Queen's University Belfast

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report

Contact details:

• Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Mr Conor Curran Telephone: 028 90 971045 Email: c.curran@qub.ac.uk
• Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above ☒ Name: Click or tap here to enter text. Telephone: Click or tap here to enter text. Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:	Diversity and Inclusion | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast
Signature:	

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between September 2023 and August 2024

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

1   In 2023-24, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Policy/service delivery developments

Policy / Reporting

- Queen's University Belfast has been awarded a prestigious Gold Athena Swan Award conferred in January 2024 by Advance HE. Queen's is the first university on the island of Ireland and is only the second in the UK to achieve an institutional Gold Award for its work improving gender equality. Athena Swan
- During the reporting period the University launched the revised Equality Scheme and Equality Action plan 2024-2029 following consultation in 2023. Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024 - 2029
- Queen's Inclusive Employment Scheme continued and we hosted 17 individuals with a disability or long term condition in various Schools and Directorates throughout the University.
- We continued to offer support and guidance on Menopause and Fertility Leave and continue embedding our Menopause Policy and Fertility Treatment Leave Policy
- We published our Fair Employment returns, for further details see Fair Employment Return Monitoring Data

EDI Training

- We delivered two Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity awareness training sessions for staff online (Feb 2024 and April 2024).
- We delivered two Gender Identity training and Non-Binary awareness for staff online in collaboration with The Rainbow Project (March 2024 and May 2024).
- We delivered Neurodiversity training with Employers for Disability NI for all staff (Nov 2023).
- We delivered Active Bystander Training to staff and students throughout the year and with the Active Bystander Company in May 2024 with 31 staff attending this session.
- We delivered Bullying and Harassment training to staff (Oct 2023 and May 2024).
- We delivered one of our award-winning Menopause awareness sessions in October 2023.
- We delivered an Autism, ADD and ADHD information session in conjunction with Employers for Disability NI.
- In this reporting period, the University delivered two Mindful Manager training sessions, one introduction to Suicide Awareness, two Introductions to Mindfulness,

two Managing Grief and Complicated Grief sessions, one Anticipatory Grief session, Parenting Clinics, Men's Mental Health Awareness, and further separate Parenting Clinics.

Outreach, Engagement and Events

In the 2023-2024 reporting period, the University delivered:

- 22 events related to Disabilities / Long Term Conditions / Mental Health.
- 15 events related to Race / Ethnicity.
- 29 events related to Gender Equality.
- 9 events related to Sexual Orientation.
- 8 events related to Political Opinion.
- 3 events related to Religion / Faith.
- 2 events related to Age.
- 8 events related to Dependents / Caring Responsibilities.

2   Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2023-24 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Click or tap here to enter text.

Some examples of outcomes and impact delivering quality and diversity positive action measure are set out in the response above.

The following evidence is presented **in alphabetical order.**

ACCESSIBILITY

AccessAble (Physical Accessibility)

In this reporting period, the University has continued its commitment to enabling physical accessibility on campus for staff, students and visitors. We have continued our partnership with AccessAble to develop guides to help staff, students and visitors to get to and around our sites and buildings more easily. The promotion of the AccessAble has seen a 140% increase in users during the reporting period.

To encourage awareness and consideration of physical accessibility there are posters for all public areas of the University which promote and provide information on accessibility guides for each of the locations on campus. This enables staff, students and visitors to ascertain if their destination at Queen's is going to be accessible to them. QUB accessibility guides continue to be actively promoted on digital screens in shared areas on campus.

Institutional Digital Accessibility

Accessibility Regulations (Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018) came into force in September 2018 and continues to build upon regulations in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Regulations require public bodies to take the necessary measures to make their websites more accessible by making them perceivable, operable, understandable, robust and the University continues to ensure its webpages remain compliant.

The Web Support Team continue to provide training for all website moderators to ensure their content meets accessibility requirements and are compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 - AA standard. Website owners and content editors receive scheduled accessibility reports for their website(s) via email on a fortnightly basis. We have continued to improve integrations between our web platforms to make the process of implementing accessibility fixes easier for website owners and content editors in the CMS. Our guidance continues to evolve with these changes.

The University has also created further resources for all content management system users to ensure that those working with web content are acting in line with the accessibility requirements for public sector bodies and continue to promote and follow good practice regarding web accessibility. This includes dedicated Accessibility support available from the

University's IT Helpdesk. We are also moving our web content into newer templates which have accessibility features built into them from the start.

Digital Accessibility

Support and training continue for staff to enable digital accessibility. The Centre for Educational Development (CED) provides support, resources and guidance including:

- A range of online guides are in place on the [Digital Learning at Queen's](#) site to help staff plan, design and develop content in a more inclusive way.
- A [Canvas Course Setup](#) guide has been developed which is updated annually and used as a tool to support staff in preparing for the next academic year 2023 /2024.
- How to [Record a Video quick guide](#) learning materials.
- [Accessible Video Content Design for Learner Variability.](#)

The University has put in place appropriate tools, advice and support to staff on how to record learning materials which also allows for [automated captions and transcripts.](#)

The University continues to deliver and promote ['Accessibility Toolkit';](#) an online, self-paced Canvas course that provides guidance for academic staff to become more knowledgeable about digital accessibility. It provides advice on how to create accessible content for learner variability, giving examples of both good and bad practice; and highlights accessibility checker tools such as the Canvas Rich Content Editor and Blackboard Ally. The training is available to all staff with access to Canvas VLE and the training was advertised and promoted in a number of ways internally in the University in order to encourage attendance.

For those uploading teaching material, Canvas also includes an accessibility tool that checks common accessibility errors within the editor. This tool can help staff design course content while considering accessibility attributes and is located in the Rich Content Editor menu bar. The University has also recently invested in a Blackboard Ally integration with Canvas to further enhance this provision going forward.

The software underpinning Canvas is supplied by Instructure. Ensuring accessibility of the platform is a key focus of the provider, according to their accessibility statement. [Accessibility statement](#).

Features of Canvas VLE which support accessibility include:

- change colours, contrast levels and fonts on documents.
- zoom in without the text spilling off the screen.
- navigate the content using just a keyboard.
- navigate the content using speech recognition software.
- listen to the content using a screen reader.
- screen readers.

ANTI HARASSMENT ADVISORS

PART A

Queen's is committed to creating an environment free from any form of harassment and ensuring all staff feel comfortable within the workplace. We continue to work with our established network of Anti-Harassment Advisors on Campus who can provide confidential information to staff on issues relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Any member of staff who is experiencing harassment can contact an Anti-Harassment Advisor to seek advice, support or to talk to them about what they are experiencing in strict confidence and help them decide what steps to take next. The Anti-Harassment Advisors provide support through:

- Listening to staff who believe they are being harassed, to clarify the options open to them and to assist them in resolving the matter informally where possible and provide similar support to those accused of harassment.
- Where requested, supporting individuals throughout the resolution of their concerns. This may include discussing with the individual what they may wish to say or write to the person who they feel has harassed or bullied them or to a senior member of staff who can take action. The aim is to empower and support the individual.
- Dealing with all cases with the utmost confidentiality except in cases where there is an unacceptable risk to a member of staff, student or to the institution.
- Signposting to other appropriate support.
- Providing similar support to those accused of harassment.

The details and further information on our Anti-Harassment Advisors is detailed on our [Diversity and Inclusion webpages](#).

ATHENA SWAN

Athena SWAN (Gender Equality)

Queen's University Belfast has been awarded a prestigious Gold Athena Swan Award conferred in January 2024 by Advance HE. Queen's is the first university on the island of Ireland and is only the second in the UK to achieve an institutional Gold Award for its work improving gender equality.

On 30th May 2024, the university celebrated this by hosting a celebration event which was held in the Whitla Hall and included keynote, a poetry reading, lightening talks, music and a dynamic panel discussion. [Queen's celebrates historic Athena Swan Gold Award](#)

A further 'in conversation' reflections was also held called 'Reflections: A 25-year Journey in Gender Equality' which featured current and former key members of Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI) and Athena Swan Committees.

The event also featured a formal lunch for key stakeholders, enabling deeper conversations on the University's ethos of active inclusion.

Institutional Athena Swan Award from Advance HE and 15 school awards 3 Gold, 7Silver, and 5 Bronze awards have been attained making Queen's a leader in gender equality in the Higher

Education Sector. We have made significant progress in implementing the 2019-2023 Athena Swan Action Plan.

As well as leading the Athena Swan Programme at Queen's, Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI) continues to celebrate and champion women at our University. It provides a voice for women at Queen's and advocates for structures, culture and working practices that are fair, transparent and responsive to the needs of women.

QGI is active in developing women's careers through promotions workshops and bespoke mentoring programmes and enhances the visibility of the contribution of women in Queen's through prestigious lectures, networking events, conferences, portraits project, art commissions and podcasts. QGI engages with Schools and Directorates, representing women's views across Queen's and supporting women's views on priority issues to come to the fore.

In the last reporting year, QGI and the Athena Swan team at Queen's have hosted a number of activities as part of our continued commitment to gender equality. Highlights include:

- **Women in Leadership** (Oct 2023) QGI hosted the 'Women in Leadership' in conversation event with US Ambassador Jane Hartley who highlighted the role of women in leadership and delivering inclusive economic growth.
- **Ada Lovelace Day (October 2022)** is an international celebration of the achievements of women during which we showcased female role models from Queen's and industry, highlighting their career journey and exploring why they chose a career in STEM.
- **Swan Champions Network** meeting and activities continued over the past year providing an opportunity for School Swan Champions from across the University to collaborate on areas of common challenge in gender equality. An informal session was held in March 2023 where staff heard directly from colleagues about the changes they have seen as a result of the Athena SWAN programme at Queen's.
- **Athena Swan Annual Lecture** *"What does intersectionality look like in research practice and decision making?"* provided an opportunity for collective engagement on issues relating to gender equality and intersectionality.
- **Portrait Illustration Project** was established to celebrate and promote the impactful contributions of women at Queen's. The project aims to highlight the critical and varied roles that a diverse range of women play across the University with a range of watercolour portraits commissioned by renowned Irish artist Laura Callaghan. The portraits will become part of the University Art Collection and will be unveiled in a special exhibition at the Naughton Gallery in November 2024.

We also continued to offer differentiated Female Development Support to help female progression in the University.

- **Aurora Leadership Development Programme** is an Advance HE leadership development programme female only led aimed at addressing the under representation of women in leadership positions. In this reporting period we supported 16 female colleagues (both academic and profession services staff) from across Queen's successfully completed the programme.

- **Annual QGI Academic Mentoring Programme** provides mentorship for female lecturers, senior lecturers and professors. The 2023-24 programme arranged approximately 16 Mentee – Mentor pairings.
- **Annual QGI Professional Services Mentoring Programme** provides mentorship in the area of career development and leadership for professional services staff at Grade 7 the 2023-2024 programme has arranged approximately 25 Mentee- Mentor pairings.
- **Academic Progression Workshop 2024** the annual academic progression workshop was held on Thursday 11 January 2024. All female academics were invited. The workshop enabled informed understanding and learning about Academic Progression and career planning.

Swan Champions Training (April 2024)

Attendees were given an engaging Assertiveness Skills Training session which set the stage for an insightful exchange of best practice. Attendees had the opportunity to gain valuable insights from representatives of the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy, and School of Law on effective student engagement strategies. Additionally, participants learned about leading successful SATS from the School of Arts, English and Languages, as well as the School of Nursing & Midwifery. The event concluded with a delightful brunch, providing the Swan Champions with a relaxed environment to network and further discuss their experiences and insights.

International Women's Day (March 2024)

An extended programme of events and initiatives took place in March 2024 to celebrate international women's day at Queen's including:

- QGI hosted a networking lunch at which we welcomed keynote speaker Ms Orla Corr OBE, Pro Chancellor, Queen's University Belfast.
- 'Meet the Artist Alina Gawhary – Art and Afghanistan' in partnership with Beyond Skin.
- School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EEECS) hosted an afternoon of talks from inspiring EEECS entrepreneurs who shared their inspirations and journey in establishing Feminatech and an app called M-Power to help women track and deal with symptoms of the menopause.
- 'I AM WOMAN' exhibition by Documentary visual artist Lise McGreevy who presented her powerful equality / diversity exhibition for a second time on campus.
- Film Screening with Cycling UK, Belfast Cycle Campaign and Queen's University Belfast for a screening of the documentary film 'Women Don't Cycle.' An expert panel followed the screening who shared their reflections on women and cycling.
- 'Reach for Better' Business Event – Yoga and panel discussion featuring inspirational women working in different aspects of sustainable business.
- School of History Anthropology Philosophy and Politics Event to discuss intersectional issues facing women in politics.
- School of Medicine Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences hosted Sara McCracken, founder and CEO of Angel Eyes NI, who shared her journey in establishing Empatheyes, a social

- enterprise harnessing Virtual Reality technology to create a Visual Impairment Simulator.
- School of Natural and Built Environment lecture on Climate Change and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in construction. This lecture delivered by Wendy Blundell explored how civil and infrastructure engineers and other built environment professionals, can better support delivery of the UN SDGs.
- Faculty of Medicine Health and Life Sciences hosted an insightful talk by Professor Jenny Johnston followed by a panel discussion which shed a light on the complexities and challenges surrounding menopause and fertility treatment, and the relevant policies and support systems that are available at Queen's.
- School of Psychology hosted 'Menopause in Academia' Dr Valarie Holmes presented her findings from her recent study: Experiences of perimenopause and menopause among women in academia. Which was followed by a discussion based on how we can take action to support women experiencing perimenopause/menopause as a University.
- School of Social Sciences Education and Social Work Swan Annual Lecture 'What does intersectionality look like in research practice and decision making?." This lecture provided an opportunity for colleagues to engage collectively.

Active Bystander Training

Delivered virtually, this training aims to empower staff across the Queens University community to challenge poor behaviours which may have become normalised and bring about change through the reinforcement of messages defining the boundaries of unacceptable behaviour. We designed scenarios specifically related to experiences in higher education, including the context of age, gender, LGBT+ inclusivity and respect for cultures, to focus discussions and provide attendees with guidance and strategies on how they could intervene as an Active Bystander. Our hope is that by working together we can create a safe and supportive working environment within our community by supporting staff to intervene and interrupt unacceptable behaviours safely and appropriately.

The feedback from participants has been very positive and a number of academic colleagues have proactively developed material and delivered sessions to staff and students in their area. This training was also included as part of 'REC-EDI 5' programme this year. This programme was developed by QGI as part of Queen's Racial Equity Programme. Active bystander training continues to be developed and delivered across schools.

CARERS AND PARENTS

Carers Research Support Fund

The Carer's Research Support Fund is a new fund developed by QGI as part of the Institutional Athena Swan Programme and was launched in the Research and Enterprise Directorate.

The fund contributes to the costs of additional caring responsibilities for Academics (Teaching & Research or Education), Researchers and staff when attending research conferences or other development research activities.

Staff can apply for up to £500 per academic year which can be used for either caring costs, or travel costs of dependant(s) and an additional caregiver to accompany the staff member to a conference.

Queen's recognises that participation in research conferences and career development research activities can be more challenging for those with caring responsibilities. This new fund is part of our broader approach to enhancing and enabling an inclusive and supportive research culture.

Carers Network

The staff Carers Network continues to support our employees with caring responsibilities. The Carers Network allows carers across Queen's to come together and share experiences and information and provide carers at Queen's with a voice to support the University's understanding of the issues faced by working carers.

A new procedure helps identify new carers commencing employment at Queen's and improved alerts for those who update their record to identify as a carer. The Diversity and Inclusion Unit issue regular updates and share information with carers, including information from Health Trusts, targeted information sessions around financial matters, benefits advice from Employers for Childcare and information sessions on Direct Payments.

The Carers Network continues to offer several social gatherings each year as an opportunity to meet and share experiences. There have been coffee mornings, a holistic therapy session and a Christmas lunch during the reporting period.

The University continues to engage and consult with the carers network in helping shape an informed approach to new policies and procedures throughout Queen's. Further information on the Carers Network is available on the [Carers Webpages](#).

Carers Passport

Following the launch of out Carers Passport in 2022 we continue to promote its benefits. The Carer Passport is a way for staff who are working as carers to electronically document and communicate their caring responsibilities to their manager, in a way that allows for the conversation and discussion to take place with less stigma.

The Passport, which has been adopted in many progressive workplaces around the UK, aims to promote the understanding of the staff member's needs, enabling managers to put in place the flexibility needed to support their individual circumstances where possible.

Enabling a two-way discussion, the Carer Passport supports a conversation between staff and managers that will generally involve balancing the needs of the staff member with the needs of the business area. It does not normally involve a formal change to the staff member's contract

of employment, but, instead, enables staff and managers to find solutions and arrangements that can empower and support carers at Queen's.

The launch of the passport has been assisted by specific sessions for Line Managers to support their understanding and application of the Carer Passport at Queen's.

More Information [Carer Passport | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast (qub.ac.uk)](https://qub.ac.uk)

Parents Network

This informal network was established to help support staff who are new parents or have recently joined Queens and have children and wish to connect with other parents informally, to ask and answer general questions. Since its launch, the network continues to grow and be a beneficial resource for those at Queen's with parenting responsibilities.

Student Parents and Carers Network

Queens continues to offer support for students with dependants. For students with caring responsibilities, the QUB Student Parents and Carers network offers relaxed and friendly fortnightly meetings to raise issues, share information and learn about opportunities.

Students' Parents and Carers Support Fund

During this reporting period, the University continued to publicise and encourage applications for the 'Parent and Care' Support Fund. Available to all students with caring responsibilities, funding of a £100 award is available to contribute to the costs of caring activities such as emergency childcare, household or transport costs, or any other costs associated with caring responsibilities.

Homework Clubs

The Homework Clubs Programme gives Queen's University volunteers the chance to provide homework support to children and young people who live in areas of educational underachievement.

During 2023-24, Homework Clubs Programme worked in partnership with 16 Clubs based in areas of educational achievement throughout Belfast.

Volunteer Student Union recruited, trained and allocated 150 student volunteers to these 17 partner homework clubs, offering weekly study support to 398 participating children and young people aged 4-18 years, improving their study skills, building their confidence and raising their aspirations about further and higher education.

Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms at Queen's

In 2022, the University formally introduced a range of private Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms for use by Queen's staff and students returning to work or study after Maternity Leave.

All rooms are equipped with comfortable sofas, armchairs and footstools, have access to electrical sockets for breast pump use, and are located close to bathroom facilities. Pregnant staff and students may also use these rooms to rest in during their pregnancy.

Information on the location of the rooms and areas where breastfeeding is welcome across the campus is available on the University's Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms Webpages.

Breast Feeding Welcome Here Scheme

In September 2023 Queen's joined over 800 other business and organisations as a member of the Public Health Agency's Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme. This Scheme is an initiative which makes it easier for mums to recognise places where they can breastfeed their baby while out and about. 2023 | Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme launched at Queen's

COST OF LIVING

Queen's continued with support to staff and students facing the cost of living crisis.

Student Cost of Living Support

- Our Accommodation bursary scheme supported approximately 450 students in this academic year, reducing their costs by up to 37%.
- The University's Financial Assistance Fund is available to support students in financial hardship during their studies. It is available to students who are not eligible for the Student Support Fund.
- Care experienced students can request support from SUQCESS for costs directly related to their academic studies or academic career.
- Childcare support and discounted sport memberships.
- Queen's Students Union teamed up with the University to provide The Pantry, a free refill station located on the Ground Floor of One Elmwood. The Pantry: Your Free Refill Station

Accredited Living Wage Employer

Queen's has already been paying its employees the Real Living Wage since 2022, and the recent accreditation officially recognises the University's commitment to ensure employees and any regularly contracted workers are paid the living wage hourly rate.

Currently, only 93 organisations in Northern Ireland are Living Wage employers, compared to 3,714 in Scotland and 580 in Wales, underscoring the need for increased advocacy and support for the Living Wage movement across Northern Ireland.

The Living Wage accreditation is one of a number of initiatives the University has undertaken during the Cost of Living Crisis to support and invest in their people. These include a new pay deal that will see a base salary increase of 13% over three years for all staff, a one-off payment and an additional day's leave. Queen's also developed a Financial Assistance Scheme that allows interest free borrowing of up to £2,400. Other benefits include existing on-site affordable childcare services, discounted sport membership and free period products in bathrooms across campus.

PART A

DISABILITY

Autism Awareness Training

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit hosted Autism Awareness training session in April 2024 delivered by Employers for Disability Northern Ireland (EFDNI).

The session focused on how people on the autism spectrum are affected, their wide range of abilities, challenges, skills and strengths. The session brings the individual perspective of people on the autism spectrum through a number of videos, to increase insight and enhance awareness of how best to interact with and support people on the autism spectrum in the workplace and line managers were specifically encouraged to attend. A total of 32 staff were in attendance.

British Sign Language Training

The Language Centre currently supports the British Sign Language Level 1 and Level 2 teaching and assessment, supporting staff to improve their ability to communicate with the deaf community, including those living with hearing loss.

Employ Autism Scheme

The University continued to work with the charity Ambitious about Autism and Santander Universities UK to enable autistic students and graduates to access paid internships and tailored careers support and advice, and to improve neurodiversity in the workplace.

Internships are typically equivalent to full-time work for 8-10 weeks but could stretch over a longer period with reduced hours per week.

The programme is open to all current students or graduates who have graduated within the last two years and have not yet secured permanent employment, who are over 18 and registered as autistic with Queen's Disability Services or who have a formal diagnosis (received or in progress) of autism or a social communication disorder.

Behind The Scenes at Queen's

In June 2024 we held an informal event to showcase Queen's as an inclusive employer. Demonstrating the variety and extent of working roles available across our campus, including in professional support, technical and operational services, to those who may not have thought of Queen's as a potential employer. Information was provided on the Recruitment and Selection processes, Transport, Travel and Sustainability Schemes, Wellbeing and Reward, and Support Funds/Leave Entitlements. Speakers discussed a range of roles and opportunities including Clerical, Gardening / Estates, Hospitality, Queen's Sport, Nursery/creche provision, Q work, Queen's academy and Inclusive Employment Scheme.

Inclusive Employment Scheme

Our Inclusive Employment Scheme provides an opportunity for those who have been unable to get work, or have had to leave work because of a disability, to develop skills and gain valuable

work experience. The placements at Queen's provide invaluable opportunities with one of Northern Irelands largest employers to learn skills, to develop relationships in the workplace, to build confidence, to enhance CV's and ultimately to lead to full-time or part-time employment.

This Scheme has been growing year on year following the pandemic, with 17 placements opportunities matched for 2023/2024. Those matched individuals commenced in August and September 2023; with placements for varied durations from twelve weeks – six months. Inclusive Employment Scheme Webpage.

Other Disability Initiatives

The University continues to deliver a number of additional disability friendly good practice initiatives:

- Queen's University Disability Forum (meets quarterly) to review and monitor progress against the University's Disability Action Plan and consider the needs of, and the issues affecting, staff and students with disabilities at the University.
- Funded support is available for students with disabilities through Disability Support Allowance (DSA).
- The Needs Assessment Centre provides support, advice and guidance tailored specifically to the individual students to prepare them for University life and enable them to reach their potential and provides advice on the DSA process from the application for funding to receiving recommended support.
- Peer support is provided though regular social group meetings to enable students with disabilities and/or long-term conditions to meet other students.
- One to one support is arranged by Disability Services for students through the Register of Support Providers at Queen's to assist with specific academic challenges.
- Advice and guidance for staff declaring a disability is now available to provide clarity and support regarding who they need to tell and for what purpose e.g., for reasonable adjustments or staff monitoring, in addition to further sources of support.
- Support is provided to disabled staff via the Disability Support Fund which allows QUB staff (who have disclosed their disability) to apply for funding to purchase various pieces of equipment to assist them when carrying out their work.

Staff Disability Support Network

The Staff Disability Support Network continues to provide a voice for staff with disabilities and long-term conditions. The network provides an opportunity for these staff to be represented and participate in University life. A nominee from the network attends the University's Disability Forum which provides feedback on how the University can encourage and support greater representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions throughout the institution.

PART A

EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE CURRICULUM

The University continues to invest and improve Equality Diversity and Inclusion in the curriculum, most notably with regards to digital accessibility.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Curriculum is key to the student experience. All the support provided by the Centre for Educational Development aims to remove barriers for students and to ensure equity (See further information on digital accessibility on Page 5).

Queen's use of Canvas, a University-wide Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), across all academic programmes from has been a key enabler in the move to active connected learning and online learning, meeting the needs of a diverse digital student body. Canvas has also supported the delivery of alternative assessments.

Canvas has been enabled to allow a personal pronoun identifier in Canvas VLE; a Canvas account setting which enables staff and students to select and update their personal pronouns in their user settings, which will display after their name in areas throughout Canvas.

This is function communicated regularly to ensure that new staff and students are aware of this way to identify.

There is continued on-going work across the University in relation to De-Colonising the Curriculum where appropriate.

EQUALITY SCREENING

In the reporting period, we equality screened (or are actively equality screening) the following workplace policies:

- Policy & Procedure for the duty of care of staff and students travelling for research purposes.
- IPLS Admission Test.
- Employment Policy Review.
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment (PUWER).
- Relocation Policy.
- Reward Strategy.
- AMIC Business Case.
- Redeployment Policy.
- Redundancy Policy.
- Sustainable Travel Policy.
- Research Support for Carers (Pilot).
- Serious Adverse Incident Policy.
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Stress Management Policy.
- Staff Total Reward Booklet.
- New & Expectant Mothers Policy and Guidance.
- Student Placement Policy.
- Naming Main Site Tower.

- Illumination of The Lanyon.
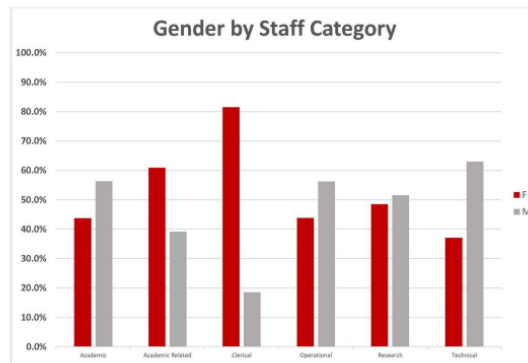- Domestic Abuse Leave Policy.
- Pregnancy Loss Policy.

Please click to view our Equality Screening webpage for policies screened and supporting information provided to staff.

FAIR EMPLOYMENT RETURN

We have submitted our Fair Employment return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on 6 June 2024.

Workforce Profile as of 6 February 2023:

Gender

1976
45.9%

2332
54.1%

Gender by Staff Category

Ethnicity

BAME
382
8.9%

Not Known
250
5.8%

White
3676
85.3%
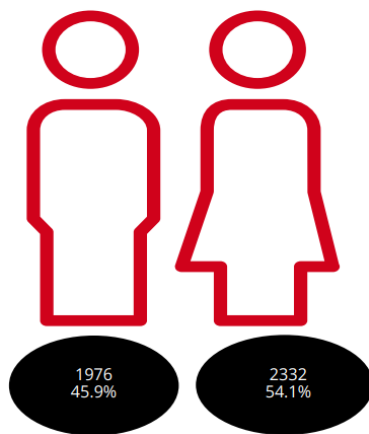
*BAME = Black & Minority Ethnic

Disability

No
2902
67.4%

Not Known
1006
23.4%

Yes
400
9.3%

Community Background
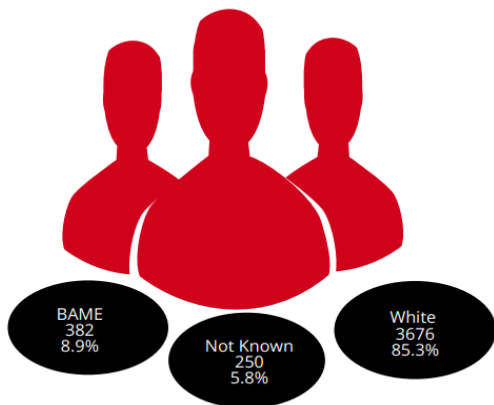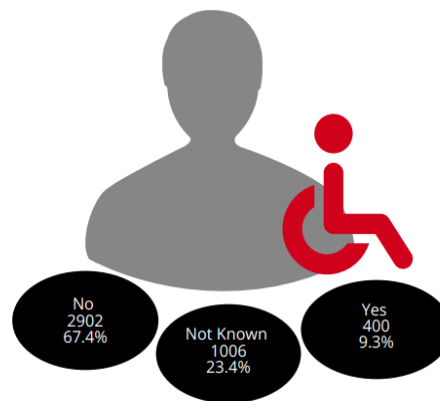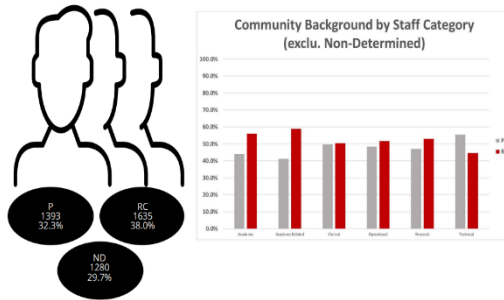(P-Protestant, RC-Roman Catholic, ND-Non Determined)

We published our Fair Employment Return findings in respect of employees in June 2023, for further details, visit the Diversity and Inclusion Webpages.

Initiatives addressing Under-representation

We will continue to develop initiatives in order to address under-representation in the University, for example through the use of Welcome Statements, our Social Charter Project and Behind the Scenes at Queen's and our Inclusive Employment Scheme.

We have expanded our general Welcome Statement to confirm that the University welcomes applications from all sections of society and particularly from individuals from the Black, Asian, Minority or Ethnic (BAME) community, persons with a Disability and those who identify as LGBT. We also provide evidence of our commitment to Equality to applicants by including information on our staff networks for our LGBT staff (PRISM), BAME and International staff (iRise) as well as a Disability Support Network and Carers Network.

FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES

Staff can avail of family friendly policies to ensure work-life balance including Adoptive Leave, Career Break, Dependant Leave including Bereavement Leave, flexible working, parental leave, paternity leave (including Adoptive Paternity Leave) and Shared Parental leave. Further details on our family friendly policies can be accessed on our Annual, Family and Other Leave webpage.

Manager Training – Family Friendly Policies

Knowledge sessions on Family Friendly Policies have been built into the People Manager Essentials Programme, the development programme is designed to support people managers to build their people management knowledge, skills and effective behaviours. These knowledge sessions provide guidance and information to Managers on Family Friendly policies such as Family Leave, Dependents Leave and Flexible Working to ensure policies are applied fairly and consistently.

Online toolkits have been developed, including an online toolkit specifically relating to family leave. These manager guidance toolkits provide support and ensure consistency, fairness and full information on family friendly entitlements for all employees when making and responding to requests. Policy, guidance and information on these toolkits was communicated via staff roundup (Internal Comms) and advertised on the Queen's webpage. This guidance can be viewed at [People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast.](#)

The University is committed to facilitating flexible working arrangements where possible to ensure staff are supported to strike the right balance between home and work life, and particularly support those with caring responsibilities or those impacted by health or disability considerations.

New Hybrid Working Guidance was introduced in March 2023, developed in response to staff feedback that working flexibly is considered an important benefit. Hybrid working can now be arranged formally through the flexible working policy or agreed informally as part of the Agile working approach. Hybrid working can also be combined with other kinds of flexible working such as staggered hours, part-time hours, or job share.

GENDER

Diversity Charter Mark NI

The Diversity Mark accreditation is awarded to companies following an assessment process which ensures they have reached the required standard of commitment to advancing Diversity and Inclusion.

Queens currently holds a Silver Diversity Mark, recognising its commitment to advancement of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

The Silver Diversity Mark award highlights the University's progress in advancing gender, race and disability equality and its ambitious plans in this space and reflects significant progress since the University was awarded Bronze several years ago.

Fertility Treatment Leave Policy

Following the launch of the [Fertility Treatment Leave Policy](#) we have continued to support staff who are undergoing fertility treatment, or those supporting a partner who is undertaking fertility treatment, including the provision of paid time off.

The Fertility Treatment Leave Policy acknowledges the demands on individuals and their partners, offering offers staff members who are undergoing investigation of fertility treatment, undertaking or recovering from fertility treatment up to five days paid leave per treatment cycle.

The policy also entitles a staff member who wants to support a partner who is undergoing fertility treatment up to two days of paid leave per treatment cycle.

The policy was designed to offer support to staff undergoing fertility treatment, whilst raising awareness of the issues with line managers and other staff members. The fertility treatment leave is a day one right for all staff, and sits alongside existing support available to staff, including temporary workplace adjustments and free counselling.

Menopause Policy and Guidance

The University continues to create an environment where women feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for reasonable adjustments at work, if necessary. The Menopause Policy and accompanying Menopause Guidance sets out the University's commitment to supporting colleagues experiencing the menopause and/ or menopause type symptoms.

The Menopause webpage also provides information and further support for staff experiencing the menopause, and for Line managers and Supervisors who are supporting staff. These include Frequently Asked Questions, further sources of Information and support, information on roles and responsibilities, symptoms and reasonable adjustments.

Menopause Support Fund

The Staff Menopause Support Fund provides financial assistance for staff who are experiencing menopause/menopausal symptoms. The fund can be used to contribute towards the purchase costs associated with reasonable adjustments to enable them to remain in the working environment. For example, this could include:

- A fan.
- Fitting blinds to windows.
- Where uniforms are compulsory, providing additional spare uniforms, or uniforms in different sizes.
- Consideration of adjustments to, or purchase of additional PPE or in different sizes.

Menopause Information Sessions

The University is continuing to schedule a regular programme of Menopause information sessions for staff, and specific sessions to increase awareness and support line managers to support staff experiencing the menopause.

The sessions are delivered by two of the University's own academic GPs with a keen interest in women's health, Dr Helen Reid and Professor Jenny Johnston – both from the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences.

The sessions are designed to reduce stigma, raise awareness, and inform staff on what to expect and when and how to seek help around issues relating to menopause.

Period Dignity at Queen's

Queen's recognises the inability to access period products is a societal issue of increasing urgency in the context of the current cost of living crisis. Following pilots by Students Union and Student Wellbeing Team providing free period products in the Library, Graduate School

and One Elmwood, and similar pilots by Athena Swan Champions in their Schools, Queen's launched an institutional approach by providing free period products in bathrooms across campus.

We have now installed 43 free period product vending units in bathrooms, including all-access bathrooms, located across the main University campus and in key sites on the wider campus.

Providing free pads and tampons, we hope that these vending machines will help our students and staff – whether needing period products in the moment or being impacted by period poverty. Period Dignity @ Queens

Activities and Events

- Swan Champions Training Event (April 2024). Training & Learning Solutions led an engaging Assertiveness Skills training session, setting the stage for an insightful exchange of best practice. Attendees had the opportunity to gain valuable insights from representatives of the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy, and School of Law on effective student engagement strategies.
- QGI Gratitude Lunch (April 2024) Queen's Gender Initiative was delighted to host a special Gratitude Lunch to express our heartfelt thanks to colleagues who contributed to the Athena Swan Gold application. This event was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the hard work, dedication, and collaboration that went into this significant achievement. We appreciate the collective effort and commitment to promoting gender equality and fostering an inclusive environment at Queen's University.
- Portrait Illustration Project (March 2024) This collaborative project with QGI and The Naughton Gallery is to celebrate and promote the impactful contributions of women at Queen's. This project will highlight the critical and varied roles that a diverse range of women play across the University through the commissioning of a range of watercolour portraits. The portraits will become part of the University Art Collection and will be unveiled in a special exhibition at the Naughton Gallery in November 2024.
- Professional and Academic Progression Workshops (January 2024) The QGI annual Academic Progression workshop was held on Tuesday 9 January 2024. All female academics were invited, including those who are currently on probation and there was an excellent attendance at this event. The workshop was to enable learning about the Academic Progression process and support colleagues in their career planning.
- US Ambassador In Conversation (October 2023) hosted the 'Women in Leadership' in conversation event with US ambassador Jane Hartley.
- QGI Academic and Professional Services Mentoring Programmes - QGI delivers a suite of Mentoring Programmes for women in Queen's. Our approach is holistic and Mentee-led and has been shaped by feedback from our Mentoring Champions, Mentees and Mentors over many years.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

African Scholars Research Network

The network continues to build a cross-campus Research Network of African Scholars at Queen's. The network fosters collegiality and a strong foundation for a sustainable supportive culture for these researchers of various disciplines and educational backgrounds.

Chinese Culture Forum

The Chinese Culture Forum continues to provide a platform at Queen's for ongoing exchange of ideas and sharing experiences of individuals who are interested in Chinese culture, contemporary or traditional, with an intention to understand better Chinese cultural products, practice and perspectives through intercultural dialogues.

The Chinese Culture Forum celebrated the Year of the Dragon with events in February 2024 which included:

- Chinese New Year Launch Event.
- Chinese New Year Interactive Fair.
- Drawing the Dragon Workshop.
- Chinese Muslim Heritage Literacy: Reflections on a Recent Research Report.
- Festival of Chinese New Year.
- Bridging Eastern and Western Cultures through Film: The 2024 Eutopia Arthouse Film Festival Information Session.
- A decade of Academic and Cultural Encounters with(in) China.
- How to synthesize Mandarin by yourself? – Phonetics is never a mystery.
- ArtEast Exhibition.
- Year of the Dragon Competition and Exhibition.
- Chinese Artifacts at Queen's Exhibition.

Chinese Language Interest Group

The Chinese Language Interest Group facilitates the student-led learning community to enhance a better understanding of Chinese culture, through learning the language and social activities throughout the academic year.

Language Courses

The Language Centre at Queen's continued to support staff and students at the University, as well as members of the public, in developing their language competence and cultural awareness, through the provision of language courses, both taught and online/blended course, as well as related training workshops focusing on cultural awareness and understanding.

In Academic year 2023-2024, there were courses offered across 16 different languages taught at a range of levels.

Cultural Awareness Training

The Language Centre supported Cultural Awareness training workshops during the academic year in both online and face-to-face contexts. This involved collaboration with Arts, Humanities

and Social Sciences faculty, Students Union volunteering initiatives as well as a number of ad hoc workshops supporting engineering and global food security students in discipline specific training contexts.

The Language Centre team has also worked positively with colleagues at Queen's during this reporting period, to propose the development of an institution wide approach to supporting cultural skills development. It is hoped that this initiative will become part of the University's strategy and be developed in the coming academic year 2023/24 for rollout thereafter.

Linguistic Residential Scheme

The University has continued with the successful Linguistic Residential Scheme which is aimed at developing language students' skills as part of their academic studies. The Scheme offers a maximum number of 12 places for students studying Irish with remaining spaces offered to other students who have indicated a preference to live with Irish speakers and who have confirmed they speak the language.

Iorla Morra More – Linguistic Diversity and Minority Languages Staff Network

Queen's established a new staff network called 'Iolra Morra More', this is a peer network open to all staff who are interested in celebrating and promoting minority languages and linguistic diversity on campus.

This new staff network which launched in February 2024, represents an important move towards promoting greater understanding and respect for languages on campus and acknowledging language rights as defined and elaborated upon by numerous United Nations, UNESCO, and Council of Europe reports.

The network aims to:

- Promote respect for all languages and minority languages, including but not limited to, Irish and Ulster Scots through academic and cultural events for staff and students.
- Serve as a platform for staff to seek support, raise awareness and share findings relating to languages and minoritised language practices.
- Liaise with other HE institutions to develop knowledge on best practice in supporting minority languages.

Activities and Events

- Ciorcal Comhrá – Irish Speaking coffee and conversation group. Meeting Monthly during term time.
- International Student Ceili.
- Diwali Night (November 2023) took place in One Elmwood including music, food, dance and henna tattoos.
- Language events: International Day of Sign Language, European Day of Languages, World Arabic Language Day, International Mother Language Day, UN French Language Day, The Sound of Language Festival, UN Chinese Language Day, World Portuguese Language Day.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (STAFF TRAINING)

During the reporting period the following numbers of staff completed the mandatory diversity training modules (e-learning):

- **Think Difference. Act Differently** – 90% of all staff have completed this module;
- **Unconscious Bias** – 89% of all staff have completed this module.

More details on all staff training during the reporting period is included in Table one on page 41 and 42.

LGBT+

LGBT+ Staff Network – PRISM

Members of PRISM continue to host an information stand at staff induction sessions for new staff.

In this reporting period we have held welcome events in September, February, April and June, each with all new staff who have started in that quarter in attendance. The welcome events provide new staff with an opportunity to meet PRISM members and hear about its activities and how to join the Network.

The network continues to provide a forum for networking and a means of peer support between LGBT+ staff, representing the interests of LGBT staff and working with colleagues to inform the University on relevant issues.

Recently the network has been instrumental in providing information, feedback and assisting the development of our enhanced guidance on our Trans Equality Policy which provides information to staff and students on gender and trans identity. This updated guidance continues to support staff to helps individuals discuss how they would like their transition to be managed, and how they can be supported at Queen's.

Pride 2024

On 24 July 2024, Queen's University Belfast's third Pride Picnic 2024 at Queen's took place, bringing together staff and students to celebrates Belfast Pride 2024 with music and street food.

Over 350 staff, students and their families attended the event celebrating Belfast Pride and providing an opportunity for people to come together and enjoy some food while having an opportunity to find out more about PRISM, our LGBT+ staff network, and how to become an LGBT Ally at Queen's.

LGBT+ Allies

The University formally established a network of LGBT Allies on Campus back in 2020. The LGBT Allies across the Queen's campus are supported to identify and practice practical ways to

step up an ally and to commit to inclusive behaviours in the University, creating a safe and supportive environment for all our LGBT staff and students.

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit and PRISM continue to work on developing and mobilising our network of LGBT+ Allies across the University. Further information on the support that LGBT Allies can provide can be found on our [LGBT+ Allies Website](#).

Activities and Events

- PLUS (QUB LGBT + postgraduate group) hosted a programme of activities and events in 2023/2024 including Movie Nights, Trivia Night, Open Mic Poetry Reading, Valentines Art evening and a Queer Art Night.

CIVIC UNIVERSITY and UNIVERSITY OF SANCTUARY

In June 2024, the University launched its civic mission by pledging to become a Civic University and University of Sanctuary.

In seeking to become a Civic University, Queen's further recognises the unique and privileged position of universities in shaping the world we live in through their social and civic responsibilities.

Initiatives such as co-designed community-based projects in the Greater Shankill and Market areas, and Queen's Civic Commitment to South Belfast, have delivered hugely positive impacts and demonstrate how an inclusive partnership approach between communities, policymakers and academics can work towards lasting change.

Later this year, Queen's will also celebrate its first cohort of students emerging with Level 4 Certificates in Youth Leadership and Community Action, a course delivered through community partners in cross-community organisation RCITY and facilitated by youth group Foróige.

Queen's has shown great commitment through the years in helping those hugely able, but highly unlikely, to participate in Higher Education, overcome obstacles that stand in their way.

The path to achieving Sanctuary status will reaffirm the University's dedication to this objective by its intent to welcome people seeking sanctuary through facilitated access to higher education and support to local refugee communities.

The move will further endorse Belfast's City of Sanctuary status, passed as a Council motion in April 2022, and build on recent support measures made by Queen's such as increasing provision of fellowships for at-risk academics, and Copty Scholarships for Palestinian students.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The University continues to support is #QUBeWell Healthy Campus Framework, which seeks to outline the University's commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its students and staff community.

Staff Wellbeing (Including Mental Health)

The appointment of two new roles, a Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing manager and a Staff Wellbeing Officer in January 2023 has supported further stakeholder engagement. A new institutional Staff Health and Wellbeing Action Plan is under development in support of wellbeing commitment stated in Strategy 2030. A Stress Management Policy and Guidance has also been written and will be launched in Autumn 2024.

Staff Mental Health Awareness Week 2024

Mental Health Awareness Week took place Monday 13 May - Friday 17 May 2024, the theme for this year was 'Moving the Dial on Mental Health', with a focus on movement and we marked the week with a range of collaborative events with Queen's Sport, including:

- Belfast Hidden History Tour.
- Dodgeball.
- Zumba.
- Nutrition and Mental Health.
- Staff Football.
- Pilates.
- Walk – Talk Workshop.
- Campus Run.
- Dance Yourself Fit.
- Circus Activities and Performance.
- Badminton.

The keynote event 'Moving the Dial on Mental Health' Panel Discussion was an engaging and lively discussion with personal insights from the panel on the real benefits movement can have on a person's overall wellbeing and mental health. The panel was hosted by the sports broadcaster and Mental Health Advocate, Mark Robson.

Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Training

Staff training continues to be a priority and there is continuous demand for training from students and staff at the University on supporting students, colleagues, and friends. Targeted mental health support and training delivered during this reporting period included:

- Stress Awareness
- Mindful Manager
- Introduction to Suicide Prevention and Awareness
- Women and Money
- Parenting Clinics
- Cancer Awareness Sessions
- Sleep Workshop

- Mental Heath Awareness

- Introduction to Mindfulness
- Managing Grief

- Complicated Grief
- Anticipatory Grief
- Helping Children Manage Change
- Keeping Children Safe online
- Making the most of your money
- Unlocking Men's Mental Health

- Staff in distress awareness session
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- Dying Tidily
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Men's Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Teen's Emotional Health
- QUB Pensions Workshop

Staff E-learning Module of Supporting Students Mental Health and Wellbeing

As part of the funding allocated to the #QUBeWell project, an e-learning module has been developed by the Student Disability and Well-being Team which aims to empower staff with the tools and confidence to provide the right support to students who may be struggling with their mental health, and signpost them to the most appropriate service (if required).

This largely scenario-based training has been developed in response to the most common presenting issues from students, and staff who make referrals to the Student Wellbeing Service. The scenarios have also been aligned to the Service's Stepped Matched Care Model of Support that provides a framework for staff to know when and how to refer students to relevant support services, according to levels of risk.

Scenarios include:

- Stress, anxiety, procrastination and perfectionism.
- Supporting a friend, with impact on academic study.
- Disengagement and early warning signs.
- Student at risk – suicidal ideation, self-harm, risk to themselves or other.

The module advises colleagues on what processes, protocols, and services are in place to help support students, and staff supporting students. Delivered as both an E-learning module and also with in-person training option, over 700 staff have participated so far in the 2023/2024 academic year.

Talk Campus Peer Support

Talk Campus Peer Support is a further support in addition to Inspire 24/7 student telephone number Talk Campus. Talk Campus is an app-based peer support platform where students come together from around the world, and give and get support within a safe, supportive

infrastructure. Students can use it if they are struggling, worried about their mental health, and need some help, or they can go on and listen and support others. The app provides additional cultural competency to the suite of support services offered through the University as TalkCampus supports over 26 different languages.

The platform is safe and moderated and is designed as a place where students can be themselves and talk openly about how they are feeling. TalkCampus is not a replacement for counselling or professional support, however it is a great place to start talking and to make sure that however students are feeling, they are not alone.

Promotion of Talk Campus App will continue with particular focus during Semester One of each academic year.

Students Union Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan

The Students Union (SU) has been working to progress mental health and wellbeing as a core strategic priority and has created a Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan. The plan is based on the Student Minds framework and has been reviewed by staff and student officers.

The plan contains core action areas (both strategic and operational) for the SU over the next few years. Several of these core action items have been progressed this academic year and have been achieved through cross-departmental working within the SU but also with internal and external stakeholders.

Some examples of the campaigns / initiatives this year include:

- Offering Mental health events, cost of living initiatives and peer to peer training.
- Revieing student worker hours cap, academic deadlines and student workload across Schools.
- Development of the Suicide Safe Policy 2023.
- OMNI Mental Health Action Plan.

The SU has also organised a variety of other events wellbeing pop ups, student stress buster events, student mental health workshops and a wide range of staff and student mental health and wellbeing training.

RACE

Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and International (BAMEI) Staff Network (iRise)

Our BAME and International Staff Network, iRise, continues to provide a peer network open to all academic and professional services staff who identify as, or are characterised as, BAME and/or international.

The network provides a safe and welcoming space for BAME and/or international staff in Queen's to regularly meet during working hours to discuss issues and work matters, in addition to planning social events both on and off campus.

iRise was also established to give BAME and international staff at Queens's University a voice on systemic and operational issues and the network continues to represent the interests of these staff and work with colleagues to promote deeper understanding of the issues faced and also inform the University on relevant issues. In this reporting period, the network was consulted in the development of the new Discipline and Grievance Procedure (currently pending approval).

The network also continues to provide support for new BAME and international staff joining the University. iRise is represented at all new staff induction Welcome Events and these were held in September 2023, February, April and June 2024 with a total of 290 new staff in attendance. This presented the opportunity to meet iRise members and hear about the network's activities, as well as find out how to join iRise.

iRise conducted a number of activities in 2023 -2024 in partnership with other areas across the University. These events were designed to engage with and celebrate the community of Black and international staff and students at Queen's, and to raise awareness of and educate staff on experiences of racial inequality. Events included:

- iRise Mid-Autmn Festival and Welcome Event.
- iRise Social Gathering: Drinks, Canapés and Engaging Conversations.
- Black History Month.
- Academic Progression Workshop.
- EID Radiance: Celebration.
- BAME Career Seminar Series Event.

Race Equality Conference in Higher Education

Queen's held its first ever Race Equity in Higher Education Conference in September 2023 to highlight and support the importance of race equality across the University, the community and wider society.

Panel sessions included Queen's students, with academics, researchers and practitioners from a number of institutions discussing solutions-based approaches to progressing race equality across education, research and societal engagement.

The programme also included keynote speakers from Queen's alumna and multi award-winning global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion leaders.

Race Equality Charter

Within the last reporting period, the University continued to work towards identifying and critically reflecting on the institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students through our work on the Race Equality Charter (REC). This national charter is run by Advance HE aimed at supporting institutions on their work in this area. We are one of 100 higher education institutions in the UK who are signatories to the Race Equality Charter (REC) and are aiming to apply for a Bronze Award by 2024 – of which only 39 institutions currently hold an award.

Our REC work is led by a senior academic and a dedicated REC Project Manager, supported by a Racial Equity Champions Network. This programme is synergised by a wider structure of staff and student groups whose collective efforts are imperative to driving meaningful and positive change on racial equity within Queen's. Our REC programme is a key component of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments, embedded within the University's Strategy 2030, designed to nurture an inclusive and supportive culture and demonstrably valuing the diversity of all our people.

Racial Equity Champions Network

Our network of Racial Equity Champions has over 30 active members representing each School and Directorate. Champions bring a wealth of personal, professional, and research-based knowledge to the work on advancing racial equity and the network meets formally every 6 weeks. Champions share best practice and identify local issues as part of their remit and are also responsible for the introduction of initiatives and promotion of REC-related programmes of work within their Schools and Directorates.

Mentoring Programmes focused on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff experiences.

The previous REC Reverse Mentoring Programme in 2022-23 provided an opportunity for senior staff to build genuine awareness of some of the barriers and experiences faced - particularly in a work context - by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues through a two-way mentoring relationship. The term 'Reverse Mentoring' refers to the fact that it is the most senior members of staff who are the Mentees on the programme and are mentored by more junior staff, who identify as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. Phase one of the programme received positive feedback from those involved and was marked by a close event where a number of participants shared their experiences. Following the successful REC Reverse Mentoring Pilot, phase two a new accelerated programme will run from September – November 2024 will launch later in the forthcoming academic year.

The 2023 Race Equality Mentoring Programme was launched again in May 2023 and is the first traditional style mentoring scheme at Queen's designed to support the career progression of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues. Twenty-two staff mentees and mentors from across the University have commenced a one-year mentoring relationship. A parallel programme is being run in a number of Schools for students which is in its early stages.

REC- EDI 5

The REC-EDI 5 Programme was launched by the QGI-REC team during Race Equality Week 2023. This innovative programme supported Schools and Directorates to deliver actions designed to seed new projects. The programme comprised five actions to be carried out over five months (February – June 2023) under the theme EQUAL: Educate, Quantify, Understand, Assemble/Author, Link. Schools and Directorates and their REC Champions were supported by the QGI-REC team to refine actions for their area of the University, to provide with training, supporting materials and practical support where needed – including facilitating Active Bystander Training (or Train the Trainer) and co-hosting listening exercises with staff and

students. Several Schools and Directorates have already delivered successful pilot actions in the programme which will be taken forward in the next academic year

Race Equality Week 2024

Race equality week took place between 5th-11th February 2024. Queen's hosted a number of events to mark Race Equality week including:

- The Queen's Gender Initiative - REC team took part in the Race Equality Matters five-day challenge – exploring some of the key and daily issues that impact on BAME and international staff and students.
- Race Equality Week 2024 Breakfast Event.
- Film Screening of 'Hidden Figures' for staff and students.
- QUB Nigerian Society – In conversation with Dr Poppy Boyd and Dr Femi Omotoyinbo.

SOCIAL CHARTER PROJECT

Our Social Charter reaffirms our commitment to engaging with society and celebrates the many ways in which we contribute through our dedicated projects with communities throughout Belfast and the wider region. The University's Social Charter commits us to the principles of equality and social justice. These principles are embodied in the following projects:

- Developing Social Innovation with local communities.
- Widening Participation – Raising awareness, aspirations and attainment.
- Asylum Seeker Scholarships.
- Research on issues affecting migrant and minority ethnic communities.
- Research and Expertise on Gender Issues.
- Disability Research Network.
- Transforming divided societies into welcoming communities.

Civic Mission

Queen's launched its civic mission in June 2024 by pledging to become a Civic University and University of Sanctuary. In seeking to become a Civic University, Queen's further recognises the unique and privileged position of universities in shaping the world we live in through their social and civic responsibilities.

Initiatives such as co-designed community-based projects in the Greater Shankill and Market areas in Belfast, and Queen's Civic Commitment to South Belfast, have delivered positive impact and demonstrate how an inclusive partnership approach between communities, policymakers and academics can work towards lasting change.

Later this year, Queen's will also celebrate its first cohort of students emerging with Level 4 Certificates in Youth Leadership and Community Action, a course delivered through community partners in cross-community organisation RCITY and facilitated by youth group Foróige.

The path to achieving Sanctuary status will reaffirm the University's dedication to this objective by its intent to welcome people seeking sanctuary through facilitated access to higher education and support to local refugee communities.

The move will further endorse Belfast's City of Sanctuary status, originally passed as a Council motion in April 2022, and build on recent support measures made by Queen's such as increasing provision of fellowships for at-risk academics, and Copty Scholarships for Palestinian students.

3   Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No (go to Q.4)

☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the Diversity and Inclusion Webpages for further information on details of decisions.

3a   With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the Diversity and Inclusion Webpages for further information on details of decisions.

3b   What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

☒ As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the Diversity and Inclusion Webpages for further information on details of decisions.

☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details)*:

Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details)*:

Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ Other *(please specify and give details)*:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☒ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Welcoming statements are added to job advertisements where underrepresentation is identified in certain areas e.g., in respect of persons with disabilities, females, and ethnic minorities.

In addition, all job adverts contain equal opportunities statements confirming Queen's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity to all, reference to LGBT+ and BAME and International Staff networks.

PART A

Queen's University is committed to promoting equality of opportunity to all. We have created an inclusive culture by establishing staff networks such as iRise (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and International Staff Network) and PRISM (LGBTQ+) which help us progress equality. We also subscribe to Equality Charter Marks such as the Diversity Charter Mark NI in addition to Athena Swan.

For further information on our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, please visit: Diversity and Inclusion, Queen's Gender Initiative, Staff Networks .

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

6 In the 2023-24 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

☐ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan

☐ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning

☐ Yes, in some departments/jobs

☒ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's corporate plan

☐ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2023-24 report

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The University's Strategy 2030 and People and Culture Plan both seek to ensure that equality and diversity objectives are mainstreamed across Queen's.

In January 2024 we launched our new Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan 2024-2029, informed by an updated Audit of Inequalities.

Equality action plans/measures

7   Within the 2023-24 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

 7

Actions ongoing:

35

Actions to commence:

5

The new Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 was launched during this reporting period the Actions above all relate to the new Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024-2029.

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

Equality Actions detailed in Question 2

8   Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2023-24 reporting period *(points not identified in an appended plan)*:

N/A

9   In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2023-24 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)*

☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality

☐ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way

☒ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities

☐ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

☒ All the time

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2023-24 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

We have continued to offer targeted stakeholder engagements and consultation online both with internal stakeholders and external consultees through our consultee list, social media and external consultations available on our webpages at Consultation Exercises.

12 In the 2023-24 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were most frequently used by consultees: (tick all that apply)

☒ Face to face meetings

☐ Focus groups

☐ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing

☐ Questionnaires

☒ Information by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation

☐ Internet discussions

☐ Telephone consultations

☒ Other *(please specify)*: Online via Microsoft Teams

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

Our engagements continue to be primarily online using our [Consultation Exercises] Webpage with responses received via email or using Microsoft Forms.

13 *Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Informal meetings were held with Trade Union representatives (UCU, NIPSA and Unite). Informal meetings were held with representatives from the Equality Commission during the year 2023-2024 and telephone conversations/email seeking advice. Formal consultation and engagement meetings were held with other key internal and external stakeholders.

14 *Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

PART A

☒ No

☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

Consultation Exercises | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast (qub.ac.uk)

Equality Screening | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast (qub.ac.uk)

15   Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

21

16   Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2023-24:

Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.

N/A

Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented.

N/A

Consultations for an **EQIA** alone. N/A

17   Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

None in this reporting period

18   Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☒ No concerns were raised

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☐ No, already taken place

☐ No, scheduled to take place at a later date

☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

Click or tap here to enter text.

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☒ No

☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2023-24 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

- Following our comprehensive Audit of Inequalities undertaken in the previous reporting period to we continue to use the Audit to inform our institutional Equality Action Plan.
- Monitoring of equality data (community background) is helping to inform our Social Charter project and the use of welcome statements in job advertisements. This is designed to encourage applications from under-represented groups to apply for employment opportunities at Queen's.
- We use our equality data to inform our Equality Screening exercises and to inform policy development. E.g., the University's new Menopause and Fertility Treatment Leave Policies, Pregnancy loss and Domestic abuse leave.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2023-24, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Detailed in Table One below.

25 Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Detailed in Table One below.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
Recruitment and Selection Interviewing Training session which addresses DDA and Reasonable Adjustments.	Delivered 17 sessions during this reporting period	There were 299 staff trained. With one-to-one sessions delivered as required.
Think Difference, Act differently. (Mandatory e-learning training)	This training addresses issues such as equality, diversity, Section 75 and disability/gender discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping.	90% of all staff have completed this eLearning training
Unconscious Bias Training	E-learning mandatory training for all staff.	89% of all staff have completed this module
Trans and Non-Binary Awareness	2 training sessions were delivered by the Rainbow Project March (2024), May 2024	33 Attendees
Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Awareness	Feb (2024), April (2024)	20 Attendees
Neurodiversity Awareness Training	November (2023)	25 Attendees
Equality Screening Clinic	September (2023) March (2024)	14 Attendees

An introduction to Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity	The aim of this course is to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity among those working with international students	150 participants attending the training in this reporting period
Bullying and Harassment Training	2 Sessions delivered by Diversity Inclusion. March 2024 and May 2024	52 staff attended training sessions during this reporting period.
Active Bystander Training	Delivered as part of the REC EDI 5 Programme	Delivered to Staff and Students
Active Bystander Training	Delivered by the Active Bystander Training Company (May 2024)	31 staff attended this session.
Autism and ADD/ADHD	Delivered by Employers for Disability NI	24 Staff attended this session
Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia	Delivered by Employers for Disability NI	20 Staff attended this session
Disability Awareness Training	Delivered by Employers for Disability NI	11 Staff attended this session
Dyslexia Awareness Session	Delivered by Employers for Disability NI	19 Staff attended this session
Staff Induction	All new staff joining the University must attend a Staff Induction Event. Which includes awareness raising on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.	Welcome events were held in September, February, April and June with a total of 290 new staff in attendance.
Mental Health and Wellbeing Training Action Measures	**Outputs**	**Outcome / Impact**
Stress Awareness	Delivered by Action Mental Health	11 staff attended this session
Mindful Manager	Two sessions delivered by Action Mental Health	27 staff attended this session
Introduction to Suicide Prevention and Awareness	Delivered by Lighthouse	36 staff attended this session
Mental Heath Awareness	Delivered by Action Mental Health	8 Staff attended this session
Introduction to Mindfulness	Two sessions delivered by A Costello	22 staff attended this session
Managing Grief	Delivered by Inspire	20 Staff attended this session
Complicated Grief	Delivered by Inspire	18 Staff attended this session
Anticipatory Grief	Delivered by NI Hospice	9 Staff attended this session
Helping Children Manage Change	Delivered by Parenting NI	12 Staff attended this session

Keeping Children Safe online	Delivered by Parenting NI	13 Staff attended this session
Making the most of your money	Delivered by Kith & Kin	57 Staff attended this session
Women and Money	Delivered by Kith & Kin	58 Staff attended this session
Parenting Clinics	Parenting NI	6 Staff attended this session
Cancer Awareness Sessions	Bowel Cancer Awareness Prostate Cancer Awareness All delivered by Queen's Academic staff. Skin Cancer Awareness – Delivered by Dr Finbar McGrady Lung Cancer Awareness – delivered by Cancer Focus NI Oesophageal Cancer Awareness – delivered by OG Cancer NI	125 Staff attended these sessions
Sleep Workshop	Delivered by a Queen's academic	40 Staff attended this session
Staff in distress awareness session	Delivered by staff wellbeing	26 Staff attended this session
Drug and Alcohol Awareness	Delivered by Inspire Wellbeing	14 Staff attended this session
Dying Tidily	Delivered by School or Law	19 Staff attended this session
Mental Health Awareness Week	Nutrition and Mental Health – Vital Nutrition - 25 Moving the Dial on Mental Health - 75	100 Staff attended these sessions
Men's Mental Health & Wellbeing	Delivered by Inspire	15 Staff attended this session
Teen's Emotional Health	Delivered by parenting NI	24 Staff attended this session
QUB Pensions Workshop	Delivered by Queen's Pension Manager	144 Staff attended this session
Unlocking Men's Mental Health	Delivered by Inspire Wellbeing	15 Staff attended this session

PART A

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

26   Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2023-24, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

During the reporting period, significant progress has been made by a wide range of Faculties, Schools and Departments in providing University staff with access to a wide range of information, advice and support services online through a variety of sources, including but not limited to:

- The Queen's University website: Queen's University Belfast
- The Queen's People and Culture website: People and Culture
- The Queen's Diversity and Inclusion website: Diversity and Inclusion
- The Queens Equality Screening and Consultation website: Consultation Exercises
- The Queen's Disability and Wellbeing Services website Disability Services | Student Centre
- The Queen's staff Wellbeing website: Wellbeing at Queen's
- Queen's Accommodation website: Student Accommodation
- Students Union Equality and Diversity website: Students Union Equality and Diversity
- The Queen's Gender Initiative Website: Queen's Gender Initiative
- PRISM, the Queen's LGBT+ staff network: PRISM LGBT+ Staff Network
- iRise, the Queen's Black Asian Minority Ethnic and International staff Network iRISE | Queen's University Belfast (qub.ac.uk)
- CONNECT the Queen's Carer's Staff Network: Connect

The University continues to ensure information is signposted to University Staff and Students through a wide variety of other communications vehicles (email: Staff Round Up) and social medial platforms (YouTube, Facebook, X, Instagram). The University makes its facilities available to a wide range of user groups and when required to do so can make its publications and general information available in alternative formats.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27   How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2023-24?

Insert number here: 0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

28   Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

The new updated Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 was launched in January 2024 and the actions will be reviewed on an annual basis.

29   Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

Continue to focus on training on:

- Sexual orientation, transgender, disability quality in the workplace (annually).
- Delivery of Bullying and Harassment Training.
- Active Bystander training.

Continue to raise awareness and provide training on equality screening new/ reviewed workplace policies.

30   In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

☒ Employment

☐ Goods, facilities and services

☒ Legislative changes

☒ Organisational changes/ new functions

☐ Nothing specific, more of the same

☐ Other (please state):

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are at the heart of [Strategy 2030](#) which sets out the University's ambition to shape a better world through life-changing education and research, investing in its people, both students and staff to ensure excellence and impact. Our Commitment to meeting the statutory Equality Duties is fundamental to these aims and our broad ranging programme of work will continue in the forthcoming year.

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

| **1. Number of action measures** for this **reporting period** that have been: |

32	13	8
Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level Local for all Items	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs[i]	Outcomes / Impact[ii]
1	To mainstream the disability duties into all decisions and activities	Mainstream new or identify existing disability duties into local area plans, decisions and actions	Achieved. Each member of Disability Forum to provide tangible evidence of how disability duties have been mainstreamed into their local area plans – every three months. Process to ensure support and compliance to support every service provider in Professional Services and the learning environment. Promotion and embedding of accessibility in

			University policies, guidance and structures, supported and lead by senior management.
2	To mainstream the disability duties into all decisions and activities	Develop, communicate and operationalise an effective Disability Action Plan (DAP) that underpins the University's responsibility and commitment to enact disability duties into its strategic and operational decisions and activities	Publication of DAP online (QUB website), maximising all social media channels and internal communication media such as Team Brief, Staff Round Up etc. Each member of DF communicates locally in their Faculty/School/Directorate. Section 75 Annual Progress Report provided to Senior Management and to the Equality Commission on the actions taken under this Plan.
3	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Continue to administer and promote the Disability Support Fund	Achieved.
4	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Work with external partners to deliver specific training regarding disabilities and long-term conditions, to educate and support staff, students and visitors	Achieved. Delivered a series of Neurodiversity training sessions, Autism ADD and ADHD Awareness, Disability Awareness training for all staff.
5	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Ensure all Line Managers are adequately supported to support applicants and prospective staff with	Achieved and Ongoing. HR Business Partners and Diversity and Inclusion Unit provide specific support to Line Managers and Supervisors Continue to review and plan for

		disabilities or long-term conditions	structured approach and sharing of best practice across the University
		Provide Manager resources which include specific information on supporting and managing staff with disabilities.	
6	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Include Welcome Statements at each key stage of the applicant journey to encourage and support prospective employees to disclose a disability or long-term condition. Recruitment information available in accessible formats when requested.	Achieved and Ongoing. Welcome statements at all stages and alternative formats of recruitment information offered when requested.
7	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Establishment of Staff Disability Network Partially Achieved Continue to raise awareness, encourage growth and engage members	Partially Achieved. Continue to raise awareness, encourage growth and engage members.

PART B

8	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Continue to build and increase participation in the Inclusive Employment Scheme	Achieved Inclusive Employment Scheme. Hosted 17 placements in this reporting period and is set to continue with another cohort for 2024/2025.
9	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Outreach activity	Behind the Scenes at Queen's in June 2024 an informal event Showcasing Queen's as an inclusive employer.
10	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Outreach Activity	Achieved. On International Day of persons with Disabilities on 30th November the University hosted a 20 min "My Disability doesn't define me".
10	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Include welcome statements at various key stages of the student applicant journey encouraging prospective students to disclose a disability or long-term condition	Achieved. Welcome statements included on both digital and physical prospectus. Digital and physical prospectuses available in accessible formats. Encourage and share information about disability disclosure and accessibility with schools, colleges, careers teachers to encourage student disclosure of disability. Engaged international students to minimise apprehension and support disclosure.

PART B

11	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Continue to administer and promote the disability support fund	Achieved

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Think Difference. Act differently	Annual mandatory e-learning training)	90% of all staff have completed this eLearning training.
2	Unconscious Bias Training	E-learning mandatory training for all staff	89% of all staff have completed this module.
3	Bullying and Harassment Training	2 sessions delivered by Diversity and Inclusion. March 2024 and May 2024	52 staff attended training sessions during this reporting period.
4	Trans and Non-Binary Training	2 training sessions were delivered by the Rainbow Project March (2024), May 2024	33 staff attended training sessions during this reporting period.
5	Sexual Orientation and Gender Awareness Identity Training	2 training sessions delivered by the Rainbow Project	20 staff attended training sessions during this reporting period.
6	Menopause Awareness Session	1 session delivered by Professor Jenny Johnson and Dr Helen Reid	35 staff attended this training session during this reporting period.
7	Neurodiversity Awareness Training	1 training session delivered by Employers for Disability NI	25 staff attended training sessions during this reporting period.
8	Autism Awareness	1 training session delivered by Employers for Disability NI	24 staff attended this training during this reporting period.

PART B

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Enhance the physical and digital accessibility and inclusiveness of the University for people with disabilities and long-term conditions	1. Ensure communications and engagements activities and materials are available in other formats, including subtitles 2. Create portfolio of diverse images which can be used throughout University communications	Achieved and ongoing. Continuing to update the Brand Hub with diverse pictures. These photos are used across the website and marketing materials. Use of subtitles in all social media videos. You-tube videos are auto subtitled.
2	Enhance the physical and digital accessibility and inclusiveness of the University for people with disabilities and long-term conditions	Continue to communicate information on accessibility	Achieved and ongoing.

PART B

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to '**encourage others'** to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	1. Continuously review and update provision of the AccessAble App 2. Continue to promote the AccessAble App to service users	Achieved. Incorporated into Staff Recruitment and Induction/Onboarding process. 140% increase in users. 2020-2021: 7,799 Users 13,933 Page views. 2021- 2022: 18,785 Users 32,795 Page views. 2022-2023: 21873 Users 67,046 page views Top 5 Access Guides used in this reporting period were: 1. Medical Biology Centre 2. PEC - Physical Education Centre 3. Peter Froggatt Centre 4. 6 College Park 5. New Physics Building Bell Lecture Theatre Further promotion of AccessAble in September 2024 and ongoing.
2	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to undertake Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs) review for all staff and students with mobility impairments.	Achieved.

3	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to ensure that the University, where possible and reasonable to do so, ensures that the physical infrastructure and systems are in place and maintained to comply with the DDA codes of practice.	Achieved and ongoing.
4	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Include welcoming statements at each key stages of the applicant journey to encourage and support prospective employees to disclose a disability or long-term condition	Achieved.
5	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Ensure digital and physical recruitment, job advertisements and information are available in accessible formats	Achieved.
6	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Ensure all Interview Panel attendees receive appropriate training to ensure they understand the University's commitment to equality of opportunity and support applicants and prospective staff with disabilities or long-term conditions.	Training resources/support available to educate panel members on requests for reasonable adjustments and disability duties as part of the selection process, and reasonable adjustments in relation to the employment lifecycle.

7	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	1. Continue to advertise and promote Staff Disability Network Group to raise awareness and encourage growth of membership. Disability Network to provide feedback to Forum on how the University can encourage and support greater representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions	Achieved and ongoing. Network established and continue to raise awareness and grow.
8	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Work with external partners to develop and participate in additional schemes and initiatives which provide persons with disabilities and long-term condition work experience opportunities	Achieved and ongoing. Inclusive Employment Scheme. Employ Autism Scheme.
9	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Inclusion of welcoming statements at various key stages of the student applicant journey encouraging prospective students to disclose a disability or long-term condition	Achieved.
11	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Promote the experiences of current students registered with disability services at open day and transition events to encourage prospective student disclosure	Achieved.
12	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Increase higher education opportunities for prospective students with disabilities and long-term conditions through targeted WP initiatives	Achieved and ongoing.

PART B

13	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to enable autistic students and recent graduates to access 10 paid internships and tailored careers support and advice as part of the Employ Autism Higher Education Network	Achieved.

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	N/A	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

PART B

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Work with external partners to develop and participate in additional schemes and initiatives which provide persons with disabilities and long-term condition work experience opportunities	Working with External partners to participant in additional schemes and initiatives	Consider further opportunities to work with external partners to develop and participate in additional schemes and initiatives which provide persons with disabilities and long-term condition work experience opportunities for persons with disabilities and long-term conditions.	Continue to explore options in relation to guaranteed interview scheme, ringfencing posts and paid opportunities.
2	Inclusion of specific training on disability considerations and the duty of providing reasonable adjustments for Line Managers	Provide Manager resources which include specific information on supporting and managing staff with disabilities	Deliver one session annually which considers disability duties.	To be included as part of the development of resources for Manager Toolkit 2024/2025.
3	Create portfolio of diverse images which can be used throughout University communications	Create portfolio of diverse images which can be used throughout University communications	Grow percentage use of images in printed/digital documents featuring positive images of disabled people by 10%. Communicate and encourage use of diverse images to users.	This portfolio creation is ongoing.

PART B

4. Please outline what action measures **have <u>not</u> been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Identify opportunities to promote the experiences of current staff registered with disabilities or long-term conditions at recruitment events and during recruitment outreach activities to encourage prospective staff disclosure	We are continuing to promote and explore staff coming forward to share their experiences. However, given the sensitive and personal nature of some disabilities this is proving more challenging than expected.
2	Analyse staff surveys to identify areas for improvement to support staff with disabilities or long-term conditions	Analysis of staff Surveys is ongoing and disability declaration is not always included in anonymised data.
3	Review the University's approach to Institutional and digital accessibility	Need to undertake a benchmarking exercise of digital accessibility at the University.

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit actively monitors measures in the action plan as part of a live, iterative process. We informally gain feedback from staff across the on a range of subjects. Feedback is regularly discussed at team meetings which can help inform new initiatives.

(b) Quantitative

The Disability Forum monitors progress against the action plan measures at meetings which take place three times a year. Progress is also monitored by the Diversity and Inclusion Unit, who provide the University Operating Board with a Progress Report on an annual basis. Quantitative data is collected, collated

PART B

and analysed across equality categories. Our equality monitoring system and database is reviewed regularly and where necessary, changes and/or new data may be commissioned.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either: ▪ made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or ▪ taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

 Please select No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	N/A	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

No

---

[i] **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

[ii] **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.