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Foreword

From our origins in 1841, our simple philosophy has been to provide educational opportunities for all.

In those early days, both young men and women were welcomed, consequently we could claim to have one of the longest-established diversity agendas in the sector.

The University of Huddersfield is deeply committed to equality and diversity for all its students and staff. Central to our strategy, is inspiring and enabling all our students to succeed and we have committed to eliminating attainment gaps in degree outcomes, student continuation and graduate employment outcomes.

We have already embraced a number of initiatives to further support our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion journey. This includes:

- Holding the Athena SWAN Bronze Award for gender equality since 2015 and the HR Excellence in Research Award since 2011;
- Committing to the Stonewall Global Diversity Champions programme;
- Becoming accredited as a Disability Confident Employer;
- Signing up to the Race Equality Charter.

We constantly strive to maintain a culture of diversity and inclusivity, which is in our heritage, and we will be ever vigilant in pursuit of new ways to advance this agenda as we move forward.

Professor Bob Cryan

Vice Chancellor



Background

Introduction

The University of Huddersfield is committed to providing an inclusive learning and working environment in a culture of mutual respect and dignity, where all staff and students are valued for their contribution and able to reach their full potential.

We understand Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) at the University as different but interrelated terms:

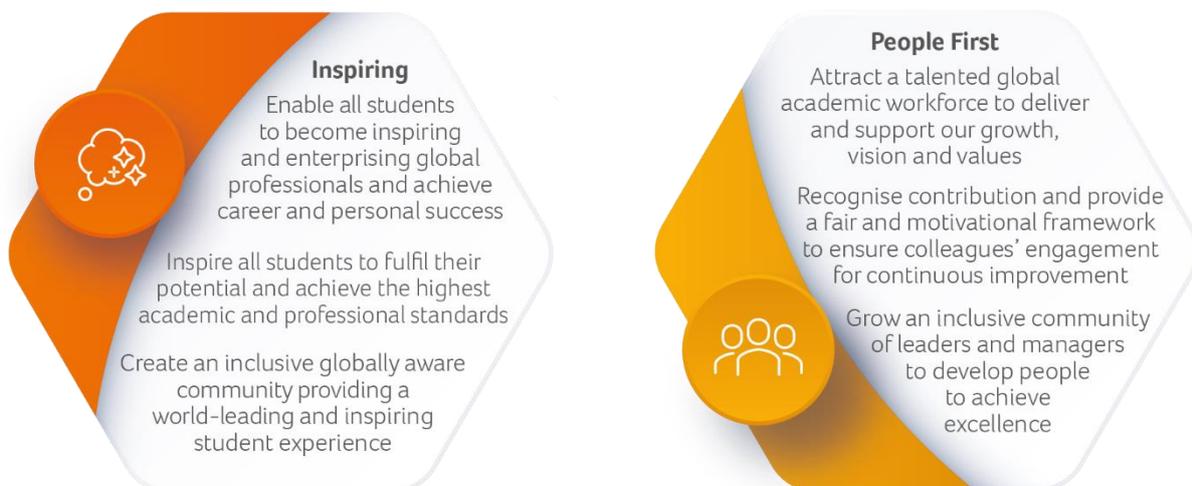
Equality – providing equality of opportunity for all, and ensuring individuals are not discriminated against because of their characteristics.

Diversity - taking account of the differences between individuals and groups of people, in a culture that embraces and values those differences.

Inclusivity – embedding an inclusive approach into the policy, practices and environment and proactively removing barriers to inclusion to create a culture which gives all individuals a sense of belonging.

At the heart of the 2025 University Strategy, our core value states ‘We will work as a **team** to provide an **excellent** service to all of the **communities** we support’. We value the rich diversity of our community and this is reflected in the diverse range of students and staff we welcome to the University.

The University aims to advance equality of opportunity, value diversity and embed inclusive practice into all that we do. This is fundamental to our University Strategy, reflected within the ‘Inspiring’ and ‘People First’ aims:



Legislative Context

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the University to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act (we use the definitions of discrimination formally adopted by the UK government, and other associated legal advice)
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The protected characteristics referred to in the duty are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The University also has a duty to identify and publish equality objectives every four years and report annually on our progress in relation to how we are meeting the objectives.

We are committed to going beyond the legislation and aim to achieve equality, diversity and inclusivity throughout all areas of University activity.

This statement applies to all staff and students of the University, visitors and external contractors that work for, or visit the University. Each member of our University community has a responsibility to behave in accordance with our inclusive strategy. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and will be investigated through appropriate procedures and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Vision

The University of Huddersfield is committed to providing an inclusive learning and working environment in a culture of mutual respect and dignity, where all staff and students are valued for their contribution and able to reach their full potential.

Objectives

Learning for All

- The Teaching and Learning Strategy and associated projects aim to develop an inclusive approach which enables students to learn, develop and achieve their full potential.
- Develop a community of students and staff which values equality, diversity and inclusivity through training, personal development and support.
- Develop life skills of students and staff by working collaboratively in a diverse and inclusive University community.

Community for All

- Embed the principles of equality, diversity and inclusivity into the University's culture, practices, plans, policies and procedures.
- Promote and celebrate equality, diversity and inclusivity across the University community.
- Deliver support mechanisms to build and maintain an inclusive community.
- Take individual responsibility to develop an inclusive community.

Voice for All

- Students and staff able to inform decision makers on any matters/issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusivity.
- University leaders promote equality, diversity and inclusivity through individual action, two-way communication, active listening and developing a supportive and collaborative culture.

Facilities and Access for All

- Develop and maintain an inclusive and accessible, physical and digital learning and working environment for all students and staff.

Strategy

In order to achieve the objectives, the University will:

1. Identify and publish specific and measurable equality objectives every 4 years and report annually on progress against these objectives.
2. Improve staff awareness and competency of 'Inclusion by Design' (IBD) so that IBD is an inherent part of curriculum design, teaching and learning practice and assessment processes.
3. Design, develop and maintain an inclusive working and learning environment for all staff and students in consultation with equality networks and user groups.
4. Provide accessible information on university matters and provision.
5. Embed the principles of the external organisations and charters the University has signed up to, into our policies, practices, procedures and culture.
6. Analyse and monitor EDI data to assess the impact of our equality activity and plan future priorities.
7. Provide equality and diversity education and training for all staff and students.
8. Continue a regular programme of EDI interventions to increase awareness and engagement, develop understanding and celebrate diversity.
9. Continue to support staff and students through the provision of EDI networks, events and other interventions.
10. Recruit and welcome staff and students from the communities we serve.

Progress Measures & Targets

In line with the University 2025 Strategy, our aims include to:

- Apply for the Race Equality Bronze Award by 2023.
- Improve our score in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index year on year.
- Maintain the progress made as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan, year on year.
- Maintain the progress made in student continuation and progression year on year and achieve no statistical difference between equality groups by 2025.
- Be at least two points above benchmark in the Teaching Excellence and Outcomes Framework core and supplementary metrics.

- Maintain the progress in the student engagement score year on year and achieve a 20% improvement by 2025.
- Meet the aims of the Athena SWAN action plan year on year and apply for an Athena SWAN Silver Award for gender equality by 2025.
- Move up from employer to leader level for the Disability Confident Employer Award by 2024.
- Improve the Quality of Working Life (QoWL) scores in each survey and by 2025 to be in the QoWL sector upper quartile measure for staff engagement and satisfaction and good management practice.

The EDI committee will set out a summary of all EDI project activities and this plan will be maintained and monitored by the UEDIEC.

Governance

University

The University Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Enhancement Committee (UEDIEC) was established in Spring 2019 to support and strengthen our institutional approach to EDI. The committee meets a minimum of three times a year and reports to the Senior Leadership Team Schools and Services (SLTSS) with business referred to or from University Teaching and Learning Committee, University International Committee, University Research Committee and Senate as appropriate.

The group currently comprises:

- Chair – Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning (member of SLTSS)
- Director of Human Resources or nominee (member of SLTSS)
- HR EDI Officer & Network Co-ordinator
- Director of Student Services or nominee
- Director of Research and Enterprise or nominee
- Chairs of Schools' Equality and Diversity Committees or Athena Swan Self-Assessment Panels (one per School)
- Disability and Inclusion Manager
- Assistant Director of Estates and Facilities or nominee
- President of Students Union or nominee plus two other nominees from the Students Union, preferably to represent undergraduate and post graduate students. (Presumably Wellbeing/Equalities Officer and Education Officer)

- Two representatives from Professional Services
- Co-opted members as necessary for conduct of business

The University aims to develop and enhance an equitable and inclusive working and studying environment for the benefit of all, whether staff, students, partners or visitors. Working and studying environments that support people to feel free to be themselves, while respecting others, and embrace diversity are more successful and innovative. We seek to enable all staff and students to fulfil their potential and to foster a working environment that protects their physical and mental wellbeing. Having a diverse and inclusive organisational culture informs our priorities for action as we seek to ensure that these priorities continue to be embedded in policy and practice across the University.

The UEDIEC Terms of Reference:

- Lead the development and implementation of University EDI related policies, framework and schemes for staff and students.
- Provide recommendations to Council for the EDI objectives that form part of the institutional EDI employment policy.
- Provide the forum for discussion and oversight of EDI issues relating to REF 2021 and to action any EDI implications of the implementation of the Code of Practice across the institution.
- Facilitate the embedding of EDI practices into planning and policy making.
- Provide a forum for an annual review of EDI elements of University policies.
- To engage in a two-way dialogue with URC, UTLC, UIC and SLTSS to identify areas of potential enhancement, and, of concern, related to EDI and to resolve them through action or referral as appropriate.
- To ensure actions are completed in relation to the EDI agenda and to promote and share good EDI practice.
- To monitor and review EDI data across the University.
- To suggest initiatives aimed at driving cultural improvement throughout the University.
- To lead and provide oversight of the University level submissions to appropriate professional EDI bodies, including Advance HE and Stonewall.
- To lead, monitor and adapt the implementation of the institution's Athena SWAN Action Plan and other action plans linked with Institutional level EDI related professional accreditations.
- To support and guide Schools and Services in the development of their own EDI activity and EDI based professional accreditation submissions.
- To engage with staff and students in the University as a whole, around EDI issues and to support the staff and student equality and diversity networks.

Schools

The Schools of Applied Sciences, Education & Professional Development and Music, Humanities and Media have established EDI committees. The chairs of the School EDI committees report to their own School governing boards/committees and represent their School on the UEDIEC to provide a cohesive approach to EDI matters across the University.

The other Schools all have established Athena SWAN self-assessment teams and are in the process of setting up EDI committees to replicate the above structure.

Partnership Working & Engagement

The governance committees will work in partnership with the staff networks, Diversity Champions, Students' Union Officers, EDI Officer and other University and School EDI roles to:

- share best practice;
- advise the relevant board, committee or leader of initiatives, research and issues identified at the operational level; and
- implement interventions and projects across the University.

Staff Networks

The University welcomes and supports the development of staff networks. Our staff networks provide an opportunity for staff who share a protected characteristic to network, obtain peer support, share information and provide opportunities to inform University policy on equality related matters.

The University currently has 4 staff network groups:

- BAME Staff Network
- LGBTQI+ Staff Network
- Staff Disability Network
- Women's Staff Network

The networks are run by and for the members, with support from the University EDI Officer. Each network develops their own individual terms of reference and has regular meetings, led by a nominated chair. Any EDI issues that need to be resolved and any suggestions of development are referred to the UEDIEC through the EDI Officer.

Diversity Champions

The University aims to develop and enhance a fair and inclusive working and learning environment for the benefit of all. The establishment of Diversity Champions in each School/Service is an important initiative for the University in support of this aim.

Working in collaboration with the University EDI Officer and UEDIEC, the responsibilities of the champions are to:

- Raise awareness of equality and diversity responsibilities within Schools/Services.
- Act as an initial point of contact on equality and diversity queries within the Schools/Services.
- To take forward matters arising within the School/Service to the EDI Committee/UEDIEC/EDI Officer as appropriate.
- To advise the EDI Officer of current projects, initiatives or research within the School/Service, in order to assist in the delivery of appropriate EDI events and initiatives.
- Play an active role in championing the University's commitment to equality and diversity across the institution.
- Advocate on equality and diversity matters.
- Act as a conduit for information on equality initiatives and an advocate for positive change.
- Raise awareness of the equality dimension in decision making in their department.
- Actively support their School/Service in equality and diversity initiatives.

Student Networks and Student Engagement

The Students' Union support five student networks, currently comprised of:

- BAME Ambassador Scheme
- Disabled Students Network
- Global Citizen Network
- LGBT+ Network
- Women's Network

The networks are volunteer, student led groups who are defined and directed by their individual members. They are self-organising and supported by a member of the Students' Union staff team.