University of Aberdeen

Public Sector Equality Duty

Examples of Mainstreaming Equality April 2017

4   ELIMINATING UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND VICTIMISATION

This section highlights how we have been working towards meeting the first of the four 'needs' of the general duty within the Equality Act 2010 and mainstreaming equality to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We have made progress in this regard through supporting staff and students to increase their knowledge of equality and diversity, enhancing our promotions process to mitigate against bias, implementing equality impact assessments, reviewing and making clear strides towards eliminating our gender pay gap and enhancing support for staff and students.

4.1   Equality and Diversity module – _Diversity in the Workplace_ Training

4.1.1   Background

All University staff are required to complete a mandatory online Equality and Diversity training module – _Diversity in the Workplace_. Since publication of the report in 2015, completion rates have increased significantly, with 80% of staff completing this training (an increase of 10% since 2016). We continue to aim for a 100% completion rate and have introduced, since the report in 2015, a requirement that all new staff are to complete this training module within the first three months of their employment. Since the last report we have also introduced a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) on completion rates of the Equality and Diversity training across the University. This KPI requires Directors and Heads of School to monitor the uptake in their areas and report on progress. This has resulted in significant increase in uptake, particularly in the academic areas. We have also implemented a robust training plan around this. The target to reach 100% completion rate has also been embedded into our Athena SWAN action plan.

4.1.2   Impact

The impact of these interventions will be monitored through staff surveys and analysing trends in relation to issues raised with the Staff Wellbeing Coordinators.

Action: Achieve 100% uptake of Diversity in the Workplace on-line training (Action 2.1)

4.2   **Unconscious Bias Training**

4.2.1   Background

Since 2015, the University Unconscious Bias training has been delivered to a range of staff groups, using both internal and external trainers. Thus far, the Senior Management Team, members of the Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity, College Diversity Leads, Human Resources staff and other senior colleagues have received training and/or briefing. Members of the University's Promotion Panels have also received training with a follow-up briefing paper prepared for discussion before each promotion panel meeting. This takes into account unconscious bias research which suggests that raising awareness of bias immediately before a decision-making situation mitigates against bias occurring.

4.2.2   Impact

The impact of the unconscious bias training is evidenced by the feedback received. 95% of respondents to the feedback survey rated the training as Good or Excellent, with respondents commenting that the training had motivated them to make behavioural changes in decision-making situations. Feedback also suggested that all staff should receive the training and that follow-up sessions should be available. We have acted on this feedback by committing to additional training sessions from an external training consultancy.

4.2.3   We are aware that unconscious bias can pervade all areas of the University, from senior management decision-making to one-to-one discussions between staff and/or students. We are committed to continuing the roll-out of training.

Action: Develop and roll out a plan for unconscious bias training, considering both face-to-face and on-line options (Action 2.2).

4.3   **On-line Equality and Diversity Training for Students**

4.3.1   Background

The University has introduced an online equality and diversity training module for students, following an equality and diversity survey of students in 2015. This training is mandatory for all Level 1 students and the uptake has been steadily increasing. To date 711 students of the 2600 students offered the training (27.3%) have completed it. Completion of the training, is added to their degree certificate transcript.

4.3.2   We are clear in our responsibility to ensure that students treat each other and staff with respect and that the students' contribution to creating an inclusive and tolerant culture is equally important as that of staff.

4.3.3   Impact

Our intention is to ensure that all students complete this training and that it becomes viewed as an essential aspect of studying at the University of Aberdeen. This will be enforced through increased communication to students, engaging with Personal Tutors to encourage them to promote the training and gaining feedback on the training so improvements can be made to it where appropriate. While it is too early to assess the wider impact of this training, feedback on the course so far has been positive.

Action: Monitor uptake of the student equality and diversity on-line training (Action 2.3)

Action: Implement feedback/suggestions process (Action 2.4)

4.4 Mitigating Bias in the Promotions Process

4.4.1 Background

To mitigate the potential for unconscious bias/discrimination in our promotions process, we have introduced he opportunity for the first stage of the process to be conducted on the basis of a 'blind review'.

4.4.2 Impact

We will monitor the impact of the introduction of this initiative by continuing the routine monitoring we undertake of our promotions submissions and outcomes. Our promotions statistics since 2014 indicated that application rates for promotion are similar for both men and women when distribution within the population is taken into account, however, overall there was no clear trend regarding who was more successful in gaining a promotion (see table 1 below). We provide coaching and training for all mangers on discussing promotions with their staff and we are responding to feedback (which indicated that staff require increased guidance and support in navigating the promotions process) from career development focus groups to ensure that information regarding the promotions process is fully accessible and routinely publicised. We also provide ongoing one-to-one coaching for staff and a well-publicised mentoring scheme. At present we have 42 females and 15 males being mentored through the scheme.

Table 1 :success rates within promotion process by gender

Year	Applied			Successful			Success rates (%)	
	Female	Male	% female	Female	Male	% female	female	male
2014/15	106	96	52.48	65	54	54.62	61.3	56.3
2015/16	90	67	57.32	50	41	54.95	55.6	61.2

Action: **Review the impact of the introduction of blind review on promotion outcomes (Action 3.2).**

Action: **Continue to offer awareness sessions for all staff on the annual promotion exercise (Action 3.3).**

4.5 Equality Impact Assessment

4.5.1 Background

The University continues to assess its policies and decisions through the Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment process. Managers who are proposing new polices or initiatives are required to explain in their covering papers to University committees whether an Equality Impact Assessment is required and provide clear reasons if they believe it is not required. The Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity oversees the Equality Impact Assessment process and provides feedback on assessments presented to them.

4.5.2 Impact

Whilst this process is in place we have established from the quality of the impact assessments presented, that further guidance and training is required in this area and have identified this as a key priority for the forthcoming 6 months.

Action: **Revise the guidance in committee paper templates (Action 1.1).**

Action: **Provide additional training on equality impact assessment for appropriate staff (Action 1.2).**

4.6   Equal Pay Statements

4.6.1   Equal pay between men and women is a legal right under both domestic and European law. We recognise that it is our duty to promote equality across the four main strands of gender, ethnicity, disability and age. This duty, and requirement, extends to the provision of equal pay for work of equal value.

4.6.2   The University recognises the importance of ensuring our pay system delivers equal pay for equal work and to be confident that the University is achieving this an Equal Pay Audit is carried out every three years.

4.6.3   The University's Equal Pay Audit analyses four equality strands: gender, ethnicity, disability and age. Our analysis also gives consideration to Occupational Segregation factors.

4.6.4   Our most recent Equal Pay Audit was conducted in December 2016, using snapshot data as at August 2016. The data used in this review excludes the salaries of; Principal, Vice Principals, Clinicians and TUPE transfers with protected grades. The gender balance for the population under review currently stands at 56% female and 44% male. There has been very little change in the overall gender balance over the past four audit periods. Gender pay gap information is presented in section 4.7.

4.6.5   The proportion of black and minority ethnic groups (BME) currently stands at 8% alongside 88% white and 4% unknown. The BME representation has increased slightly from our last audit conducted in 2013. The overall Ethnic Pay Gap (EPG) for 2016 is 3%. This is based on a mean BME salary of £38, 873 and a mean White salary of £40, 206.

4.6.6   The number of employees with a declared disability is currently 103, representing 4% of the total population. For comparison, the number of employees declaring a disability from the 2013 review was 35, representing 1% of the total population. The overall Disability Pay Gap (DPG) is 16%, based on a mean salary of £33,140 per annum compared to a mean salary of £39, 416 per annum for non-disabled staff. The number of colleagues who have a declared disability is low; although the overall Disability Pay Gap is 16%, the low numbers make it difficult to probe further due to data protection and confidentiality.

4.6.7   Research has shown that occupational segregation is one of the main causes of the pay gaps in the United Kingdom (Equality Challenge Unit, 2014). The University is committed to monitoring occupational segregation, equal access to training/development, supporting mobility as well as flexible working opportunities. The spread of the University population across 9 HESA Occupational Groups can be identified in (Table 2 below).

4.6.8   Occupational Segregation analysis according to HESA Groups shows within the University; Groups 1, 2 and 9 are characterised by comparable distribution of males and females. Groups 3 and 6, consist of a higher number of females while groups 4, 7, 5 and 8 are characterised by a significantly higher distribution of a particular gender (Table 2).

4.6.9   Horizontal or Occupational Segregation

4.6.10 Research has shown that occupational segregation is one of the main causes of the pay gaps in the United Kingdom (Equality Challenge Unit, 2014). The University is committed to monitoring occupational segregation, ensuring equal access to training/development, supporting mobility for all staff as well as flexible working opportunities. The occupational segregation grouping adopted by HESA (SOC2010) is presented below in Table 2 together with definitions and staff examples.

Table 2

Occupational Group	Occupational Group Code Narrative	Types of staff within Group
	SOC2010 Groups with definitions and staff examples	
Group 1	Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	Technical Resources Manager, Research Finance Manager, Director of Finance, Oceanlab Director, Project Manager
Group 2	Professional occupations	Lecturer, Senior lecturer, Research and Teaching Fellows, Personal Chair, Capital accountant,
Group 3	Associate professional and technical occupations	Research Technician, Cartographer, Graphic designer, Careers advisor
Group 4	Administrative and secreterial occupations	Personal assistant, Secretary, Recruitment assistant, Clerical assistant, income assistant, payroll officer
Group 5	Skilled trades occupations	Electrician, Joiner, Grounds Person, Uniprint
Group 6	Caring, leisure and other service occupations	Custodian, Technician, Domestic supervisor
Group 7	Sales and customer service occupations	Sales assistant, Shop supervisor, Telephone
Group 8	Process, plant and machine operatives	Uniprint assistant, Maintenance assistant, Porter/Driver, Control systems Engineer
Group 9	Elementary occupations	Porter, Security officer, Cleaner, Catering assistant, Domestic assistant

4.6.11 Gender

4.6.12 The spread of the University staff population across the 9 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC2010) groups can be identified in (Figure 1).

Gender splits within HESA Occupational groups
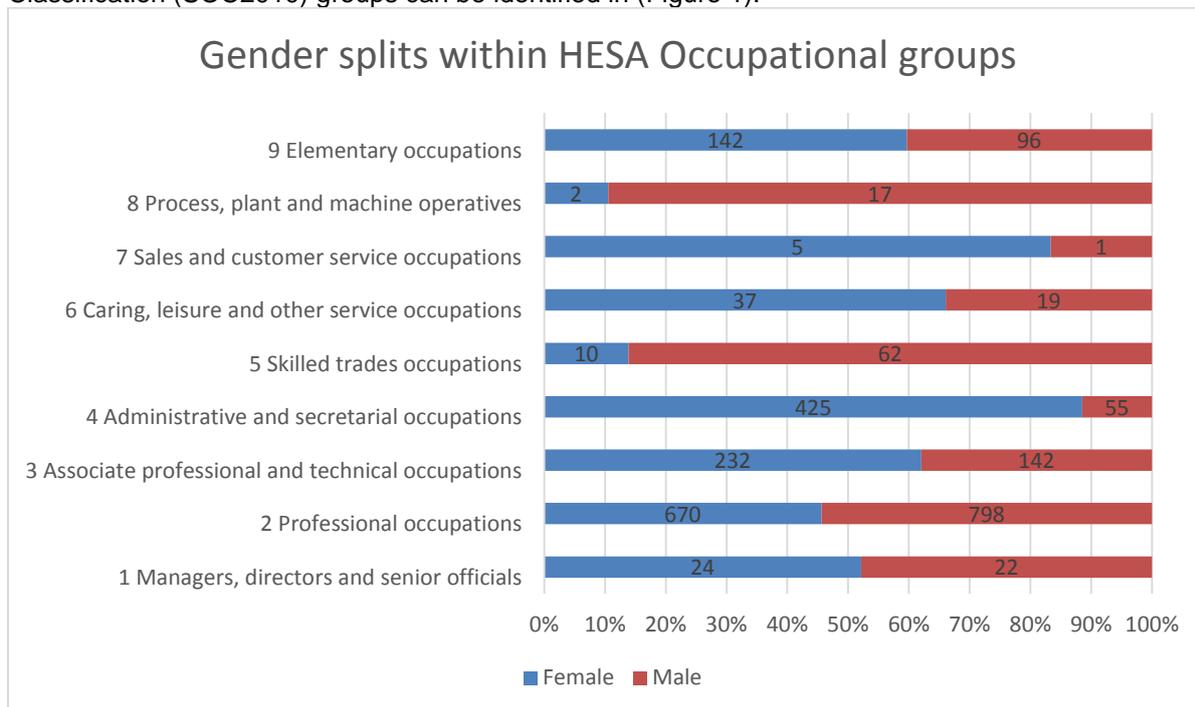
Groups 1 and 2 are characterised by comparable distribution of males and females. Groups 3, 6 and 9 consist of a slightly higher number of females while groups 4, 7, 5 and 8 are not characterised by a significantly higher distribution of a particular gender (Figure 1).

4.6.13 Examples of imbalanced groups' composition using the University 'Post Long Description' (F/M):

Group 4: Income Assistant (3/0), Payroll officer (5/0), School Finance Person (5/3), Information Assistant (10/2), Senior Information Assistant (13/2), School Administrative Officer (7/1), Clerical Assistant (6/3), Personal Assistant (16/0), Receptionist (6/1), Secretary (81/4)

Group 7: Sales Assistant (3/0)

Group 5: Ground Person (2/17), Assistant Engineer/Electrician (0/6), Electrician (0/8), Engineer (0/6)

Group 8: Maintenance (0/3), Porter/Driver (0/11)

4.6.14 Further analysis of the pay and grade frequency distributions demonstrate these patterns of segregation as identified above. Female pay distribution is concentrated around the earlier grades (especially at Occ Group 4) and tapers out where salaries are above £60,000 per annum. However, male pay is more centrally distributed with a more gradual decline above salaries of £80,000 per annum. These patterns of pay and grade distribution are mostly responsible for the overall occupation gender pay gap described below.

4.6.15 The mean salary for females and males, across all grades is respectively £34,223 and 44,861 with the mean pay gap at 23.7% (Table 3). The median salary is £32,004 and £41,709 with median pay gap at 23.3%. With regards to the mean and median, the University pay gap is slightly higher than the Scottish HEI average results with the difference being less than 3%.

4.6.16 The Occupational Segregation Gender Pay Gap crosses the recommended 5% threshold for four different HESA occupational groups. The mean gap is in favour of males at 7.7% (median gap in favour of females at -7.7%) for Group 1 (Managers, Directors and Senior officials), 17.7% (median, 12.4%) for Group 2 (professional occupations), 5.4% (median 23.1%) for Group 5 (Skilled trade occupations) and 18.4% (median 16.4%) for Group 9 (Elementary occupations).

Table 3

	Pay Gap by Gender and Occupational Groups									
HESA GROUP	**Number of Employees**				**MEAN (FTE Salary £'s)**			**MEDIAN (FTE Salary £'s)**		
	Female	Male	Total	% of total population	Female	Male	Gap	Female	Male	Gap
1	24	22	46	2	57688	62518	7.7	50516	46924	-7.7
2	670	798	1468	53	44310	53823	17.7	41116	46924	12.4
3	232	142	374	14	32091	30988	-3.6	30175	30175	0.0
4	425	55	480	17	25848	25050	-3.2	24565	22494	-9.2
5	10	62	72	3	24888	26320	5.4	21233	27628	23.1
6	37	19	56	2	20713	20431	-1.4	20624	19485	-5.8
7	5	1	6	0	17752	**	**	15831	**	**
8	2	17	19	1	**	19362	**	**	17399	**
9	142	96	238	9	16170	19811	18.4	15831	18940	16.4
TOTAL	**1547**	**1212**	**2759**	**100**	**34223**	**44861**	**23.7**	**32004**	**41709**	**23.3**

** Where there are less than 5 employees in a group the salary has not been disclosed to protect confidentiality. Hence, a pay gap calculation is not possible.

4.6.17 Ethnicity

4.6.18 Occupational pay gap analysis by occupational grouping is difficult to assess for some of the HESA SOC2010 groups. This is due to low numbers of BME staff in some of the groups (e.g. Groups 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8). See Table 4.

4.6.19 Where measurements are possible, the ethnicity pay gap by occupational groups exceeds the 5% threshold for two groups; Group 2 (Mean gap 13%, Median gap 11%) and Group 4 (Mean gap 16.7%, Median gap 17.2%). These gaps are in favour of the White population.

4.6.20 However, overall ethnicity mean pay gap is -3% (median, -9.2%) in favour of the BME population.

Table 4

HESA GROUP	Number of Employees			% of total population	MEAN (FTE Salary £'s)			MEDIAN (FTE Salary £'s)		
	BME	Non-BME	Total		BME	Non-BME	Gap	BME	Non-BME	Gap
Pay Gap by Ethnicity and Occupational Groups										
1	1	43	44	2	**	58746	**	**	46924	**
2	181	1212	1393	53	43605	50340	13.4	41709	46924	11.1
3	17	339	356	13	30373	31657	4.1	26829	30175	11.1
4	16	451	467	18	21652	26001	16.7	20335	24565	17.2
5	1	69	70	3	**	26074	**	**	25298	**
6	2	54	56	2	**	20617	**	**	20046	**
7	0	6	6	0	**	17492	**	**	16012	**
8	0	19	19	1	**	19404	**	**	17898	**
9	12	222	234	9	17577	17673	0.5	15831	15831	0.0
TOTAL	230	2415	2645	100	39869	38636	-3.2	38184	34956	-9.2

* Note that employees who have not declared their status have been excluded from the analysis

** Where there are less than 5 employees in a group the salary has not been disclosed to protect confidentiality. Hence, a pay gap calculation is not possible.

4.6.21 Disability

4.6.22 Low numbers of disabled staff in some of the occupational groups prevents the calculation of disability pay gaps (DPG) for those groups (Table 5). Overall mean disability pay gap is 15.4% (median 21%) in favour of non-disabled staff.

4.6.23 The Mean and median disability pay gaps exceed the 5% recommended threshold for the following occupational groups; Group 2 (Mean 6.7%, median 7.1%) and Group 3 (Mean 8.1%, median 5.7). however, for Group 5 there is a mean DPG of 5.8% (in favour of non-disabled staff)and a median DPG of -4.6% (in favour of disabled staff).

Table 5

	Pay Gap by Disability and Occupational Groups									
HESA GROUP	**Number of Employees**				**MEAN (FTE Salary £'s)**			**MEDIAN (FTE Salary £'s)**		
	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Total	% of total population	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Gap	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Gap
1	4	41	45	2	65972	59591	**	43636	49772	**
2	36	1376	1412	50	46174	49501	6.7	43597	46924	7.1
3	15	348	363	13	29267	31862	8.1	28453	30175	5.7
4	19	441	460	16	25602	25818	0.8	23879	24565	2.8
5	6	62	68	2	24794	26333	5.8	26463	25298	-4.6
6	4	52	56	2	19377	20712	**	19493	20335	**
7	0	5	5	0	**	17752	**	**	15831	**
8	1	17	18	1	**	19636	**	**	17898	**
9	18	207	225	8	17700	17667	-0.2	16396	15831	-3.6
TOTAL	103	2549	2652	100	33140	39161	15.4	28453	36001	21.0

* Note that employees who have not declared their status have been excluded from the analysis

** Where there are less than 5 employees in a group the salary has not been disclosed to protect confidentiality. Hence, a pay gap calculation is not possible.

4.7   Gender Pay Gap Information

4.7.1   The overall (vertical) Gender Pay Gap (GPG) currently stands at 24% for 2016. This is based on a mean female salary of £34,272 per annum and a mean male salary of £45,334 per annum. When the GPG is calculated based on the median calculation this also stands at 24% and has reduced very slightly from 25% in 2013 and 36% in 2010.

4.7.2   The data used in this review excludes the salaries of; Principal, Vice Principals, Clinicians and TUPE transfers with protected grades. It is important to note that the overall GPG is indicative of the uneven distribution of males and females across the pay grades rather than an issue of equal pay for equal work. The University will conduct annual Gender Pay Gap Reporting to comply with the new Government Legislation and ensure the institution gender pay gap is continually monitored.

4.7.3   Although the gender pay gap overall is 24%, Table 6 below demonstrates the gaps within each grade. The pay gap within grades shows acceptable gaps within the recommended 5% threshold. The pay gap within each grade does not exceed 2% (except in Grade 9 and 9 off scale).

Table 6: pay gaps by grade

	Number of Employees				MEAN (FTE Salary £'s)			MEDIAN (FTE Salary £'s)		
Pay Gap by Gender and Grade										
Grade	Female	Male	Total	% of total population	Female	Male	Gap	Female	Male	Gap
1	135	37	172	6	15839	15831	**0**	15831	15831	**0**
2	56	50	106	4	17198	17217	**0**	16960	17399	**3**
3	205	102	307	11	20548	20710	**1**	21220	21220	**0**
4	167	74	241	9	24544	25105	**2**	25298	25298	**0**
5	210	93	303	11	29337	29585	**1**	30175	30175	**0**
6	337	221	558	20	35978	36061	**0**	36001	37075	**3**
7	239	242	481	17	44985	45003	**0**	46924	46924	**0**
8	130	207	337	12	54440	55221	**1**	55998	55998	**0**
9	13	34	47	2	60925	63917	**5**	61179	64895	**6**
9 Off	55	152	207	7	85449	94165	**9**	78844	84387	**7**
TOTAL	1547	1212	2759	98	34272	45334	**24**	32004	41709	**23**

4.7.4   In general terms the University does not have significant need for concern over Equal Pay when comparing Equal Pay for Equal Work. To ensure the University continues to meet Equal Pay obligations and sector benchmarks we will commit to the following actions to avoid unfair discrimination, to reward fairly the skills, experience and potential of all our staff and thereby to increase efficiency, productivity and competitiveness and enhance the University's reputation and image:-

Action: **Examine our existing and future pay practices for all our employees including part-time workers, those on fixed-term contracts or contracts of unspecified duration (Action 1.3).**

Action: **Carry out regular monitoring of the impact of our pay practices and report at least every three years (Action 1.4)**

Action: **Provide training and guidance to managers and supervisory staff involved in decisions regarding pay and benefits (Action 1.5)**

Action: **Discuss and agree our equal pay policy with representatives of the recognised campus trade unions (Action 1.6)**

4.8   Transgender Policies/Training

4.8.1   Background

We are in discussions with the Scottish Transgender Alliance to deliver training to approximately 50 members of key staff from across the University, both staff and student facing. The Staff and Post Graduate LGBT Network have been proactive in suggesting how the training is delivered.

Action: **Deliver training to appropriate staff by December 2017 (Action 1.7).**

4.8.2   We have engaged with our student transgender forum to ascertain their support needs. The discussions indicated that further clarity is required for our transgender staff and students on how to request a change of name on certificates, e-mail addresses and ID cards. It was noted that some students where instigating this process through Student Support, but would have preferred to have been empowered to make the requests on their own behalf.

Action: Promote transgender training as identified in 4.8.1

4.8.3   In consultation with the Scottish Transgender Alliance we are reviewing the language used in research and surveys conducted at the University to ensure that the wording used for questions relating to gender identity and sexual orientation is inclusive of transgender, non-binary and lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals. At this stage, draft guidelines have been created for the School of Psychology and it is intended that these will be refined for consideration across the University.

Action: Develop and implement draft guidelines on gender language (Action 1.8)

4.8.4   Impact

The impact of these initiatives will be monitored through ongoing dialogue with the communities affected, surveys with staff trained and service users.   It is anticipated that our work on transgender awareness will encourage staff to appreciate the issues faced by our transgender colleagues and students.

4.9   Widening Participation

4.9.1   Although widening participation and socio-economic status are not included in the Equality Act 2010, there has been increased collaboration between the Equality and Diversity and Widening Participation teams at the University over the last two years, in particular, through the engagement of the Widening Participation Manager in the Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity and through the Equality and Diversity involvement in project work.   This collaboration has allowed projects in both areas to take account of equality and diversity outcomes. Two of the most significant of these projects are outlined below.

4.9.2   Scottish Funding Council (SFC) REACH Project

4.9.3   Background

The University is a partner institution with the successful SFC REACH Project. This programme focuses on raising the number of applicants, offers and entrants from disadvantaged backgrounds into high demand and competitive areas of study. REACH focuses on schools with below-average progression rates on to higher education and pupils from the most deprived areas of Scotland.

4.9.4   Impact

We have achieved all targets previously set for applicants from areas of social deprivation (MD40 applicants) into Medicine and Law. Despite the University being in an area which has significantly lower areas of social deprivation than other parts of Scotland, we have been able to raise aspirations and support those pupils who wish to enter legal or medical fields from traditionally low progression areas.

4.9.5   We are now assessing the link between the success of this project and the admissions rates in relation to the protected characteristics.

Action: Analyse data produced as a result of the REACH project and cross-reference with equality protected characteristics (Action 3.4)

4.9.6   Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) *Attracting Diversity* Project

4.9.7   Background

The ECU Attracting Diversity Project is a national initiative which involves a number of Higher and Further Education institutions in Scotland. The purpose of this initiative is to develop and

implement interventions to attract and increase student diversity, to develop more inclusive approaches in recruitment functions and to better target underrepresented groups.

4.9.8 The University became involved in this project in late 2014. A team from across the University and the Student's Association has been working together to progress the aims of the project with priority objectives as follows:

- To embed the continuous improvement and refinement of equality and diversity considerations in student recruitment functions;
- To embed the continuous improvement and refinement of the University's data recording process in regards to equality and diversity in student recruitment;
- To conduct an analysis of the current data held by the University so as to identify any unintentional equality gaps in student recruitment;
- To conduct a review of the equality data that we do and don't record;
- To embed the continuous improvement and refinement of the recruitment process in response to the data analysis exercise.

4.9.9 In the project's current phase, we will develop an outreach initiative with a local secondary school with the aim of developing a resource which can be used by academic departments to tackle equality barriers and misconceptions at a secondary school level. We will work with a class of S3-S4 pupils to develop a poster and presentation on gender in Computing Science. This initiative will involve a series of on-campus and in-school workshops. A focus group will also be held with parents / guardians to learn about their views of the subject in relation to gender. At the end of the project the pupils will attend an event at the University to give a presentation on what they have learned. The University's team will use the data and information gathered from the work with the schools and the pupils to develop the resource.

4.9.10 Impact

Outreach project: The resource is being developed with the School of Natural and Computing Science. The development of this resource will enable Student Recruitment and Admissions Service (SRAS) to work with academic schools to actively address equality and diversity barriers and misconceptions with local secondary schools, pupils and parents / guardians. This resource is the first outreach activity that SRAS's Widening Participation (WP) Section has specifically developed to address equality recruitment issues.

Understanding E&D in student recruitment: Equality and Diversity is now a day- to-day consideration in the WP Section specifically and across SRAS more generally. Our involvement in the ECU project has helped us to refine and increase understanding of the impact of our practices on equality.

Networking and information sharing: The institution's involvement in the ECU Attracting Diversity initiative has provided the WP Section with networking opportunities and access to information on what other institutions (in both FE and HE sectors) are doing to tackle equality and diversity issues in student recruitment. These opportunities have led to an increase in our understanding of this issue and how we can actively work to reduce barriers and change misconceptions.

Action: Development of appropriate resources to support the initiative to be completed by June 2017 (Action 3.5).

4.10   Enhanced Support Mechanisms for Staff and Students

4.10.1 Background

Since the report in 2015, the University has introduced a revised Academic structure, with new academic line managers, thus enhancing the support offered to staff, including addressing equality issues. An extensive training programme has been provided to the new academic line managers and this has included training on equality and diversity. This represents a significant change in the University's line management structures and, together

with the updated performance management and promotions processes creates a more coherent support structure for staff and ensures the opportunity to effectively further communicate and roll out equality initiatives to staff.

To further support academic line managers we will continue to provide our suite of training and development opportunities which will include promoting equality and dealing with equality related concerns.

Action: **Continue to deliver training for Academic Line Managers and provide specific sessions on:**

- **Promoting equality**
- **Dealing with equality-related staff concerns**
- **Supporting disabled staff**

(Action: 4.2)

4.10.2 <u>Impact</u>

The impact of the introduction of the Academic Line Manager system will be monitored through the staff satisfaction survey. The training for the line managers will be evaluated through feedback questionnaires.

4.10.3 In relation to student support, a system of Personal Tutors has been implemented. Personal Tutors are the first line of support for students and have an important role in monitoring and supporting students with equality concerns. We are clear that Personal Tutors require support to fulfil their role sufficiently and have already provided them with guidance in specific areas, particularly in relation to the Mental Health Strategy.

To further support them we will provide training on supporting students with equality related concerns and raise awareness on the support mechanisms available within the University. See Diagram 1 below.
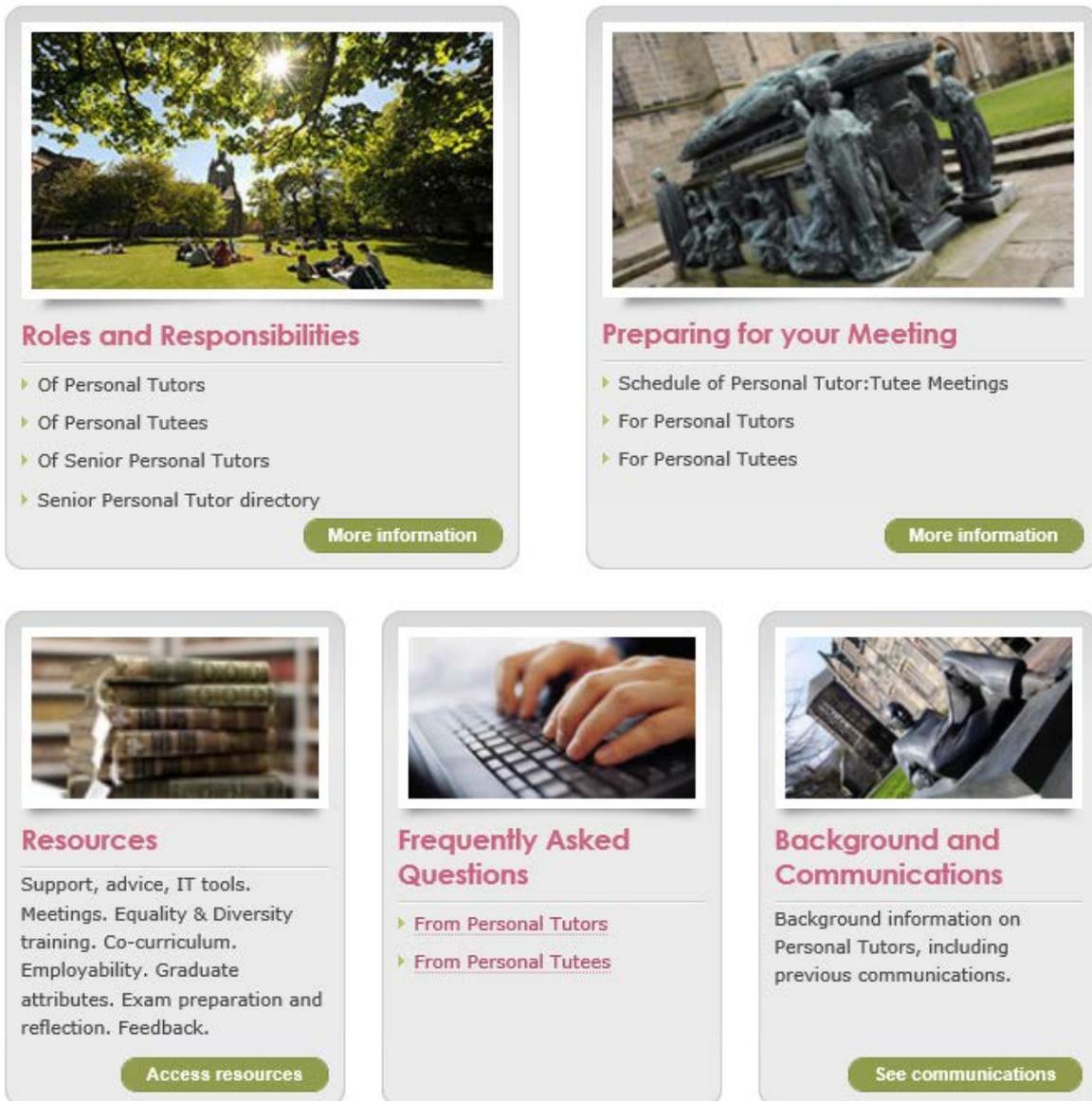
Personal Tutors

Roles and Responsibilities

▸ Of Personal Tutors
▸ Of Personal Tutees
▸ Of Senior Personal Tutors
▸ Senior Personal Tutor directory

More information

Preparing for your Meeting

▸ Schedule of Personal Tutor:Tutee Meetings
▸ For Personal Tutors
▸ For Personal Tutees

More information

Resources

Support, advice, IT tools. Meetings. Equality & Diversity training. Co-curriculum. Employability. Graduate attributes. Exam preparation and reflection. Feedback.

Access resources

Frequently Asked Questions

▸ From Personal Tutors
▸ From Personal Tutees

Background and Communications

Background information on Personal Tutors, including previous communications.

See communications

Diagram 1 : web support for Personal Tutors including equality and diversity guidance and training

Action: **Provide training/briefing to Personal Tutors on:**

- **Supporting students with equality-related concerns**
- **The support mechanisms available at the University**

(Action 4.2)

5   FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT GROUPS

This section showcases the work the University has undertaken to meet the second need of the general duty within the Equality Act 2010: to foster good relations between people from different groups and mainstream equality and diversity.

Our equality networks provide opportunities for fostering good relations and the review of our equality governance structures now underpins and facilitates those opportunities. In addition, the networks contribute their valuable insights and views into a range of University groups, including the Employee Engagement Working Group. We continue to enhance our packages to welcome international staff and students, which in the current political climate has become an increasing priority. We are proud of our work with Stonewall Scotland and our increasing ranking in their Workplace Equality Index.

5.1   Equality Network Groups

5.1.1   Background

As reported in the 2015 report, the University has a thriving set of equality network groups. These include the Staff and Post Graduate LGBT Network; the Senior Women's Network; the Disability Network and the Harassment Advisers Network. Since then further enhancements have been made by Groups agreeing to take a self-managing approach. The Staff and Post Graduate LGBT Network has led the way with this approach. The Senior Women's Network has now established a Steering Group and developed a clearer remit for the Network which hadn't previously existed. The Disability Network Group has identified two co-chairs and has outlined a plan for meetings in the forthcoming year and is currently developing a Network Charter. The Harassment Advisers Network will be transferred into the Staff Wellbeing Coordinator remit (Further information about this can be found in section 6.1 below).

5.1.2   Impact

The key outcomes from the Network Groups since the 2015 report are:

- The University signed Stonewall's No Bystander Pledge, but is clear that the pledge, in our University, applies to all of the protected characteristics;
- A Transgender Policy is currently being developed and training being commissioned from the Scottish Transgender Alliance;
- The Networks have contributed to the development of values for the University through the Employee Engagement Group;
- The Network groups have provided specialist guidance and supported the development of a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the University staff and students.
- The Senior Women's Network members supported the University's 15 delegates on the Leadership Foundation's Aurora Programme by becoming mentors or becoming Aurora Role Models under the banner of "pass it on"; and
- The Senior Women's Network has increased in size to approximately 80 members.

5.1.3   The University Race Working Group is seeking to establish a race network at the University, although we have been involved in a Scottish Race Network organised by the Equality Challenge Unit. Our data indicates the low levels of staff who identify as BME and so this area may pose challenges. However, we are very clear that this is an area which requires to be progressed, particularly in the light of the Brexit vote.

5.1.4   We have been proactive in engaging with staff and students who could potentially be affected by the outcome of the vote and also providing reassurances where possible. For staff, this includes establishing webchats to provide the opportunity for staff to raise questions and convey information as appropriate.

Action: Establish a Race Equality Network Group by November 2017 (Action 4.8)

Action: **Continue to monitor the impact of Brexit and provide ongoing support to staff and students (Action 3.11)**

5.1.5 We are also in the process of establishing a Parent's Network, which was convened initially in one area of the University to support the development of the University's Athena SWAN submissions. Discussions at the meetings highlighted that it was a helpful Network to the members and the University. In addition, we are establishing a Carers Network, as we are keen to engage with the issues faced by this group of staff and to work towards becoming a 'Carers Positive' employer. We have commenced the process of collecting data in this area.

Action: **Achieve accreditation as a Carers Positive Employer (Action 4.5)**

Action: **Establish an active Carers Network (Action 4.6)**

Action: **Establish the Parent's Network (Action 4.7)**

5.2 Equality and Diversity Governance

5.2.1 The Governance structure of Equality and Diversity has been reviewed and improved since the 2015 report. This was initiated by an increasing engagement and involvement from all areas of the University in Equality and Diversity initiatives, including Athena SWAN. The review resulted in the Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity becoming more reflective of the diverse nature of our community with a representative from each of the equality network groups now having a place on the Group. We have also added Widening Participation team members to the membership, the University Chaplains and three Heads of School and the Head of the Business School. These changes have been effective since the start of academic year 2016/17 and have already proved positive in relation to the broader range of agenda items and the input of a wider membership. The Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity has also widened its remit to include specific reference to intersectionality.

5.2.2 The increased focus on Athena SWAN and Equality and Diversity has resulted in equality and diversity groups forming in two of our three Colleges or with Athena SWAN teams taking on board wider equality objectives. The chairs of those groups have become equality and diversity champions. The Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity now has three Heads of School in its membership (one for each College) to reflect the growing need for input and collaboration on equality initiatives.

5.2.3 The Gender Equality Steering Group has been revised to better reflect the diversity of the University community and now reports to the Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity, as do the Equality Network Groups. The equality and diversity governance arrangements can be seen in the diagram below.

Action: **Monitor the impact and effectiveness of the new remit, composition and membership of the Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity (Action 1.10)**
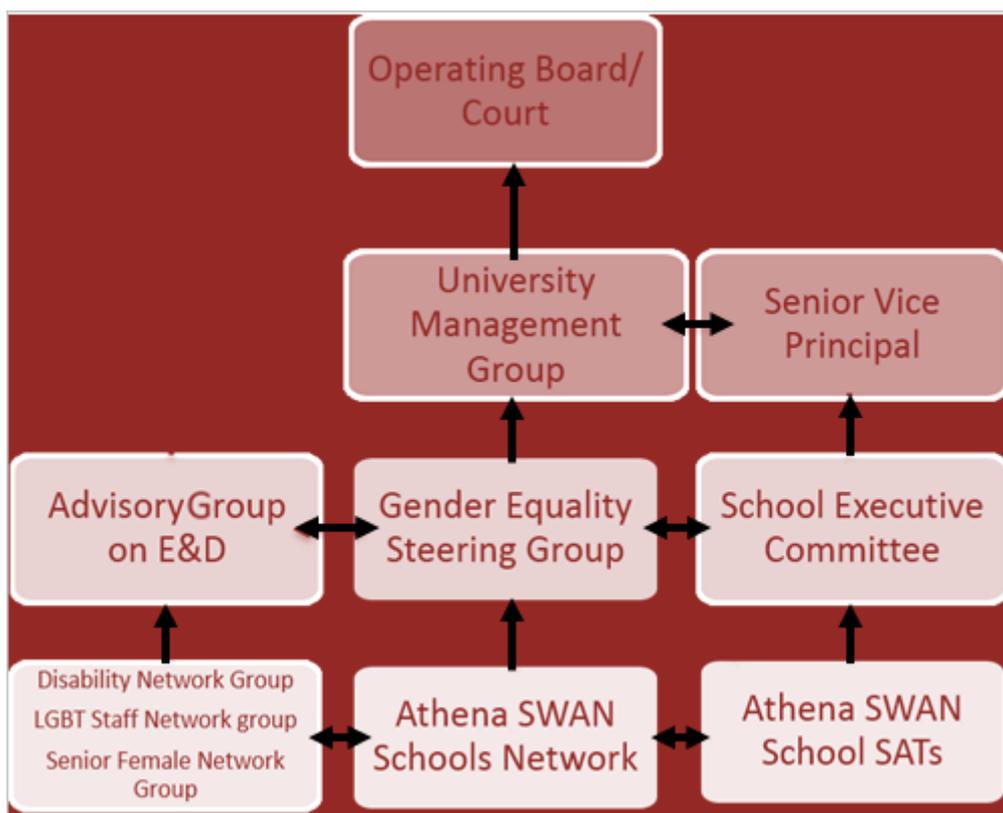
Diagram 2: Equality and Diversity governance structure

5.3   International Student and Staff Induction

5.3.1   The increasing diversity of our student population and in particular international students has promoted relevance of Equality and Diversity issues as part of the induction process for new students to the University. Since 2015 the Equality and Diversity team have introduced specific E&D sessions for international students at the start of term. The feedback from these sessions has been very positive and we will continue to offer these sessions and enhance them where feedback dictates.

5.3.2   We are in the process of enhancing the induction programme for new staff starting with the University and, specifically, staff joining us from overseas by introducing welcome sessions for them and their families. The aim of these sessions is to assist staff and their families settle into working at the University, life in Aberdeen and provide the opportunity to network with others in similar circumstances.

> **Action:**   **Introduce welcome sessions for international staff and their families (Action 4.11)**

5.4   Stonewall Scotland – Diversity Champions Programme

5.4.1   Background

The University is a supporter of Stonewall Scotland and continues to be a Stonewall Diversity Champion. We improved our ranking in the Stonewall Workplace Equality index in 2015/16. The decision was taken not to participate in 2017/18 as we received a substantial level of feedback on the previous submission and were keen to concentrate on delivering on our action plan, resulting from the feedback. We are planning to submit an application for the 2018 process.

5.4.2   Impact

The impact of our involvement with Stonewall has been linked to: the creation of the Staff and Postgraduate LGBT Network, the University's commitment to the No Bystanders Pledge, greater understanding of the needs of the staff and student LGBT community and in increased expertise through attending Stonewall events.

Action: **Submit an application to the 2018 Workplace Equality Index**
(Action 3.6)

5.5 Employee Engagement

5.5.1 The University has established an Employee Engagement Working Group since the report in 2015. The remit of the Group, chaired by the Vice Principal for People Strategy, is to explore current engagement processes, develop an Employee Engagement Strategy and provide recommendations for improvement. The draft strategy will be presented to the University Court in June 2017.

5.5.2 A range of key objectives have been identified from the Employee Engagement Strategy Working Group including:-

- Embedding a culture of openness, respect, honesty and dignity at work for all members of the University community;

- Promoting opportunities for members of the University community to work in partnership and improve staff and student wellbeing.

- Developing a set of values for the University which further build on the University's Strategic Plan. The values are being finalised, however they will place a significant importance on respect, tolerance and diversity.

Action: **Ensure link is made between the Employee Engagement Strategy/Action Plan and equality and diversity considerations.**
(Action 4.12)

5.6 Launch of LGBT Boxing Initiative

5.6.1 A new initiative to encourage LGBT people to participate in boxing has been launched. The University of Aberdeen Boxing Club is working in partnership with Boxing Scotland and LEAP Sports to offer classes for LGBT people that aim to challenge perceived barriers to participation in the sport. This initiative was developed as a result of conversations with LGBT students who were keen to participate in boxing, but reluctant to join a club.

Action: **Monitor uptake and seek feedback from participants**

(Action 3.15)

6 ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

This section details the examples of mainstreaming equality which contribute to advancing equality of opportunity, the third 'need' of the general duty contained in the Equality Act 2010. At the heart of understanding how to advance equality is gaining reliable qualitative and

quantitative evidence. We are delighted to have established a University Equality and Diversity Research Group, whose work will provide robust data which can be used to inform policy and practice. Since 2015 the University has established a Mental Health Working Group and launched a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy to further equality for staff and students with mental health and wellbeing concerns. Our continuing commitment to advancing equality for women has proved successful in relation to our Athena SWAN initiatives. We are proud to be advancing equality and raising awareness of learning disabilities through our prize-winning Project SEARCH initiative.

6.1   Equality and Diversity Research

6.1.1   The School of Psychology has led in setting-up a University-wide Equality and Diversity Research Group (EDRG), comprising a multi-disciplinary team of researchers and policy makers from across the University. The purpose of the group is to utilize the knowledge-base and skills available to support rigorous quantitative and qualitative research that will provide an evidence-base that can inform equality and diversity policy and process within the University and potentially across the sector. The research of the EDRG is currently supported by Research Council grant funding and University funding from the *Principal's PhD studentship in Equality and Diversity*.

The group's projects include:

- A systematic review of existing research examining how bias might impact all aspects of higher education;
- A quantitative investigation into whether there are gender differences in marks awarded for work where student gender is known relative to where gender is unknown;
- Quantitative and qualitative examinations of gender differences in help-seeking behaviour; and
- Quantitative and qualitative examinations of gender differences in contributions to small group teaching.

Action: Advisory Group on Equality & Diversity to monitor progress on the projects (Action 3.14)

6.2   Mental Health and Wellbeing

6.2.1   Background

The University has developed a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including a policy and action plan. The strategy was developed by the University's Mental Health Working Group, chaired by the Vice Principal for People Strategy. The Group undertook an audit of mental health and wellbeing services within the University. The results indicated that the University offers a wide range of support for students and staff with mental health and wellbeing concerns. One of the key objectives of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to foster a shift in culture across the University to one which is open about mental health and wellbeing and which encourages staff and students to discuss mental health and wellbeing concerns.

6.2.2   The Mental Health Working Group, which comprised staff with experience in mental health and student sabbatical officers, identified that:

- It was vital to use positive language in policies and guidance related to mental health and wellbeing and that a continuum of mental health conditions would be an appropriate approach given the range of mental health conditions and degree to which they manifest themselves within different individuals;
- Preventative measures were critical to addressing mental health issues. Instilling the principles of 'self-care' and resilience in staff and students would act as underpinning support mechanisms. This also applied to givers of support – there must be recognition that there is a limit to the extent of support which an individual staff member can provide to staff and students with mental health issues;

- The Personal Tutor role would be central to identifying potential mental health issues in students. Personal Tutors would receive specific training and guidance.

6.2.3 The strategy and policy documents also highlight that the University appreciates that mental ill health or wellbeing concerns can arise from factors within or outwith the University, or a combination of both. The Mental Health Working Group had noted that the new Academic Line Manager arrangements and the introduction of the Personal Tutors would help significantly with identifying any internal factors which may be affecting the mental health of staff or students and managing those effectively.

6.2.4 Impact

The actions which have already been undertaken to support the launch of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy include:

- 59 staff and students have completed Mental Health First Aid training;
- Lunchtime Mindfulness sessions are held weekly;
- Coaching and mentoring schemes are offered to staff;
- A communication was issued in the staff e-zine regarding the work of the Mental Health Working Group which yielded a number of expressions of interest from staff keen to become involved;
- The role of the Harassment Adviser has been reviewed and will be replaced by a wider role of Wellbeing Coordinator. A training plan for the new coordinators has been developed;
- There are plans to recruit a Mental Health Practitioner in the Directorate of Student Life;
- A 'map of support' will be issued to Personal Tutors and those with pastoral care responsibilities along with additional guidance;
- The University entered the 'Britain's Healthiest Workplace' survey and received feedback which is being used to develop targeted actions and events;
- An Employee Assistance Programme was launched in November 2016 providing 24hr telephone counselling and online support;
- The University held its third successful Staff Wellbeing Day on 11 January 2017 and a similar event was held on 30 January for the student community. Another staff event is planned for mid-2017.
- Resilience workshops for students have been delivered
- Students requiring pastoral support now have the option to meet with a 'therapet' dog and pastoral carer from the organisation PEACE (more information at http://www.petandcompanion.com/) in the Inter-faith Centre.

The University is developing, in consultation with staff and students, a calendar of Wellbeing events, the next of which will be a Health and Wellbeing Day at our Foresterhil campus on 30 May 2017. In response to feedback we will also engage with colleagues at Foresterhill on the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy at that event..

Diagram 3: Mental health and Wellbeing postcard developed in advance of the formal launch of the University's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Action: **Monitor the use of the Employee Assistance Programme and analyse trends where they occur in relation to equality issues/bullying/harassment (Action 4.9)**

Action: **Monitor uptake of use of Wellbeing Coordinators and trends in issues to ascertain where further support may be required (Action 4.10)**

6.3 **Leadership Foundation Aurora Programme**

6.3.1 Background

We have responded to requests, through the career development focus group meetings, to support women's development. One of the key initiatives has been the University's participation in the Leadership Foundation's Aurora Programme. Fifteen female members of staff were funded by the University to attend the programme in 2015/16.

6.3.2 Impact

The impact of this has been significant, with a number of schools now funding their colleagues to attend the programme, therefore creating a cohort of women who have recently undertaken external management development training. We have undertaken a feedback exercise with the participants, collecting comments through an anonymous survey and also through workshop sessions. The feedback suggested that the external networking opportunities were extremely valuable, and this will be factored into the continuous improvement of internal management development training. 82% of delegates reported increased confidence, 36% had applied for promotion and 18% received more positive feedback since their Aurora experience.

6.3.3 We have been keen to employ the 'pass it on' idea and The cohort of delegates have been keen to support other female colleagues, by becoming involved in the University's enhanced Mentoring Scheme and by providing presentations on their learning to University committees and groups. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this has also been highly beneficial career development opportunities for the Aurora delegates.

6.3.4 Due to high demand (70 applicants) and limited spaces for Aurora, we offered internal support for unsuccessful applicants. This included hosting workshops on 'Academic Leadership for Women' and an 'Interviewing for an Academic Job' workshop, both led by Professor Karen Kelsky. A focus group identified concerns relating to career progression including: understanding of the promotions process, and flexible and part-time working advertised as part of job roles.

Action: **Promote increased networking, development and mentoring opportunities (Action 3.12)**

Action: **Monitor uptake and effectiveness of Aurora Leadership development Programme (Action 3.16)**

6.4 **Athena SWAN**

6.4.1 Background

The University has signed up to the principles of the Athena SWAN Charter which seeks to advance and support the careers of women in higher education.

6.4.2 We currently hold an Athena SWAN Bronze institutional award (and have recently submitted an application to have this renewed) and two of our Schools hold Bronze Departmental awards. All of our Schools will have applied for an Athena Swan award by November 2017.

6.4.3 Impact

This has been an area of real change and the impact on the institution has been significant. Each of our Schools now has a Self-Assessment Team (SATs) which routinely analyses data and implements initiatives which would make a difference at a local level. Some of the SATs are now broadening their remit to encompass broader equality areas, thus increasing awareness and engagement from across the University. The University's Principal meets

with the SAT leads on a quarterly basis to hear concerns and to facilitate progress. The SAT leads have also become more involved in wider equality and diversity initiatives and consultations. The initiatives which have stemmed from this includes:

- A highly successful annual International Women's Day Conference since 2014;
- An 'Inspiring Women' exhibition which was created using the profiles of current and past staff and students and is exhibited across the University;
- Established a coaching programme for staff returning from maternity or paternity leave;
- Central funding available for leadership development;
- Re-launched University mentoring programme, which has seen a significant increase in uptake.
- The membership of the Gender Equality Steering Group has been revised to achieve a better gender balance and to reflect the diversity of the University community
- Central funding for maternity leave cover has been proposed
- Portraits of three female Vice Principals (including the University's first female Vice Principal) were unveiled in March 2017 and will be prominently displayed in the Sir Duncan Rice Library (see Diagram 4 below).

Diagram 4: University colleagues with their portraits: Professor Margaret Ross, Vice Principal for People Strategy, Professor Neva Haites, Vice Principal for Development and Professor Clare Wallace, former Vice Principal for Research and Knowledge Exchange and current Chair in Sociology

6.5   Project SEARCH

6.5.1   Background

We have been supporting young people with learning difficulties to gain work experience and jobs through Project SEARCH.

6.5.2   Project SEARCH is a collaboration between the University of Aberdeen, Inspire (Partnership Through Life) charity and the North East Scotland College, operated under a license from the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disabilities (SCLD) and funded by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. The project is based on an international model which originated in the USA and is a one year Internship programme supporting up to 12 young people per year with additional needs to gain skills and experience to go on to employment.

6.5.3   The Interns are supported to undertake 3 internships/work placements over a one year period of study. It is the normal expectation that each participant will undertake 3 placements over the course of the year. The on-site team (which comprises the University Employer Partner Co-ordinator, the Senior Job Coach from Inspire and the Tutor from North East Scotland College), work together to identify work placement opportunities based on the student's experience, interests and skills assessment. The project has achieved the following local and national recognitions:

- Foremost 'up and coming' site – Project SEARCH 2014 European Conference, Glasgow

- 'Raising Achievement' Award 2014 – Aberdeen Children's and Young People's Services
- Green Gown Awards 2014 Finalist
- Highest Employment Rate in Europe – Project SEARCH 2015 International Conference, Arizona, USA
- First provider in the North East of Scotland to be accredited by Developing Young Workforce (North East) at Gold Level in November 2016

Further information can be found here: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/project-search-2431.php

6.5.4   Impact

To date, the University has supported 32 interns. 23 interns have found and sustained jobs in the North East of Scotland. In November 2015, the 'Interns Into Employment' toolkit was launched to support local businesses in employing Project SEARCH graduates. 'Meet the Intern' events encourage members of the local business community to engage with the project by becoming a Mentor to one of the interns or by delivering a workshop/seminar/talk to the interns on their area of expertise as part of the curriculum.

Action: Measure the impact of the Project SEARCH initiative on the interns and the staff supporting them across the University (Action 3.13)

6.5   Excellence in Diversity Awards

6.5.1   The University was delighted to have been shortlisted in the Excellence in Diversity Awards 2016 and then awarded Highly Commended in the Education category. We have been able to use our achievement as a lever to publicise equality and diversity initiatives within the University and outwith.

Diagram 5: Logo of Excellence in Diversity Awards

7   COURT DIVERSITY

This section details the examples of mainstreaming equality which contribute to advancing equality through improving the diversity within the composition of Court and governing bodies. This is the fourth and newly published amendment to the 'needs' of the general duty contained in the Equality Act 2010.

7.1   The University has been actively seeking to increase the diversity profile of Court, its governing body, since 2015.

7.2   The Court has adopted a Statement of Intent on Diversity which sets out its commitment to its own membership reflecting the diverse nature of the University community insofar as is possible and practicable. This includes a commitment to addressing gender imbalance and the Court has, in 2016, extended its goal in this regard from 40% to 50%. This goal is across all categories of membership on Court rather than just those members appointed by Court itself.   The Court is also part of the Committee of Scottish Chairs' '40:40:20' policy commitment.

7.3   We recognise, however, there are barriers to achieving gender balance on Court, namely that a significant number (2/3^{rds}) of its members are elected or externally appointed by external bodies. We have brought the Statement of Intent on Diversity to the attention of those bodies or individuals who either elect or appoint members. This approach was adopted for the nominations process for General Council Assessors on Court in 2016, where gender balance was achieved in the two positions available.

7.4   The collation of equality monitoring data on new Court members has been introduced and will enable future baseline reporting against all protected characteristics to be undertaken. There have been two vacancies for independent members of Court during the reporting period, with one woman and one man being appointed. In support of both processes the University put in place a number of additional measures to help increase awareness of the positions among under-represented groups, but with a particular focus on women. Those measures included:

- Equality Impact Assessments of the role description, person specification and advertisement were undertaken. Adjustments were made to the wording of the person specification and advertisement to mitigate against the risk of indirect bias against women in terms of the experience required and further text was added to the advertisement emphasising the diversity of the University community.
- Increasing the range of advertising networks used beyond mainstream print media to professional networks for women and other under-represented groups. These have included:

Public Appointments Scotland;

Women on Boards;

Non-Executive Directors;

Diversity Network Sites (Ethnic Jobsite, Asian Jobsite, Diversity Jobsite, LGBT Jobsite,Disability Network and Disability Jobsite); and

Communications to staff, students and alumni and inviting nominations for consideration;

- The proactive identification of potential female candidates from the University's own network of contacts;

7.5   The need to achieve gender balance and greater diversity in the overall membership of Court is a key principle underpinning proposals for a new composition of Court that were agreed in December 2016. The proposals will increase the proportion of the membership appointed by Court to 48% and should over time enable the Court to better address the issue of gender balance and diversity. The Court, through its Governance and Nominations Committee, commenced the process of planning for the transition to the new composition with the achievement of gender balance and greater diversity being a key driving factor.

Action: Continue to carry out equality monitoring of Court Membership, reporting to University Management Group (UMG) and Court on progress towards targets (Action 4.4)

7.6   The University Court currently has a composition of 28. The following figures are based on the membership in office as at the following dates since 2015:

Table 7: Gender profile of Court

	31 July 2015 (Financial Year End)	31 July 2016 (Financial Year End)
Men	20	20
Women	7	8
Vacancy	1	0

Table 7 demonstrates that 28.5% of our court membership is female. This has increased from 25.9% in 2015.