  
  
Equality Assurance Report to University Council 2023

# Introduction

1.1 This report provides an overview for Council of the activities undertaken in 2022/23 to implement the University’s EDI Strategy 2021-2024. It considers:

* Activities and outputs in relation to the EDI Strategy objectives
* Progress against the success measures established in the EDI Strategy
* Equality Change Programme activities and outputs
* Athena and Race Equality Charter activities and outputs
* University gender and ethnicity pay gaps 2022 and 2023
* College EDI activities and outputs
* Female and minority ethnic representation on key decision-making committees
* Priorities for 2023/24

# Background: EDI Strategy 2021-2024

2.1 The EDI Strategy for 2021-2024 has 3 themes:

* Inclusive environment: developing a University community where everyone feels welcome, included and empowered to succeed
* Dismantling barriers: addressing the structural barriers faced by groups within the University in order to create more equitable outcomes
* Integrating equality, diversity and inclusion: issues and impacts are considered and addressed across our activities
  1. The full strategy can be viewed here: [University of Birmingham Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2024.](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/collaboration/equality/edi-scheme/index.aspx)

2.3 The strategy incorporates activities to meet our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 to actively promote equality across the protected characteristics, our institution-level Athena and Race Equality Charter action plans and activities to address pay gaps and student attainment gaps. It has been developed following consultation with our student and staff communities and analysis of our institutional data and aligns with the People and Culture pillar of the Birmingham 2030 Strategic Framework.

2.4 The EDI Strategy includes key success measures by which progress can be measured:

* % of female Professors
* % of Grade 9 female academic staff
* % of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff at all grades
* % of staff disclosing information on their disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender identity
* Progress against student Access and Participation Plan 2020–21 to 2024–25 targets

2.5 Creating inclusive learning and working cultures, where everyone can flourish and reach their full potential, is the responsibility of all members of the University community and demonstrated through their actions and behaviour and the integration of EDI into activities across the University. The EDI Strategy supports and underpins the development of that culture by identifying, in an evidence-based way, the areas and issues that need institutional attention.

2.6 There are three main groups that are engaged in developing our framework of structures, policies and practices, events and activities to support EDI at the University. They are:

## Central EDI teams

2.7 The central EDI teams for students and staff are based in Academic Services and Human Resources respectively and work under the leadership of the DPVC for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion to:   
Develop institution-level initiatives

* Provide specialist knowledge and expertise on EDI matters
* Engage with stakeholders to develop a co-ordinated approach
* Identify emerging issues and developing solutions
* Increase awareness of and engagement in EDI issues
* Manage University-level external accreditations and networks
* Monitor and report on progress against action plans

## Equality Change Programme Workstreams

2.8 The University’s Equality Change Programme (ECP) was established in autumn 2020 to drive forward key strands of EDI activity. Whilst the focus of the programme was the delivery of the Athena SWAN and Race Equality Charter action plans, our intention is to use the programme longer term to raise the profile of EDI, work across School or Departmental boundaries and engage staff and students from across the organisation.

2.9 The first phase of the programme was set up with 7 workstreams whose members were drawn from across the University, with a Governance Group providing senior leadership and strategic oversight of the work. Taking this cross functional approach enabled the workstreams to challenge the status quo, work across traditional boundaries and propose new approaches.

2.10 The Governance Group then carried out a review of phase one, in consultation with Workstream Chairs. This identified 3 key principles to inform the second phase of our work:

* The value of bringing equality action plans together with direct oversight from the University Executive
* The need to ensure that actions are embedded and have a measurable impact on the recruitment, progression and experience of under-represented groups.
* The importance of having decision makers directly involved in delivering activity, whilst ensuring that decisions are informed by the experience of our staff and students.

2.11 For the second phase of the work departments are taking the lead on delivering the remaining actions, reporting to the Governance Group. Over time, this model of individual departments taking local actions to deliver common EDI objectives has the potential to expand in scope giving the University an integrated model of EDI management with visible senior leadership.

2.12 In 2023, the programme will focus on delivering the outstanding actions from the Athena and Race Equality Action plans, monitoring the impact of actions that have been delivered and preparing to renew/extend the University REC and Athena awards in 2025.

## Academic Colleges

2.12 Each College has an EDI Lead who is a member of College Board and also an EDI Lead in each School. The Leads help implement institutional initiatives locally and to identify and develop initiatives to address issues within their particular College. The Colleges of Engineering & Physical Sciences and Medical and Dental Sciences also employ their own EDI Advisers. An update on College EDI activities is provided in section 9. 3.

# Progress against EDI Strategy: Inclusive Environment

## EDI Strategy statement:

3.1 The University is a large, complex and diverse institution. We want to create an environment in which every member of our community, of all backgrounds, identities and circumstances, feels valued, accepted, supported and empowered to succeed. In order to do this, we need to take action at organisational and individual levels. At an organisational level, we will ensure that we have in place fair policies and practices which facilitate the progression and participation of all staff and students. During our consultation for the Strategy with students and staff, it was evidenced that feelings of inclusion are informed by day-to-day experiences and interactions with colleagues, managers, lecturers, supervisors and fellow students. In this sense, everyone has a role to play in creating inclusion: by treating others with dignity and respect; by encouraging participation by all and by being empowered and feeling supported to challenge exclusionary and discriminatory behaviour. We will undertake targeted activity to address the following issues:

* Helping individuals to develop self-awareness and to address bias
* Increasing knowledge and awareness of practical actions that can be taken to create inclusive working and learning environments
* Creating opportunities to share knowledge, experience and learning
* Empowering everyone to speak up and challenge behaviour and situations that are exclusionary
* Increasing visibility of and communication about EDI across the institution
* Increasing transparency on progress against our objectives

## Inclusive Environment initiatives and outputs in 2022/23

3.1 During 2022/23 the following activity has been undertaken to support the inclusive environment objectives:

3.1.1 Helping individuals to develop self-awareness and to address bias:

* Over 800 staff have now completed the online “Introduction to Race Equality Training”. Feedback has been extremely positive, e.g. ““I am pleased that the University is taking this seriously and providing training that is eye-opening to someone of my background”
* The LGBTQ+ Allies Scheme has been expanded to include a termly online Domestic Abuse awareness session, delivered by the staff EDI Team and West Mercia Women’s Aid and, from summer 2023, will be expanded further to include a termly online menopause awareness session, in support of the new staff guidance in these areas
* All staff who are readers for the next REF have attended training sessions on implicit bias (delivered by the staff EDI Team and Research Planning), to support the development of individual and group approaches to ensuring fairness and mitigating bias
* About 50 senior management members of Academic Services and Campus Services have attended a three-part anti-racism training course. A further cohort has been commissioned to extend the delivery to Heads of Services across the two divisions
* The Student EDI Canvas course was shortlisted for THE Awards 2022 in the Outstanding Contribution to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion category, recognising the successful initiative for engaging thousands of students to educate themselves voluntarily on EDI

3.1.2 Increasing knowledge and awareness of practical actions that can be taken to create inclusive working and learning environments:

* We have introduced the Framework for Supporting Staff Experiencing Menopause guidance document and intranet resources to raise awareness and understanding of menopause in the workplace and encourage and enable conversations between managers and staff about workplace adjustments. This is further supported by the Menopause Allies sessions (3.1.1) and regular Menopause Cafes run by the University Women’s Network.
* We have introduced a Domestic Abuse Framework for Staff guidance and intranet resource, to provide practical guidance on the workplace-based support the University can offer staff to help them leave an abusive relationship. This is further supported by termly awareness-raising sessions run by the staff EDI Team and West Mercia Women’s Aid that re open to all staff.
* We have also introduced a Carers Framework for staff, aimed at staff who have caring responsibilities outside of being parents, such as for elderly or disabled relatives. The Framework formally recognises this group of staff through the completion of a ‘Carers Passports’ and introduces 5 days of fully paid Carers’ Leave for staff with a passport.
* Adoption of Universal Design principles for interviewing by Student Services with templates and guidance developed by Careers Network, such as a pre-interview invitation letter which indicates thematically the questions candidates should come prepared to answer, how long the interview is expected to take and who to expect on the panel.
* We have benefitted from a partnership with 10K Black Interns to get access to paid internship opportunities for UoB’s Black students and graduates with multinational corporations, professional firms, ambitious start-ups, and public bodies. Through paid internships across 25+ sectors, 88 Black students were successful in gaining an internship this year. We also supported the launch of the 10K Able Interns programme with a small number of UoB students participating
* An Inclusive Practice Standards document and a new Canvas resource for staff has been produced to highlight what should be provided as part of the University’s duty to promote an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all students
* We are working with Estates Services and the Chaplaincy to identify both short and longer term solutions to the provision for prayer space
* Student Wellbeing and Partnership scaled and diversified service operations by analysing data sets that have not be available previously. For example, UBHeard performed well with minority ethnic students (51% service user profile vs 47% of general population) and Pause@UoB (19% service user profile vs 17% general population).
* Campus Services has reviewed the on-campus provision for parent and baby rooms. There are now 5 parent and baby spaces across the Edgbaston campus. All rooms are accessible and the ground floor of buildings. They are clearly signposted and listed on the campus map app.
* The Assistant Director of Student Affairs (EDI) was appointed as a Commissioner at the Living Black at the University Commission to develop sectoral advice on race inclusivity for Black students at university accommodation in the UK. 3.1.3 Creating opportunities to share knowledge, experience and learning
* We continued to deepen our EDI strategic partnership with the University of Amsterdam. During the year, we hosted a visiting student delegation from the Dutch capital to explore our city’s colonial past and LGBT+ history.
* The Assistant Director of Student Affairs (EDI) also invited to deliver a joint presentation with the University of Amsterdam in Berlin to a group of EU universities on de-colonising university education and experience.
* The University hosted a visit from colleagues from Brazilian colleagues as part of the Birmingham Global, Birmingham-Brazil Partnership. This was an opportunity for the staff EDI Team to share experiences of Athena Swan, Student EDI, and examples of best practice in the recruitment, retention and progression of female academic staff with our Brazilian colleagues.
* The EUniwell collaboration includes a work package on Institutional Transformation which has provided an opportunity to share good practice with our EU partners on key areas of HR: recruitment, progression and retention

3.1.4 Empowering everyone to speak up and challenge behaviour and situations that are exclusionary

* The Dignity and Respect Oversight Group have overseen the introduction of the Report and Support tool for students and staff as a single gateway for accessing support around harassment, bullying and sexual misconduct. In addition to support, users can make formal or anonymous reports about behaviour and incidents via the platform. The development and launch of Report and Support has been a collaborative process, involving the Student and Staff EDI Teams and colleagues in Academic Services engaged in preventative activities, supporting staff and students and in investigating reports of misconduct.
* Careers Network worked with Legal Services to create a new policy that address unfair treatment by an employer for students or graduates on a placement, internship or early graduate employment. It was created to support students or graduates who raise a complaint, to ensure inappropriate behaviour by employers is addressed, and that students and graduates are supported by their University

3.1.5 Increasing visibility of and communication about EDI across the institution:

• The Staff EDI and Student EDI teams co-ordinated 5 main equality programmes each year (LGBTQ+ History Month, International Women’s Day, Parents and Carers Fortnight, Black History Month and Disability History Month). A total of 74 events have been run as part of these programmes during 2022/23. A particular highlight included Professor Nira Chamberlain’s talk on The Black Heroes of Mathematics, which was also attended by students from 3 local schools.

* The Student EDI team worked in partnership with The Exchange to stage the formation of the higher education parade contingent across 6 universities at Birmingham Pride with over 500 students, staff, alumni, and guests.
* Improvements have been made to accessibility of students and their families to graduation ceremonies. A new dedicated accessibility website has been set up, along with an accessibility stand available on the day, manned by members of the Student Disability Service team.
* The Chaplaincy and the University of Birmingham Islamic Society co-hosted the annual Community Iftar to mark the end of Ramadan. The event was attended by over 1,500 attendees as the biggest iftar in the city.
* We work closely with the University’s social media team to ensure that EDI events – such as the history months programme – are promoted across University media channels.

3.1.6 Increasing transparency on progress against our objectives:

* External Relations has developed an EDI Communications plan which collates and coordinates activity that is already happening within the University, coordinating with the Guild to take a joint approach where appropriate and moves the University to a more proactive footing in how it communicates its EDI activity. Examples of this in action over the last year include all staff emails for EDI events and to update on the Equality Change programme as well as regular updates in the weekly staff briefing.
* We have reviewed the EDI intranet site to ensure the correct use of key search terms and improve the prominence of reports on progress so that all items are within two clicks of the landing page.

# Progress against EDI Strategy: Dismantling Barriers

## EDI Strategy statement:

4.1 We aim to be a diverse institution that is representative of the wider society in which we operate. We recognise that some groups are under-represented at the University and that our staff population becomes less diverse as seniority increases. We want to be an aspirational institution where students and staff see themselves reflected at all levels of the University. We recognise this as a structural problem and will actively avoid a ‘deficit model’ approach to under-representation. Where there is group-based disadvantage – for example, as evidenced by key markers such as recruitment, progression, retention, reward and attainment – we will take action to address those barriers in a targeted and systematic way. This will be by rethinking and redesigning processes, target setting and monitoring progress against those targets and addressing organisational development needs, in addition to providing targeted support for specific groups. We will undertake targeted activity to address the following issues:

* The recruitment, progression and retention of staff from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups across the University
* The degree awarding gap for students from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups
* The recruitment, progression and retention of female academic staff at senior levels
* The gender and ethnicity pay gaps, which reflect the uneven distribution of female and male staff and white and Black, Asian and other minority ethnic staff across the University
* Accessibility and the lived experience of staff and students with a disability
* The visibility of LGBTQ staff across the University
* Staff disclosure rates in relation to disability status, gender identity, sexual orientation and religion or belief to better inform our evidence base
* The impact of socio-economic background on our students

## Dismantling Barriers initiatives and outputs 2022/23

* 1. During 2022/23 the following activity has been undertaken to support the inclusive environment objectives.

4.2.1 The recruitment, progression and retention of staff from Black, Asian and other

minority ethnic groups across the University:

* The Aditi leadership for minority ethnic staff has now been running for 7 years and a detailed evaluation was carried out in 2022. The evaluation concluded that the Aditi programme was effective in supporting minority ethnic staff to achieve their potential, particularly where participants were supported during and after the course by their line manager
* We continue to promote the Black, Asian and minority ethnic recruitment panel register across the University to enhance the diversify our interview panels and give all recruiting managers access to trained staff from a range of ethnic backgrounds
* To accelerate progress in this area, we will be introducing a range of signature initiatives in the 2023/24 academic year that focus on the University’s recruitment of minority ethnic staff and creating a sustainable career pipeline

4.2.2 The degree awarding gap for students from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups:

* The remit of the Student Access and Progress Committee was expanded to Access, Progress, and Inclusivity to provide stewardship in EDI issues in learning and teaching
* The Inclusive Educator programme had nearly 1,200 members of teaching staff complete the programme. This also contained the BAME toolkit and the now partner course the Accessible Educator. It is a compulsory element for all new staff undertaking the PGCert and Heads of Schools are urged to encourage staff to complete the programme as part of the PDR process. The Inclusive Educator and the Student EDI Canvas course was shortlisted for the Pearson Innovate Awards 2022.

4.2.3 The recruitment, progression and retention of female academic staff at senior levels:

* The University’s Senior Leadership Programme had one cohort in 2022/23, of which 69% (11 staff) were female
* The Emerging Leader Programme had 3 cohorts in 2022/23, of which 57% (30 staff) were female
* To accelerate progress in this area, we will be introducing a range of signature initiatives in the 2023/24 academic year that focus on the University’s recruitment of minority ethnic and female staff and creating a sustainable career pipeline

4.2.4 Reducing the gender pay gap - 2022 Gender Pay Gap:

* Women’s average hourly pay is 16.3% (mean) or 17.6% (median) lower than men’s, compared to 17.1% (mean) and 17.6% (median) in 2021
* Women’s average bonus pay is 53.6% (mean) or 25.0% (median) lower than men’s, compared to 69.2% (mean) and 7.5% (median) in 2021

This is the University’s 6th year of reporting on its gender pay gap. Since 2017, the hourly gender pay gap has reduced from:

* 19.9% to 16.3% (mean)
* 23.3% to 17.6% (median)

The bonus pay gap has reduced from:

* 66.0% to 53.6% (mean)
* 50.0% to 25.0% (median)

The substantive issue underpinning the pay gap continues to be the uneven distribution of male and female staff across the pay quartiles. Significantly more female staff than male are in the lower pay quartile and more male staff than female in the top pay quartile. Gender balance within the pay quartiles is incrementally improving year on year, but greater balance in the top and lower quartiles is needed to significantly reduce our gender pay gap.

4.3.5 Reducing the ethnicity pay gap – 2022 Ethnicity Pay Gap

* The average hourly rate of pay for staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups is 11.7% (mean) or 15.2% (median) lower than for staff from white ethnic groups
* The average bonus pay for staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups is 38.9% higher (mean) or 25.0% lower (median) lower than for staff from white ethnic groups
* The mean bonus pay gap in 2022 is *in favour* of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff. This is due to the impact of a comparatively small group of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff employed in clinical posts in the upper pay quartile receiving high value bonus payments.

This is the University’s 2nd year of reporting on its ethnicity pay gap. Since 2021, the hourly ethnicity pay gap has changed from:

* 12.2% to 11.7% (mean)
* Remained at 15.2% (median)

The bonus pay gap has changed from:

* 22.4% to +38.9% (mean), i.e. in favour of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff
* 13.8% to 25.0% (median)

The growth in the median bonus gap in 2022 is driven by a one-off bonus payment made to all Professional Services staff in Support roles. This has resulted in a high proportion of minority ethnic staff receiving bonuses, as the largest proportion of the University’s minority ethnic staff are employed in Support roles. However, as these roles typically fall within the lower pay quartile, this also lowers the average values of bonuses paid to minority ethnic staff, which strongly influences the median (middle) value measure.

The ethnicity pay gap, whilst smaller than the University’s gender pay gap, is underpinned by a similar issue: the underrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff in the upper pay quartile and over-representation in the lower pay quartile. Whilst the ethnicity of staff in the upper middle and lower middle pay quartiles is proportionate to the overall University staff population, the largest concentration of staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups is in the lower pay quartile and the smallest in the upper pay quartile.

The University’s ethnicity pay gap is also affected by the ethnic diversity of the local employment market. This means we employ a considerable proportion of minority ethnic staff in locally recruited Support posts (Bands 200-500). In contrast, universities based in areas with a less ethnically diverse local labour market employ mostly white staff in their lower paying posts, whilst the majority of their minority ethnic staff are employed in higher paid Academic posts. This results in much smaller ethnicity pay gaps, no pay gaps, or pay gaps that favour minority ethic staff. In contrast, in 2023 the University’s increased employment of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff in Support posts has resulted in a slight widening of the mean pay gap.

4.3.6 Accessibility and the lived experience of staff and students with a disability:

* In 2022/23 the University established the Accessibility Oversight Group to drive forward progress on accessibility across our physical and digital campus environments. The Group is chaired by the DPVC for Equality and has three main workstreams focused on digital, learning and physical accessibility.
* The Disabled Student Contribution Group was launched by the Student EDI team during Disability History Month 2022 to create a feedback mechanism for students with disability to help inform changes of policies and practices for enhancing accessibility.
* The Staff EDI team and HR Workplace Wellbeing Working have formed an accessibility sub-group in conjunction with the Enabling Staff Network, focused on accessibility issues as they affect staff and improving the disabled staff experience.

4.3.7 Increasing LGBTQ+ Visibility

This is included in our overall objective to raise the profile of staff networks across the University. All Staff Networks now have Teams sites, which are helping to connect and engage with staff from under-represented groups. The staff Networks have provide the following updates on their activities:

* “Throughout Black History Month (BHM) 2022, the Race Equality Network supported the University to celebrate the cultures and histories of our Black communities and deliver events and activities that enables us to continue conversations about race. It was great to see the visual impact of having Old Joe change colours to showcase BHM, which sparked a lot of interest and engagement across the Network’s social media channels. We hope these opportunities to have well-informed conversations will add to the ongoing efforts towards developing an environment where all members of the university community are able to thrive.”
* “The Rainbow Network have continued to collaborate with the EDI team on the development of the successful LGBTQ+ ally scheme, for which over 300 current staff and PhD students have completed the introductory training and joined the scheme. For the first time this year we have piloted booster training to give more practical examples of day-to-day allyship, incorporating real examples of microaggressions as reported in the Rainbow Network’s annual survey, and we plan to continue to better engage with existing members of the scheme by increasing activity and networking opportunities within the associated Microsoft Teams group.”
* “In 2023, the Women’s Network hosted the University’s first International Women’s Day celebration event, with more than 100 participants enjoying a series of talks and breakout sessions. The Network also offered regular Menopause cafes and Book Clubs for its members”
* The University also celebrated National Day of Staff Networks in May 2022 holding an indoor barbeque in the Great Hall. The event was attended by over 100 staff and supported by the Vice Chancellor and members of UEB.

4.3.8 Staff disclosure rates in relation to disability status, gender identity, sexual orientation and religion or belief, to better inform our evidence base:

* Disclosure rates are one of the ‘success measures’ for the EDI Strategy (section 6 below). During 2022/23, significant systems changes have been made to harmonise how this information is collected and shared across different HR systems, including Oracle Recruit and HR Core. Starting in 2023, all staff now receive an annual reminder to review and update their personal information, alongside an explanation of how equality data helps evidence the need for change and measure the impact of interventions.

4.3.9 Reducing the impact of socio-economic background on our students:

* We made available £20k worth of £50 supermarket vouchers to support students with "in the moment" financial support needs. The vouchers were distributed across our wellbeing network to students presenting with financial difficulties on day-to-day expenses.
* The University funded a dedicated debt adviser role to work out of Guild Advice, in the Guild of Students. This was a direct response to increasing concerns about individual finances.
* The Guild of Students established a ‘Community Pantry’ on campus with support from Campus Services. This is a route for students to access a limited range of donated (non-perishable) food and other essentials for free.
* We are also aware of the particular challenges of the cost-of-living crisis may pose in relation to accessing sanitary products (often referred to as ‘Period Poverty’). With this in mind, we provided access to free sanitary products through selected locations on campus.
* Careers Network developed an ‘Excellence through Adversity’ award for students on the Personal Skills Award. It offered students the opportunity to reflect on their lived experience (it was their decision on what the adversity was – there was no specific category) and align it to how they have developed personally and within an employability context.
* Campus Services reviewed the food and beverage offering for students and staff on campus with a dual focus on affordability and choice. This included the introduction of meal deals and filter coffee or tea options as our low-price offers on campus.

# 5. Progress against EDI Strategy: Integrating Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

## EDI Strategy statement:

5.1 Effectively integrating equality, diversity and inclusion across the University – and ensuring it is not just a centrally owned activity – has been identified as a key issue in our consultations. Feedback emphasised that this integration needs to take place across our activities and functions and at all levels of the organisation in order to be effective. We will undertake the following targeted activity:

* Develop our processes and systems so that consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion informs the development and assessment of decision-making
* Develop local responses to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme themes, building on the current Equality Leads network and the considerable work already taking place within Colleges

## Integrating Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2022/23

5.2 During 2022/23 the following activity has been undertaken to support the integrating equality, diversity and inclusion objectives.

5.3.1 Develop our processes and systems so that consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion informs the development and assessment of decision-making:

* The staff EDI Team has worked closely with colleagues in Recruitment and Core systems to implement standardised equality characteristic categories, options and wording of questions across all HR systems. This means the employee experience of being asked for information on their equality characteristics - and the data recording of those characteristics - is harmonised and consistent across all HR systems, including Oracle Recruit and Core, and is also mapped across to activities such as the annual Staff Satisfaction Survey.
* The management of the Birmingham Scholar programme was migrated into the Student EDI team to develop synergy with wider institutional EDI work for students.

5.3.2 Develop local responses to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme themes, building on the current Equality Leads network and the considerable work already taking place within Colleges

* An EDI mapping exercise was conducted to review the role of EDI Leads in Colleges and Schools and provided induction training for those new to the role.
* The EDI Community of Practice of staff across the University involved in or having a strong interest in EDI has continued to grow and now has 100 members on its Teams site. The community meets termly, with each meeting covering an academic and Professional Services initiative.

# 6. Progress against EDI Strategy success measures

6.1 The EDI Strategy 2021-2024 establishes key markers against which the University’s progress in ‘moving the dial’ on EDI can be quantified and measured during the time period of the strategy. These are:

* Percentage of senior female academic staff (Professors and Grade 9)
* Percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff at each grade in Professional Services
* Percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff in Academic roles
* Increasing the percentage of staff disclosing information on their disability status, gender identity, sexual orientation and religion or belief
* Progress against student Access and Participation Plan 2020–21 to 2024–25 targets

## Percentage of senior female academic staff

6.2 Our female academic population significantly decreases at senior grades. We want male and female representation in these roles to be 50/50, with an initial aspiration of 30% female Professors and 40% female grade 9 academic staff by 2024.

6.3 January 2023 data indicates that the University has exceeded the target for grade 9 female academic staff and is 0.4% away from achieving 30% female Professors:

6.4 The January 2023 figure of 29.6% female Professors compares positively to the sector average of 28% (HESA 2021/22 data). Comparative data for Grade 9 academic staff is not available from HESA.

## Percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Professional Services and Academic staff

6.6 The EDI Strategy includes a success measure of increasing the ethnic diversity of our leadership and senior staff. This based on the University’s Race Equality Charter Action Plan commitment to increase representation of minority ethnic staff across the majority of grades across the University, (other than Band 200 and Academic Grades 6 – 7 where representation is already relatively high).

6.7 The data below shows the January 2023 position measured against the aspirational targets set for 2024 in the University’s Race Equality Charter. The University has made progress against the 2021 starting points at all grades and has reached or exceeded the 2024 target in a majority of grades, including Grade 9 academic staff and Grade 10 Professional Services staff. However, there are a number of senior grades (Professor, Grade 8 academics, Grade 9 Professional Services) where we are currently several % points below the 2024 target.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **University Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff (%)** | | | | |
|  | | **Race Equality Charter 2021 starting point** | **2024 Race Equality Charter Target** | **January 2023 position** |
| Academics | Professor | 9% | 15% | 12% |
| Grade 9 | 17% | 17% (Readers)  24% (Senior Lecturer) | 18% |
| Grade 8 | 24% | 33% | 29% |
| RF7  RF8 | 33%  33% | None set | 33%  37% |
| Professional Services | Grade 10 | 5% | 8% | 8% |
| Grade 9 | 8% | 13% | 9% |
| Grade 8 | 13% | 17% | 17% |
| Grade 7 | 17% | 20% | 20% |
| Grade 6 | 20% | 23% | 24% |
| Band 500 | 23% | 23% | 24% |
| Band 400 | 18% | 24% | 23% |
| Band 300 | 24% | 24% | 29% |
| Band 200 | 40% | None set | 33% |

## Percentage of staff disclosing information on their disability, gender identity, sexual orientation and religion/belief

6.8 The January 2023 data shows that an increasing proportion of staff feel comfortable disclosing information on their religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender identity to the University. Disclosures on disability status have declined, but investigations have shown this is largely due to system changes within HR and more accurate data now being reported. As of 2023, staff will also receive an annual reminder to review and update their personal information which is already showing a positive impact on disclosure rates.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Protected characteristics staff disclosure rates (%)** | |
| **Characteristic** | **January 2023 position** |
| Age | 100% |
| Sex | 100% |
| Gender Reassignment | 20.6% (‘what is your gender identity?’)  30% (‘does your gender identity differ from your sex at birth?’) |
| Disability | 70.1% |
| Ethnicity | 94.9% |
| Religion or Belief | 60.8% |
| Sexual Orientation | 59.4% |

6.9 Student Success and Access and Participation Plan targets 6.9 Progress against the University’s Access and Participation Plan targets will be reported on separately.

# 7. Athena Swan Charter

7.1 The majority of University Schools hold Athena Swan awards. The College of Medical Sciences holds a Silver award for the entire College. Six of the seven Schools in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences hold awards (1 Silver and 5 Bronze), with the School of Computer Science currently working towards an award. All four Schools in Life & Environmental Sciences hold awards (1 Silver, 3 Bronze). In the College of Social Sciences, two of the four Schools hold Bronze awards, with Birmingham Business School receiving their first Bronze award in 2022/23. In the College of Arts & Law, two of the five Schools hold Bronze Athena awards, with Birmingham School of Law receiving their award in the 2022/23 academic year.

7.2 The University’s Bronze Athena award is valid until May 2025. It is intended that the University apply for a Silver award at that point, (as we are able to demonstrate a wide range of gender equality initiatives and to measure their impact). Work towards this will begin in early 2024.

# 8. Race Equality Charter

8.1 The Race Equality Charter Survey was re-run in 2022 and results compared to the 2018 survey. The results show an increased engagement in race equality issues from staff who do not identify as minority ethnic, as well as a narrowing of the gap between perceptions of different staff groups on areas such as recruitment and progression. One of the issues which received most comments from staff was the lack of diversity amongst the University staff population compared to the city of Birmingham. The planned mid-term progress review by Advance HE has been deferred (due to staff changes at Advance HE) and will now take place in 2023.

# 9. College EDI activities and outputs

9.1 A very successful aspect of the Equality Strategy has been the commitment from each College to set up a local EDI plan aligned with the Equality Strategy priorities but adapted to the local context. This approach is giving rise to innovative approaches which are then shared more widely. A snapshot of this work is given below.

## College of Arts & Law

9.2 During 2022 the College has carried out a number of projects to support mental health, including running Mental health First Aid training sessions and setting up a Mental Health First Aid Network of ‘champions’. Mental Health literacy guidance has been designed by colleagues in Birmingham Law School. This resource is being reviewed by the DPVC Staffing, before being made available across the University.

9.3 Following the introduction of the Birmingham Academic Career Framework, a standard format for equality analysis for promotions has been introduced. There is further work to investigate career progression gaps where data shows minority ethnic staff are less likely to progress.

9.4 The College has reviewed approaches which are currently used when recruiting undergraduate students to identify approaches which could be adapted or upscaled to attract more diverse PGT and PGR students. A number of approaches have been identified (conversion activities, enhancing student experience, and preparing for the world of work) and will be piloted over the next year.

## College of Engineering & Physical Sciences

9.5 During 2022 EPS launched an EDI focused travel fund for staff and research students, to meet additional costs during travel such as childcare or disability support. The research support team, alongside the EDI team, piloted a training workshop for early career researchers to consider EDI in their research bids and in practice. Following the successful pilot, the workshop will run annually as part of the suite of research support available to EPS academics.

9.6 The College has continued to run events to celebrate communities, share best practice and learn more about marginalised experiences. In 2022 this included the Sun, Stars and Exoplanets Research Group's “Space is Black” celebration and display during Black History month and the student lead “Equal in STEM”, a panel style event that incorporates multiple equality and diversity groups and gives students the chance to hear from industry professionals and academics about their career paths.

## College of Life & Environmental Sciences

9.7 To further embed EDI each area of the College has committed to one action which can be owned and delivered locally. An example is an action led by the Education team to diversify our Student Ambassador team who perform an essential role in student recruitment. Students from under-represented groups have participated in focus groups and there is a college-wide goal to involve a diverse group of students in these activities.

9.8 Another college action is the establishment of a termly lunch for Female Professors. This is proving valuable for networking and providing informal mentoring for newly appointed professors, helping them to navigate their new roles. Heads of School are also proactively approaching under-represented staff to reflect on applying for promotion, either in the next or future promotion rounds. Anecdotal evidence is that this approach is resulting in more women successfully applying for promotion.

## College of Medical & Dental Sciences

9.9 The College has developed the MDS SUSTAIN Leadership programme to support Academics from under-represented groups who are new to research. The course (which works with a cohort of approximately 20) combines skills development, mentoring and peer support. Feedback has been extremely positive. In addition to the skills development and networking opportunities, participants have appreciated the emphasis placed on ensuring that time and resource are allocated to support their career development.

9.10 The College has carried out an arts-based project with The Barber Institute of Fine Arts to find innovative ways of reflecting the diversity of the modern staff and student population, whilst continuing to recognise the important history of the Medical and Dental School. Students have participated in a series of artist-led workshops exploring the theme of recognition from the perspectives of gender, race and disability. A series of art works has been produced, which are on display in the Medical School foyer.

## College of Social Sciences

9.11 CoSS piloted the use of Intentions plans (originally developed for the REF) to highlight areas of potential bias during promotion processes. Those involved in the pilot agreed that this was a helpful addition to the process and have recommended its roll out to other Colleges. The College also developed a student-alumni mentoring programme in partnership with Careers Network. This was aimed at under represented groups supporting them to enhance their work experience and improve their overall University Experience.

9.12 A programme of menopause training has taken place, including ‘train the trainer’ sessions to improve the information and support available to managers and members of staff. Initiatives have also been developed at School level: Anti racism and microaggression training has been delivered, followed up with a “Safe Space “ initiative which will give an insight into the lived experience of minority ethnic staff. All of our Schools have appointed Student EDI Ambassadors, making these paid posts to reflect the important nature of this work. Professional Services

9.13 Many of our Professional Services areas are also developing plans which embed EDI into their work. One example is provided by External Relations, who are progressing a programme of activity to ensure that the face and voice of the University in the media is diverse:

‘We have signed up to the BBC 50:50 Initiative, which supports the aim of an equal gender split in its editorial broadcast output. This involves reviewing and agreeing how we collect and count our data so we have a robust methodology that we can use to set a benchmark and then measure our progress toward achieving a 50:50 gender split in the content we issue, (such as expert comment in press releases and video, interviewees, etc). To support this, the University’s online experts guide is being updated to ensure a more diverse list of experts is available to comment on the issues of the day. We are working with Directors of Research and College Marketing and Communications teams to identify new individuals to include in the guide and will provide any further support if necessary. This includes media training which so far this year, has been completed by 32 academics, with a 50:50 gender split. (At present, no other EDI information is recorded but this is under review). We are also progressing two QR-funded projects: the Inspiring Women podcast and LES’s Women in Policy have been developed to showcase and champion our female researchers and increase their media presence and policy engagement.’

# 10. Diversity of Council membership

10.1 Work to broaden the diversity of the membership of the University Council remains a priority, whilst recognising the parallel importance of making appointments on personal merit. This work is led by the Council’s Membership Committee which is chaired by the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council.

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| --- | --- |
| **Council membership by sex and ethnicity** | |
|  | **April 2023 position** |
| Female | 52% |
| Male | 48% |
| Black, Asian or other minority ethnic group | 13% |
| White ethnic group | 87% |

# 11. Priority EDI activities for 2023/24

11.1 The University has committed to a ‘Bold Vision for EDI’ at Birmingham. The vision recognises the need to take positive action to add impetus to the work already taking place as part of the University Equality Strategy, REC Charter and Athena Swan, and the need for additional resource to promote and implement EDI activity.

11.2 There are three areas of activity set out within the Bold Vision plan:

* A set of signature initiatives to develop positive action initiatives through interventions at key points in the Academic and Professional Services career pipeline. These initiatives are themed into: o Academic staff o Professional Services staff o University-wide initiatives
* The creation of an EDI Centre to build a critical mass of staff and focus for EDI at the University of Birmingham. The Centre was established in May 2023 and is co-led by the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (EDI) and the newly appointed Director of Equality, Inclusion and Wellbeing who is also a member of the HR Senior Leadership team. The unit is staffed by existing staff EDI experts and additional project support will be recruited to implement the programme of signature initiatives and to enable the University to draw on in-house research to inform practice
* The adoption and embedding of current and emerging best practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff and wider EDI work across the University

11.3 During 2023/24, the EDI Team will also be strongly focused on preparation for the new University Equality Strategy for 2025 onwards and the renewal of the University’s Athena Swan Charter and Race Equality Charter awards, which are also due in 2025.



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