

## **Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2016-17**

### **Introduction**

This is the first annual Equality & Diversity report for the University of Suffolk, following our launch on 1 August 2016. We recognise the importance of a diverse student and staff body in driving economic, cultural and educational transformation within the region and have continued to establish the institution as one which attracts diverse staff and student populations and supports them in achieving their aspirations and realising their potential.

We do not tolerate discriminatory practice and work to deliver a positive environment for the conduct of all our activities, where members of our community treat one another with mutual respect and dignity.

There has been progress across a wide range of equality and diversity related initiatives, which all contribute to building a more diverse and inclusive community at the university: highlights in particular include our successful bid to host the Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach project, our placement in the Top 30 Working Family Employers and our accreditation under the European Commission's Research Concordat.

As previously, our challenge – and our commitment - remains to ensure that the institution provides every student and every staff member with a positive and rewarding experience that is fair and free from discriminatory practice. This report outlines the work during 2016-17 to ensure that our policies and services meet this commitment.

Richard Lister (Vice-Chancellor) and Sara Corcoran (Director of Human Resources and Chair of the Equality & Diversity Committee)

### **Equality & Diversity Policy**

We are committed to ensuring that all members of our community are treated, and treat each other, with respect and dignity in all our activities. Whilst recognising all the relevant statutory duties in respect of legislation against discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, we acknowledge that people are also discriminated against on the basis of other factors in addition to those prohibited by the law. We aim to foster a secure and caring environment which is welcoming to all and free from prejudice and discrimination.

The institution therefore requires that discriminatory behaviour which is offensive or demeaning to anyone is treated as a matter of concern and dealt with appropriately. We believe that this principle is of fundamental importance in the context of a learning community - where the exploration, formulation, exchange and challenge of ideas and knowledge, and the acknowledgement of a wide diversity of opinion and belief, is central to its existence.

Accordingly, we will ensure that the principles of respect and dignity of the individual, and of equality of opportunity for all, are incorporated in the policies, and in the organisation and management of all activities of the institution's community. In particular, this approach is supported by our [Dignity and Respect at Work](#) and [Dignity at Study](#) policies.

We seek to make all members of our community, including visitors, aware of the behaviour we expect from everyone and will take steps to deal with any allegations of harassment or bullying - including by a visitor or of a visitor.

Our full [Equality & Diversity Policy](#) is available on the website.

### **Equality & Diversity Governance**

The institution's Board has overall responsibility for ensuring adherence to the duties set out in the relevant legislation and with institution's Equality and Diversity policy. The Executive, led by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, is responsible for demonstrating commitment to, and providing leadership in, promoting equality and ensuring that the Equality policy and associated action plans are implemented effectively, including overseeing the allocation of adequate resource. Senior management responsibility for Equality and Diversity lies with the Director of HR, reporting to the Vice-Chancellor and the Board.

The University Senate is responsible for ensuring that academic policies and procedures avoid discrimination in terms of student recruitment, progression and attainment.

The Equality & Diversity Committee, chaired by the Director of HR, has lead responsibility for assuring the institution's equality obligations and commitments. The Committee, meets three times per year:

- to monitor the key areas of the institution's performance (including student recruitment, retention, achievement/outcomes and satisfaction; and staff recruitment, retention and progression) in relation to equality indicators;
- to keep relevant policies and procedures under review; and
- to set, monitor and report progress against equality objectives.

The Committee reports to the Executive and has wide membership from across the institution's community, including four academic representatives, a number of professional service managers, the recognised trades unions and the Students' Union. In addition the Committee co-opts up to three external members to support current priorities – for 2016-17 Suffolk MIND and the Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Race Equality have continued to provide our co-opted members.

The Executive, Heads of Department (both Academic and Professional Service) are responsible for leading the implementation of the Equality and Diversity policy and action planning in relation to employee and student matters within their own faculties/directorates and departments, and ensuring that all their staff know their responsibilities and receive support and training in carrying these out.

All members of the institution's community have a responsibility to support the aims and objectives of the Equality & Diversity policy, ensuring that their behaviour towards each other and to the wider external community is respectful, encouraging a positive and inclusive environment. All persons visiting or contracted to work with the institution are required to adhere to the Equality & Diversity policy.

### **Current Profile**

A table showing the profile of staff and students for the academic year 2016-17 is shown overleaf. Distributions have remained fairly stable over recent years.

The majority of staff and students are female, which reflects the academic and vocational provision of our programmes. Relative to other HEIs, our BME representation for students is

low<sup>1</sup>. However, this is reflective of the fact that 95% of our students are recruited from within 50 miles of their place of study in a region which does not have a high population of BME residents<sup>2</sup>. The proportion of BME staff remains below the sector norm (11.8%)<sup>3</sup>. However, over the last five years the proportion of White British staff has dropped from 85% to 81%, indicating that the workforce is becoming more culturally diverse.

The distribution of staff and students across disabled, religious and sexual orientation groups remain broadly similar to previous years. There has been an increase of 1.8% in students in the 18-24 student age group (with 1% reduction in 25-44 group), otherwise the age distribution is fairly constant.

In the general population, the prevalence of disability rises with age: around 6% of children are disabled, compared to 16% of working age adults and 45% of adults over State Pension age<sup>4</sup>. The data shows a 1% drop this year in the disabled student population, although it is not significantly out of line with the general population. By contrast, our disabled staff population is considerably lower than national levels and falling (from 7% in 2012-13), albeit we are in line with the sector<sup>5</sup>. The work we are doing to promote more flexible forms of working may help to address this. We continue to see increases in the numbers of staff and students reporting mental health needs. This is an area of continuing attention to ensure they are represented and supported appropriately.

#### Staff and Student Diversity Data Summary – 2016-17

<b>Characteristic</b>		<b>Students</b> (As at 1 December 2016)	<b>Staff</b> (As at 1 December 2016)
<b>Total Population</b>		4819	441
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	31.98%	37.87%
	<b>Female</b>	66%	62.13%
	<b>Not known</b>	0%	0%
<b>Transgender</b>		1.76%	0%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Black</b>	4.98%	2.95
	<b>Asian</b>	2.45%	1.36%
	<b>Chinese</b>	0.31%	0.45%
	<b>Mixed race</b>	1.10%	1.13%
	<b>Other Ethnicity</b>	0.77%	0.91%
	<b>White Other</b>	2.84%	7.71%

<sup>1</sup> 28% of all those entering HE are from BME groups (<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/analysis/HEinEngland/students>)

<sup>2</sup> 4.8% of Suffolk's population is from BME groups compared to 14.1% of England and Wales' population (Suffolk Demographic Profile, SCC 2013)

<sup>3</sup> DLA Piper, Higher Education Sector Staff Statistics, 2015

<sup>4</sup> Disability Facts and Figures, DWP, January 2014

<sup>5</sup> DLA Piper, Higher Education Sector Staff Statistics, 2015

	<b>White British</b>	86.57%	80.95%
	<b>Not known</b>	0.98%	4.54%
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Disabled</b>	15%	4.31%
	<b>Not disabled</b>	84%	91.61%
	<b>Not known</b>	0.42%	4.08%
<b>Age</b>	<b>18-24 years</b>	50.36%	2.49%
	<b>25-44 years</b>	39%	47.85%
	<b>45-54 years</b>	8.8%	28.12%
	<b>55+ years</b>	2.14%	21.54%
<b>Religion</b>	<b>Buddhist</b>	0.56%	0.45%
	<b>Christian</b>	25.34%	27.89%
	<b>Hindu</b>	0.33%	0.45%
	<b>Jewish</b>	0.1%	0.23%
	<b>Muslim</b>	1.35%	0.68%
	<b>Sikh</b>	0.06%	0.23%
	<b>Other</b>	3.27%	1.81%
	<b>No religion</b>	37.66%	23.36
	<b>Not known/Provided</b>	31.31%	44.9%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Bisexual</b>	1.83%	1.13%
	<b>Gay/Lesbian</b>	1.87%	2.49%
	<b>Heterosexual/Straight</b>	90.14%	52.83%
	<b>Not known/Provided</b>	6.16%	43.54%

Year on year, our student population tends to be more mature and more part time than the typical HEI profile. We have been working with the Students' Union to understand better how this impacts on the institution's culture, what this means in terms of the support and facilities sought and the ways in which students interact with the institution. As a result the Students' Union has introduced a number of Liberation Officer roles to support, for example, Mature, Disabled and BME students (see section on SU later, under Other Activity in 2016-17, page 8).

The institution has been very successful in attracting and supporting students from disadvantaged groups and our commitment to widening participation is unwavering. However, research has demonstrated that students from a number of these groups are at a greater risk of attrition and for this reason one of our objectives this year has been to support students whom we identify as being at higher risk of withdrawal. This is reported in the next section.

Faith is important to many students and we recognise that supporting this is essential to many students' experience. The multi-faith chaplaincy is well established and integrated into the life and structure of the institution.

### Board Level Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

One of the KPIs agreed and monitored by the Board relates to gender balance: specifically seeking a gender balance in staff groups at Grade 9 and above and also in Board membership by 2020. The table below shows the position as at 31 May 2017.

Staff Group	No. Males	No. Females	Ratio
All Grade 9 and 10	46	56	45:55
All Grade 11	6	5	55:45
Professors	9	3	75:25
Executive	5	2	71:29
Board	9	6	60:40

### Equality Objectives

The institution's Equality objectives for 2016-17 and progress against these are reported below, together with a report of other activity supporting the equality and diversity agenda.

#### i. General

*a. Establishment of arrangements at Faculty/Directorate level to ensure effective consideration of equality and diversity matters at this level*

The two Faculties and the Professional Services all provided a report to the Equality & Diversity Committee's summer term meeting on the E&D matters that had been considered and actions taken through the year. These showed a number of important initiatives, the more significant of which are detailed in the next section on Other Activity. Having reviewed the different approaches taken to drafting the reports, the Committee agreed to develop a template for the different departments to complete, thereby achieving greater consistency of approach for the future. The template will be rolled out for all departments to begin using in 2017-18.

*b. Introduction of some positive action initiatives to support those students within protected groups which are at higher risk of withdrawal*

A significant project is being led by Professor Noel Smith, with colleagues from a number of academic and professional services departments, to review a wide range of issues impacting on retention and student success. Established by Senate, the Progression Strategy Task-and-Finish Group is tasked with constructing an integrated, institution-wide approach towards:

- improving student engagement and attendance;
- increasing student retention;
- improving achievement (the number of students achieving firsts and 2:1s on graduation);
- ensuring socially inclusive practice, so that we meet the needs of all students, including those from widening participation backgrounds and others at risk of experiencing barriers to accessing and succeeding in higher education; and
- improving student experience and student satisfaction.

The initial focus of the project was to identify and implement a clear overarching model of teaching and learning which supports a more progressive, differentiated student journey from 'guided learning' at year one to 'independent learning' at year three. Other initial elements of the Progression Strategy included the design of a

more sophisticated, extended induction programme and the introduction of revised, less punitive assessment regulations.

The attention of the Progression Strategy group is currently focused on the articulation of a critical and holistic model of student engagement and the role of personal tutorials. The group will then move to develop strategies for ensuring the consistent integration of inclusive curriculum into course design. This includes mainstreaming reasonable adjustments. It also includes – as the main thrust towards an inclusive curriculum at Suffolk – good opportunities for students to use their own experiences as part of their learning. This needs to be reflected in classroom activity and independent study – and, for example, action-based learning and problem-based learning techniques may be important here. It will also be reflected in a greater use of placements, work experience, research fieldwork, sandwich years and other opportunities for community engagement.

*c. Introduction, in collaboration with the multi-faith Chaplaincy and the Students' Union, of more annual events celebrating key dates across a number of faiths*

Two new events have been agreed for 2017/18:

- i. Marking Sukkoth in October (Jewish festival).
- ii. Celebrating Guru Nanak's birthday in November (Sikh festival).

It is hoped that these can become part of the regular calendar of events.

In addition, a multi faith prayer space was organised on 16th May 2017 for which there was good feedback. The chaplaincy are also playing an increasingly strong part in the Freshers' and Induction activities, to ensure that their presence and support is well publicised to students.

## **ii. Ethnicity**

*a. The completion, by Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee, of a review of the curriculum for potential ethnocentricity*

There was a slightly faltering start to this work whilst LTAC and course teams agreed a methodology which would help ensure an appropriate and consistent approach across teams. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement team have led the process with Course Leaders and Course Committees during their round of summer term meetings, collating responses and identifying any courses for more detailed follow up. A report will be submitted to the autumn 2017 meeting of LTAC and subsequently to the Equality & Diversity Committee.

*b. The introduction of more effective methods to reach potential BME staff and students*

We have committed in the Access Agreement to undertake a project in 2017-18 specifically with young BME students and young white male students – both of whom are under-represented in HE (and at the University of Suffolk) and more likely to withdraw early. A pilot of intensive 2-hour support sessions for students with English as an additional language has been developed, focusing on Year 11 GCSE coursework attainment. The pilot will run through the 2017 autumn term. We have committed in the 2018-19 Access Agreement to expand this activity and continue it until 2020-21.

## **iii. Disability (Mental Health)**

*a. Participation in the Mindful Employer initiative and extension, as appropriate, of the commitments therein to the student body*

We have committed to the Mindful Employer initiative and encouraged staff and managers to participate in, and consider the Mental Health First Aid programme from a staff, as well as student, perspective. Whilst the agreed objective is to adopt the

Mindful Employer initiative and explore how this can be extended to incorporate the student body, the reality is that there is currently better provision of service and support for students than staff in this area. Therefore, liaison between Student Services and HR has been primarily with a view to extending some of the support already available to students to staff who are experiencing poor mental health. Together the two teams have been completing a self assessment framework for the organisation in order that an action plan can be agreed for the coming year.

#### iv. Gender

a. *Utilisation of the AthenaSWAN methodology to assess gender equality provision in the organisation in support of the Board gender KPI and in readiness for a potential AthenaSWAN (or other equality chartermark) submission in due course.*

A number of meetings were held through the year to scope what would be required and how this might best be taken forward. The Self Assessment group has been expanded in recognition that the AthenaSWAN methodology is a considerable undertaking – much more significant than initially envisaged. A project plan is now being formulated, and meetings to progress the collation and analysis of data, policy and practice scheduled through the 2017/18 academic year, with a view to a possible AthenaSWAN submission in November 2018.

#### Other Activity in 2016-17

- **Follow up from last year's objectives**

a. *To seek Working Families accreditation in support of the Board gender KPI and as a stepping stone towards a potential AthenaSWAN submission in due course.*

Following accreditation under the Working Families initiative in March 2016 we participated in their Top Employer Initiative. Our submission was benchmarked against 112 other participating organisations nationally and resulted in the University of Suffolk being named as a Top 30 Employer - a phenomenal result in our first year of membership. We continue to progress this agenda to maintain and enhance our position.

b. *The introduction of a number of staff support networks (Working Parents/Carers, LGBT).*

Following consultation with staff about the kinds of networks groups they would find helpful, a Family Network group was launched and now meets monthly. In addition to informal networking and mutual support, the group's purpose includes considering issues impacting on those with family commitments and the ways in which the organisation might support these.

- **Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach**

In the autumn term we were successful in securing a bid to host the Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (NEACO) delivery in Suffolk. This forms part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) which aims to support the Government's goals to:

- double the proportion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in higher education (HE) by 2020
- increase by 20 per cent the number of students in HE from ethnic minority groups
- address the under-representation of young men from disadvantaged backgrounds in HE

The project began in January since which time a team of staff have been appointed to support and deliver this project through a range of initiatives, for example commissioning community based activities which will include some work with BME boys. These

initiatives will run through the 2017-8 academic year and so will be reported in more detail in next year's report.

- **Student Outreach activity**

The Events team organised a number of specific events aimed at the increasing HE participation from under-represented groups, as detailed below:

- **Splendid:** A two day visit for students with disabilities or specific learning needs. This event took place in February 2017, showcasing the opportunities at the University whilst highlighting the support available. The event included an opportunity for parents and carers to visit the University. We will be expanding Splendid in 2018 to include a group of Year 12 students.
- **Uni Camp July 2017:** Our summer residential events aim to raise aspirations and give a taster of university life. The event was expanded this year, with 64 students attending, all of whom met at least one of our widening participation criteria (which include ethnicity). Male students are also prioritised as are under-represented at the University of Suffolk.
- **Access Conference:** The University holds an annual conference aimed at mature students undertaking Access to Higher Education courses in the Partner Colleges, although we also promote it to colleges in the wider locality. This event provides information about returning to learning, study skills and student support, while also giving students a taster of the University's courses.
- **Family Awareness Days:** We have been organising Family Awareness Days for a number of years. These are usually held on the Ipswich campus and are aimed at the families of students in Years 7-9. In partnership with the NEACO project, there are plans to extend this initiative in 2017-18 to reach a wider group and to make it more likely that young people and families from WP backgrounds will attend.
- **Care leavers and looked after children:** In August 2016, we introduced a joint residential programme in conjunction with the University of East Anglia, specifically targeted at care leavers and looked after children. The event had 20 students attend in 2016, and we hope the event will be bigger in 2017 – partly due to an improvement in the quality of our contacts within local authorities and schools that work with these students.
- **Young carers:** In February 2017, we held a campus visit, including subject sessions, for a group of 15 Young Carers from Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex. Some of these students have subsequently attended our open events.

- **SBS BME Business Awards**

The Suffolk Business School, in partnership with the Bangladeshi Support Centre (BSC), ran the first BME Business Awards for Suffolk as part of their annual Business Festival in October 2016. More than 50 nominations were received in total, representing businesses from a broad range of communities across the county, for the four main award categories celebrating both individuals and businesses. Presentations were made by sponsors that included Ipswich Borough Council, Inspire Suffolk, Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and followed food, music and dance performances to celebrate the broader contribution made by BME communities in the County. Feedback from the BME community about the event has been extremely positive. The second awards evening is planned for 25 October 2017 and promises to be bigger and even more colourful.

- **Equal Pay Review**

An Equal Pay Review, focused on gender, ethnicity and disability, was undertaken for staff as at 31 May 2016. The analysis showed an institutional gender pay gap (inclusive of Exec)

of 12.04% in favour of men. Whilst this is a significant gap, one which we want to remove, the context is that in November 2015, UCEA reported a gender pay gap of 14.7% for all HE sector employees. This compares to the Government's announcement in November 2016 of a gender pay gap in the wider economy of 18.1%. We are now required by law to publish gender pay gap data annually: the first report must be published by April 2018, based on a snapshot data as at 31 March 2017. Some aspects of the prescribed methodology are different to practice previously applied in the sector and so work on this is underway currently.

The Equal Pay Review demonstrated that, although there is a gender pay gap in a small number of grades, there were no significant gender pay differentials for staff in Grades 1 to 9. There are significant gender pay gaps in the more senior grades where we have a number of longer serving males at the upper end of the scale. The pay differential within the Executive is significantly skewed by the three most senior posts, which are currently held by males.

In the main, there are small, more favourable pay differentials for staff who have identified themselves as disabled or from a minority ethnic background. However there are adverse pay gaps for staff whose disability or ethnic status is unknown. This is an area where the institution will look to effect change, in particular improving staff confidence to provide this data and promoting an understanding why it is important for us.

Although the review did not signal any significant concerns with pay and practice, it is important that we continue to review and monitor our promotion and recruitment procedures to ensure there is nothing adversely affecting any particular group. An important area for attention, in this regard, is that there are no staff above grade 9 who have declared a disability.

- **Staff Survey 2017**

Our first all staff survey as the University of Suffolk was undertaken in February 2017, achieving an impressive response rate of 82%, which means that we can continue to have great confidence in what the survey results are telling us, and clearly demonstrates that we maintain a strong degree of engagement from staff.

One of the key concerns in the previous staff survey was that due to the number of respondents who chose not to declare against each of the various equality categories, we were unable to draw conclusions about how different groups feel about their work experience. We have been working to improve this, as we are keen to understand the employment perspective of our various constituent groups and address areas where there may be perceived inequality. Therefore it was encouraging to see an improvement of 2% in the number of respondents who felt able to declare their personal information. In each equality category those preferring not to say were more positive compared to 2015 but still remain considerably more critical of the organisation than those who did disclose (which is typical for staff surveys).

It was also encouraging to see an improvement in positive responses from those declaring a disability, those from BME backgrounds and gay/lesbian staff to the question about getting the help and support they need from colleagues. In the 2015 survey, each of these groups of respondents were less positive than the institutional norm: this is now a high scoring question.

Overall, part time staff continue to respond more positively than full time staff across a range of questions. Similarly, female respondents continue to be more positive than males, albeit the difference between the two groups narrowing. Respondents who indicated that they have a disability were much more positive in this survey compared to 2015. However, 43% were

dissatisfied with the opportunities to use their skills in their job. Black and Minority Ethnic respondents were also less satisfied in this respect and we wish to explore this further. This has also been a topic identified to discuss further with the BME staff and student network.

As part of the survey, staff were invited to indicate one thing the university should focus on over the next 12 months in order to improve the experience of working here. The strongest theme in responses, from an equality and diversity perspective, relates to increasing opportunities to work flexibly.

- **All Staff Event**

The annual 'All Staff Event' was held on Friday 8 September 2016, with diversity and inclusion as the theme. One of our key messages to staff and students continues to be that they are unique within our community: "names not numbers". Some interesting keynote speakers explored some current issues and posed some questions about diversity and inclusion and the tensions between them. In the afternoon staff were able to explore these further with some more practical sessions.

Approximately 130 members of staff (including two from Partner Colleges) attended. Feedback from the event was very positive and one of the speakers was invited back in January to lead an away day for the External Relations team who wished to explore this whole area in more depth. Their programme was built around Unconscious Bias and Stereotyping as well as some more general information about the legislative framework and the obligations that arise from this. Their afternoon was spent focusing on the Directorate's own E&D objectives and action plans. These include further training from the Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE) over the next academic year.

- **Training & Development**

The Active Bystander and Prevent sessions have continued this year, available to both staff and students, but take-up continues to be limited. The Recruitment and Selection of Staff workshop remains a requirement for the chairs of interview panels (panel members are encouraged to attend) and Selecting Students continues to be a popular programme, especially among Health Sciences staff, who are required to undertake the course every 3 years as part of their NMC membership and for course re-validation.

Over the past year, in addition focusing their away day on Equality & Diversity matters, the External Relations team have prioritised a range of equality related training and development this year. For example, as well as Mental Health First Aid, the Student Recruitment and Outreach team have been trained in delivering sessions for students with additional needs, including autism and ADHD; and Safeguarding training. The Outreach Officer attended a conference in June 2017 on mature and part-time students accessing higher education, and the team have recently joined a network, led by the University of Winchester, specifically looking at ensuring children from military families can access higher education.

- **European Commission's Concordat on HR Excellence in Research**

The University achieved the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research Award in June 2017, recognising our long term commitment to the career development of researchers. Acceptance under this concordat requires inclusion of an action plan for further improvement. An implementation group has been formed to take forward the action plan over the next two years. The plan includes some items relating to the principal that diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.

- **Female Entrepreneurship**

Supporting diversity in entrepreneurship is one of the strategic objectives of the Ipswich Waterfront Innovation Centre (IWIC) which was launched in October 2016. To date there have been no women applying for membership of the IWIC as entrepreneurs/innovators and a small working group was formed in May to develop a plan for how the IWIC would begin to respond to that objective. A small group, including representation from Suffolk Business School, Corporate Affairs, R&E Services, IWIC team and the New Anglia LEP, has now met three times to explore this area and propose a variety of activities to support the development of female entrepreneurship, the most significant of which is the establishment of the Suffolk Centre for Female Entrepreneurship (SCFE), a unique resource within UK Innovation Centres, Suffolk and further afield; providing a leadership role and knowledge base for the support and promotion of female entrepreneurship, innovation within business and a reduction in gender inequality across all business sectors. The SCFE will launch in October 2017 and further information about its first year of activities will be provided in next year's report.

In its first disbursement round the Foundation Board supported a project submitted by the IWIC to cover the cost for student entrepreneurs to become IWIC members. As a result of this project three student members joined, two of whom were female and who were both the first female members of the IWIC. In the second round of disbursement held in October 2017, the project was refunded.

- **Disabled Students' Allowances**

The Head of Student Services led a project to evaluate the effectiveness of support for students with disabilities in the context of the reforms to the Disabled Student Allowances and practice in Higher Education. The following areas for action have been addressed through the year as outlined below:

1. Staff awareness of Disability
  - The Disability and Mental Health Adviser has been rolling out the nationally recognised Mental Health First Aid programme of training for staff, with 5 sessions/65 staff trained during the year
2. Inclusive practices and a minimum-level approach to reasonable adjustments
  - A multi-disciplinary group developed an inclusivity framework which fed into the Teaching and Learning Framework review in January.
3. Individual reasonable adjustments
  - The introduction of the Disabled Students' Allowances Quality Assurance Framework (DSA-QAF) and mandatory criteria in April 2016 to enhance the quality of Non-Medical Help (NMH) necessitated a full audit of NMH staff skills, experience and qualifications. Development plans and some changes to staffing, to ensure full compliance, were completed during the year.
4. Availability and accessibility of learning materials and assistive technologies (e.g. technology required, loan equipment, books/e-books)
  - Further funding was identified which enabled the University to purchase additional loan equipment, for example Digital Voice Recorders
  - Investigation is ongoing into the benefit of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) strategies, in particular the use of Lecture Capture as a centralised way of recording taught sessions.

- **Brexit**

Brexit has continued to create a level of ambiguity for our international staff and, until Government negotiations have progressed further, we are unable to provide firm assurances

about their legal position in the future. However, we continue to emphasise the important contribution that they make to our community and have provided support for the international staff society, whose lively gatherings are helping these staff develop a stronger sense of community here.

- **Students' Union**

The Students' Union elected a range of Liberation Officers in their March 2017 elections with all positions contested and the highest turnout received so far voting for these roles. The roles elected include a Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer, Women's Officer, LGBT +, Students with Caring Responsibilities and Students with Disabilities Officers. These roles (and the remainder of the SU Executive team) have been working on a range of campaigns to promote equality and diversity for student members. Events are planned for Black History Month in conjunction with the BAME officer, and the SU is leading on the Papyrus Hope Walk to support young people struggling with their mental health as one of their priority campaigns. With funding from the Foundation Board, the Union also ran a 'student boost' campaign of random acts of kindness to impact upon student health and wellbeing.

The Students with Disabilities Officer has actively created a network of students with disabilities seeking to ensure that students who have disability-related extenuating circumstances feel acknowledged and supported by their course teams.

Following work on 'It's Never OK' an NUS campaign on prevention of Sexual Harassment, the SU President has been active in promoting 'Ask for Angela' and the Union have set up a Cabsmart agreement to improve the safety of women on and around campus.

The Students with Caring Responsibilities Officer has continually informed practice, with more sports sessions being held in the middle of the day to accommodate childcare, the inclusion of a family disco, zoo trip and other family events in the calendar.

### **Training & Development**

Academic & Student Services and Human Resources together work to ensure that equality and diversity are embedded in existing learning and development programmes, to develop new ways of increasing understanding and awareness of equality and diversity issues and to support equality and diversity initiatives. We also explore alternative modes of delivery in order to maximise coverage.

### **Equality responsibilities of service and facility providers**

Staff from external businesses or organisations, and contractors, who operate on campus, are made aware of our Equality & Diversity policy and our guidelines for dealing with harassment and bullying, and are encouraged to act in accordance with them and with equality legislation. If any breach of equality legislation, our policy or the harassment and bullying guidelines by a member of staff of an external business or organisation which operates on campus is brought to our attention, we will take reasonable steps to prevent any further breach occurring.

We ensure that equality considerations are taken into account in tendering processes and seek to ensure that potential contractors have an effective equality policy. Contracts with business or organisations hosted by the institution must be drawn up with reference to our Equality & Diversity Policy.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing policy in relation to equality and diversity issues lies with the Equality & Diversity Committee, which is an advisory group to the Executive.

The Head of HR Projects assists the Director of HR in providing an annual report on equality and diversity related activity to the Equality & Diversity Committee, Senate, the Executive and the Board.

Sara Corcoran  
Director of HR

## **Appendix 1**

### **Equality & Diversity Priorities 2017-18**

Whilst the institution recognises the need to continue to develop and assure equality in all areas, data suggests a focus on the areas of gender, ethnicity and disability for the coming year. The following outline objectives have been agreed for the year and are currently under review to establish timeframes and resources for delivery.

#### **General**

1. Implementation of the Progression Strategy, to support those students within protected groups which are at higher risk of withdrawal (Specific actions to focus on for E&D Cttee purposes?)
2. Work to reduce the number of staff who do not disclose their protected characteristic data i) for general employment purposes and ii) in staff survey

#### **Ethnicity**

3. Completion of any actions arising from the review of the curriculum for potential ethnocentricity
4. Completion and evaluation of the NEACO and Uni Camp initiatives in respect of increasing the numbers of BME student applicants
5. The introduction of more effective methods/positive action approaches to reach potential BME staff

#### **Disability**

6. Development and implementation of an action plan to support the Mindful Employer initiative, ensuring consideration of actions for both staff and students
7. Action to understand and address the barriers for staff with disabilities progressing beyond Grade 8

#### **Gender**

8. Progression of the AthenaSWAN methodology with a view to a possible submission for accreditation in November 2018
9. Action to understand and address the barriers for more flexible approaches to work for staff in management grades