



Equality Outcomes

2025-2029



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The University of Edinburgh has a strong and long-standing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and to promoting a positive environment, which ensures fairness, challenges prejudice, and celebrates difference. Our staff and students are our greatest strength and inspiration and all members of the University community should expect to be able to excel, to be respected and valued for their unique perspectives and contributions. We promote equity and social justice, seeking to remove structural barriers, eliminate discrimination and create an inclusive culture. We do this through visibly mainstreaming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all that we do and encourage all staff and students to engage in these efforts.

The University is a proud holder of an Advance HE Athena Swan Institutional Silver award, the first University in Scotland to hold this level of award, which recognises our work to address gender equality in higher education. We are committed members of the Advance HE Race Equality Charter, and we have an ambitious action plan to progress race equality and anti-racism throughout our institution. We are also recognised as a Stonewall Diversity Champion and a Carer Positive Employer, and have many active equality-related staff/student networks and committees.

This document sets out the University's Equality Outcomes for the period 30 April 2025 – 29 April 2029. These Outcomes align with the University's Strategy 2030 and reflect the University's priorities with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Outcomes will form part of a bold EDI Strategy, with the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee taking responsibility for its development, monitoring and review on behalf of the University Executive.

Context

Under the Equality Act 2010, the University is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and must – in all its activities – have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The 'protected characteristics' defined by the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The PSED is underpinned by additional, devolved, specific duties. The Scottish specific duties came into force in May 2012 and require the University to publish equality reports every two years from April 2013, and a set of equality outcomes every four years. Equality Outcomes are broad results that will be achieved as a consequence of targeted actions to improve equality. The University published its previous set of Equality Outcomes in April 2021 covering the period 2021-2025, and [reported end-of-cycle progress](#) in achieving these in April 2025.

Development of the Equality Outcomes 2025-2029

The University identifies and shapes its Equality Outcomes through:

- Review of the previous set of Equality Outcomes and the progress made;
- Desk-based research and evidence review, including consideration of: responses to staff and student surveys; statistical equality data; recommendations from Thematic and other internal reviews; and external research and reports on persistent inequalities and discrimination in the Higher Education sector;
- Cognisance of national priorities such as tackling gender-based violence and racial harassment;
- Alignment with University strategic priorities and existing initiatives/activities across the University;
- Guidance from Equality & Human Rights Commission.

We have chosen to carry forward the majority of our Equality Outcomes for the prior period (2021-25), which were set to address ingrained inequalities that impact on multiple equality groups, and with the expectation that these outcomes would continue to be relevant beyond the period. These are:

Outcome 1: Our staff and students feel safe, confident and supported to report harassment, hate crime and gender-based violence.

Outcome 2: Improve access to education, and reduce retention, progression, and awarding gaps for different groups of learners.

Outcome 3: Increase the diversity of staff, including at senior grades, in leadership roles and on key decision-making bodies.

In 2023, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Funding Council published jointly a set of National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) for the tertiary education sector. We will contribute to delivering on the NEOs through adoption as specific and measurable objectives supporting achievement of our broader outcomes.

The Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 and a rationalised set of contributing NEOs have been developed in consultation with the University EDI Committee, and approved by Staff Experience Committee and University Executive on 11 March 2025, and presented to University Court on [insert date when confirmed]. The set of outcomes cover all of the protected characteristics and all three needs of the PSED.

How we will deliver on our Equality Outcomes

The Outcomes will be underpinned by targeted actions and measures to achieve these outcomes and evaluate their impact. The University's EDI Committee will oversee development, monitoring and review, reporting progress to the University Executive. Specific actions will be held by relevant budget holders across the institution.

To deliver on our Outcomes we will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in all that we do.

We will:

- Publish annual statistical reports, and provide access to data to support the progression of equality, diversity and inclusion across the institution;
- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion principles are embedded in our governance, strategic planning, and day-to-day activity;
- Promote understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the University community by expanding provision and improving take-up of training, learning opportunities and range of resources;
- Promote the effective use of Equality Impact Assessment in governance, decision-making, policy and practice across the University;
- Publish a progress report by 30 April 2027, and review our outcomes no later than 30 April 2029.

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