
Research Excellence Framework				
11.1 Continue the equality monitoring of decision-making in the REF process and involve EDIC in the analysis of data	EDIC requested that it be kept apprised of the monitoring being undertaken to assess the contribution of different staff groups to the REF process	Senior Policy Adviser, Research and Innovation	May 2021 (EDIC discussing REF EQIA) 2021 – 2025 (continued monitoring and implementation of actions)	Analysis used to implement meaningful actions to address under-representation in the REF process
Court Diversity				
12.1 Actively monitor the diversity of Court and establish mechanisms for achieving a membership which reflects more closely the diversity of the University staff and student community	Significant improvement had been made regarding the gender imbalance on Court. It is critical that Court now seeks to address under-representation in relation to other characteristics	University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer working with clerk to Court and Equality and Diversity Adviser	2021 - 2025	Actions taken to address under-representation where appropriate Actions result in a Court which is more representative of the University community
Aurora Leadership Programme				
13.1 Monitor the effectiveness of the Aurora Leadership Development Programme	Schools and Professional Services areas continue to support staff to attend the Aurora Leadership Programme and it is important to monitor the experiences of those staff and ascertain the impact of the programme	Athena Swan Officer working with School Athena Swan Leads	Ongoing with regular review	Monitoring undertaken and recommendations made as appropriate
Carers				
14.1 Achieve accreditation as a Carers Positive employer	The Parents and Carers Network has noted the impact on working life being a carer has. An accreditation such as the Carers Positive award would signal University commitment to supporting carers	Equality and Diversity Adviser working with Chairs of Parents and Carers Network	January 2022 (initial accreditation) 2021-2025	Accreditation achieved Related policies and guidance developed, launched and implemented



			(implementation of principles of the Charter)	
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