MAINSTREAMING REPORT

With associated reviewed

Equality Outcomes and Employment Information

INTERIM REVIEW APRIL 2023

Table of Contents

Introduction

Queen Margaret University is pleased to publish this report, which sets out progress on mainstreaming equality against a number of outcomes established for the period 2021-25.

Under the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) introduced in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, the University is required to report on how it is mainstreaming equality. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) covers discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. These categories are known in the Act as 'protected characteristics'. In preparing this report, we refer to the 'relevant protected characteristics' as defined in the Act.

To meet the specific duties, the University is required to:

- report on progress on mainstreaming the general duty into all functions every 2 years;
- develop and publish a set of equality outcomes that cover all protected characteristics (or explain why not all protected characteristics are covered);
- assess the impact of policies and practices against the needs of the general duty;
- gather and use information on employees;
- publish gender pay gap information;
- publish statements on equal pay for gender, race and disability;
- have due regard to the general duty in specified procurement practices;
- publish information in a manner that is accessible.

In 2016, the Scottish Government amended the specific duties to introduce a new requirement on listed bodies to publish the gender composition of their boards and to produce succession plans to increase the diversity of their board.

We consider that there has been significant movement towards mainstreaming equality and diversity throughout the University in the period since the publication of the University's original report in April 2013. Equally, however, we recognise that we need to continue to establish outcomes where we have evidence to suggest inequality, with such evidence providing the basis for targeted action, including enhanced policy and practice.

The period under review (April 2021-23) has been a period of planned recovery and renewal from the unprecedented events caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. We reflect on the impact of that in this report.

Throughout this Report, the University has had due regard to the general duties as specified under the Equality Act 2010, and which require the University to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
2. Advance equality of opportunity by having due regard to removing or minimising disadvantage, meeting the needs of a particular group that are different from the needs of others and by encouraging participation in public life; and
3. Foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The equality outcomes reflect the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Faith/belief, Gender reassignment, Marriage/civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Sex and Sexual orientation.

The University also seeks to remove inequality created by social and economic deprivation in line with Scottish Government objectives and set out in the University's Outcome

Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC): https://www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/outcome-agreements/2021-22/queen-margaret-oa2021-22.aspx

The Scottish Funding Council and the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Commission signed a memorandum of understanding in 2020 designed to ensure greater alignment between University Outcome Agreements and their Public Sector Equality Duty Reporting.

A link to this Mainstreaming Report is included in our Outcome Agreement 2021-22, and Outcome Agreement 2022-23. The University's Mainstreaming Report 2021-25 was developed in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC) the membership of which represents staff and student stakeholders, and includes representation from each of the recognised Trades Unions. This biennial progress report was approved by the EDC at its meeting on 25 April 2023, and approved for publication by the University Court on 26 April 2023.

The pandemic raised significant challenges for the university but it also served to reinforce our commitment to helping to create a better society through education, research and innovation and by providing a supportive and creative learning environment in which students and staff thrive. Along with other bodies in Scotland and elsewhere, we are continuing to develop our understanding of the equality impact of COVID-19, and how that should inform our planning, the delivery of learning and teaching, and the support we provide to students and to our staff.

The report is divided into two sections:

- Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality: sets out progress made in mainstreaming equality within the University.
- Section 2: Review of Current Equality Outcomes: reflect on progress made in relation to equality outcomes established for 2021-25

These sections are supported by management information, and by two Appendices: Staff Equalities Data and our Equal Pay Review.

1. Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality within the University

1.1 Mainstreaming Equality

Mainstreaming describes the process by which equality and diversity are brought into the core of an institution's work and integrated into day-to-day activities. It is the process by which equality and diversity are considered in relation to all functions, including the development, implementation and review of policies and processes, supported by training and development. For Queen Margaret University, it means ensuring that equality sits at the heart of its strategy, and operational delivery, in order to create a structure and a culture that embraces and advances equality and diversity: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-theuniversity/our-strategic-plan/

It was recognised by the Scottish Ministers in their Proposals published in 2013 that "fully mainstreaming equality is a long term improvement journey". Queen Margaret University continues to work towards equality being embedded in the culture and structure of the University, so that it better serves its communities. As reported below, the University continues on its improvement journey, having secured some areas of significant progress. We recognise too that there is more to be done, and that is reflected in our equality outcomes going forward and in the narrative in this report

1.2 Governance and Strategic Planning

1.2.1 University Court and Institutional Committees

Mainstreaming equality requires collective responsibility, but also leadership and commitment from the University Court and through the University's governance and management structures and arrangements.

Embedding equality and diversity in our governance structures and in our strategic planning process is critical to mainstreaming equality and diversity, as is defining responsibilities, setting performance measures and monitoring progress against those measures.

While responsibility for mainstreaming equality and diversity within the University rests with all staff and students, the University Court is, as a matter of law, responsible for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and for ensuring that the University meets its public sector equality duty (PSED) and the specific duties relevant to Scotland.

The University Court has a role therefore in overseeing the University's performance of its legal duties and in ensuring that appropriate mechanisms are put in place that provide the necessary assurances from the senior leadership team that legal requirements are being met.

The University Court exercises such oversight through the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC). The EDC is responsible to the University Court for the development of the strategic framework for equality in service provision and in employment across the University. The Committee reports directly to the Court on its discussions, on the development of specific initiatives, and presents policies and procedures for Court approval. In so doing, it has a function that reflects the general duties.

The Committee is convened by the University Secretary, who is also Secretary to the University Court, and includes in its membership a lay member of Court, appointed by the Court. Its wider membership is designed to reflect the staff and student body and to benefit from a range of perspectives. To that end, it has members drawn from each academic and

professional service area of the University, as well as student and trades union representation.

The Equality and Diversity Committee has a remit to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunities and foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding, thereby ensuring the University avoids the potential for discrimination on grounds of the protected equality strands.

The Committee's remit goes beyond legislative compliance however. It aims to support delivery of key elements of the University's Strategic Plan through policy development and the promotion of examples of good practice from both internal and external sources. It also seeks to develop and maintain effective networking and liaison in equality and diversity issues. This applies internally within the University and externally, with a particular focus on working relationships with professional equality experts and equality bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Advance HE.

Along with its responsibility to develop and agree the institutional mission, the University Court has a role in 'establishing a vision for equality, and in moving the agenda beyond compliance to an approach that ensures the richness and diversity of society are reflected and celebrated within the institution'[1].

We consider that we have made significant progress over the last 4 years in terms of the University Court's approach to its equality duties, evidenced through policy development and through systematic review of the diversity of its membership. Progress in terms of the latter is described fully within page 15 of Section 2 below.

A number of other Committees and structures within the University are concerned with eliminating discrimination, advancing equal opportunities and fostering good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding, These include the Student Experience Committee and the Research Strategy Committee, both of which are Committees of the Senate, and the Race Equality Steering Group and Widening Participation and Student Retention (WISeR) Board. The manner in which these decision making bodies contribute to advancing equality and diversity within the University is discussed further below.

1.2.2 Purpose and Values

The University published its revised Strategy in May 2020: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-theuniversity/our-strategic-plan/

The Strategy (and associated Delivery Plan) has been reviewed further in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. We have acknowledged in our delivery plan that we must contribute to the pandemic recovery, manage its impact, and embed lessons learned over the period of the pandemic into our future development.

We believe that, despite the impact of the pandemic, the core principles of our strategy remain relevant and achievable. Our Strategic Plan continues to reflect the University's established commitment to, amongst other things, promoting inclusiveness, equality, and a sense of community.

We reframed our Mission and Vision, and have reflected instead on our **Purpose**

We see our Purpose as helping **to create a better society through education, research and innovation,** and by providing a supportive and creative learning environment in which students and staff thrive.

Our purpose is underpinned by our **Values**, which includes **social justice**. We embrace equality, diversity, inclusion, respect, and supporting our communities. Opportunities and access are open to all and on a fair basis.

To fulfil our purpose, we have developed a set of strategic goals, with associated outputs, that are underpinned by our values and our alignment to the internal and external environment, including how we will contribute towards the Scottish Government's drive towards excellence and equity across the education and skills landscape in Scotland.

Equality and Diversity continue to be a focus of the University's Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council. The University's Outcome Agreement 2022-23 focuses on our commitment to attract and retain students from a wide range of backgrounds, and to support them to achieve successful outcomes. Over the period during which we have published an Outcome Agreement, we have adopted a definition of 'under-represented groups' that has extended beyond that of the narrow SIMD national indicator and have developed a range of initiatives to increase the participation and retention of those from a broad range of underrepresented groups.

The outcomes established in the University's Strategic Plan and its Outcome Agreement are supported by a number of institutional strategies and policies.

The *Student Experience Strategy* exemplifies the University's commitment to delivering high quality educational programmes that satisfy a range of professional and vocational needs but which also develop individuals for a broader role, both in future employment and society. The strategy sets out to 'maximise the potential of the individual, irrespective of their background', to ensure 'sought-after' graduates and postgraduates, who are well educated, creative, independent, and reflective citizens, with transferable skills of flexibility, ready for employment, reflecting a range of academic, multi-disciplinary and transferable skills, as well as an enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

It places the student at the centre of the educational provision. To support that aim, programmes 'will incorporate curricula and learning strategies that recognise diversity in the student body'. It recognises the need for flexibility in patterns of attendance and the needs of all learners and seeks to develop academic and pastoral support structures that support the learner at all stages from pre-entry, entry, progression, graduation and post-graduation.

We are working to promote entry to, and provide education at, undergraduate and postgraduate level for all students, whatever their background. We are committed to enhancing the student experience through delivering equality across the protected characteristics and creating an inclusive learning environment; this applies to recruitment and admissions, to the curriculum, teaching and assessment, to welfare and support services, and to staff development and training.

In support of the above, we will continue to develop a range of co-ordinated performance indicators, qualitative and quantitative, that provide the basis of the evaluation of the student experience. These include:

- Application and conversion rates.
- Student retention and withdrawal measures.
- Student attainment.
- Survey results including the National Student Survey (NSS) and the QMU Student Survey.
- Module evaluation.
- Focus groups.

- Internal Staff/Student Liaison Committee feedback and/or feedback from Programme Representatives.
- Annual Programme Review report.

We have made significant progress in collecting data on each of the protected characteristics which provides for improved reporting. Further information on this is provided in section 1.2.5 below.

The Senate, Student Experience Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee receive detailed reports on student admission, progression, completion and attainment broken down by the protected characteristics. Specific reports are produced annually that set out statistics by sex, ethnicity disability and gender reassignment in relation to students who have submitted academic appeals, have submitted a complaint under the University's formal Complaints procedure, or have been subject to action under the University's Discipline or Fitness to Practise regulations. The total numbers recorded under the latter two procedures are small, and analysis under each of these processes suggests that there are no areas of concern in terms of equality of treatment of students. The Equality and Diversity Committee considers a range of staff equality reports, including the Equal Pay Audit, and EQIAs undertaken on policy developments.

Annual Monitoring Reports are produced by both academic Schools each year. This exercise is a crucial element of the University's quality assurance and enhancement processes, providing an important opportunity for staff to evaluate the programmes for which they are responsible, and for the School Academic Board to exercise its responsibility for assuring academic standards and enhancing the quality of the student experience.

The Student Experience Strategy also commits us to enhancing the student experience by recruiting, developing and retaining excellent staff who reflect the diversity of the student population.

We are committed to ensuring that our staff population is representative of the wider community. Monitoring of that is conducted through profiling of staffing. Evidence in support of that is presented in Section 2 and in the Appendices to this report.

Our strong commitment to equality in research is promoted in a number of different ways, including through our commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and further Athena SWAN recognition. Further details are set out within Section 2 below.

1.2.3 Equality Policy

The University's Equality policy articulates the University's approach to Equality in relation to staff and students. Amongst its provisions are that:

- Staff and students at the University are expected to treat others with respect at all times and to challenge discriminatory behaviour, attitudes or practices whenever they occur.

- In support of the above, the University will provide opportunities for staff and students to participate in learning opportunities that enable them to consider their own prejudices and adopt good practice.

- In relation to staff, the policy confirms the University's position, which is that staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment, and that entry into employment with the institution, and progression within employment, will be determined only by personal merit

and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure.

- It is in the best interests of the University and everyone who works within the University to ensure that whenever employment opportunities arise, we consider the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community. Within the framework of the law, we are committed, whenever practicable, to achieve and maintain a workforce that broadly reflects the community in which we operate and this will include using diverse sources of recruitment and adverts that target specific groups where permissible. The University will also provide fair and accessible opportunities for training and promotion for staff.

- In relation to *students*, we are committed to enhancing the student experience through delivering equality across the protected characteristics and creating an inclusive learning environment. The University encourages early disclosure of disability to allow for the provision of suitable reasonable adjustments prior to entering the institution.

- The University will operate fair and transparent procedures for student assessment, progression, attainment of awards and involvement in other University activities.

- The University will promote the use of inclusive language and avoid the use of words or phrases which are discriminatory or exclusive in all University publications and correspondence.

- The University seeks to increase student numbers from non-traditional groups; extend collaborative working relationships; promote staff understanding of diverse student groups and create an appropriately supportive infrastructure.

- The Court shall promote mainstreaming and ensure equality is an integral part of the planning process. The Court shall also take active measures to encourage diversity in membership and the business of the Court and actively involve students in decision making and policy development.

- The University will ensure a visible commitment to equality in modules and programmes and that all teaching is equality proofed. The University will celebrate and promote good practice in this regard.

- In research, the University will continue current good practice under the Research Excellence Framework and will build on this good practice in the future. The University will celebrate and promote good practice in research by the use of case studies and promotional material.

- The University will maintain its Athena SWAN awards and seek to obtain further recognition to promote its good practice.

- The Equality and Diversity Committee will ensure that the Equality policy and its aims are enacted throughout the University by the scrutiny of emerging policy and procedure under the Equality Impact Assessment procedure and through reporting on mainstreaming and the equality outcomes. Student recruitment, retention and progression statistics will be monitored and feedback under student surveys reviewed to

ensure the student experience is mapped to this policy. Employment statistics will be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Committee and published in line with the Scottish specific duties to ensure that, in terms of employment, the University is meeting the aims under this policy.

- The University will continue to monitor its teaching and learning practice via Annual Monitoring Reports for both Schools and through the quality assurance and quality enhancement process.

- The University will commit to maintain its Athena SWAN awards and the good practice established through the Concordat and the Research Excellence Framework.

1.2.4 Equality Impact Assessment

As part of its mainstreaming approach, the University undertakes Equality Impact Assessments ("EIAs") when reviewing and developing strategy, policy and process. We recognise that not all staff are involved in the EIA process, and that we have still more to do in terms of expanding the pool of trained staff. We have committed to auditing all formal University policy statements/regulations, with a view to producing a definitive register which sets out: policy owner, date of approval/last review and date of EIA. While we have made progress, we recognise that we need to do more, so this remains an outcome in our Mainstreaming Report.

We have made significant progress in collecting data on each of the protected characteristics which provides for improved reporting.

1.2.5 Management Information

We have in place management information capability that provides us with the basis to monitor and evaluate our performance across a wide range of indicators. We recognise though that the usefulness of such management information is reliant on our capacity to collect data and to produce resulting meaningful analysis. This is an area in which we continue to make significant progress in terms of student data collection and analysis, and through the further development of our HR ITrent system.

In terms of *student data*, we have improved our capacity to collect information as suggested by the reduction in the percentage of 'unknowns'.

Note: Data reported for Session 2022-23 is at 28th March 2023.

SEX	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Sex not known	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (2)

Indicative numbers for 2022/23 suggest that we have 2 refusals in terms of student sex data – these are the first refusals in 5 years. However, it is acknowledged that proportionally this is an extremely low number of refusals and that the percentage of refusals remains at 0.0%.

ETHNICITY	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Prefer not to say	1.0% (61)	1.2% (73)	1.8% (113)	2.6% (176)	3.3% (201)
Not known	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (2)

The percentage of refusals in terms of ethnicity has been on an upward trend since 2018/19. In 2021/2, the percentage of refusals was 2.6% and indicative figures for 2022-23 suggest there has been a further increase to 3.3%. We are however pleased to report that the number and percentage of unknowns has been maintained at 0% respectively since 2018/19.

RELIGIOUS BELIEF	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
No religion	49.0% (2877)	53.2% (3108)	54.8% (3478)	54.2% (3722)	52.1% (3179)
Prefer not to say	5.1% (300)	6.2% (360)	6.8% (429)	7.9% (541)	8.4% (513)
Not known	9.5% (555)	1.6% (92)	0.3% (17)	0.1% (8)	0.0% (2)

For religious belief, we are able to evidence an improvement in the reduction of unknowns, from 9.5% in 2018/19, to an indicative 0.0% in 2022/3. The percentage of students responding to the question, but selecting 'Prefer Not To Say', appears to show an upward trend, from 5.1% in 2018/9 to an indicative 8.4% in 2022/23.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Prefer not to say	4.4% (257)	5.2% (306)	6.1% (385)	6.9% (471)	7.8% (474)
Not known	16.1% (946)	12.0% (701)	9.1% (576)	6.8% (465)	0.0% (2)

Sexual orientation remains an optional question during annual matriculation for students. However, we have seen a marked increase in the percentage of students responding to this question, with an indicative 0.0% of unknowns in 2022/23 compared with 16.1% of unknowns in 2018/9.

The percentage of students responding to the question, but selecting 'Prefer Not To Say', appears to show an upward trend, from 4.4% in 2018/9 to an indicative 7.8% in 2022/23.

GENDER IDENTITY	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Prefer not to say	1.2% (71)	1.4% (82)	1.4% (87)	1.6% (107)	n/a
Not known	16.2% (953)	13.8% (809)	13.6% (861)	15.0% (1027)	n/a

TRANSGENDER	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Prefer not to say	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.6% (159)
Not known	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.0% (60)

It should be noted that the HESA entry 'Do you consider yourself to be trans, or have a trans history?' replaced the previous gender identity entry in 2022/23. The change in question seems to indicate a slightly larger proportion of refusals in 2022/23, increasing to 2.6%

compared to 1.6% in 2021/22. However, we are pleased to note that the percentage of unknowns has decreased significantly since 2021/22, decreasing from 15.0% to 1.0%.

We will continue to work to improve the percentage of unknowns, but we consider that the information available to us does allow us to produce management reports concerning our student population that are significant in statistical terms. We are able to produce live 'on time' reports that are accessible to all staff, either through direct access to the reports, or by request. In relation to student retention and progression, for example, we provide reports on a monthly basis to all programme leaders and senior academic managers so that any issues emerging are identified. A full suite of Management Information reports on student progress and achievement broken down into each of the protected characteristic groups is included in the Annual Reports for each programme.

Management information and supporting commentary on our staff is set out in Section 2 below and within Appendices 1 and 2 of this report.

2. Section 2: Equality Outcomes to 2025: Reporting on Progress

As part of the mainstreaming process, and to comply with specific duties, the University is required to publish, undertake and report on progress on equality outcomes.

Equality outcomes are not targets or processes. An outcome is an aspirational end result which, in the short term, will change awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes, and in the longer term, will change behaviour, put a focus on equality in decision making and improve social and environmental conditions.

In our Mainstreaming Report 2021-2025, we established six Equality Outcomes. The equality outcomes that form the basis of reporting in this report are:

Equality Outcome 1: By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University.

Equality Outcome 2: Pay Gaps are eliminated where the pay gap is significant in statistical terms in favour of any group.

Equality Outcome 3: By 2025, significant steps have been taken to improve the attainment of those grounds with a protected characteristic in our student population and workforce who experience poorer outcomes. We will particularly focus on gender, race, age and disability, and, where determined, the disproportionate impact of COVID on certain groups.

Equality Outcome 4: Our people policies promote inclusive employment and career advancement prospects

Equality Outcome 5: Equality and diversity is embedded fully in the curriculum and in research

Equality Outcome 6: More robust and comprehensive data is available on the characteristics of our staff, with identified evidence gaps filled.

As set out in the following sections of this report, we consider that we have made significant progress during the lifetime of our Mainstreaming Report across all areas. Not all outcomes have been achieved, and not all outcomes will be achievable in isolation – some require partnership working. Some outcomes may not be achievable at all due to larger societal influence, but it is important nevertheless to recognise those that fail into that category.

As far as possible, in reporting progress we have focussed on progress made rather than activities undertaken, although we consider that reporting on activity can be useful in demonstrating how we meet the general duty.

2.1 Equality Outcome 1: By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University.

Appendix 1 of this report sets out our equalities data in relation to our academic and professional services staff.

Our overall workforce numbers have increased from 2019/20 by 14%. Review of our workforce data demonstrates increasing numbers of staff amongst protected characteristics. Between 2019/20 and 21/22, numbers of BAME staff have risen 52% (from 23 to 35); numbers of LGBT staff have risen by 24% (from 25 to 31); numbers of disabled staff have risen by 46% (from 28 to 41) and we have increased our numbers of employees aged 16-24 from 1 to 5.

Appendix 2 of this report sets out our Equal Pay data in relation to our academic and professional services staff and contains analysis of the proportion of staff by protected characteristic at QMU compared to the Scottish HEI Sector benchmark.

As of March 2022, female staff represent 68.38% of QMU's workforce; BAME staff represent 5.14%; staff with a declared disability represent 7.09% and LGBT staff represent 5.32%. Although benchmarking against Scottish HEIs suggests that QMU tends to perform slightly better in terms of percentage of staff by protected characteristic compared to the Scottish HEI average, it is acknowledged that our numbers in some areas (particularly ethnicity and disability) remain low and that lack of representation is a sector-wide problem. Increasing diversity in our workforce therefore remains a continuing priority.

We have taken, and will continue to take, the following actions in the period to 2025 to address gaps identified in our workforce. We continue to adopt a broad definition of 'workforce' to include nonexecutive directors on our Governing Body, and those with whom we engage in partnership in the delivery of the student learning experience.

During Session 2021-22, the gender balance of membership of Court was maintained at 50% female and 50% male. The lay member gender balance was 47% female and 53% male. Equality Monitoring is in place for all Court members. During 2022-23, we will continue to reflect on the balance of diversity on the Court, while maintaining the gender balance required under the Gender Representation on Boards legislation.

We continually compare our approach to the attraction and recruitment of young people with the approaches of other Scottish HEIs, and where we identify opportunities to improve our approach we will continue to seek to implement changes to our recruitment and selection policy and procedure to attract and recruit more young people.

As a result of comparing our approach to other Scottish HEIs, entry level development opportunities for young people have been introduced with the establishment of our Modern Apprenticeship Policy published in 2022. Since the introduction of the policy, two young apprentices and an intern have been employed within our IT department and Student Services. We remain committed to growing our own workforce of the future and diversifying the age range of our staff profile. Our policy framework sets out a review five months prior to the end of the Modern Apprenticeship to determine the possibility and business requirement of continuing the position on an open-end basis.

To continue to explore the possibilities of extending our entry level development opportunities for young people, we are planning to explore opportunities to access the Job

Centre Plus Kick Start scheme to create short, fixed term job placements for unemployed 16 to 24-year-olds in our community.

Human Resources colleagues have undertaken work to encourage managers to review job description requirements and person specifications when recruiting for entry-level jobs. Focused work has gone into reviewing the essential requirements of these jobs, for example the ask of certain qualifications, to identify where it may be possible and appropriate to remove these as entry requirements, instead allowing applicants to work towards these qualifications or requirements on the job. In undertaking this exercise, we believe we have made good steps forward in terms of removing barriers facing young people entering the workforce at QMU.

Through the Race Equality Steering Group, chaired by the Principal, we have begun work to progress workstreams that invest in a diverse workforce, foster an anti-racist culture of understanding, record and respond effectively to racist incidents, monitor and review organisational race data and consult with community partners.

2.1.1 EDI Culture Review

As part of the work of the Race Equality Steering Group, QMU has appointed Professor Paul Miller PhD as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion & Anti Racism Adviser to its Principal. Since his appointment in 2022, Professor Miller has been providing advice and guidance to QMU's Principal, Sir Paul Grice, and other QMU staff, on the further advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion, and on fostering an anti-racism culture of understanding. He is supported by Visiting Fellows (Race Equality), Dr Leroi Henry and Dr Kenisha T. Linton.

Building on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) work being undertaken at the University, Prof Miller is currently undertaking an EDI culture review of the experiences and outcomes of BAME staff and students in particular, as part of the university's focused anti-racism work. Through this full EDI Culture Review, QMU will be the first university in the UK to undertake such a broad review looking into EDI issues affecting both staff and students. The findings from this review will enable QMU to strengthen its current EDI strategy and action plan, and develop a meaningful anti-racism strategy and action plan.

The project is mid-way through completion, with project deliverables due to be delivered in the summer of 2023. The work undertaken so far has included the completion of a series of facilitated consultations with staff across the University on the following themes/ topics:

- Everyday experience of working at Queen Margaret University
- Recruitment, development and promotion
- Team working & Community
- Grievances and disciplinary
- Culture of the University
- Line management and support systems relating to race equality
- Leadership
- Communications

ALL categories of staff have been included in the consultation. In addition, the work has included the completion of a series of facilitated consultations with students on the following themes/ topics:

- Employability
- Welfare provision
- Reporting and support mechanisms

- Culture of the University- staff members and other students.
- Education- the curriculum, academic support and mentors
- General aspects of the student experience- societies, sports, catering services.

Note: Students across the University have been consulted.

Supporting the outcomes of the facilitated conversations, a detailed analysis of quantitative data has also been conducted, including analysis of gender and minority ethnicity pay gap data, equality monitoring data and staff and student surveys.

The primary deliverables of the work, due to be delivered in Summer 2023, are as follows:

1) Research Report
There will be a summary project report of between 25 - 30 pages comprising: Executive summary, project methodology, project activities and findings, and a list of prioritised recommendations.

2) A draft EDI & Anti-racism Strategy
This high-level strategy will set out the University's EDI/Anti-racism ambitions over three years: 2023 - 2026), drawing on existing areas of strengths and practice.

3) A draft EDI & Anti-racism Action Plan
This operational document will set out specific areas for action, grouped under various Work Packages, where the University could focus attention. The lifetime of the Action Plan is linked to the lifetime of the Strategy to cover the period 2022 – 2026.

The Race Equality Steering Group has been supporting the work of the EDI Culture Review, and has met 3 times since its establishment in 2021. Although the final outcomes of the EDI Culture Review are still to be received, members of the Steering Group have begun progressing work under the priority work-streams informed by project updates thus far.

Fostering an anti-racist culture of understanding

Since the beginning of the review, the Race Equality Steering Group has received positive updates from Professor Paul Miller that there has been a collective interest and energizing happening across the university with regards to the anti-racist and EDI work. It has been noted that this has come from all areas of the university, from professional and academic staff as well as students. Many people from across the university have been reaching out directly to Professor Miller, who has expressed that he feels confident that the project is reaching people and is having an impact in many ways. It has been noted as a priority for the Race Equality Steering Group to now think beyond the project in order to sustain this energizing and interest across the university.

Decolonising the curriculum

In January 2023 the LEAD Centre launched a longitudinal initiative to enhance approaches to Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment (ILTA) across QMU, thus aligning with the this RESG work-stream and a key overarching theme in our QMU Student Experience Strategy 2021-26.

The LEAD Centre sought nominations for colleagues from a range of QMU academic and professional services teams to join a cohort of twenty-six ILTA Champions. Three Student Champions will also be joining the Cohort for Module 4 (Inclusive Student Engagement and Partnership). This cross-institutional cohort based approach was designed in order to create a network of QMU 'Trojan Mice' *(Prof Zoe Robinson, Keele University)* of Inclusive Learning,

Teaching and Assessment' who can positively influence ILTA practice, and ultimately enhance the student experience at QMU and our collaborative partners.

Our ILTA Champions have the following remit:

1. Attend a longitudinal programme of workshops, delivered by Advance HE.
2. Cascade their learning and enhanced practice to wider teams of colleagues in order to influence positive change around ILTA practice across QMU and our collaborative partners.
3. Co-create a revised Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment policy for QMU.

From January to April 2023:
- Colleagues from [Advance HE](#) have been delivering a longitudinal online programme of Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment workshops for our cohort
- These focus around the following topics:
  - Module 1: Introduction to EDI in Learning, Teaching and Assessment
  - Module 2: Inclusive and Equitable Assessment and Feedback
  - Module 3: Inclusive Curriculum
  - Module 4: Inclusive Student Engagement and Partnership

- Colleagues from LEAD and Student Services have also embedded wraparound activities either side of this workshop programme:
  - To debrief and share key learning
  - To plan associated resources and activities to cascade learning to wider team members
  - To plan inputs to the forthcoming Festival of Learning on the 25th May.

Between May and December 2023, plans are in place for the following:

- ILTA Champions will contribute to co-creating a revised QMU Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment policy. This policy revision will be led by the Head of Student Services and a small working group, and aims to be completed by December 2023. Once approved, the policy will be disseminated across QMU.
- ILTA Champions will also continue to discuss and disseminate their learning with colleagues in their own teams and beyond.

In March 2023, the LEAD Centre appointed Vikki Hill as a Senior Lecturer in Academic Development. Vikki will be taking forwards the LEAD Centre's work around EDI and Sustainability in the curriculum, with Decolonising the Curriculum as a priority focus. Vikki has already started meeting with colleagues who are working on Decolonising activities and has started to curate Decolonising resources into a Sharepoint site that QMU and Collaborative Partner colleagues will be able to access. We will continue to work with agencies that can support us effectively in this work, including the Advance HE Project Team in Scotland and the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland.

Alongside this work, the LEAD Centre will be hosting the third QMU Festival of Learning Symposium, taking place on 25th May 2023, with the theme this year of 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion'. The festival aligns with the QMU Student Experience Strategy and the Race Equality Steering Group, and has an overall theme of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion in Learning, Teaching and Assessment with a particular focus on:

- Belonging
- Decolonising
- Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment

This symposium is open to staff and students and will provide an opportunity to share practice and to reflect upon how our learning, teaching and assessment approaches can address our theme to enhance our students' experience and create an inclusive and socially just learning community.

Constructing systematic, anti-racist development practices

Acknowledging the long-term work that needs to go into developing systematic, anti-racist practices, members of HR participated in a training session focusing on policy review and analysis from an EDI/Anti Racism lens lead by Professor Paul Miller in August 2022. This training will form the basis for future and continuing reviews of our policies and procedures.

Investing in a diverse workforce

We remain committed to benchmarking our recruitment process against the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit and implement any changes that are necessary to our advertising, engagement, sifting and interviewing processes so that we can attract and recruit more minority ethnic candidates. Initial reviewing of the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit has been conducted as part of our full EDI Culture Review. It was recognised that findings from our internal EDI Culture Review, conducted by Professor Paul Miller, are likely to influence and identify the ways in which we can implement the Toolkit most effectively. Following the publication of the review, we will take informed steps to implement the Action Plan, which will include embedding the Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit.

A full recruitment policy review conducted by HR is planned for the next academic year. This review will be conducted with an EDI lens focus. Following the outcomes of the review, we will put in place revised any relevant recruitment and selection processes that enable us to recruit the right people to help us deliver on our aspirations.

As part of our work to improve our recruitment webpages, an external audit of our webpages with an EDI lens was conducted by TMP Worldwide. A report containing recommendations relating to themes of messaging, imagery, story-telling, language and accessibility was received in December 2021. An extensive amount of work has since been undertaken and the university is committed to continuing the work necessary to implement these recommendations, as detailed below:

- The Marketing team have implemented a number of changes to address the accessibility of our website
- We have re-worded our Equality and Diversity webpage with further plans to update it to have less of a purely compliant feel to it. We have now also linked the Equality and Diversity page to our vacancies page to reflect our commitment to EDI to potential applicants.
- We made change to the web [recruitment form web page](#) and changed the imagery
- We have made our hybrid working web page visible on our website for attraction purposes, with plans in place to do more work on this, including having "spotlight" sites for particular things we know are important to people when looking for a new employer (e.g. how the university supports staff with caring responsibilities and Dignity at Work)

- Human Resources and Marketing colleagues have worked to change the way our HR policies appear on our website so that they look more visual and are more easily accessible. Continuing with this work, we have plans in place to do review our policy style with the aim to take a more concise and user-friendly tone. This is something that HR will be addressing when reviewing policies.
- Following discussions with Marketing, Human Resources and the Equality and Diversity Committee, we are putting plans in place to have more diverse imagery on our website as well as staff stories and more images of staff in general. We acknowledge the challenges involved in encouraging a diverse range of staff, particularly those with protected characteristics, to be included in website content. We are therefore considering in our plans how best to reach and communicate the benefits of being represented on webpages to encourage more staff to feel confident in participating.
- We have diversified our approach to recruitment advertising by posting our advertisements on a variety of new websites in an effort to target our most underrepresented groups such as BAMEed, Teacheroo job board and The Voice.
- In cases where we might be struggling to recruit, Human Resources colleagues are reviewing essential criteria and have also begun including EDI statements in job adverts to encourage underrepresented groups to apply.
- To begin work on building our employer brand that focuses on our values and from an EDI perspective, a survey is planned to go out in Autumn to collect data on what staff enjoy about working at QMU. The results of this survey will be used to articulate why people should want to work for QMU more clearly via our web pages, reflecting current staff experiences.

Recording and responding effectively to racist incidents

In Spring 2022, the new 'Report and Support' tool was introduced at the university, and was officially launched in October '22. Report and support is a new online platform for students and staff where they can report and ask for support for any incident of inappropriate conduct that they have experienced. Report and Support covers a variety of topics such as:

- Rape, Sexual Assault and harassment
- Stalking
- Relationship abuse and Coercive control
- Hate Crime
- Discrimination
- Violence and Assault
- Bullying and Harassment
- Online abuse

The tool is for any student or member of staff at QMU. Any student or staff can report and/or ask for support for themselves but it is also possible to do a third party report or an anonymous report. All the information is confidential and the reports are read by a small number of staff who will ensure the individual is contacted and offered support and supported to identify what cause of action they want to take. The individual themselves will be able to decide whether they want to report to the university, to the police or if they only want support. The staff will support the individual to take what action they decide to take.

On the website itself there is also a lot of information under the various headings. This enables the student or member of staff to take in the information provided and make an informed decision about what they want to do next. The website contains detailed

information about various issues, reporting options and detailed information about support is available.

Since its launch, the website has received good traffic and anecdotally students have been using the website as a source of support and information when an incident occurs. The tool itself has received a number of reports, although it is acknowledged that numbers are still relatively low and that there is still work to do in order to increase awareness of the tool amongst the university. Work is now being planned to promote the tool and the various aspects of the site in a clearer way to increase awareness of its functions and purpose across the university.

Monitoring and reviewing organisational race data

Alongside Professor Miller's analysis of pay gap data, Human Resources have begun undertaking work to look deeply at the university's data to try to identify and understand the experiences of BAME staff at the university. It has been acknowledged that we are working with small numbers, and thus it can be difficult to draw conclusions. Nonetheless, by reviewing our race data, HR colleagues have been able to identify a potential area of which needs focussed work regarding the length of service of our BAME staff. Currently, our data shows that we are not retaining BAME members of staff at the same rate as non-BAME staff, and thus BAME staff members are often leaving the university after a shorter length of service. Having identified retention as a potential issue, focused work will now look to address the area of retention and in particular to understand the reasons why we are currently not retaining BAME staff. As a first step to address this, Human Resources will now be conducting an exit interview for any leaver from an ethnic minority background and all leavers with less than 12 months service in addition to an exit survey.

Consulting with Black community partners

Work is planned to engage with community partners following the publication of the EDI Culture Review. The Race Equality Steering Group have agreed that community work should extend beyond black community partners to engage a diverse range of ethnic minority community partners.

2.2 Equality Outcome 2: Pay Gaps are eliminated where the pay gap is significant in statistical terms in favour of any group.

We are committed to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, free from bias and based on objective criteria. We recognise that, under the Equality Act 2010, women and men have the right to equal pay for work of equal value; this applies to all employees regardless of full or part-time status, casual or temporary contract or length of service. Equally, the University also recognises its duty to provide equal pay for work of equal value regardless of differences in sex, age, race, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy/maternity or disability.

The University has in place, a pay and grading system which is used to assist in determining equal pay across the University. The pay and grading system is applied transparently, based on objective criteria to ensure that it is free from unlawful bias. The University's policies and procedures associated with pay and remuneration have been developed and implemented with a view to eliminating unlawful bias, and are systematically monitored and reviewed.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires equal pay data to be published biennially. However, in order to demonstrate the University's continued commitment towards equal pay, we have committed to undertaking an Equal Pay Review annually in order to review the University's progress and identify if further actions are required. This commitment to annual reporting has allows us to analyse data both in terms of long-term trends, but also in terms of any significant changes that may have occurred within a year, allowing us to identify and target any potential arising issues at an earlier stage.

Analysis of the data set within our Equal Pay Review 2023 (based on data from 31st March 2022) indicates that, for all staff (including the Senior Leadership Team), there is gender a pay gap in terms of mean salary of some -4.50% between female and male employees, in favour of male employees. This has increased slightly since 2021 but is not considered to be significant. When excluding the salaries of SLT members, the Mean Pay Gap is now shown to be favouring male employees at -0.23%. Although this figure has fluctuated slightly over the course of the past five years, it is noted that these fluctuations have remained relatively consistent and none of these fluctuations have resulted in a figure that is considered significant.

By way of context, the Advance HE report titled 'Equality and Higher Education Staff Statistical Report 2022', reported a mean pay gap of 14.8% in favour of male employees and a median pay gap of 8.5% across UK HEIs. As with previous years the overall gender pay gap in Scotland continues to be wider, with a mean negative female pay gap of 15.2% and median pay gap of 16.2%. It is acknowledged that these figures have narrowed slightly in recent years. In terms of benchmarking, QMU continues to perform significantly better in terms of the pay gaps reported for UK and Scottish HEIs. Nevertheless, QMU is not complacent, and will commit to continuing to work to reduce pay gaps where they exist in our staff population.

Our 2022 and 2023 Equal Pay Audits, which set out progress and changes in pay gaps since 2021, have published along with this Mainstreaming report. The reports include updates on activities taken place to address identified areas, as well as an established Action Plan for the next year. The reports can be found at: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/equality-and-diversity/

2.3 Equality Outcome 3: By 2025, significant steps have been taken to improve the attainment of those grounds with a protected characteristic in our student population and workforce who experience poorer outcomes. We will particularly focus on gender, race, age and disability, and, where determined, the disproportionate impact of COVID on certain groups.

Actions under Equality Outcome 1 regarding the work of the Race Equality Steering Group and EDI Culture Review apply.

We have recently enhanced our capacity to deliver on our stated outcomes through the appointment of a Dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Adviser. This newly created post at the university will act as a central and focused point at the university to drive EDI progress across all areas of the university.

In progressing these outcomes, we have stated that 'Actions in pursuit of this outcome reflect those set out in our Equal Pay Audit Action Plan and in our Outcome Agreement 2023 (subject to SFC guidance). Approaches and actions set out in pages 17-24 of the 2021 Mainstreaming report will be developed further'. In reporting on progress, we replicate some of the narrative set out in our Outcome Agreement 2023 (due to be published May 2023).

2.3.1 Student Population

We are committed to widening participation amongst those who have previously been inhibited from entering Higher Education for social, economic or cultural reasons, and to taking active steps to maximise their persistence and success. Our published widening participation and retention strategy seeks to increase student numbers from non-traditional groups, including those that are: first generation to go to Higher Education; from low progression schools; reside in communities in the lowest 20% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (MD20); articulating students from Scotland's Colleges; disabled students; BAME students; male students studying Nursing and Allied Health programmes; ex-service/armed forces; estranged students; student carers and those who are care experienced.

Our approach to widening access offers built-in tailored support throughout the learner journey, including at points of transition. We work to raise awareness of higher education within target communities, including those local to the University. Our Widening Participation and Outreach Plan 2022 to 2023 outlines the wide range of awareness and access activities undertaken with schools, colleges, local authorities, partner agencies and local communities. Our contextualised admissions process provides the basis for fair offers to study at the University.

We support the successful transition of those entering the university through QM Advance, Direct Entrant Induction Week (induction programmes), PALS (Peer Assisted Learning Scheme), Academic Skills support through the Effective Learning Service (ELS), and QMCares (support for student carers, care experienced and estranged students). Student services provide support from pre-entry to post-graduation through funding advice, careers and employability support, disability support, counselling, and wellbeing support. Students are supported through employer mentoring, work experience opportunities and support with developing CVs and job applications.

To deliver on these commitments, we have invested carefully in people and structures, utilising fully our SFC Widening Access and Retention Funding (WARF) allocation of £623k (April 2022) for this purpose. Specifically, we currently invest some 90% of our WARF funding on dedicated people who develop and implement our access and retention agenda

through school, college and community engagement, and provide the tailored support to applicant and student groups whom we have identified through our research and evaluation are at a higher risk of not persisting with their studies. The latter includes entrants from SIMD20 and SIMD40 quintiles, articulating students, those from a care-experienced background, student carers, those estranged from their families and most recently, male students.

Our Widening Participation and Outreach (WPO) Team, consisting of four staff funded directly by WARF, works with a range of partners, including schools, colleges, community groups, third sector and voluntary agencies, and local authorities to maximise the opportunities of people in Edinburgh and the Lothians and beyond. Detailed explanation of many of the projects and initiatives on which the team lead, or in which they are involved, is provided within the University's Outcome Agreement 2023 (due to be published XXX).

Both of our Academic Schools also receive funding for a WISeR Coordinator, a role that supports the embedding of best practice within each School, and engages staff at the local level with the University's access and retention priorities. Priorities established for each School are evidence based, drawing on programme level data, including application, admission, retention and attainment.

Protected Characteristics

On the basis that we have adopted a wider definition of 'under-represented groups' that has extended beyond that of the SIMD national indicator, we have included specific outcomes for protected characteristic groups in our Outcome Agreements since 2011. We have in place a range of initiatives to increase the participation and retention of those from a broad range of non-traditional groups. This includes disabled students, BAME students, mature students, and male students studying Allied Health programmes.

We are committed to enhancing the student experience by creating and promoting an inclusive learning environment. This applies to recruitment and admission, to the curriculum, teaching and assessment, to welfare and support services, and to staff development and training. We continue to benchmark and evaluate our performance in this area, primarily through the Equality and Diversity Committee and through the Widening Participation and Student Retention (WISeR) Board.

Student Entrants

In terms of benchmarking our performance, we have used statistics drawn from HESA's HEIDI+ statistical platform showing the percentage of students from the Scottish HEI sector as a whole alongside figures from our internal reporting platform.

Scotland domiciled, UG Students only*		2020/1	20201/2	2022/3
Disabled Students	Scotland	17.0%	18.2%	-
	QMU	30.4%	30.7%	30.1%
Students from minority ethnic backgrounds	Scotland	9.6%	9.5%	-
	QMU	9.6%	10.5%	12.5%

| Mature Students | Scotland | 43.4% | 39.3% | - |
| | QMU | 38.9% | 39.8% | 37.4% |

Although benchmarking figures for 2022/23 are not yet available, in 2021/2, we remained above the sector average for all of the above measures.

In 2021/2, it is noted that the sector average of students from minority ethnic backgrounds stagnated, whilst QMU saw an increase. Internal figures from 2022/3 demonstrate this increase steadily continuing, with the percentage of students from minority ethnic backgrounds increasing by a further 2%.

It is noted that the sector average of students with a declared disability is steadily increasing. We committed to recruit and retain students with declared disabilities at a level above the rest of the Scottish University sector, and have continued to achieve that level.

We know from experience that the percentage of disabled students reported will increase during the year as additional students declare, or are assessed through referral to the disability services team. The percentage of disabled students remains high, reflecting our continuing efforts to identify students with disabilities, and students becoming more confident in self-declaring. We have robust procedures in place to support disabled students in terms of the delivery of teaching and learning and assessment. We have utilised a proportion of our WARF funding to this area, recognising that disabled students are at higher risk of withdrawal if their support needs are not met. Our statistics on the retention of disabled students suggests that we are succeeding in this respect.

We are committed to our duties under the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act, and to contributing in a meaningful way to the first BSL National Plan. We published our BSL Action plan in October 2018: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/footer/bsl-action-plan/

Our Plan 2018-2024 is framed around the same long-term goals as the national plan, where these are relevant to our work. In its BSL Progress Report, published in October 2021, our work in embedding BSL into our Initial Teacher Education programmes is highlighted as one of the key successes to date of the BSL National Plan: https://www.gov.scot/publications/british-sign- language-progress-report/pages/4/

We recognise that application and entry to some degree programmes is subject to wider societal influences. Audit Scotland's report on the Scottish NHS workforce records that 1 in 10 of the Nursing workforce is male, and that 2 in 10 of the Allied Health professions are male. A rebalancing of the student demographic requires partnership working with schools, Colleges, parents, and with the professions and wider community influencers.

Student Engagement & Support Activities

We recognise that there are a number of factors that contribute to student retention and attainment, including student engagement in their studies,

We continued to provide a full service to students during 2021-22, with all services offered both online and face to face. Services are trauma informed and responding well to student demand, as shown in the recent NSS survey, with 84.09% of students responding that there is sufficient provision of welfare and student services to meet their needs, compared to 61.85% nationally. Similarly, 76.59% agreed that the support from welfare and student service is helpful compared to 62.96% nationally.

During Session 2022-23, we have worked with our Students' Union to address the severe cost of living challenges as they impact on our students. The working group established to oversee our response promotes the various aspects of our support through social media messaging and through a dedicated webpage: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/cost-of-living-crisis-support-for-students/

The Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT) events in particular have been well received by students and supported by dedicated staff volunteers. The weekly event sees some 300+ meals provided to students, with feedback suggesting that the social aspects of the evening – games/films/bingo – is supporting a sense of community.

The number of students receiving support from Student Services continues to be high, with increased demand on the disability, counselling and wellbeing services. All Student Services continue to provide the option of online and in person appointments, and have seen a shift in preferences to face to face appointments, particularly in counselling and wellbeing. The Counselling and Wellbeing team provided support to 417 students in 2021-22 through 1038 appointments.

The reasons for support being sought remain those relating to stress and feelings of being overwhelmed, anxiety, low moods and depression, as well as relationship and family issues. We have seen a continuation of students struggling with loneliness and isolation and feeling "cut off" which is likely linked to some extent to the pandemic, and to students finding it difficult to get to know other students due to lack of opportunity to socialise.

We reviewed our Counselling Service and Wellbeing Service in early 2022, and merged the two services with a simplified referral route. This has reduced waiting times and improved the capacity to respond to emergencies. There is now scheduled "emergency appointment" available each day for any critical incidents. In addition, we have increased the availability of evening appointments, as this has proved popular with students who are working or are on placements. We have continued to provide one to one support as the main form of support, but also provide group support, workshops and webinars for students on areas such as managing stress, coping with anxiety, building resilience etc.

We have continued to roll out our Placement Wellbeing Toolkit and this has been very popular among students and staff as a support tool for students on placements.

We continue to provide support to a significant number of disabled students, providing support through individual learning plans, study supports, assistive technology etc. Through the disability service, we have seen an increase in students with mental health conditions, as well as a significant increase in students seeking diagnosis for neurodiversity, with related increased waiting times to be diagnosed.

We continue to work with partner organisations, such as alcohol and drugs services (MELDAP), local Eating Disorder Supports, Primary Mental Health Service (CWIC), and with local Women's Aid and Rape Crisis groups.

Our Student Mental Health Strategy has been refreshed through the Student Mental Health Working Group. SFC funding for additional counselling continued to support two counsellors, each at 0.6 FTE, to the existing Counselling and Wellbeing teams. Specifically, the additional resource has:

- Provided additional drop-ins for self-help and wellbeing support, and for preventing/tackling sexual harassment and violence.
- Delivered psycho-education workshops and staff training.

- Undertaken Counselling assessments.
- Delivered brief Counselling and One-at-a-time Therapy/Single Session Therapy.
- Increased links with local stakeholders

We have built into this additional resource specialist support to assist us in our commitment to addressing sexual harassment and violence.

Report and Support provides a platform for students to report various forms of harassment and violence. It also provides access to advice and support.

We continue to work collaboratively with Edinburgh Universities through the GBV steering group, working with Rape Crisis in providing support to students. We are active members of the Fearless Partnership, working with a variety of stakeholders including the Universities, NHS and the Police to improve responses to GBV in the Edinburgh Area, sharing good practice and linking supports. We also work collaboratively through the Thrive group to strategically improve mental health among students in the Edinburgh area.

Our Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS) continues to develop, offering our students the opportunity to engage in additional study sessions, facilitated by trained peer Leaders. After six years of operation, we now have a solid evidence base of the impact of the scheme on student attainment and retention.

Student Attainment

An analysis of student attainment, as measured by degree classification, suggests that outcomes have improved in a number of categories, but there is work to be done. In line with the HE sector, female students perform better than male students in terms of degree outcome, as do non-BAME students compared to BAME students.

As the below tables show, since 2018/9, performance has improved for disabled students, male students, and BAME students, but each of these groups underperform against the benchmark. BAME students under-perform by some 16%. While the gap has closed a little on the previous year, we need to understand the reasons for this gap. This forms an important part of our work going forward.

All students:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
All	79.6% (487/612)	81.2% (544/670)	80.6% (502/623)	81.5% (536/658)

Student attainment by Sex:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
Female	81.4% (376/462)	82.9% (422/509)	82.6% (385/469)	83.2% (427/513)
Male	74.0% (111/150)	75.8% (122/161)	75.7% (115/152)	75.2% (109/145)

Other Sex	- (0/0)	- (0/0)	100.0% (2/2)	- (0/0)

Student attainment by declared disability:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
Declared Disability	77.0% (94/22)	80.1% (133/166)	71.7% (109/152)	79.9% (139/174)
No disability	80.2% (393/490)	81.5% (411/504)	83.4% (393/471)	82.0% (396/483)
Unknown incl. PNTS	- (0/0)	- (0/0)	- (0/0)	100.0% (1/1)

Student attainment by ethnicity:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
Minority Ethnicity	65.0% (39/60)	71.9% (41/57)	69.6% (32/46)	66.7% (38/57)
Unknown incl. PNTS	100% (4/4)	100% (1/1)	100% (2/2)	80.0% (4/5)
White	81.0% (444/548)	82.0% (502/612)	81.4% (468/575)	82.9% (494/596)

Student attainment by religious belief:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
No religious belief	81.5% (251/308)	84.8% (324/382)	84.9% (327/385)	83.8% (346/413)
Religious belief	75.3% (128/170)	77.4% (192/248)	74.1% (160/216)	75.1% (157/209)
Unknown incl. PNTS	80.6% (108/134)	70.0% (28/40)	68.2% (15/22)	91.7% (33/36)

Student attainment by gender identity:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
Gender identity different from sex assigned at birth	85.7% (6/7)	75.0% (3/4)	75.0% (3/4)	100.0% (3/3)
Gender identity same as sex assigned at birth	78.8% (406/515)	81.1% (459/566)	80.9% (452/559)	81/7% (477/584)

Unknown incl. PNTS	83.3% (75/90)	82.0% (82/100)	78.3% (47/60)	78.9% (56/71)

Student attainment by marital status:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
Co-habiting	50% (9/18)	94.4% (17/18)	73.1% (19/26)	89.7% (26/29)
Divorced or formerly in a CP now legally dissolved	- (0/0)	66.7% (2/3)	66.7% (2/3)	75% (3/4)
Married or in a registered civil partnership	74.1% (20/27)	81.0% (17/21)	95% (19/20)	78.8% (26/33)
Separated (but still legally married or in a CP)	50.0% (1/2)	100% (2/2)	75.0% (3/4)	66.7% (2/3)
Single (Never married and never registered in a CP)	80.3% (374/466)	81.1% (433/534)	79.7% (409/513)	81.5% (413/507)
Unknown including PNTS	83.8% (83/99)	79.3% (73/92)	87.5% (49/56)	80.2% (65/81)
Widowed or surviving partner from registered CP	- (0/0)	- (0/0)	100% (1/1)	100 (1/1)

Student attainment by Age:

Honours graduates with a 1st Class or 2:1 Award	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
Mature Student	80.4% (131/163)	82.7% (143/173)	82.8% (159/192)	80.0% (176/220)
Other	79.3% (356/449)	80/7% (401/497)	79.6% (343/431)	82.2% (360/438)

2.3.2 Workforce

We remain committed to promoting female career development through established programmes, including Aurora, Athena Swan, DEVELOP, and ensure equal access by all staff to promotion opportunities through the management of Performance Enhancement Review (PER) and Reward and Recognition.

We are committed to supporting female career development through the YourDevelopment training directory, and we have continued to support the funding of staff through the Aurora programme, with eight members of staff funded in 21/22 and nine members of staff funded in 22/23. Funded places have ranged cross both academic and professional services staff from

different work areas and across different grades within the university. A reviewal of the internal Aurora application system has also been conducted at the university, which has resulted in a much more accessible process for staff. Whilst previously Aurora delegates were nominated by their line manager/SLT member, we now send an invitation to all female members of staff who occupy a Grade 6 to Grade 9 role to ask for an application form to be completed (should they wish) for the Aurora programme. The applications then would go to their line manager and SLT member for sign off. As a result the university has an active Aurora network which meets regularly and the programme continues to receive positive feedback from its recent cohorts. As the network continues to grow it is hoped in future years, the network moves beyond being a network for only Aurora delegates but can be a female leadership network open to all women at the University.

We continue to ensure that our revised Reward and Recognition Policy and Procedure provides transparent process for reward and promotion of all staff by conducting an annual Equality Impact Assessment of the Reward and Recognition process. In the most recent Annual Equality Impact Assessment of the Reward and Recognition process, analysis of the applications received in 21/22 and the outcomes did not conclusively suggest patterns of unfair bias to any particular group of staff due to a protected characteristic.

Applications were invited from all eligible employees, employees were made aware of these opportunities via a variety of communication methods and were invited to attend briefing sessions for further information. Employees who were absent from work due to maternity/paternity leave or sickness also received invitations to apply should the wish to. It was however noted that it may be useful to explore any perceived or real barriers linked to applications from fixed-term or part-time employees; further investigation of this is planned to be undertaken by the HR team. It was also noted that further EQIAs of Reward and Recognition would benefit from a more complete set of data for the entire QMU staff population. We are committed to improving the data gathered on the characteristics of our staff, as set out in Equality Outcome 6.

We recognise that not all staff are involved in the EIA process, and that we have still more to do in terms of expanding the pool of trained staff. In 2022, the university commissioned an external audit of our EIA process, conducted Diversity McKenzie. As a result of the audit, Diversity McKenzie have reviewed and updated our EIA processes, and will be providing updated guidance for training staff on the EIA process. Once the university receives this guidance, we will put plans in place to implement the guidance and training, which will be led by the newly appointed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Adviser.

In line with guidance published by Advance HE on the collection of diversity monitoring data, we will put in place actions to actively encourage those employees with a protected characteristic to declare this to the university. The initial priority will focus on the collection of Staff Disability Data. Although work related to this action has been delayed, the HR Team remains committed to the enhancement of the University's employee equality data and plans are now in place to begin focused activity in the Spring 2023. Further details can be found in Equality Outcome 6.

We will continue to ensure our practice is in line with the Disability Confident Scheme and examine if there are additional measures that can be introduced to attract, retain, and develop disabled staff. The University currently has level 1 membership of the Disability Confident Scheme – Disability Confident Committed. Following discussions between the HR team and representatives from the DWP, an exercise assessing current actions within the University's Recruitment, Retention and Staff Development processes has begun at the university. Through this exercise, it is anticipated that further actions will be identified that will

further the support the University provides in this area, both internally and externally. Work continues in this area, with the following actions having been undertaken thus far:

- HR Partners attended a disability in the workplace conference which involved discussions on supporting disabled staff in the workplace and are considering appropriate actions in this.
- The opportunity to request reasonable adjustments at the interview stage is available
- Discussions relating to reasonable adjustments take place at the earliest opportunity via HR inductions, and HR colleagues liaise with external expertise as appropriate.
- As mentioned earlier in the report, there are plans in place to review the recruitment procedure with an EDI lens. Disability will be considered along with other protected characteristics in this review.

QMU is also an accredited Living Wage employer. The Living Wage commitment sees everyone working at QMU, regardless of whether they are permanent employees or third party contractors, receive a real Living Wage. The University's third party contractors adopt the Living Wage as and when existing contracts are renewed.

We maintain our commitment to HR related policy review, every 3 years, as agreed with Trade Unions and ensure that our commitment to supporting equality and diversity is embedded across all policies and procedures. Immediate priorities highlighted in the 2021 report included the Special Leave Policy and Absence Management Policy. Since the publishing of our Hybrid Working Statement, it is recognised that the changing nature of work practices will need to be reflected in the review the Absence Management Policy, and thus plans are in place to review the policy in light of hybrid working.

Human Resources have recently concluded a review of our family related and special leave policies have announced several enhancements to existing entitlements as well as new entitlements for staff. This review aligns with the University's objective, as set out in its Strategic Plan, to be a 'Wellbeing University', that embraces the values of equality, diversity and inclusion. Through this review the HR team are working to ensure that our institutional commitments are firmly reflected through our working practices, organisational culture, and HR policies. The review also recognises the significant social shift that has resulted in careers and caring responsibilities becoming more integrated following the pandemic. It is hoped that the outcomes of this review demonstrate the University's commitment to support our staff in managing a range of caring responsibilities.

The HR team have reviewed HR policies covering family and caring related leave entitlements and benchmarked these policies across the HE sector as well as public and private sectors. Staff feedback received as part of our Anti-racism and EDI Culture Review has also been considered as part of this review. The culture review is still ongoing however we have decided to act on some of the feedback received now. The following table provides a summary of the key enhancements to our policies and new entitlements.

Policy	Type of Change	Key Changes
Partner Leave (formerly Paternity leave)	Enhanced Entitlement	- Enhanced from 2 weeks paid leave to 4 weeks paid leave. - Entitlement to Occupational Partner Leave Pay from day one of employment.
Maternity Leave, Adoption & Surrogacy	Enhanced Entitlement	Entitlement to Occupational Maternity Pay from day one of employment.

		• Increased entitlement (regardless of statutory payment qualification) – 90% of pay from week 1 to 6 weeks. • Occupational Maternity Pay paid in full to those who are made redundant 11 weeks prior to their due date (29th week of pregnancy).
Shared Parental Leave	Enhanced Entitlement	• Entitlement to Occupational Shared Parental Pay (subject to certain qualifications) from day one of employment. • Increased entitlement to 50% of pay for 16 weeks.
Special Leave: **Baby loss Leave**	New Entitlement	• 3 days' paid leave for employees who suffer a loss prior to 24 weeks of pregnancy. • Entitlement from day one of employment.
Fertility Leave	New Entitlement	• Up to 5 days' paid leave per rolling year during treatment. • Up to 3 days' paid leave to provide support for a partner during treatment. • Entitlement from day one of employment.
Emergency Care for Dependents	Enhanced Entitlement	• 5 days' paid leave (pro-rata) per rolling year to help support with the Emergency Care of Dependents. • Entitlement from day one of employment.
Bereavement Leave (formerly Compassionate Leave)	Enhanced Entitlement	• 6 days' paid (pro rata for part time). • Line manager discretion regarding number of days has been removed • Entitlement from day one of employment.
Parental Bereavement Leave	New Entitlement	• Up to 10 days' paid leave (pro-rata) for the loss of a child up to the age of 18 years • Entitlement from day one of employment.
Funeral Leave	New Entitlement	• Up to 1 day's paid leave. To support employees with their attendance at a funeral for a family member, or someone with whom they had a close personal relationship. • Entitlement from day one of employment.

2.4 Equality Outcome 4: Our people policies promote inclusive employment and career advancement prospects

Actions in Equality Outcome 1, 2 and 3 apply.

We continue to consult with key stakeholders over the revision of existing and the development of new policies and on the potential equalities impacts, and to develop and revise HR policies based on best practice and legislative changes, considering all protected characteristics. The review and enhancements made to our Family Related and Special Leave Policies outlined in Equality Outcome 3 apply.

Our Statement of Hybrid Working was published in 2022, defining hybrid as a flexible and variable working arrangement and setting out guidance for a hybrid way of working as we transition out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has found working in a hybrid way can have a number of potential benefits, including: a positive impact on staff wellbeing, morale and job satisfaction; increased capacity for attraction and retention of staff; increased organisational resilience; reduced commuting time and associated costs; more time for family and friends and potential opportunities to further optimise our use of existing space. Our Hybrid working statement is underpinned by four supporting principles:

1. Working arrangements will be adaptable in order to suit individual teams, departments and divisions, but will be in line with agreed University-wide policies and procedures, and will have regard to the expectations and requirements of students, staff from within and outwith the team concerned, and other stakeholders.
2. Our operating model will be trust- based, providing agreed flexibility for staff members to carry out their roles whilst ensuring the service delivery to our stakeholders is the priority.
3. Working arrangements will be underpinned by clear principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.
4. Working arrangements will enable and support staff wellbeing and a healthy work/life balance.

Human Resources have also undertaken a review and refresh of our flexible working policies, implementing changes to our website to make it more accessible for current staff and for recruitment purposes. As well as making our flexible working policies more visible, the policy documents themselves have also been streamlined to make them more accessible and thus create greater understanding amongst staff of the flexible options available to them.

The University published Menopause Guidelines in 2022 with the purpose of increasing awareness and ensure a greater understanding about what the menopause is and highlight what support is available at the University to staff and managers. The principles of the guidance are as follows:

- To raise awareness and foster an environment of understanding and open, respectful and honest dialogue that ensures staff are comfortable in having conversations about menopause
- To provide relevant training for staff in relation to menopause
- To provide appropriate information on our web pages about menopause to all staff
- To ensure appropriate information is available to all managers so that they can support staff at work
- To consider reasonable adjustments at work

As a greater number of women are working longer into their careers, menopause support in the workplace is becoming an important aspect of EDI. This is particularly relevant for higher education institutions that have a female-heavy employee profile. Queen Margaret University, which has a proud history as a trailblazer for women's education, is keen to promote menopause awareness as part of its ongoing support of women's personal and professional development. Alongside the publication of the Menopause Guidelines, a '(Meno) pausitivity @ QMU' event was held on campus in January 2023 in collaboration with colleagues from Over the Bloody Moon. Targeted at those with a limited knowledge of menopause with the aim to open discussions, raise awareness, remove stigma, and help understanding, the event was well attended by both staff and students and anecdotally was said to have created a positive atmosphere on campus which in turn has begun to generate open conversations about the menopause at the university.

We continue to progress fully all actions set out in the institutional Athena Swan Action Plan, and are working towards a re-submittal for an institutional Bronze Award in January 2024. We recognise that there is still more work to be done to achieve a Silver Award for Nursing, and whilst this work has currently been delayed indefinitely, our efforts for this round will focus on maintaining an institutional Bronze award. Work towards our next Athena SWAN submission includes plans to publish a communication plan with the purpose of raising awareness of the Athena SWAN principles through key internal communication channels/committees.

We continue to review our current Performance Enhancement Review policy and procedure in joint consultation with our recognised Trade Unions and Line Managers. The HR Team is focused on sharing and responding to information transparently with all stakeholders via mechanisms that are presently in place e.g. Trade Union Meetings. Equality of opportunity is considered a priority in regard to development opportunities within the University. All staff are invited to participate in the University's Performance Enhancement Review process and to take ownership of their own development by suggesting and agreeing personal objectives in agreement with their line manager. We have committed to building a coaching culture where managers and peers are trained to have effective career and development conversations to support career advancement prospects.

We have launched a new Concordat for Researcher Development Action Plan 2022-25 confirming our commitments to enhancing environment and culture, employment, and professional and career development.   Our annual Researcher Development Training Programme continues to grow and extend collaborative provision with other HEIs. EDI features as an underpinning theme in new institutional Action Plans for the Concordat for Research Integrity and Knowledge Exchange.

A new Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 22-27 has been launched with a stronger emphasis on people to ensure equality of opportunity in the development and capacity of all our researchers and their contributions. An enhanced research culture section on our website offers a summary of key developments and initiatives.

2.5 Equality Outcome 5: Equality and diversity is embedded fully in the curriculum and in research

In relation to Research, actions under Outcome 4 apply.

In relation to embedding EDI in the curriculum, actions under Outcome 1 regarding the Race Equality Steering Group work-streams of fostering an anti-racist culture of understanding and decolonising the curriculum apply.

We value all contributions through an open, positive and healthy research and KE culture based on diversity, inclusivity and mutual respect across all activities and underpinned by integrity and a sustainable environment. QMU is dedicated to building a supportive, collegiate and highly motivated research culture based on diversity, inclusivity and mutual respect across all activities to help us to attract and retain our talented staff and students.

Equality of opportunity is essential to achieving research excellence and we believe our diversity of thought and culture is fundamental to our ability to solve complex challenges. We continue to aim to remove barriers, eliminate discrimination and make sure all researchers have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

To do so, we continue to offer researcher development training and mentoring; funded initiatives; interdisciplinary events; support for external collaboration; enterprise and innovation services; grant writing support; and career and professional resources to enhance employability, with opportunities to meet others and become part of our vibrant research community.

We are driving tangible and sustainable positive developments in our research culture through:

- Our commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and potential resubmission to the HR Excellence in Research Award (Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and the HR Excellence in Research Award).
- The University's Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Participation in the Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS).
- Our membership of the collaborative Teaching Research and Academic Mentoring Scheme (TRAMS) led by the University of St Andrews and University of Dundee.
- Our annual QMU Researcher Development Training Programme;
- Our commitment to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and institutional subscription to the UK Research Integrity Office.
- Our commitment to the Responsible Use of Metrics in Research Assessment, as a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and the Leiden Manifesto and through our Institutional Statement on the Use of Metrics in Research Assessment.
- Our Commitment to the Knowledge Exchange (KE Concordat) as one of the three Scottish HEIs who submitted to the Development Year.
- And through supporting sector best practice and Narrative CV developments through participation in the UK Research and Innovation Alternative Users Group.

We will progress any issues identified in the EQIA of our REF submission. The outcome of our REF submission, and our EQIA of that submission, will inform our research policy. We will commit also to the outcomes of the CEDARS (the Culture, Employment and New Research and Knowledge Exchange Centre 3 Year plans are embedding institutional strategy priorities at a local level and addressing issues identified in our REF 2021 EQIA and in response to institutional panel feedback. We are working with Universities Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council to progress solutions to sector-wide issues arising from the reports of the REF 2021 Equality and Diversity Panel (EDAP).

We are committed to continuing to run the [UK Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS)](#) to better understand EDI in our researchers, benchmark against UK aggregate data and improve our research culture.

We are fully engaged in the cross-institutional Teaching, Research and Academic Mentoring Scheme (TRAMS), providing broader mentoring opportunities for researchers. We have continued to invest in additional mentoring initiatives to better align expectations, promote professional and career development, address equity and inclusion, foster research independence, and cultivate ethical behaviours and integrity.   We have adopted clearer definitions for early and mid-career research staff to enable effective career development interventions.

As stated in Outcome 1, we remain committed to Aurora leadership training to build research capacity and continue to increase numbers of female staff with significant responsibility for research.

We believe that the University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes represent an area of good practice in mainstreaming. This includes the validation and review of new and established programmes, and the annual monitoring of all programmes.
During the validation and review process, the checklist for approval panels explicitly invites panel members to consider whether there is:

- sufficient evidence that the Programme will contribute to widening access and engaging students from non-traditional backgrounds and under-represented groups
- sufficient evidence of curriculum innovation and development to enhance equality and diversity, as well as to address potential exclusionary aspects of the programme and to encourage students to think globally and locally
- evidence of inclusive teaching practices.

2.6 Equality Outcome 6: More robust and comprehensive data is available on the characteristics of our staff, with identified evidence gaps filled.

Although work related to this outcome has been delayed since the publishing of the 2021 Mainstreaming report, the HR Team remains committed to the enhancement of the University's employee equality data and plans are now being put in place to address identified gaps.

The New Starter Information form has been reformatted to include language explaining the importance of collecting equality data, whilst also reassuring employees of confidentiality. This includes supportive language as well as information on where support can be accessed.

Changes to HESA requirements and related classifications of many protected characteristics mean that we will soon be asking all staff to re-complete their Monitoring data. We will use the launching of the new monitoring form to begin further exercises to encourage staff to update their information.

For the first time, the University will be opting to include a transgender entry to our revised monitoring form for staff. The inclusion of this field will allow us to begin collecting and analyzing staff data on transgender identity, which in turn will be used to identify any necessary areas of focused work or activity relating to transgender staff.

Despite delays to targeted action, as reflected in Outcome 1, review of our workforce data demonstrates increasing numbers of staff declaring protected characteristics in a number of areas. Although it is encouraging to see this increase in numbers, it is recognised that the university currently does not hold robust staff data relating to certain protected characteristics such as disability. The University is committed to encouraging staff to declare if they have a disability and will explore appropriate mechanisms for doing this. The University is committed to supporting staff and applicants who have declared a disability. Anecdotally, positive feedback has been received from employees who have received support through reasonable adjustments.

2.7 Summary Table of Outcomes

Outcome	Evidence Base	Activities and Outputs	April 2023 Update	PC (s) and general duty	Responsibility
Equality Outcome 1 By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University. We will adopt a broad definition of 'workforce' to include non-executive directors on our Governing Body, and those with whom we engage in partnership in the delivery of the student learning experience	Internal HR management information; HESA Staff return; Outcome Agreement Evaluation; Annual Report and Accounts; Court Annual Review; Externally Facilitated Court Review (due 2021/22)	Promote equality and diversity in recruitment and reward of staff and in consideration of job descriptions. Maintenance of agreed %age Gender Balance on the University Court and its standing committees, and of gender balance on key decision making bodies of the University. Improvement in the representation of other protected characteristics on the University Court and its standing committees. Gender Action plan updated in line with SFC guidance –due Autumn 2021. Further improvement in the collection of staff data by protected characteristics (Outcome 6 refers). An improvement in the percentage of those	Ongoing Gender representation on Board requirement met Ongoing Completed. Action plan no longer required by SFC under current guidance. Ongoing – targeted action planned from Spring 2023	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, Faith and belief Eliminate unlawful discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity	Head of Human Resources University Secretary

		staff who declare a protected characteristic.			
		Continue to work with Advance HE on the development of effective policies and interventions to achieve this outcome.	Ongoing		
		Development of opportunities to establish apprenticeships for professional services roles where appropriate in order to create entry level development opportunities for young people.	Completed – apprenticeships established 2022		
		Explore opportunities to access the Job Centre Plus Kick Start scheme to create short fixed term job placements for unemployed 16 to 24 year olds in our community	Action not yet started - to be implemented by 2025		
		Audit against the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit and implement changes identified to our advertising, engagement, sifting	Ongoing - EDI Culture Review Action Plan due to be published Summer 2023		

		and interviewing processes.			
		Devise a proactive and strategic social media approach to increase our reach to a wider pool of high quality potential employees, and promote the university as an employer of choice for a diverse range of candidate.	External review of website & media conducted 2021. Ongoing fulfilment of resulting Action Plan		
		Conduct review of recruitment and selection practices to ensure that they ensure a fair, open and transparent process.	Review planned for next academic year 23/24		
Equality Outcome 2 Pay Gaps are eliminated where the gap is statistically significant.	Equal Pay Review. Internal Management Information HESA Staff return.	Actions listed under Outcomes 1,3,4,5 and 6 all apply. The University will take action to remove any statistically significant pay gap in favour of any group. Actions captured in Equal Pay Review Action Plan.	2023 Equal Pay Review & Action Plan Published April 2023	Age, Disability, Gender re-assignment, Race, Sex, Sexual orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity Eliminate unlawful discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity	Head of Human Resources
Equality Outcome 3	HESA Student Return.	Actions set out in the University Outcome	Outcome Agreement 2023 to be published	Age, Disability, Gender reassignment,	Deans of School;

By 2025, significant steps have been taken to improve the attainment of those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population and workforce who experience poorer outcomes. We will particularly focus on gender, race, age and disability, and, where determined, the disproportionate impact of COVID on certain groups.	HESA Staff Return. Outcome Agreement Data Group monthly analysis. Annual Report data analysis. NSS data analysis. Outcome Agreement Annual Evaluation Report. OA National Measures.	Agreement 2021-24 and thereafter will be implemented fully. Actions captured in Equal Pay Review Action Plan.	May 2023 under SFC timeline Updated Equal Pay Action Plan published April 2023	Race, Sex, Sexual orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, Eliminate unlawful discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity.	University Secretary; Assistant Secretary, ELSS; Student Retention and Surveys Team; Outreach and Community Engagement Team.
Equality Outcome 4 Our people policies promote inclusive employment and career advancement prospects	Staff Survey results HR Management Information.	Consult with key stakeholders over the revision of existing and the development of new policies and on the potential equalities impacts Develop and implement revised HR policies based on best practice and legislative changes, taking into account all of the protected characteristics. Progress fully all actions set out in the institutional Athena Swan Action Plan.	Ongoing Ongoing – Carers & Special Leave policy & Flexible working already revised Ongoing – Submission due January 2024	Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, Faith and belief; Advancing equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination.	Head of Human Resources

		Raise awareness of issues relating to occupational segregation and gender pay gaps.	Ongoing - Equal Pay Report published April 2023		
		Promote E-learning training to all managers and recruitment and selection panellists.	Ongoing		
		Launch Athena SWAN communication plan to raise awareness of principles through key internal communication channels/committees.	Action not yet started - To be implemented by 2025		
		Review our current Performance Enhancement Review policy and procedure in joint consultation with our recognised Trade Unions and Line Managers. We have committed to building a coaching culture where managers and peers are trained to have effective career and development conversations to support career advancement prospects.	Ongoing – annual exercise		

		Develop our approach to the Aurora initiative by introducing a formal selection process and consider offering more places in the future to support females progressing into leadership roles.	Ongoing		
		Continue to make progress against our Concordat action plan for Researchers specifically focused on career development and support whilst at QMU and beyond through a Research training matrix and annual training plan.	Ongoing		
Equality Outcome 5 Equality and diversity is embedded fully in the curriculum and in research.	NSS and QSS results. REF 2021 Outcomes Athena SWAN award/s.	Delivery of Decolonisation of the Curriculum project.	Ongoing - Inclusive Curriculum project progressing through the Student Experience Committee. EDI in Learning, Teaching and Assessment 'Festival of Learning' in May 2023 to focus on 'Belonging' or 'Decolonising'.	Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, Eliminate unlawful discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity.	Deputy Principal/University Secretary/Deans of School
		Address issues identified in the EQIA of the REF and in	Ongoing		

		particular the participation of parttime female staff.			
		Continue to enhance gender equality initiatives beyond the traditional STEM domain of Athena SWAN through initiatives such as the Stonewall Equality Index and the Aurora programme.	Ongoing		
		Maintain Athena SWAN Bronze award, and achieve Silver award for Nursing.	Institutional Bronze Award Submission due January 2024. Silver award for Nursing currently delayed		
		Continue to implement Vitae Researcher Development Framework and actively participate in Vitae's Every Researcher Counts Project.	Ongoing		
Equality Outcome 6: More robust and comprehensive data is available on the characteristics of our staff, with identified evidence gaps filled.	HESA Staff Return HR Management Information	Provide more detailed explanation on the purpose and benefits, for the organisation and staff, of gathering such data, using past organisational examples.	Action not yet started – due to be implemented from Spring 2023	Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, Faith and belief. Eliminate	Head of HR

		Provide assurances on the confidentiality of this data.	From Spring 2023	unlawful discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity	
		Review our collection methods to ensure the language is appropriate for our audience.	From Spring 2023		
		Identify additional methods to communicate with staff in order to encourage this information to be submitted.	From Spring 2023		

3. Section 3: Employment Information

Information relating to staff employed by the University is set out in the documents attached as Appendices 1 and 2 of this report.

4. Section 4: Resources

Evidence Base

- Management Information and Analytical Reports considered by the Equality and Diversity Committee during the period 2021-23.

- Consultation with the WISeR Board.

- HESA Staff return 2021-22.

- HESA Student return 2021-22

- Internal Management Information drawn from the Tribal Student Records system (April 2023).

- Internal Management Information drawn from the i-Trent HR Records system (April 2023).

- WISeR Board Student Retention Statistics.

- Outcome Agreement 2023 (Due to be published May 2023)

- EHRC Essential guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: A guide for public authorities in Scotland, published October 2016.

- QMU Outcome Agreement Data Management Group data (established 2016).

- Advance HE and EHRC tool kits have been particularly helpful in drawing together this report.

- Advanced HE Equality in higher education: students statistical report 2022: https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/equality-higher-education-statistical-reports-2022

5. Section 5 – Management Information – Student Population Head Count (Excluding based overseas in collaborative partnership organisations)
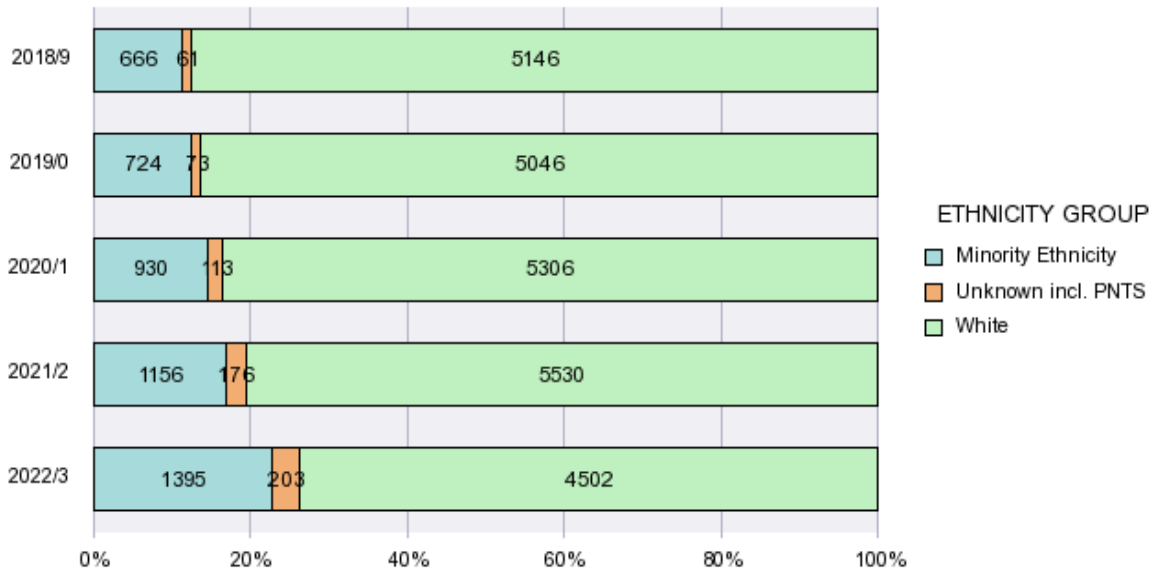
SEX	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Female	76.9% (4516)	77.4% (4522)	77.9% (4949)	77.7% (5329)	77.9% (4749)
Male	23.0% (1348)	22.3% (1305)	21.7% (1377)	21.9% (1503)	21.7% (1324)
Other Sex	0.2% (9)	0.3% (16)	0.4% (23)	0.4% (30)	0.4% (24)
Unknown	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (2)
TOTAL	5873	5843	6349	6862	6100
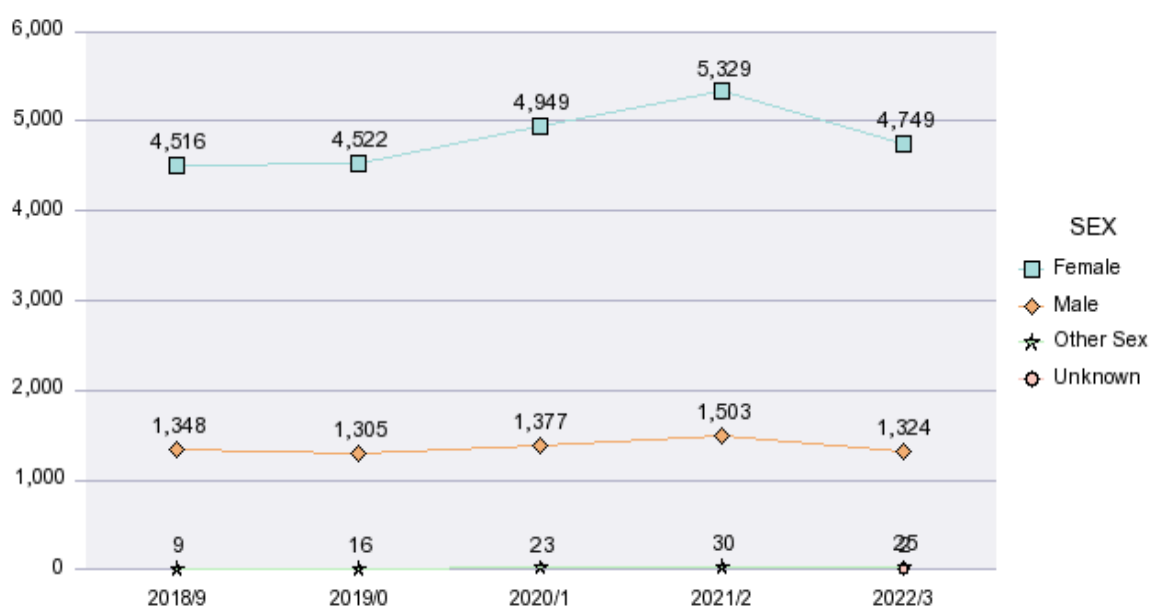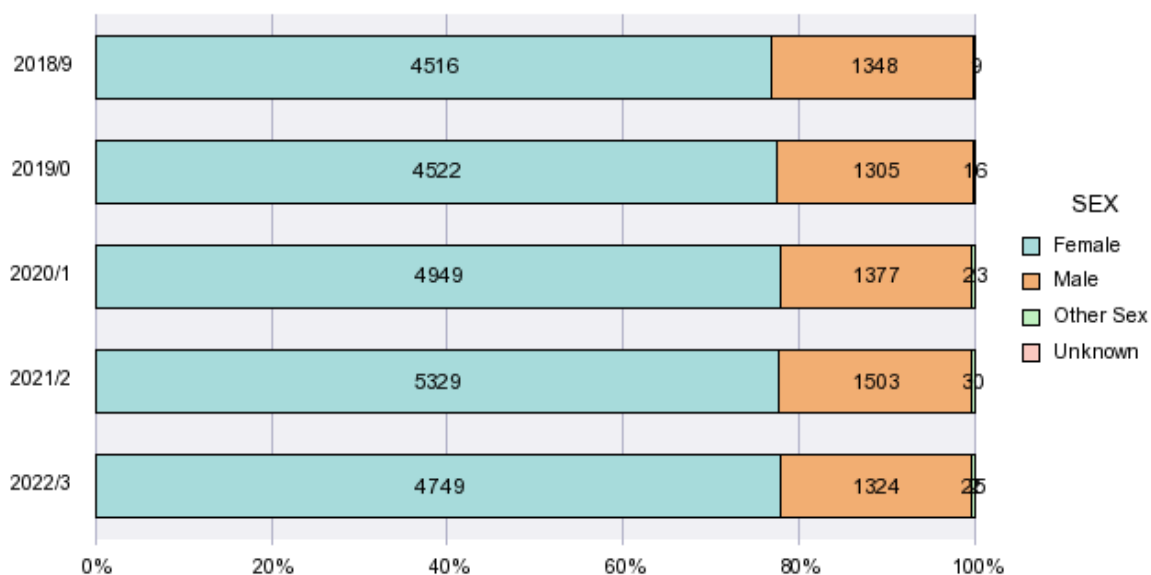
DISABILITY GROUP	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Disability Declared	19.5% (1114)	21.0% (1228)	21.9% (1389)	22.7% (1557)	23.0% (1406)
No Disability	80.3% (4715)	78.5% (4586)	77.4% (4913)	76.4% (5242)	75.3% (4594)
Unknown incl PNTS	0.2% (14)	0.5% (29)	0.7% (47)	0.9% (63)	1.6% (100)
TOTAL	5873	5843	6349	6862	6100
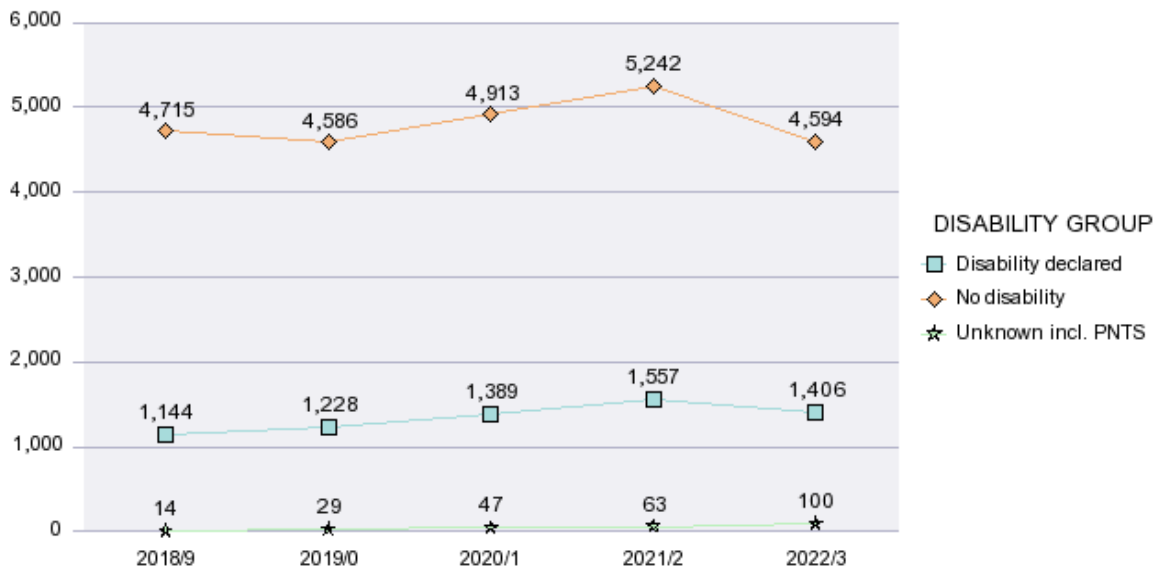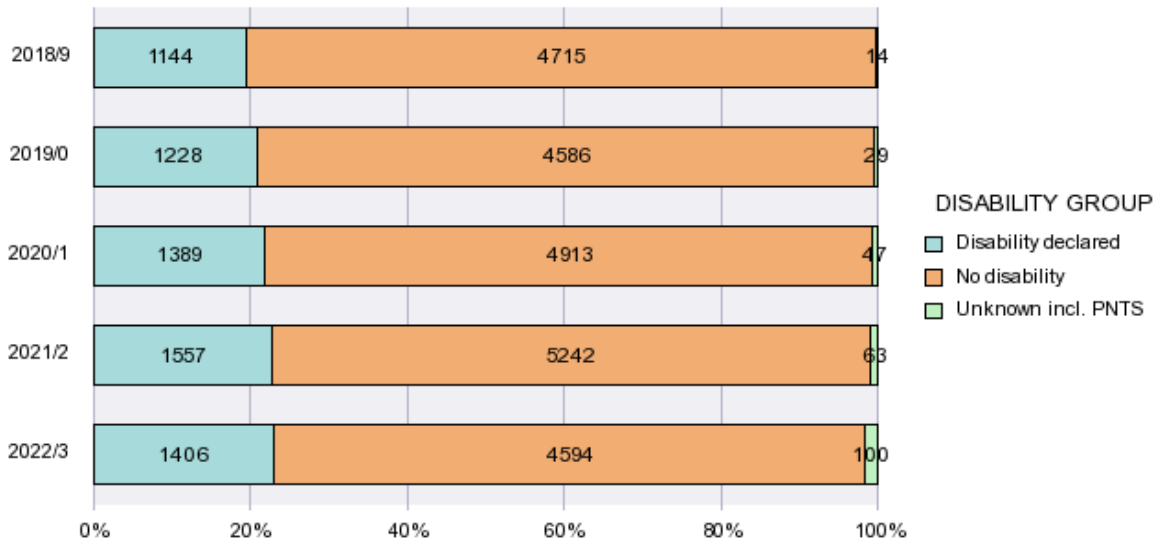
ETHNICITY	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Minority Ethnicity	11.3% (666)	12.4% (724)	14.6% (930)	16.8% (1156)	22.9% (1395)
Unknown incl PNTS	1.0% (61)	1.2% (73)	1.8% (113)	2.6% (176)	3.3% (203)
White	87.6% (5146)	86.4% (5046)	83.6% (5306)	80.6% (5530)	7.8% (4502)
TOTAL	5873	5843	6349	6862	6100

RELIGIOUS BELIEF	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Any other religious belief	1.0% (59)	1.2% (72)	1.3% (85)	1.4% (95)	1.5% (89)
Buddhist	0.4% (26)	0.5% (30)	0.4% (26)	0.5% (36)	0.5% (31)
Christian	0.0% (1)	0.0% (1)			
Christian - Catholic	13.5% (790)	13.2% (774)	9.7% (618)	5.9% (407)	0.1% (7)
Christian – Church of Scotland	7.1% (415)	7.4% (435)	7.7% (490)	7.8% (535)	8.1% (494)
Christian – Other Denomination	8.6% (504)	8.9% (522)	8.6% (549)	9.4% (643)	10.4% (632)
Christian – Roman Catholic	1.1% (66)	2.8% (161)	5.6% (358)	8.0% (552)	14.0% (854)
Hindu	0.5% (31)	0.5% (28)	0.6% (38)	0.9% (60)	1.1% (68)
Jewish	0.3% (16)	0.2% (14)	0.1% (9)	0.2% (12)	0.2% (14)
Muslim	2.6% (150)	2.4% (142)	2.4% (154)	2.4% (166)	2.8% (169)
No religion	49.0% (2877)	53.2% (3108)	54.8% (3478)	54.2% (3722)	52.1% (3179)
Pagan	0.1% (4)	0.2% (13)	0.3% (19)	0.4% (25)	0.6% (35)
Sikh	0.2% (11)	0.2% (9)	0.2% (10)	0.2% (12)	0.2% (12)
Spiritual	1.2% (68)	1.4% (82)	1.1% (69)	0.7% (48)	0.0% (1)
Unknown incl. PNTS	14.6% (855)	7.7% (452)	7.0% (446)	8.0% (549)	8.4% (515)
TOTAL	5873	5843	6349	6862	6100

RELIGIOUS BELIEF GROUP		
No religious belief		
Religious belief		
Unknown incl. PNTS		

Stacked bar chart (percentages):

Year	No religious belief	Religious belief	Unknown incl. PNTS
2018/9	2877	2141	855
2019/0	3108	2283	452
2020/1	3478	2425	446
2021/2	3722	2591	549
2022/3	3179	2406	515

Line chart data:

No religious belief: 2,877 (2018/9); 3,108 (2019/0); 3,478 (2020/1); 3,722 (2021/2); 3,179 (2022/3)

Religious belief: 2,141 (2018/9); 2,283 (2019/0); 2,425 (2020/1); 2,591 (2021/2); 2,406 (2022/3)

Unknown incl. PNTS: 855 (2018/9); 452 (2019/0); 446 (2020/1); 549 (2021/2); 515 (2022/3)

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Bisexual	3.3% (192)	4.7% (272)	5.9% (375)	7.2% (492)	8.5% (516)
Gay or lesbian	3.0% (177)	3.5% (207)	3.5% (224)	3.5% (242)	3.7% (227)
Heterosexual or straight	72.0% (4226)	73.2% (4275)	73.9% (4691)	74.0% (5081)	78.0% (4760)
Other sexual orientation	1.3% (75)	1.4% (82)	1.5% (98)	1.6% (111)	2.0% (121)
Unknown incl. PNTS	20.5% (1203)	17.2% (1007)	15.1% (961)	13.6% (936)	7.8% (476)
TOTAL	5873	5843	6349	6862	6100
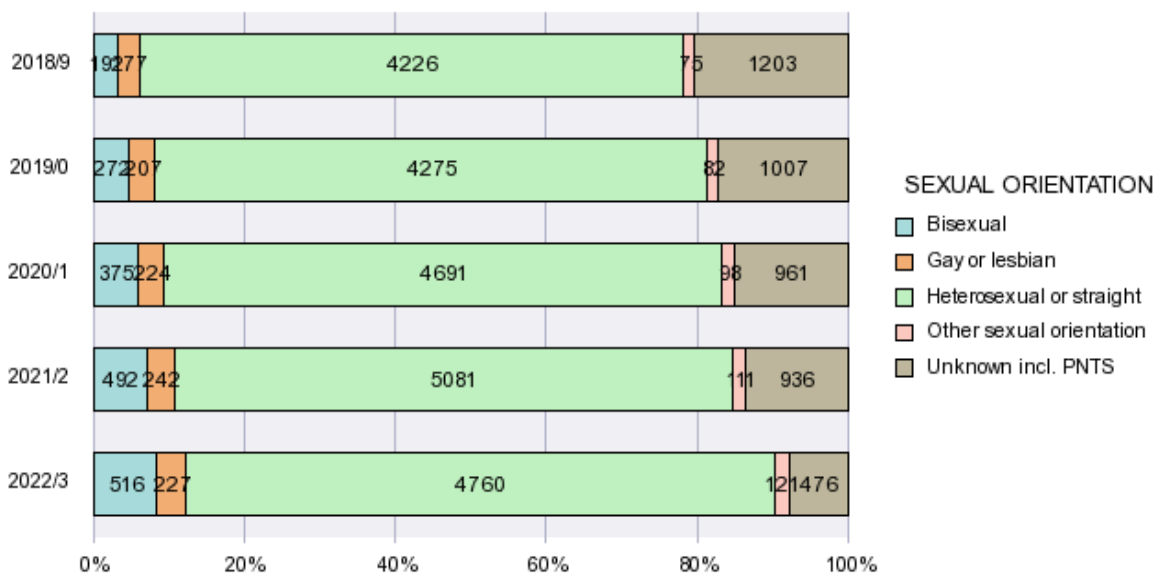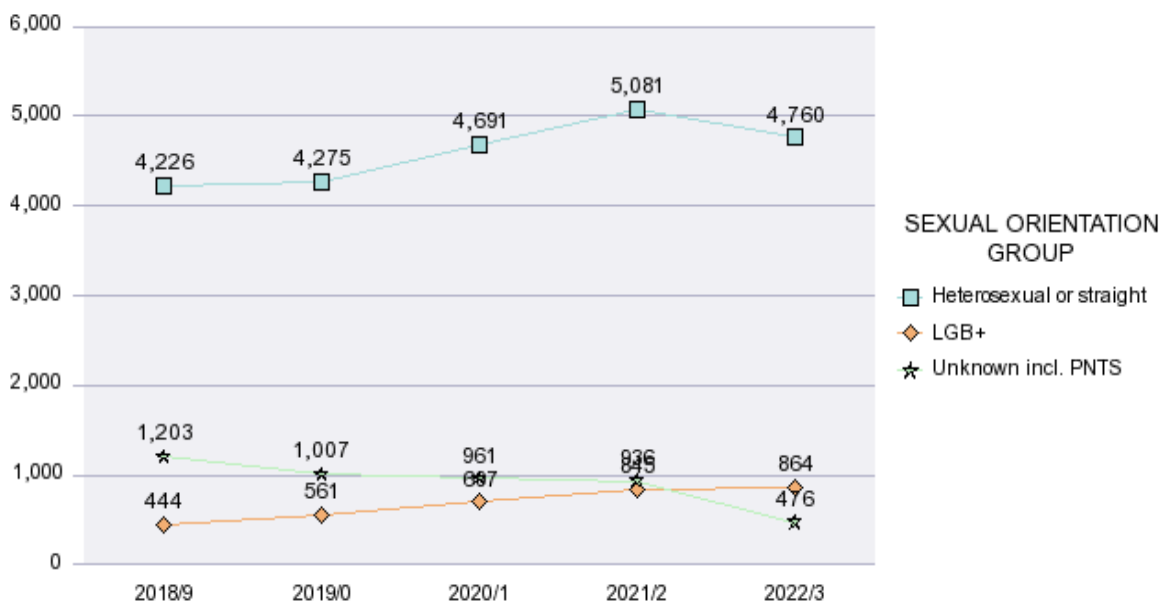
51

GENDER IDENTITY	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2
Gender identity different from sex assigned at birth	0.6% (34)	0.7% (41)	0.9% (55)	0.9% (65)
Gender identity same as sex assigned at birth	82.0% (4815)	84.0% (4911)	84.2% (5346)	82.5% (5663)
Unknown incl. PNTS	17.4% (1024)	15.2% (891)	14.9% (948)	16.5% (1134)
TOTAL	5873	5843	6349	6862
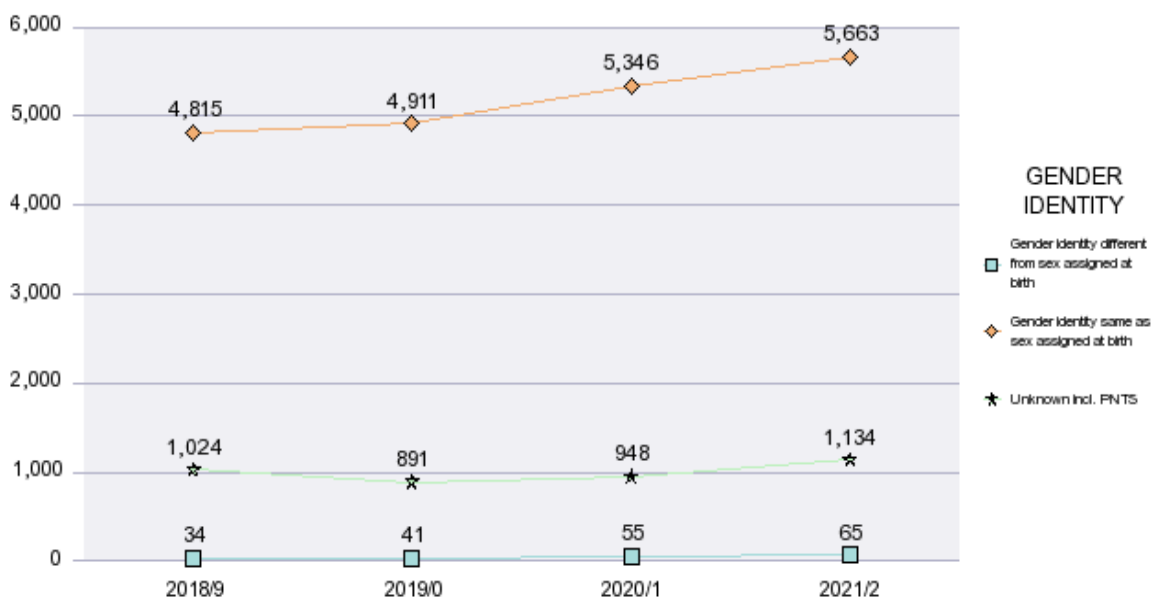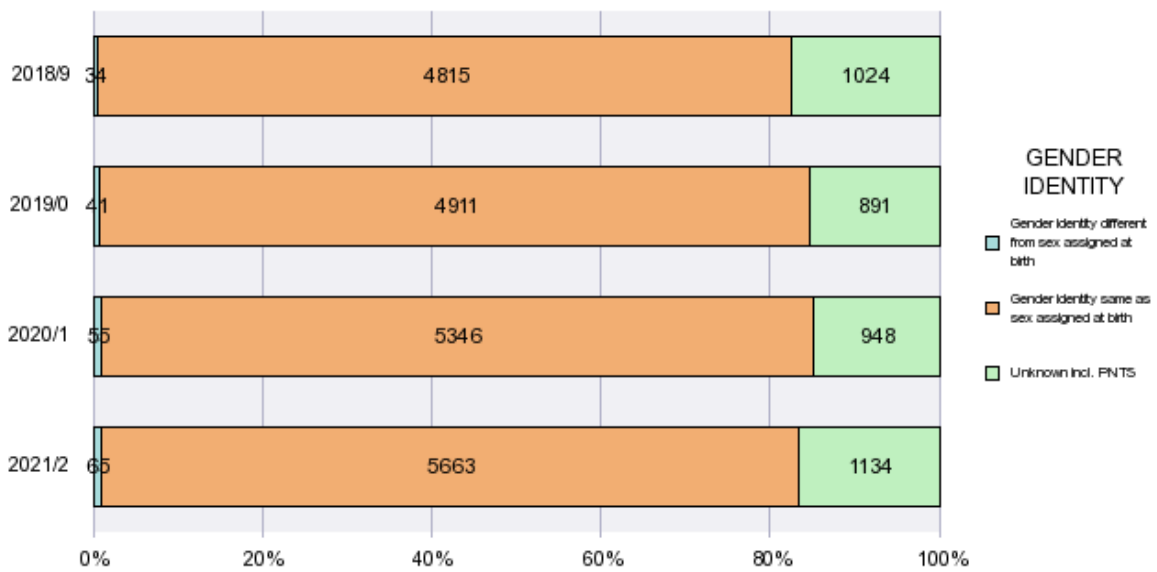
TRANSGENDER	2022/3
Consider self to be trans or have a trans history	1.1% (65)
Does not consider self to be trans or have trans history	95.3% (5816)
Unknown incl. PNTS	3.6% (219)
TOTAL	6100
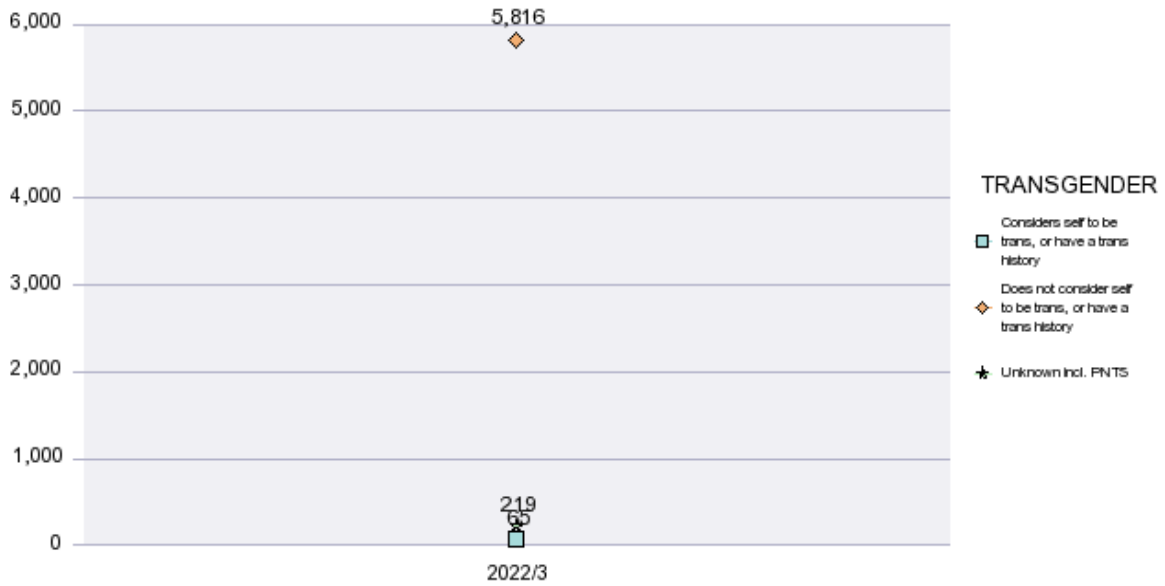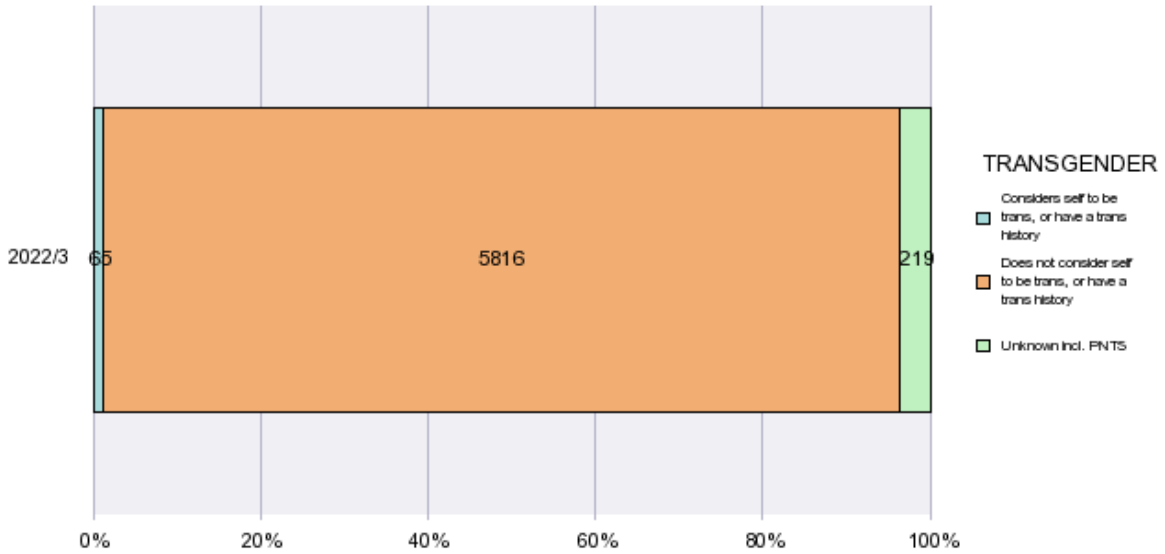
MARITAL STATUS	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Co-habiting	7.5% (439)	7.5% (441)	8.8% (558)	9.5% (655)	9.0% (548)
Divorced or formerly in a CP now legally dissolved	1.9% (109)	1.9% (111)	1.7% (109)	1.9% (133)	1.9% (116)
Married or in a registered civil partnership	20.3% (1191)	20.2% (1179)	19.9% (1262)	22.1% (1518)	22.3% (1360)
Separated (but still legally married or in CP)	1.0% (57)	1.1% (64)	1.4% (88)	1.3% (89)	1.1% (70)
Single (never married and never registered in CP)	56.3% (3309)	57.9% (3385)	57.2% (3630)	54.2% (3718)	58.2% (3548)
Unknown incl. PNTS	12.8% (753)	11.1% (649)	10.9% (689)	10.7% (737)	7.2% (442)
Widowed or surviving partner from registered CP	0.3% (15)	0.2% (14)	0.2% (13)	0.2% (12)	0.3% (16)
TOTAL	5873	5843	6349	6862	6100

MARITAL STATUS

- ☐ Co-habiting
- ◇ Divorced or formerly in a CP now legally dissolved
- ★ Married or in a registered civil partnership
- ✪ Separated (but still legally married or in CP)
- ☐ Single (Never married and never registered in CP)
- ◆ Unknown incl. PNTS
- ✦ Widowed or surviving partner from registered CP

	2018/9	2019/0	2020/1	2021/2	2022/3
Single	3,309	3,385	3,630	3,718	3,548
Married	1,191	1,179	1,262	1,518	1,360
Unknown	753	649	689	737	548
Co-habiting	439	441	558	655	442
	109	111	109	133	116

Y-axis values: 0, 500, 1,000, 1,500, 2,000, 2,500, 3,000, 3,500, 4,000